

EDUCATION

# Union Calls on Ministry to Have Proper Review of Transfer Policy



Participating teachers during the nationwide career teachers workshop at the Fiji National University Nasinu Campus on March 22, 2023. Photo: Ronald Kumar

**Transferring teachers is nothing new, but demands careful consideration on the reason for transfer, says Fiji Teachers Union.**

JONE SALUSALU  
NASINU

The Fiji Teachers Union (FTU) has encouraged the Ministry of Education (MoE) to consider all concerns when conducting its policy of transferring teachers after six years. FTU national president, Muniappa Goundar said for a teacher to be transferred after a stint of six years, the ministry must ensure family welfare was priority. "The transfer policy had been there for decades," Mr Goundar said. "Transferring teachers is nothing new, but demands careful consideration on the reasons for transfer. "For a teacher to be transferred just because he or she had been at

a school for more than six years is unacceptable by the union. "Some teachers spend more than six years at a school because their residence is close by. They are well adapted to the school and its surrounding. They produce exceptional results and stakeholders' confidence in teachers to name a few." Mr Goundar said the ministry must meet with teacher unions and other stakeholders before any such policy was implemented.

**MoE response**  
MoE acting Permanent Secretary Timoci Bure said: "Our first concern is with Mr Goundar who is an employee of the MoE. "This is a clear case of conflict of interest serving as head teacher of a school. "We would like to advise him that this is a ministerial statement in Parliament. As a senior teacher, we expect him to understand that the wishes of the minister will be developed into a policy direction." Mr Bure said as such, it would require consultation, which the minister's office had begun. "During such process they will be consulted and the office of the min-

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**Muniappa Goundar**  
Fiji Teachers Union

ister is aware of associated risks. "The statement is in line with findings on the recent examination results and issues involving teachers brought to the attention of the minister."

**Teachers' perspective**  
Tailevu, North, College teacher

Deborah Hephzibah said moving teachers suddenly out of a school in the middle or sometimes during the year was not good. "It is good to start at a new school in a new academic year," she said. "Because students are affected, they are used to the teaching method of the same teacher for that year and all of a sudden if you change the teacher, somebody comes in with a new teaching method, new teaching style, method of delivery. "Those are all factors that can affect the learning of students." For Waidina Secondary School principal Osea Naicibaciba, the policy has its advantages and disadvantages. He said the transfer policy was helpful because it engaged fresh ideas to be invested by new teachers entering the school. On the other hand, it could mean families moving from one community they felt accustomed to. All these need a broader consultation, he said. The FTU was formed in March 1930 to protect the rights of the teachers.

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must read

**WE DO NOT HAVE CONTROL OF WHAT THE BODYGUARDS POSSESS:**

**SAYED-KHAIYUM**

Suva: Former Attorney-General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum yesterday told the media that ministers who were assigned bodyguards did not have any control over what their bodyguards possessed.

This was in light of allegations made against Mr Sayed-Khaiyum's bodyguards who were alleged to have carried weapons into aircrafts without the proper approvals from the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji.

Acting Assistant Commissioner of Police Sakeo Raikaci confirmed that a report had been lodged to police, with regards to these allegations.

Speaking to the media yesterday, Mr Sayed-Khaiyum said bodyguards were assigned to them by the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF)

"Ministers who are given bodyguards do not have any control over their bodyguards, what the bodyguards have and what they don't have. That is what you should understand.

"That is the question you need to be asking the right people."

Commander RFMF, Major-General Ro Jone Kalouniwa has been made aware of the former A-G's comments.

He is expected to respond. **>Inoke Rabonu**

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