



# Fiji Teachers Union Newsletter

(THE CHILD OUR HOPE)

SEPTEMBER 2016

Published by the  
Fiji Teachers Union

Vol. 86 No. 3  
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## **GREETINGS**

Warm greetings to all our valued members!!

## **86th ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2016**

The AGM and Conference was well attended by the delegates and observers in Navua. It was very encouraging to see members attending this annual event of the Union. Congratulations to the Navua Branch Chairperson, Executives and members for a successful organization of the 86th Annual Conference in the Anaconda Town. The Annual Conference no doubt was a grand success with healthy deliberations for a positive outlook for the Union and its members.

## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

Bro. Felix Anthony, the National Secretary of the Fiji Trades Union Congress, was the Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker at the 86th AGM & Conference at the Yatu Lau Lagoon Resort in Pacific Harbour, Navua.

While addressing the delegates and guests on the Conference Theme in Navua, he highlighted on the difficult times in the history of the Trade Union movement in Fiji and also dwelt on the challenges faced by the Unions.

He stressed that the education sector and the role as Teachers are central to the future of Fiji and the society that we want to build. He highlighted that he has witnessed with some admiration the commitment of Teachers and the Union to the professional development of the teaching profession. He added that not many Unions in Fiji dwell on professional development of their members

but rather stick to the traditional roles of defending rights and ensuring the fair treatment of workers.

He commended and complimented the effort by the Unions and the Government in recognizing the role of Teachers Unions and engaging with them on the basis of equal partnership.

He expressed concern that the goal is to ensure quality education for our children and that it is a common goal and there can be no difference of opinion or dispute about that. He recommended that to effectively achieve this goal, the Unions, the Government and the Ministry of Education need to work together with regular consultations on all aspects of education.



The Chief Guest Bro. Felix Anthony addressing the delegates, guests and members at the 86th AGM & Conference at the Yatu Lau Lagoon Resort in Pacific Harbour, Navua.

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS



The President Bro. Muniappa Goundar addressing the Delegates, guests and members at the 86th AGM & Conference at the Yatu Lau Lagoon Resort in Pacific Harbour, Navua.

Mr. Muniappa Goundar, the National President in his Presidential address highlighted on the importance of the theme of the 86th Conference.

He stated that while extrapolating the issues of the status of Teachers in Fiji, we hold the philosophy that a Teacher is the treasure of any community's worth and wealth.

He reported to the Delegates and members that the Union has been invited by the Ministry of Education to discuss the issues affecting the teachers. He added that we will be looking forward to the continued consultation and dialogue.

The President also expressed concern on the following issues: new recruits' salary, Job Evaluation for Teachers and Collective Bargaining.

He stressed that whilst the Union is appreciative of Governments many initiatives to ensure that children of school age are in school, the Union, sadly, notes that not enough is being done for the Teachers.

He commended the Governments' initiatives of the Text Book Scheme, Bus Fare and Zoning which are assisting the parents and the children in the education process.

He called upon the Ministry to restore the Executive Teacher positions to 854, ensure teachers receive their increments, restore the appeals process, address the teacher – pupil ratio and respect the Unions right of representation.

### **RESOLUTIONS 2016**

The 86th AGM unanimously approved the following resolutions to be submitted to the relevant authorities for appropriate action. The Secretariat continues to engage in dialogue for implementation of the same.

#### **1. FTU ON CURRICULUM ADVISORY BOARD**

Noting that National Policies and Action Plans to achieve **Education For All** must be developed and implemented in partnership with civil society groups, including Teacher Unions and NGOs.

**The Fiji Teachers' Union 86th Annual General Meeting calls upon the Ministry of Education to ensure that there is active participation of Teachers in the development and implementation of education policies, plans and curricula through their respective Teacher Unions.**

#### **2. POST PROCESSING**

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

Further Noting that better merited officers have missed out on promotions.

**The Fiji Teachers Union 86th Annual General Meeting calls upon the Ministry of Education to include the Teacher Unions in the first stage of the selection process.**

### 3. NON-TEACHING TIME FOR SCHOOL HEADS

Acknowledging the enormous responsibility of guiding, developing, monitoring and reporting on Teachers and the school,

Noting the time consumed to provide professional guidance, assisting and assessing training needs of the Teachers under their care,

And attending to the needs and queries of the parents,

**The Fiji Teachers Union 86th Annual General Meeting calls upon the Ministry of Education to reconsider their stance and allow all School Heads to have zero teaching load to enable them to carry out their administrative duties effectively.**

### 4. EXECUTIVE TEACHER POSITIONS

Noting that the 1993 JEE saw merit in making recommendation that 854 Executive Teacher positions be created in primary schools,

Further noting that the recommendation was implemented in 1997 which had since brought in a marked improvement in the quality of classroom work in primary schools.

That this allocation of 854 ET positions was reduced to 427 by the Ministry of Education as a cost cutting measure in 2009, and which has had a negative impact on the delivery of Quality Education,

**The Fiji Teachers Union 86th Annual General Meeting calls upon the Ministry of Education to restore the ET positions to its full complement.**

### 5. IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Noting that teaching methods and Curricula are ever changing,  
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 Fiji Teachers Union 86th Annual General Meeting 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.**

### 6. ENTRY POINT SALARY - NEW RECRUITS

Noting that all Teachers recruited in 2016, have been put on a salary of \$16,610.00 [ED 8A],

Acknowledging that the 1993 Job Evaluation Exercise Agreement had made major changes to make Teacher grade to be more realistic and attractive by putting graduates on appropriate salaries, namely ED 8A and ED 8G,

Realising that ED 9A salary is making the teaching profession undesirable and that the huge reduction in salary is de-professionalising the teaching profession and that the profession will not be attracting talented individuals as teacher recruits,

**The Fiji Teachers' Union 86th Annual General Meeting calls upon the Ministry of Education to revert and restore the new recruits' salary to ED 8A and ED 8G and place them on the correct entry point as per their qualification.**

### 7. JEE FOR TEACHERS

Noting that the 2003 JEE was completed by the Public Service Commission in full consultation with the Public Sector Unions,

Further noting that the outcome of the review was to be implemented across the Board,

Registering deep concern that the recommendations have been selectively implemented for some sectors of the Civil Service.

The 86th Annual General Meeting of the Fiji Teachers Union submits that a fresh JEE be carried out in partnership with Teacher Unions and be implemented at the earliest.

**2016 CONFERENCE**  
**SPORTS RESULTS**

**MEMBERSHIP DRIVE**

It is pleasing to note that the Union membership has seen steady growth in the recent years. There are however, a good number of those who need to be educated on the benefits. Members are requested to enlighten these teachers on the various services they enjoy. Larger membership means more benefits.

**ROLE OF SCHOOL REPS**

School Reps play a crucial role in the dissemination of Union Literature and the furtherance of the course of Unionism. A well informed School Rep is an invaluable asset to the organization.

**MOE/FTU CONSULTATION**

PS Education has invited the Unions to discuss on issues pertaining to Teachers. PS has assured of monthly meetings to discuss policies, MoE initiatives and concerns of the two Teacher Unions. Some of the key issues being discussed are:

- 1) Disciplinary procedure.
- 2) Duty hours of Teachers.
- 3) Post processing and the new Open Merit Recruitment System.
- 4) Annual assessment and Merit increase.
- 5) Evaluation for Teachers.
- 6) Transfer Guideline.
- 7) Counsellor positions in all Secondary Schools.

**NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

*DO NOT RISK YOUR JOB. PLEASE, SAY NO TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.*

<u>SPORTS</u>	<u>WINNER</u>	<u>RUNNER UP</u>
Soccer	<b>NADI</b>	<b>NASINU</b>
Netball	<b>SUVA</b>	<b>REWA</b>
Men's V/Ball	<b>SUVA</b>	<b>REWA</b>
Women's V/Ball	<b>NAVUA</b>	<b>NASINU</b>
Best Player Soccer	<b>ANISH KHEM (NADI)</b>	
Best Player Men's V/Ball	<b>WAYNE FISHER (SUVA)</b>	
Best Player Women's V/Ball	<b>LORAINI WAQANIDROLA (NASINU)</b>	
Best Player Netball	<b>ALOESI NAULUMATUA (SUVA)</b>	



**FTU Soccer Champs Nadi with FTU Executives**



**FIJI TEACHERS UNION**  
**DONATION TOWARDS THE PRIME MINISTER'S**  
**REHABILITATION FUND**

Fiji Teachers Union, in the past has been assisting the poor and needy children with funds to enable them continue their education. The assistance has been through the provision of school books, uniform, school fees and calculators.

In the aftermath of Severe Tropical Cyclone Winston, the Fiji Teachers Union has set up a "School Rehabilitation Fund" [FTU-SRF], which was launched in Suva on 5th March, 2016. The specific purpose of this Rehabilitation Fund for schools and children affected by STC Winston, is primarily focused to meet the stationery needs of the schools which had been destroyed.

**FTU** has since assisted the schools affected by STC Winston with stationery -books, pens and calculators to allow the students to continue with their education without any disruption.

FTU, together with the assistance of the International Labour Organisation based in Suva, has also assisted the students with bags, uniform, shoes and stationery.

Apart from assisting the students and schools, FTU, through its Credit Union had given immediate assistance to its members through a special loan scheme.

In appreciation of the work carried out by the Government to assist the populace after the havoc created by TC Winston, the FTU Annual General Meeting endorsed that \$10,000.00 be given towards the PM's Fund to assist in the ongoing rehabilitation work.

Members have also decided that \$5000.00 be put in the FTU-SRF each year to bolster the Fund and have it as a strategy to assist the children and schools in future, should we be faced with a similar disaster.



Front Left: National President Muniappa Goundar, Hon. Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama, General Secretary Agni Deo Singh, IRO Arun Prasad and Publicity Officer Manhar Kumar during the presentation of the \$10,000 donation towards the PM's Rehabilitation Fund at the PM's Office.

**FTU SELF FUNDING MEDICAL INSURANCE SCHEME**

1. Under local hospitalization, the limit of payout is \$6500.00 plus 50% of balance of actual incurred cost on approval of private clinic facility for those members, including dependents who require medical treatment but are on the waiting list at Government operated Hospitals.
2. The cost of advance technology treatment is covered at Private Clinics subject to prior approval.
3. Local Hospitalization limit has increased from \$15,000.00 to \$20,000.00 per disability per family/person annually.
4. Overseas Hospitalization remains \$250,000.00 per disability per family/person annually.
5. Preferred Evacuation provider – India facility and on emergency situation it will be New Zealand or Australia.
6. Age limit remains at 68 years.
7. Members are once again reminded that for claims assessment, medical reports from specialist are required with the recommendation for surgery, together with the results of all the tests done to diagnose the sickness.
8. Members are advised that there is no refund of premium on withdrawal.
9. Insurance Premium – please ensure you are paying correct insurance premium. If you want your family to be covered, you must pay family cover of \$450.00 p.a.



