



# Fiji Teachers Union

(The Child Our Hope)

May 2012

## NEWSLETTER

Vol. 83, No. 1

Published by the  
Fiji Teachers Union

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### CHALLENGES ARE MANY: DR. CHAND

Dr. Ganesh Chand, Vice Chancellor, Fiji National University, while addressing the delegates and guests at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting and Conference said that teachers face a lot of challenges that have to be looked at by all stakeholders.

Dr. Chand paid tribute to the teachers who faced worse situations in 1960s and 1970s.

On curriculum, he said the Ministry should employ the brightest and best minds for curriculum write ups.

Dr. Chand said the following posed major challenges for the teaching profession:

- Behaviour Management Policy: pro -student and anti - teacher.
- Student Counselling: not part of teacher training until recently.
- Bullying: Students bullying students and some teachers bullying students.

He also emphasized on the provision for In-Service Training. He said the target should be that all teachers be degree holders.

Dr. Chand said that in the absence of PMS, teachers were stuck with the base salary that they began with. He said this meant that there was no incentive, no motivation for the teachers to excel. Meritorious teachers should be rewarded.

On retirement and job security he said that in the present environment, where there has been little or no continuing education and professional development after teachers obtain their first diploma / degree, teachers would remain out of touch with the reality of advancement in both knowledge and technology.

In conclusion, he mentioned that today's young teachers have serious attitude problems. He said the 8am - 3pm mentality ought to be changed. There is room for more commitment towards the students, institutions and the noble profession. That is the challenge!!!!





## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

National President, Bro. Saya Nand Shandil, in his Presidential Address at the 82 Annual Conference alluded to numerous concerns of the Union, including the erosion of the terms and conditions of employment of teachers through unilateral decisions of PSC and MOE.

The concerns are captured in the resolutions, which the Union has forwarded to the relevant authorities for appropriate action.

The National President thanked the government for the text book scheme and the bus fare subsidy provided to the needy students.

## RESOLUTIONS

### 1. DECREE 21 OF 2011

**Noting** with deep concern that Decree No. 21 of 2011 has effectively removed all the rights of the Public Service Unions to represent their members and to seek redress under the provisions of the Employment Relations Promulgation 2007,

Further Noting that this decree has given PSC unfettered powers to unilaterally decide and change terms and conditions of Civil Servants that have been negotiated by the Unions over decades,

*The Annual General Meeting resolved that the government be asked to repeal the Decree and restore the rights of the Unions to register trade dispute under the ERP provisions.*

### 2. PUBLIC ORDER AMENDMENT DECREE NO.1 OF 2012

**Noting** that Public Order [Amendment] Decree No.1 of 2012 restricts basic freedom,

Further Noting that the unprecedented discretionary powers granted to the Office of the Commissioner of Police under Section 11 A of the Decree,

And that Section 11A [b] could be perceived as limiting the rights of the individuals from speaking out openly during the national consultations on constitutional development and electoral reforms process,

**Believing** that everyone, including the Unions, should participate in the consultation process freely and without fear or intimidation or controlled measures,

*The AGM resolved that the government be asked to repeal the amendments made to the Public order Act.*

### 3. 2003 JOB REVIEW EXERCISE

Acknowledging the completion of 2003 Job Review

Exercise, further noting that JEE has been established collectively by Public Sector Unions and PSC as an important exercise for determining remuneration for government workers, recognising the value and importance of JEE implementation for the improvement of remuneration to government workers, including teachers.

The 82nd AGM of FTU calls upon PSC and MOE to honour the Agreement and fully implement the 2003 JEE Recommendations for teachers immediately.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012

The AGM and Conference was well attended by the members. It was very encouraging to see members attending in such large numbers.

FTU Lautoka Branch Chairperson, Bro. Dalip Ram, his hardworking executive members and members of the various sub-committees are thanked for making the conference a memorable one.

**Suva will be hosting the AGM and Conference 2013.**

## CHECK - OFF SYSTEM

Public Service Commission's rhetoric that check - off system is now history is not only ill conceived but also naive.

The Union is confident that as in the past, the check-off system will be restored.

And it must be noted that the public sector unions are paying a negotiated levy to the Finance Ministry for the service they are providing. This irrational action is void of an justification and contrary to the "Good Faith" spirit, which is the cornerstone of ERP.

The Unions have survived before and will survive this time around too!!!!

## ACTING ALLOWANCE

PSC, after earlier stating that payment of all acting allowances would cease, has decided to continue paying the teachers who are acting on a higher level.

The Union hopes this will continue till the posts are advertised and filled.

## FTUC BI-ENNIAL - 11 May 2012

AGS Bro. Rajnesh Ligam was re-elected Vice President of FTUC - Youth Wing, Sis. Vidya Singh was re-elected Vice President of the FTUC Women's Wing. GS Bro. Singh was re-elected the Treasurer of FTUC. He has been serving on the Management Board for over 12 years.



## APRIL FLOOD APPEAL

FTU thanks those members who contributed generously towards the Flood Appeal.

Altogether, 30 schools were assisted.

## CTCL MEMBERSHIP

Members are once again reminded that they must complete the CTCL Form for subscription and share deductions to get all the benefits.

Those who are CTCL members and whose FTU membership has lapsed are reminded that to continue to get CTCL benefits, they must make their FTU membership current.

Branches are asked to assist and get the non-members into the union fold.

FTU subs of \$3.32 is now facilitated through CTCL. Those who have not joined CTCL **must do** so now, in order to receive full FTU and CTCL benefits.

## BRANCH WORKSHOPS

Workshops will be conducted in all the Branches soon.

The Union will liaise with the Professional Development Unit to get the Workshop / Seminar registered and added to the teachers 20 hours of PD required by FTRB.

## ELIMINATING CHILD LABOUR

All children of school age should be in school and not at work or at home.

FTUC and FTU, with assistance from ILO Suva Office, would be meeting with relevant stakeholders in the Central, Western and Northern Divisions to identify students who are likely to drop out of school because of lack of funds for school fees, books, uniform etc.

These children would then be assisted and their progress monitored, ensuring that they remain at school.

*Members are urged to make the school environment "child friendly" to assist in retention of children at school.*

## FTU WOMEN'S WING 2012 - 2013

**CHAIRPERSON** - Sis. Vidya Singh [Ltk]

**Vice Chairpersons** - Sis. Shareen Chand [Rewa]  
- Sis. Sherina Riaz [Nadro]

**Secretary** - Sis. Roshni Singh [Ltk]

**Assistant Secretary** - Sis. Sangeeta Prakash [Ra]

**Treasurer** - Sis. Prem Kumar [Nadi]

**Ex. Com. Members** - Sis. Ajeshni Lal [Suva]  
- Sis. Sohneet Chand [Suva]  
- Sis. Urmila Singh [Rewa]

## ACTION AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

Every June 12<sup>th</sup>, Education International [EI] and its member organizations worldwide celebrate the World Day against Child Labour.

It is a good time for us to reiterate that every child has the right to free and quality education.

It is suggested that "One Hour Against Child Labour" activity be carried out in schools by teachers and students.

The objective is to sensitise teachers and students to the issue of child labour and to encourage them to take action at various levels throughout the year.

Activity:

- Reasons for child entering the labour market - discuss.
- What constitutes Child Labour - brain storming.
- How can teachers fight against child labour - discuss actions.
- Some pictures / drawings showing children at work - discuss.

## 2012 CONFERENCE SPORTS RESULTS

SPORTS	WINNER	RUNNER - UP
Soccer	Nadi	Nasinu
Netball	Lautoka	Nadroga
Men's V/Ball	Ba	Nasinu
Women's V/Ball	Nasinu	Nadroga

Nasinu



*An Innovative IHL Programme for the members of FTU  
Managing tomorrow's risks today*

## Self Funding Medical Programme Performance

The above programme was inceptioned on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011.

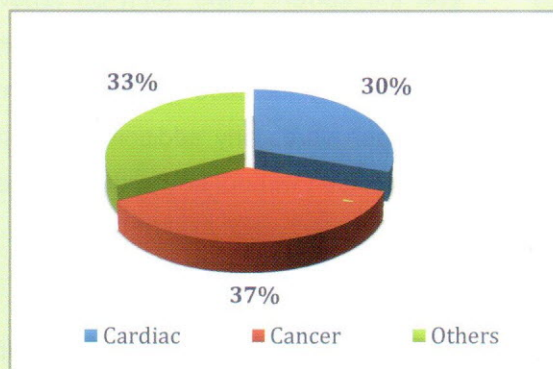
Since inception of the programme, several members have been treated for Life threatening Medical Conditions.

There were 31 cases reported as at 31 March 2012, of which 5 cases were reported for Overseas Evacuation, (out of which one emergency case was evacuated to New Zealand and others to India), all others treated locally.

### Summary of cash flow as at 31 March 2012

Insured members contribution		\$976,745.51
Less		
Claims Paid/ Outstanding / Administration Cost	\$476,601.36	
Stop Loss Premium Paid	\$112,500.00	
Total Expenses		\$589,101.36
Surplus Fund in FTU insured members designated account as at		
31 March 2012		\$387,644.15

## Medical Condition Analysis



One may ask what else can be achieved as additional benefits for covered members.

The surplus fund at the end of every twelve months can be utilized to improve on coverage. The covered members can be awarded additional benefits such as Term Life or Personal Accidents benefits.

A decision will be made upon renewal of the self funded medical programme, prior to 7<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

*"A well deserved Self Funded Medical Programme for the FTU members to manage ever rising, a) medical costs and, b) traditional premium cost."*

*"The size of FTU membership base has proven to be an excellent fit to achieve the innovative Self Funding Medical Programme"*





## IHL comments

We believe that this Self Funding Medical Programme including Stop Loss insurance has been performing well.

If the performance of the said programme continues on the current trend, then on renewal we will have provisions to consider increasing member benefits without any increase in current member contribution. In other words any additional benefits negotiated will be provided without any additional costs.

We can consider options such as;

1. increasing current medical benefits, or
2. \$10,000 personal accident cover for all principal covered members without any additional cost, or
3. \$10,000 term life covers for all principal covered members without any additional cost.
4. Local Private Hospital, 50% of the cost or \$3,500 whichever is lesser, at members preference.

*Please note above are not confirmed benefits but will be considered as we approach close to renewal based on performance of the Self-Funded Programme.*

*Those members who benefited from the above programme to date have been very appreciative of the programme in place.*



## FTU comments

The FTU In-house medical Insurance Scheme is the first of its kind to provide service to members through their own funds. The program commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2011 and since to date it has been operating very well in terms of providing prompt service to members with hospitalization claims.

Whilst the scheme has been handling its members with good service, we have followings issues with some members:

1. Members get treatment without prior approval from I.H.L and FTU.
2. It is the member's responsibility to provide the required medical reports to FTU or IHL promptly to avoid delays in processing of claims.
3. Notice of claim is to be given to FTU or IHL as soon as practicable but in any circumstance within 30 days after the happening of the circumstances giving rise to a claim.
4. Phone calls on follow ups on claims should be made directly to IHL to receive prompt reply.
5. In-House Insurance Plans were dispatched to all branches in September 2011; however the secretariat has been continuously receiving complains that they have not received the plan from their branches. Members are to contact their branches for a copy of the plan and get well versed with the policy conditions, exclusions and procedures for claims. The 2012 Annual activities report also includes the Insurance PLAN.

For any further inquiries on emergency cases, following persons can be contacted:

### Insurance Holdings (Fiji) Limited

Mr. Karuna Segran	999 2161
Mr. William Steiner	999 0913
Mrs. Jyotika	944 9457





2012 AGM IN PICTURES

