



FIJI TEACHERS UNION

(The Child Our Hope)

NEWSLETTER

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INTRODUCTION

Greetings from FTU Headquarters. Welcome to the 2013 academic year. We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our valued members a very rewarding school year.

ASSISTANCE TO MEMBERS

Transfers

FTU made representation to the Ministry to assist the members who were seeking transfers in the 2013 academic year.

The Union was able to get favourable results for many.

We have a few pending cases and we have been assured by the Ministry that consideration would be given at the first vacancy that arises.

The Ministry is thanked for understanding the plight of those applying for transfers.

ACTING APPOINTMENTS

Union had written to the Ministry to adhere to the acting appointment guidelines when promoting officers on acting positions in 2013.

Where irregular appointments were made by

the school heads and which were brought to our attention, we managed to have them corrected and the most meritorious officers were then appointed.

MEMBERS' GRIEVANCES

The Union has assisted members regarding their salary, transfer allowances, postings etc.

BRANCH AGMS

Branch Executives have been reminded that all Branch AGMs must be conducted within the month of March as per the Union's constitution.

Please note that members who are fully subscribed till the 31st of December 2012 are eligible to participate in the Branch AGM. Branch Secretaries are to ensure that the status of all the members in the Branch is current and up to date.

Branches are to provide the date, time and venue of their Branch AGM to the HQ to be advertised in the newspaper 14 clear days before the meeting. Each Branch is to obtain a permit from their District/ Division Office. A circular to this effect has been sent to all Branch Secretaries.

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Union shall become affiliated to the Branch of the Union either in their area of service or residence during the working week. Members are reminded to notify the HQ if their Branch has changed because of posting [school] or change in residence. Due date for change of Branch is 28/2/2013.

83rd ANNUAL CONFERENCE & AGM

This year, Suva Branch is hosting the 83rd Annual Conference & AGM. The theme for this conference is: “**Status of Teachers in an Evolving Democracy**”.

We request all members to attend this important meeting as it is going to empower and enhance your knowledge and understanding on union issues and you will be able to contribute to the deliberations.

On the same note, we urge all members to contribute articles on the above theme towards the 2013 Conference Journal. The due date for the submission of the articles is 15th April, 2013.

RESOLUTIONS

All resolutions for AGM’s consideration should come through your respective Branches.

The due date for the resolutions is 10th April, 2013.

AGM SPORTS

All Branches are encouraged to field in teams for the Conference Sports. Branch Reps/Team Managers are requested to begin training sessions and prepare teams for Soccer, Netball and Volleyball.

Interested players are to liaise with their respective Branch Officials for registration, training, venues, etc.

NATIONAL ELECTIONS -2013

2013 is the year of National Elections for Fiji Teachers Union. All positions can be contested as per Clause 73 of the Constitution.

Nomination Forms have been sent to all branch secretaries. They are requested to forward the nomination forms to their members through their branch newsletters. The closing date for nominations for all positions is 28 February, 2013.

The polling station venues will be published in the next edition.

CHANGES IN THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

We are happy to advise that the National President, **Bro. Satya Nand Shandil** has been appointed acting Divisional Education Officer – Northern.

He has since resigned from the position of FTU President. We congratulate him on his promotion and wish him all the best in his new office.

We wish to record our appreciation for his leadership at the top level as well as the various other positions he served on for over two decades.

As per convention, Vice President Bro. Muniappa Goundar will act as the president for the remainder of the term.

DEPARTURE – MR. PAL – GENERAL TREASURER

Bro. Mahendra Pal has resigned from the Fiji National University to take up a position in the private sector.

As such, he has resigned from the position of the General Treasurer of FTU.

We acknowledge and appreciate the dedication and commitment of Bro. Pal towards Fiji Teachers Union and we wish him all the best in his new career. He served at the National level for ten years.

FTU EXECUTIVE RESHUFFLE

In the meantime, the Working Committee has made some interim appointments.

Bro. Shashi Mahendra Shandil has been appointed as the General Treasurer and **Bro. Manhar Kumar** as the Publicity Officer. These new appointments will continue till the AGM subject to endorsement by the National Executive. We wish these officers best of luck in their new positions.

CODE OF ETHICS

COPE conducted a Regional Workshop in 2009 to develop a Code of Ethics for Pacific Teachers. Subsequently, the project has been piloted in some districts in the country.

It has received positive response from all stakeholders in the Education Sector. It has been translated in the i-Taukei and Hindi languages to be distributed nationwide.

Members are advised to familiarise themselves with the document to help them in self censorship.

FTU appreciates and thanks the Secretary General of COPE, Mr. Govind Singh and former Union stalwart Bro. Krishna Datt for their leadership in ensuring that teachers are reminded of their roles.

ILO/FTUC/FTU – CHILD LABOUR PROJECT

193 students in 20 primary schools have been assisted under the TACKLE programme.

FTU will monitor to ensure that the children who have been assisted attend school and refer these students to relevant authorities for assistance in the future.

DECISION TO LAUNCH POLITICAL PARTY

The Special Delegates Conference of FTUC, on 12th January 2013, decided that FTUC launch a political party to ensure that the voice of the

workers is heard at the highest level of decision making.

The Conference condemned the rapid erosions of the fundamental rights of workers during the last few years.

DECREE ON REGISTRATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

This Decree denies elected Trade Union officials the right to participate in the formation or leadership of a political party. It even denies them the right to support any party by including their names in the 5000 signatures required.

Trade Union Officials have been lumped together with Public Officers [Civil Servants] which is not known to be the case in any democracy we know of.

PSC CIRCULAR NO. 09 / 2013 Political Activities – Civil Servants

The coming into effect of Decree No. 4 of 2013 on “Political Parties [Registration, Conduct, Funding and Disclosure] under part 2, subsection 14 [1] on “Restrictions on public officers in a political party” states the following:

“A PUBLIC OFFICER SHALL NOT:-

[a] be eligible to be an applicant or a member of a proposed political party or a political party registered under this Decree;

[b] be eligible to hold office in a proposed political party or a political party registered under this Decree;

[c] engage in political activity that may compromise or be seen to compromise the political neutrality of that person’s office; or

[d] publicly indicate support for or opposition to any proposed political party or a political party registered under this Decree or candidate in an election.”

F.T.U SEMINAR & CHILD LABOUR ASSISTANCE

