Bechu leaves legacy of harmony
By SHEETAL SINGH
Fiji’s oldest inhabitant, Bechu Prasad, has died peacefully at his home.
The 105-year-old, who would rise before sunrise and start his day by walking to his farm, cane knife in hand, died at his Sabeto home in Nadi on Tuesday evening.
Mr Prasad, an inspiration to many, was also a community worker who preached peace and harmony between Fiji’s two major races.
Family, relatives and close friends gathered at his home yesterday to pay their respects to possibly the last of the girmitiya.
Mr Prasad, who had aged gracefully, proved many wrong by doing his own daily chores and working on his farm until a few days before his death.
Eldest son Hari Prasad, 71, yesterday said that his father died peacefully in his sleep and had been feeling weak before passing away.
The family has not confirmed funeral arrangements as yet, awaiting the arrival of the youngest daughter.

Electricity workers put wage protest on hold
By ALUMECI NAKEKE
The planned nationwide strike by the Fiji Electricity Authority Workers Association today has been called off after a breakthrough in talks last night.
Labour Minister Kenneth Zinck, Energy and Works Minister Sewanac Draunidalo and association general secretary Daniel Urai failed to come to an agreement on the workers’ grievances but agreed to put off the strike.
"There will be no strike and talks will continue to another level when Mr Urai returns from overseas,“ Mr Zinck said.
Mr Urai, who leaves for Brussels on Tuesday, could not be reached for comment after last night’s meeting.
FEA chief executive officer Rokosero Nabalarua had earlier assured the nation there would be no power blackout if the 234 members of the association went on strike.
"Strike or no strike there will be no power blackout," he said. "There will be business as usual.”
He said they had also applied steps to minimize any disruptions to the power supply.
"We all staff are members of the union. These are executive right down to hourly-paid staff. Thirty percent are non members and we have resources to man our stations in case of a strike,” he said.
The company has three unions – Fiji Electricity Authority Workers Union (231 members, mainly hourly paid workers), Fiji Electricity Authority Workers Association (234 members who are salary staff) and Electricity Trade Union (36 members who are both hourly and salary staff).
Mr Nabalarua said they also had Telesource as a back-up.

Killer breastfeeds baby behind bars
By SEMESA MADIGI
Convicted murderer Alesi Tawake has the right to breastfeed her five-week-old baby in prison, said the Fiji Human rights Commission.
Commission legal officer Daveena Sudhakar Herman said the baby would suffer if she was not breastfed and would lose out on knowing her mother as a normal child would.
Tawake is allowed to breastfeed her during the daytime while the baby is bottle-fed at night at the Dilkusha Home, Nausori.
Ms Herman said the baby should be with her mother because under the prison standing orders, women should not be stopped from breastfeeding their babies until they are properly weaned.
"A woman prisoner may bring her infant child into prison with her provided that the medical officer certifies that her normal period of lactation has not expired and that the child is dependent on the mother for nourishment,” said Ms Herman.
She said for the prison authorities to make arrangements for the mother to see her child daily because she was breastfeed- ing in the best interest of the child. Attempts to obtain comment from the Prisons Department on the issue proved futile.