



# FIJI TEACHERS UNION

## NEWSLETTER

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### GREETINGS

Warm greetings to all our valued members.

### 84<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2014

Labasa Branch is working tirelessly to make sure that all members receive the best of hospitality in the upcoming conference. The details of the conference are as follows:

**Host Branch: Labasa**

**Dates: 29<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014**

**Venue: Labasa Sangam College**

**Theme: "Quality Public Education for Equity, Social Justice and Sustainable Development"**

**Chief Guest: Bro. Angelo Gavrielatos – Federal President, Australian Education Union**



Bro. Angelo Gavrielatos is the Federal President of the Australian Education Union (AEU). Prior to this Angelo was a Presidential Officer of the NSW Teachers Federation between

2002 - 2008 and an Organiser for the NSWTF in Western Sydney between 1992- 2002. He was previously a Secondary Teacher in Green Valley in South West Sydney.

His commitment to social justice and unionism is at the heart of his work. His areas of primary responsibility have included the development and

implementation of campaigns in a range of social justice areas within the Australian context and beyond. They include campaigns aimed at addressing: the rights of indigenous students and their communities; the educational well-being of students from lowest socio-economic status (SES) communities; the development of sound policy in the area of multiculturalism and multicultural education; and the rights of asylum seekers and refugee children and their families.

Bro. Angelo is driven by a fundamental belief in the transformational power of education and what it means for each individual child and the nation as a whole.

### CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE/DELEGATES

Branches are requested to bring large delegations to the 84<sup>th</sup> AGM in order to make a strong statement to the authorities on the numerous matters of grave concern on the diminishing status of teachers and workers at large in the country. Branch Reps were reminded in the NE meeting to send in their branch delegates list to the HQ for verification.

### BILLETING

Labasa Branch has presented the billeting arrangements in the recent NE Meeting. Branches can contact Bro Pranesh Sharma on 9045156 or Bro Pratosh Kumar on 9207770 for billeting and travel arrangements.

## **SPORTS**

- As usual sports will be a major feature of the conference. Branches are expected to prepare the teams to participate in soccer, netball and volleyball. All games will take place at Subrail Park, Labasa.

## **SPORTS REGISTRATION**

Branch Reps were advised to note that registration of teams is to be sent to the HQ at the earliest and no later than 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2014. Please ensure that every player is a member of FTU and is registered under the branch. Branches are required to send the sports registration for verification to the HQ. Only the registered players would be eligible to participate in sports. Full details would be furnished in the sports committee meeting.

## **CONFERENCE PROGRAMME**

### **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

- 10.00am : Pre-Conference National Executive Committee Meeting
- 2.00pm : Sports Committee Meeting

### **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

- 8.30– 9.00am : Registration of delegates
- 9.15 : Guests and delegates get seated
- 9.30 : Official Opening of the 84<sup>th</sup> AGM and Annual Conference
  - : Welcome Address by Chairperson – Labasa Branch
  - : Presidential address
  - : Keynote Address & Official Opening
  - : Vote of Thanks
- 10.30 : Morning Tea
- 11.00 : Annual General Meeting: Minutes of the 2013 AGM. 2013/2014 Activities Report including Audited Financial Report.
  - : Resolutions & Constitutional Amendments
- 2.00pm : Lunch
- 3.30 : Sports – Team Parade/Official Opening
- 7.00 : Cultural Night

### **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

- 9.00am : FTU Co-operative Thrift & Credit Limited AGM
- 10.30 : Morning Tea
- 11.00 : Women's Wing Meeting
- 1.00pm : Lunch
- 2.00 : Sports
- 7.00 : CTCL Dinner Night

### **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014**

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

## **CULTURAL NIGHT**

Members who wish to perform during the Cultural Night on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2014 are to submit their names to their Branch Secretaries before 24<sup>th</sup> April 2014 to be submitted to Labasa Branch by 28<sup>th</sup> April.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

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

## **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.

## **INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY 2014**

It was very pleasing to note that most of the branches marked this important day with the women members in the branch. We are encouraging more and more branches to mark this significant event since it also falls during the month of the Branch AGMs.

**FIJI TEACHERS UNION**

**CONSTITUTION REVIEW**

Listed below are the proposed changes to the constitution of the Fiji Teachers Union. The delegates will be voting on this at the Annual General Meeting.

PARTICULARS		YES	NO
1	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Page 1 There is no existing clause regarding this.		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>FTU Website address must be added to the cover page.</i>		
2	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme Part II Membership – No 18 Page 1		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>Part II Membership- No. 18 Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme to read as <b>Social Security</b>.</i>		
3	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Interpretation Clause 3 Page 8 There are no existing definition of <b>Levy, Rule</b> and <b>Social Security</b> .		
	<b>Proposed</b> Interpretation- New definitions to be added: <b>Levy</b> (to appear underneath EGM) shall mean union deduction; <b>Rule</b> (to appear underneath Registrar) shall mean the Fiji Teachers Union Constitution (underneath Registrar); <b>Social Security</b> (to appear underneath Secretariat) shall mean Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme and Self Funding Medical Scheme.		
4	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Clause 13 (2) Page 13 There is no existing clause governing Death Benefit for Honorary Members.		
	<b>Proposed</b> Part (f) to be added - <b>Death benefit under the MABS.</b>		
5	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Clause 13 (3) Page 13 The Honorary members shall be entitled to participate in the benefits provided by the Union upon payment of full Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme contribution per annum.		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>The Honorary members shall be entitled to participate in the benefits provided by the Union upon payment of full Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme and Self Funding Medical Scheme contribution per annum as per terms and conditions.</i>		
6	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Clause 18 Page 15 Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>The title shall read <b>Social Security</b></i>		
7	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme: Clause 18 Page 15 The purpose of the MABS is to assist the members and their families with medical benefits as stipulated in the MABS as per terms and conditions.		
	<b>Proposed</b> Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme: Clause 18 (a) <i>The purpose of the MABS is to assist the members and their families with medical benefits as stipulated in the MABS as per terms and conditions.</i>		
8	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Clause 18 Page 15 There is no existing clause that covers Self Funding Medical Scheme.		
	<b>Proposed</b> Clause 18(b) Self Funding Medical Scheme: <i>The purpose of the Self Funding Medical Scheme is to assist the members and their families with medical benefits as stipulated in the Medical Policy as per terms and conditions.</i>		

PARTICULARS		YES	NO
9	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Power of the Executive Committee Clause 40 (1) (c) Page 21 to appoint staff for the operation of the Union		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>to determine terms and conditions of employment of staff for the operation of the union.</i>		
10	<b>Existing Clause:</b> (Title) Clause 52 Page 23 Functions of the Disciplinary Committee Committee		
	<b>Proposed</b> remove the extra word <b>Committee</b> <i>Functions of the Disciplinary Committee</i>		
11	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Composition of the Disciplinary Committee Clause 53 Page 24 The Disciplinary Committee shall comprise of a minimum of 3 members and a maximum of 5 members and at least one of one of whom shall be a Principal Officer.		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>The Disciplinary Committee shall comprise of a minimum of 3 executive members and a maximum of 5 executive members and one of whom shall be a Principal Officer and who will chair the Committee.</i>		
12	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Eligibility for Elections Clause 73 (4) (a) – (e) Page 28 Nominee for the position of General Secretary must meet the following criteria to be eligible to contest the post of General Secretary: (a) Sound administrative and trade union background and a good working understanding of labour legislation for a minimum of 5 years; (b) Have sufficient and proven advocacy skills and experience to represent the Union in negotiations and trade dispute settlement, collective bargaining, Employment Tribunal and any arbitration proceedings; (c) Shall not be convicted of any fraud, financial crime. (d) Shall not be declared a bankrupt or have had any receiving order made against the nominee. (e) Have a sufficiently high standard of literacy so as to enable the nominee to perform the duties of the General Secretary, if elected effectively.		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>Nominees for the position of the General Secretary must meet the following criteria to be eligible to contest the post of General Secretary:</i> <i>(b) Have sufficient advocacy skills and experience to represent the Union in negotiations and trade dispute settlement;</i> Sub clauses (a),(c), (d) and (e) shall remain unchanged.		
13	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Nominations Clause 74 Page 29 Nominations for the position of the Officers of the Union shall be made on the prescribed form (Appendix 2- Form b) and must be delivered to the registered office of the Union by the date fixed by the Executive Committee for receipts of nominations.		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>Nominations for the position of the Officers of the Union shall be made on the prescribed form (Appendix 2- Form B) and must be delivered to the registered office of the Union by the date fixed by the Executive Committee for receipt of nominations.</i>		
14	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Division II Powers and Duties of Union Officers - President Clause 88 Page 32 There is no existing sub-clause in relation to (e).		
	<b>Proposed</b> Sub-clause (e) to be added <i>in conjunction with the General Treasurer, sign cheques on behalf of the Union.</i>		

PARTICULARS		YES	NO
15	<p><b>Existing Clause:</b> General Treasurer Clause 92 (c), (d) and no Sub-clause (f) Pages 33-34            (a) In conjunction with the General Secretary sign cheques on behalf of the Union ;            (b) deposit in the bank appointed by the executive committee all sums over one hundred (\$100) retaining the reminder in a safe place;</p>		
	<p><b>Proposed</b> Changes to sub-clause (c) and (d) and sub-clause (f) to be added            (c) <i>in conjunction with the General Secretary/President sign cheques on behalf of the Union ;</i>            (d) <i>oversee the deposit in the bank appointed by the executive committee all sums over two hundred (\$200.00) retaining the reminder in a safe place;</i>            (f) <i>The General Treasurer shall become the Returning Officer for the FTU elections and as such chair the elections sub- committee.</i></p>		
16	<p><b>Existing Clause:</b> Branch Secretary Clause 119 (e) Page 39            (c) shall attend to all complaints from individual members of the Branch, and submit their cases to the General Secretary of the Union for further action if required; and</p>		
	<p><b>Proposed</b> remove extra word "shall"            (e) <i>attend to all complaints from individual members of the Branch, and submit their cases to the General Secretary of the Union for further action if required; and</i></p>		
17	<p><b>Existing Clause:</b> Branch Treasurer Clause 118 there is no Sub-clause (f) Page 40            (b) be responsible for the safely of all monies and property of the Union placed in his/her care or control;</p>		
	<p><b>Proposed</b> Change in the spelling and addition of Sub-clause (f)            (b) <i>be responsible for the safety of all monies and property of the Union placed in his/her care or control;</i>            (f) <i>shall become the Returning Officer for the FTU Branch elections.</i></p>		
18	<p><b>Existing Clause:</b> Penalty Clause 122 Page 42            1) If any member is proved..... breach of clause 123...            2) Failure of a member to pay any fine.....</p>		
	<p><b>Proposed</b>            (1).....<i>clause 121, sub- clause 1, 2, 3....</i>            (2) <i>add sub-sub- clause (b) which shall read Any member who is suspended shall not be eligible to contest branch or national elections.</i></p>		
19	<p><b>Existing Clause:</b> Part X Use of Funds Clause 126 (1) (e) and (g) Page 43            (e) allowance to members or their dependents on account of death, retirement or sickness as stipulated in the condition of Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme;            (g) social insurance, incidental expenses or their along with medical aid, as stipulated in the Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme terms and conditions;            (o) the provision of social and welfare amenities for its members as per provision of Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme.</p>		
	<p><b>Proposed</b> Addition of the phrase <b>Self Funding Medical Scheme</b>            (e) <i>allowance to members or their dependents on account of death, retirement or sickness as stipulated in the condition of Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme and Self Funding Medical Scheme;</i>            (g) <i>social insurance, incidental expenses or their along or their along with medical aid, as stipulated in the Mutual aid Benefit Scheme and Self Funding Medical Scheme terms and conditions;</i>            (o) <i>the provision of social and welfare amenities for its members as per provision of Mutual Aid Benefit Scheme Self Funding Medical Scheme.</i></p>		

PARTICULARS		YES	NO
20	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Failure to Pay Levies Clause 128 Page 45 If any member fails to pay a levy imposed pursuant to Clause 131 above within a period specified.....		
	<b>Proposed</b> Change in Clause number 131 to 127 <i>If any member fails to pay a levy imposed pursuant to Clause 127 above within a period specified.....</i>		
21	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Rules to be displayed in the registered office Clause 134 Page 46 A copy of the rules shall be prominently displayed in the registered office of the Union.		
	<b>Proposed</b> Change in the phrase <b>prominently displayed</b> to <b>readily available</b> <i>A copy of the rules shall be <b>readily available</b> in the registered office of the Union.</i>		
22	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Amalgamation Clause 139 (1) (a) and(c) (a) a secret ballot on the proposed amalgamation is taken at the AGM or EGM, (c) such votes cast and recorded those in favour of the amalgamation exceed by one fifth or more the votes against the amalgamation.		
	<b>Proposed</b> (a) a secret ballot on the proposed amalgamation is taken <b>via national referendum</b> , (c) such votes cast and recorded those in favour of the amalgamation exceed by <b>fifty (50) percent</b> or more the votes against the amalgamation.		
23	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Application Form for Membership – Form A Page 51		
	<b>Proposed</b> Amendments to the Application Form for Membership – Form A: The Application Form must have the <b>letter head of FTU</b> ; Spelling of <b>Ordinances</b> Title....add (Ms.) TPF/EDP..... <b>TRB # (to replace Employment No....)</b> FNPF No..... to shift up Postal Address..... Email Address		
24	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Branch Elections Nomination Form (C) Page 55		
	<b>Proposed</b> Branch Elections Nomination Form (C) 3.0.....TRB No..... and TPF/EDP No. 5.0 Phone No. ( <b>mobile</b> ) Email address..... 9.0 Names of Proposers to be 4 Table- delete 3.1- 3.4 which shall read 1-4; add TPF/EDP No. and TRB No.... The Branch Treasurer to sign right at the bottom after Comments		
25	<b>Existing Clause:</b> National Elections Nomination Form (B) Page 58		
	<b>Proposed</b> National Elections Nomination Form (B) 3.0.....TRB No..... and TPF/EDP No. 5.0 Phone No. ( <b>mobile</b> ) Email address..... 9.0 Names of Proposers to be 4 Table- delete 3.1- 3.4 which shall read 1-4; add TPF/EDP No. and TRB No.... The General Secretary to comment and sign underneath the Closing Date.... The General Treasurer to sign right at the bottom after Comments		
26	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Composition of the Executive Committee – Clause 35 1(b) Page 20 Contestable position - Clause 72 1 (b) Page 27 <b>2 Vice Presidents</b>		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>Both the above clauses to include <b>3 Vice Presidents</b> one of which shall be reserved for a</i>		

26	<b>Existing Clause:</b> Composition of the Executive Committee – Clause 35 1(b) Page 20 Contestable position - Clause 72 1 (b) Page 27 <b>2 Vice Presidents</b>		
	<b>Proposed</b> <i>Both the above clauses to include <b>3 Vice Presidents</b> one of which shall be reserved for a</i>		

## **FTU WOMEN'S WING DIVISIONAL WORKSHOPS**

The FTU National Women's Wing has organized a series of workshops for the women members in the branches. It is pleasing to note that more women members are professionally developing themselves and taking up positions in their branches. FTU is always encouraging and providing opportunities for women members to develop and gain exposure in Union matters. Two Divisional Workshops were conducted, one in Ba (Nadroga-Rakiraki) and the other in Rewa (Navua-Tailevu).

## **TEACHING OF VERNACULAR**

The teaching of Vernacular has been made compulsory as per the Constitution. Whilst this move is laudable, the Union noted with concern that effective teaching and learning was not taking place because the Ministry was not able to post teachers for the above. FTU has asked the Ministry to seek additional funding and post vernacular teachers in schools so that effective teaching can take place.

## **TEACHER /PUPIL RATIO IN ALL SCHOOLS**

In February 2014, the Ministry invited the Union for a consultative meeting to look at the possibility of reducing the teacher / pupil ratio. The Union had fought hard and had this included in the Job Evaluation Review [JER] of 1997. The Ministry has acknowledged that we have over-crowded classrooms with teacher /pupil ratio ranging from 1:40 to 1:50. The Ministry is now working on a proposal to reduce the ratio by increasing the establishment in Primary and Secondary schools by 900 and 400 respectively. A submission was also made that Executive Teacher positions be restored and non teaching for school Heads in grades ED 3C, 2C and 1B.

## **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 newsletter to the HQ. The 2014 year planner was also sent to the Branches in early February for distribution to the members. If you have not received year planner then get in touch with your branch executives. The Conference Journal is presently being put into shape and the Publicity Committee would like to thank those who have contributed articles towards the 2014 Journal.

## **CTCL NEWS**

- 1) Operating FTU-CTCL net profit is expected to be in excess of \$1.2 million.
- 2) Dividend for 2013 would be 4%.
- 3) In-House Mortgage Scheme (IMPS) has been reduced to 0.5% from 1.0%.
- 4) Hideaway Dividend for 2013 is 10%.
- 5) Vuda- Hideaway Resort construction is progressing well.

## **MOE CIRCULAR DUTY HOURS**

The above circular left teachers in a dilemma as to whether they have to extend departure time to 4.30pm or adjust their timetable to accommodate the teaching of conversational Hindi and i-Taukei language. The GS wrote to PS MoE and then met with him to seek clarification. The PS advised that the timetable in the circular was a mere suggestion. He said the Heads of schools with their team could include the vernacular programme within their 8.00-3.30 timetable. School Heads are advised to note this and maintain the 8am to 3.30pm school day. The Union has also made it clear that teachers are on duty during lunch hour, hence the 3.30pm departure time.

# INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY CELEBRATION 2014



Labasa



Rakiraki



Navua



Rewa



Nasinu



Lautoka

# REFLECTION 2005 AGM

