



FIJI TEACHERS UNION

(THE CHILD OUR HOPE)

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Affiliated to EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL, FTUC, Fiji Teachers Confederation & COPE

President : Muniappa Goundar

Our Ref:

General Secretary: Agni Deo Singh

Your Ref:

PRESS RELEASE

FALSE ALLEAGIONS BY THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Hon. Kumar out of the blue, decided to celebrate International Women's Day in Suva and then later in Labasa. Addressing the women teachers, the Minister alluded to the low number of women teachers in leadership positions. She further stated that in the past MEHA and the Unions promoted teachers. She also said that those who had connections and socialized got promoted. She said more males were promoted because of the connections, that is why OMRS gave equal opportunity to women. We wish to set the record right and once for all.

Post processing procedure prior to 2007 was as follows.

- 1) Vacant posts were advertised by MEHA.
- 2) Post processing unit in MEHA listed applicants in order of merit according to qualification, service in relevant grade, leadership experience and performance record for past 3 years.
- 3) Central Staff Board (CSB) meeting chaired by the Deputy Secretary was convened. Attendees included all the Directors (Primary, Secondary, Technical, Curriculum Advisory Services) and the teacher unions.
- 4) The CSB deliberated thoroughly and based on the criteria, selected the most meritorious candidate for promotion and recommended to the Ministry Staff Board (MSB).
- 5) The Ministry Staff Board chaired by the permanent Secretary re-examined the recommendation of the CSB and then the Permanent Secretary had the final authority to confirm the promotion.
- 6) All applicants were advised of the outcome and given 21 days to appeal if not satisfied with the decision.

All correspondence to the General Secretary Fiji Teachers Union, Please.

Branches: Suva, Nasinu, Rewa, Tailevu, Ra, Tavua, Ba, Lautoka, Nadi, Sigatoka, Navua, Labasa, Bua, Taveuni, Savusavu, Levuka.

- 7) The Public Service Appeals Board was convened to hear the appeal and give a ruling. Pending the decision of the PSAB, status quo remained. This was an open and transparent process.


In 2008 the then Interim Regime decided to keep the Unions out of all structures of consultation including post processing. Therefore for 14 years now, the Ministry has been processing promotions without any consultations. We have no inkling whatsoever who does it and how it is done. If there was any malpractice, it was clearly in the **MINISRTY**.

The PSAB was abolished in 2013, disallowing aggrieved applicants from seeking further redress by an independent body. We believe there is no transparency in this system.

The 2013 constitution section 127(8) also states that the permanent secretary with the agreement of Minister determines all employment matters including promotions. The Unions are **NOT** the authority to determine any employment matters. Hon. Kumar is once again being mischievous here.

The allegation made by Hon. Kumar is unfounded and incorrect. I believe it is a deliberate attempt to plant discord between the leadership of the unions and the women members.

For the information of Hon. Kumar, Fiji Teachers Union has a vibrant Womens Wing at national level as well as in all the branches. There is separate budgetary allocation for empowerment of women leaders. The chairperson of the Womens Wing has a seat in the National Executive Committee. There is a reserved position of a woman vice president as well. FTU firmly believes in equal opportunity for women and our women members know this very well. Minister Kumar's attempt is a futile exercise actually further exposing the weaknesses in her own Ministry. It is advisable that she address those first.



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Agni Deo Singh
General Secretary
16th March 2022.