



FIJI TEACHERS UNION

NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Bro. Manhar Kumar

1-3 Berry Road, P.O. Box 2203 Govt Building, Suva. Phone: 331 4099/ 331 4668 Fax: 330 5962 Email: ftu@connect.com.fj

GREETINGS

Warm greetings to all our valued members.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2013

The AGM and Conference was well attended by the delegates and guests. It was very encouraging to see members in good numbers.

FTU Suva Branch Chairperson, Bro. Rajnesh Lingam and his hardworking executive members and the members of the various sub-committees are heartily thanked for the wonderful organization of the conference in Suva.

Labasa will be hosting the 84th AGM and Conference in 2014.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Professor Biman Chand Prasad, Professor of Economics at the University of the South Pacific was the Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker at the 83rd AGM & Conference at Kshatriya Hall, Suva.

Professor Prasad, while addressing the delegates and guests on the conference theme said that Democracy is not an absolute concept, but it is still an ideal worth aspiring. Democracy no matter, how bad, is often better than autocracy. He quoted Sir Winston Churchill: "Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time".

He also highlighted on Democracy in the schools and classrooms. He stated that 'we all expect our children to do well in the school. Whether, we are rich, poor, literate or illiterate. Parents want their children to stay away from drugs, crime and other social ills. He further stated that while we may not have a democratic government right now, our society dreams of a democracy for its children. We want our children to grow up in a free, open, and transparent democratic framework.

He concluded his address with these words: 'It is generally believed that "a successful nation has

economically it is prosperous and equitable; and socially, it is peaceful and cohesive".



Professor Prasad delivering the keynote address.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The National President Bro. Muniappa Gounder in his Presidential Address at the 83rd Annual Conference alluded to the teachers' loss of professional identity which is a growing concern in the 21st century.

He dwelt on four issues that directly affect the teachers. The issues are as follows: Acting Appointment and Policies, Graduate Salary, Post Processing and Annual Performance Appraisal.

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

RESOLUTIONS

EXTERNAL RESOLUTIONS

1. 2003 Job Review Exercise.

Acknowledging the completion of 2003 Job Review Exercise, Further Noting that the JEE has been established collectively by Public Sector Unions and PSC in full as an important exercise for determining remuneration for government workers,

Recognizing the value and importance of JEE implementation for the improvement of remuneration to government workers, including teachers.

The 83rd AGM of FTU calls upon the PSC and MOE to honour the Agreement and to fully implement the 2003 JEE recommendations for teachers immediately.

2. TEACHER WORKLOAD

Noting the increase in teacher workload arising out of continuous changes in curriculum and assessment in the teaching and learning processes,

Further Noting the rapid increase in class sizes especially in urban area schools arising from internal migration

Acknowledging the recommendations of the Job Evaluation Exercise 1993 and knowing that its implementation is long overdue,

The 83rd Annual General Meeting of Fiji Teachers Union calls upon the Ministry of Education to implement the recommendations of the 1993 JEE to achieve class sizes of 35 and below for straight classes, 25 for class one and Form Seven, and 22 for composite classes and no teacher be compelled to teach multiple classes.

3. 2003 JOB EVALUATION EXERCISE

Noting that a massive exercise was carried out to review the terms and conditions of work of the civil servants in 2003,

Further noting that the 2003 JEE report made recommendations to uplift the terms and conditions of work of the government employees;

The 83rd Annual General Meeting of Fiji Teachers Union calls upon the government to implement the Job Evaluation Report for the rest of the Civil Servants.

4. IN - SERVICE

Noting that nearly every aspect of teaching work has become more complex and challenging,

Acknowledging that new standards for children require that teachers have deep and flexible knowledge of their subject matter and wide repertoire of teaching skills,

The 83d Annual general Meeting of the Fiji Teachers' Union calls upon the Ministry of Education to inject more funds into the In-Service programmes and ensure that these programmes are structured and provide opportunities for greater number of teachers to enhance their teaching / learning skills.

5. TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME

Considering that today's teachers encounter a range of classroom and social conditions – multilingual classrooms, increase mainstreaming of special education students, growing numbers of students in poverty and from single – parent families that compound an already complex set of professional challenges;

Agreeing that although students are of similar age and in same class, their achievement levels varies greatly; And that teachers will have to use different teaching methods to reach different students;

The 83rd Annual General Meeting of the Fiji Teachers' Union calls upon the Ministry of Education to ensure that training programme at Fiji National University and other teachers training institutions are well equipped to meet the needs of the trainee teachers [mentioned herein].

6. DECREE NO.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 the decades,

The 83rd annual general Meeting of the Fiji Teachers' Union calls upon the interim administration to repeal Decree No. 21 and restore the rights of the Unions to register Trade Disputes under the Employment Relations Promulgation.

7. POST PROCESSING / APPEALS BOARD

Noting the number of complaints received from the members regarding the filling of vacancies,

Further noting that many better merited officers have missed out on promotion,

And that these officers have no mechanism to seek redress,

The 83rd Annual General Meeting of the Fiji Teachers Union calls upon the Public Service Commission to include the teacher Unions in the Central Staff Board Meetings and restore the Appeals Process.

8. UPGRADING OF SCHOOLS

Noting that schools may be upgraded with a monitoring period of two years and that many schools qualify for upgrading,

Further Noting that several submissions for upgrading are pending with MOE,

The 83rd Annual General Meeting of Fiji Teachers Union calls upon the Ministry of Education to upgrade all the schools which qualify and put them in the right grade.

9.0 EXECUTIVE TEACHER POSITIONS

Acknowledging the important roles the Executive Teachers play in the teaching / learning process,

Further Noting that the Executive Teachers offer professional advice and guidance, monitor student

progress and achievement, does team management and administration,

The 83rd Annual General Meeting of the Fiji Teachers' Union calls upon the Public Service Commission to restore the Executive Teacher positions to its full strength ie 854.

10.0 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Noting that Early Childhood Education is an important component of the teaching / learning process

Further Noting that the cost of Early Childhood Education is relatively high,

The 83rd Annual Conference of the Fiji Teachers Union calls upon the Ministry of Education to allocate a \$30 per capita grant to all ECE schools.

11. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Noting that teacher assessment via the Annual Performance Appraisal [APA] is now the yardstick for measuring teacher performance for the purpose of rewards in terms of remuneration and promotion,

The 83rd Annual General Meeting of Fiji Teachers' Union calls upon the Ministry of Education to distribute the APA Forms in a timely manner to enable the supervising officers to do a fair and objective assessment. The 83rd AGM further submits that there be no external influence on the officers writing the reports in terms of scores to be awarded.

2013 CONFERENCE SPORTS RESULTS

SPORTS	WINNER	RUNNER-UP
Soccer	Labasa	Nasinu
Netball	Nadroga	Nasinu
Men's V/Ball	Suva	Ba
Women's V/Ball	Nasinu	Nadroga
Best Player Soccer	Edwin Sahayam (Labasa)	
Best Player Men's V/ball	Waisele Suka (Suva)	
Best Player Women's V/ball	Maca Vuruna (Nasinu)	
Best Player Netball	Kimberly Rounds (Nadro)	

BRANCH WORKSHOPS

Workshops will be conducted in all the Branches in due course.

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.

Members are urged to make use of the opportunities provided.

ELECTION RESULTS

The results of the National Elections that took place on Saturday 13th of April 2013 are as follows:

Election of President (1 only)

1. MUNIAPPA GOUNDAR	Unopposed
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Election of Vice President (2 only)

	Total	Elected
1. NASEEM ALI	640	
2. PRANESH SHARMA	1140	1
3. VIDYA SINGH	942	2
Invalid Votes	216	

Election of General Secretary (1 Only)

	Total	Elected
1. AGNI DEO SINGH	1091	1
2. JOWAHIR LAL	489	
Invalid Votes	3	

Election of Assistant General Secretary (1 only)

1. RAJNESH ISHWAR LINGAM	Unopposed
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Election of General Treasurer (1 only)

1. SASHI MAHENDRA SHANDIL	Unopposed
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Election of Personnel Officer (1 only)

1. VISHNU SHARMA	Unopposed
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Election of Publicity Officer (1 only)

1. MANHAR KUMAR	Unopposed
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Election of Executive Comm. Members (3 only)

	Total	Elected
1. NAKUL DEO BARMAN	896	2
2. NILESH CHAND	438	
3. PRATOSH KUMAR	959	1
4. RAMESHWAR LAL	871	3
5. ROHITESH CHAND	594	
6. SAROJ KUMAR	554	
Invalid Votes	146	



MABS BENEFITS INCREASED – WEF 01/06/13

- Diagnostic Tests - increased from \$100 to \$150
- Referral letter – FTU will pay \$15 for referral letter from FTU doctor.
- Full amount will be reimbursed for these tests:
 - C T Scan
 - MRI Scan
 - Treadmill test
 - Endoscopy test

INSURANCE BENEFITS

- Payment for Medical Reports required for assessment and treatment will be done in full. Members are to provide original receipts for reimbursements.
- Treatment at a private clinic option has been increased from 50% to 75%. It is now 75% of the cost or \$4,500.00, whichever is less.

2013 AGM AND CONFERENCE IN PICTURES

