



Fiji Teachers Union Newsletter

(THE CHILD OUR HOPE)

JULY 2016

Published by the
Fiji Teachers Union

Vol. 86 No. 2
Editor: Bro. Manhar Kumar

1-3 Berry Road, P.O. Box 2203 Govt Building, Suva. **Phone:** 3314 099 / 3314 668 **Fax:** 3305 962 **Email:** ftu@connect.com.fj

Greetings to all our valuable members!!

CHIEF GUEST
ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2016



The Chief Guest and Keynote speaker for the 86th AGM and Conference will be **Mr. Felix Anthony, the National Secretary, Fiji Trades Union Congress.**

BRIEF BACKGROUND OF
THE CHIEF GUEST

TRADE UNION

- 1982- 1989 Air Pacific Employees Association – Executive Committee Member, Assistant General Secretary and General Secretary
- 1990 General Secretary – Fiji Sugar and General Workers' Union (Now National Union of Workers)

FIJI TRADES UNION CONGRESS

- 1988 – 1989 National Vice President
- 1994 – 1999 National Vice President
- 1991 National Secretary
- 1999-current Executive Council Member – International Confederation of Trade Unions (ITUC Brussels) and Executive Council Member – ITUC Asia Pacific

- 2015- Elected President of International Trade Union Congress – Asia Pacific (ITUC-AP). POLITICS
- Member of Upper House of Parliament (Senate) 2002 – 2006
- Elected Member House of Representatives (Lower House of Parliament) June 2006 – December 2006 – Military Coup

86th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE

The 2016 Conference will be hosted by **Navua Branch**. The details are as follows:

Date: Sunday, 14th August – Wednesday, 17th August 2016.

Venue: Yatu Lau Lagoon Resort, Pacific Harbour.

Theme: “Reclaiming the Rights of Teachers”.

ATTENDANCE/ DELEGATES

FTU Conferences and Annual General Meetings have always had excellent representation from the Branches. Navua Branch is looking forward to welcoming, yet again, a record attendance. Your presence means a show of strength and solidarity.

The delegates list must be forwarded to the HQ by the 1st of August, 2016.

BILLETING

Navua is enthused to host the delegates in the Adventure Capital of Fiji. Branches can contact Bro. Rameshwar Lal on 9934741 and Bro. Ritesh Prasad on 9449492 for billeting arrangements.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Sunday 14th August 2016

10.00am : National Executive Committee Meeting

2.00pm : Sports Committee Meeting

Monday 15th August 2016

- 8.30– 9.00 am : Registration of Delegates
9.15 : Guests and Delegates get seated
9.30 : Official Opening of 86th AGM and Annual Conference
: Welcome Address by Chairperson – Navua Branch
: Presidential Address
: Keynote Address & Official Opening
: Vote of Thanks
10.30 : Morning Tea
11.00 : Annual General Meeting: Minutes of the 2015 AGM, 2015/2016 Activities Report including the Audited Financial Report.
: Resolutions
: Lunch
3.30pm : Sports – Team Parade/Official Opening
7.00pm : Cultural Night

Tuesday 16th August 2016

- 9.00am : FTU CTCL AGM
10.30 : Morning Tea
11.00 : Women's Wing Meeting
1.00pm : Lunch
2.00 : Sports
7.00pm : CTCL Dinner

Wednesday 17th August 2016

- 8.30am : FTU Sports
Presentation of Trophies and Prizes
10.00am : Post Conference National Executive Meeting



**THE YATU LAU LAGOON RESORT
CONFERENCE VENUE 2016**

CONFERENCE SPORTS

As in the past, 2016 will also witness strong representation in sports, namely soccer, netball and volleyball. The games will be held at Thompson Park and Vashist Muni grounds.

Reminder – Only those who have been registered by Branches and who have been cleared by HQ would be able to participate in sports. The Conference Tournament Rules apply to all sports. Sports Managers are requested to sort out all issues in the Managers Meeting on 14th August, 2016.

AGM RESOLUTIONS

All resolutions for AGM's consideration should come through your respective Branches. The due date for the resolutions is 1st August 2016.

CULTURAL NIGHT

Members who wish to perform during the Cultural Night on Monday 15th August 2016, are to give their names to their Branch Secretaries before the 29th of July 2016 to be submitted to Navua Branch.

MEMBERSHIP

It is pleasing to record that the Union membership has increased substantially in the last 12 months. The same is the case with FTU CTCL. Members will note that the larger the membership, the better the benefits.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

HQ will continue with the membership drive. Schools have been visited in Term One and the process will continue during the year.

Branches are requested to assist the Secretariat by getting in touch with the School Reps and obtaining the school member / non-member list.

CHANGE OF BRANCH

Members who have changed districts are to notify the Secretariat immediately so that the membership records could be updated.

Also note that if you change schools or are posted out of the current district and which means a change in the Branch, please have your records updated. The Branch transfer cut-off date for the conference is 1/8/2016. The final list will be taken out on 2/8/2016.

Members who want to participate in the Conference Sports must ensure that their names appear in the appropriate Branch Register.

Note that your choice of a Branch can be either through residential qualification or the school in which you teach.

SCHOOL REP & SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP LIST

The School Rep should be elected by the staff. The School Rep then becomes the link between the members at the school and the Branch / HQ. The school rep is the live wire at the school level, ensuring all Union Literature is distributed in time, assist members with all Forms and attend to all Branch meetings, etc.

SELF FUNDING MEDICAL PLAN

This initiative was approved by the 2011 AGM in Rewa. It is indeed pleasing to report that the Scheme is doing extremely well. All the members and their families who needed treatment have been assisted and the fund enjoys a strong surplus. As predicted, the benefits are going to be increased incrementally.

Please be reminded that there is no refund for levy paid for the Medical Plan. Those who need assistance, get assisted and those who do not become sick, are blessed. It is a scheme where members contribute to get assistance and to assist others in times of need.

PUBLICITY MATTERS

The February issue of the Newsletter was sent to all the School Reps in the first week. Branches must keep their membership informed of current issues by sending regular Branch Newsletters. Branch Secretaries are advised to send a copy of their Branch Newsletters to HQ. The 2016 Year Planner was also sent to the Branches in early February for distribution to the members. If you have not received the Year Planner then get in touch with your Branch Executives. The Conference Journal is presently being put into shape and the Publicity Committee is requesting members to contribute articles towards the Journal.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Members are invited to write a 2 page article for this year's Journal. The National Executive members are reminded of the requirement to submit an article for the Journal as well. Members are reminded not to submit University assignments. The due date for the article is 25th of July 2016. Articles can be e-mailed on: ftu@connect.com.fj or to the Publicity Officer on: kumar.manhar@yahoo.com

The theme for the 86th AGM is "Reclaiming the Rights of Teachers". The Publicity Committee has the right to select and edit the articles which will be submitted.

LABOUR DAY CELEBRATIONS

International Worker's Day was celebrated on May 2nd before the National Executive Meeting with a cake cutting ceremony. The National President alluded to the fact that the significance of Labour Day has considerably diminished in Fiji. However, FTU believes that concerted efforts must be put in to restore workers lost rights, especially the right to seek redress and the right to grievance procedures. During the celebration, FTU called upon all employers to ensure that the rights of workers are respected and fully restored and that they engage with Unions in collective bargaining in good faith. Members must be aware that FTU had submitted a Log of Claims to the Education Ministry. FTU also notes with concern that the Public Service Disciplinary Tribunal has not been functional for more than 12 months although there are several cases pending for long and need to be addressed.

ENTRY POINT SALARY

Members would recall that the Ministry of Education had put all new recruits in 2015 on a \$12,361.00 salary. The Union strongly objected to this act of exploitation. The salary scales of 2015 recruits were corrected in 2016. The 2016 recruits were once again lumped together at the certificate salary of \$16,600.00. This matter is being pursued through the dispute mechanism.

RIGHT OF REPRESENTATION

Members are to note that if you are called to appear before the MoE disciplinary committee, you have the **full right to be represented**. Please notify the Union and you will be assisted/represented.

Also note that for any disciplinary case, MoE must give you ample notice in writing as to what the offence charged is/are.

Members have complained that they are being informed via phone to appear before the Disciplinary Committee and that only a days notice is given. This is in breach of Natural Justice and the Right of Representation.

The Union has written to the Attorney General's office, requesting that Public service disciplinary tribunal be set up as soon as possible. The request has been referred to the honorable Chief Justice for his consideration and necessary action.

2015 AGM IN PICTURES

