



FIJI TEACHERS UNION

NEWSLETTER

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BUDGET 2014

EDUCATION gets \$541.5M, the biggest allocation to the Education Sector, ever.

No primary school child will now be required to pay any fee as the government will give the schools \$250.00 per child. Secondary education has also been made free as government has allocated \$31.5M to cover all tuition fees.

Tertiary Education Loan Scheme [TELS] will enable all eligible students to take up tertiary studies.

Salary Increase

Civil servants have received salary increase as follows:

- 23% increase for those earning less than \$15,400.
- 18% increase for those earning \$15,400 - \$20,600.
- 12% increase for those earning \$20,600 - \$26,700.
- 10% increase for those earning \$26,700 - \$34,200.
- 8% increase to those earning \$34,200 - \$46,200.

Those at the Director and Deputy Secretary level will get raises ranging from 4% to 7%.

Teachers did not receive any increase since 2006 apart from 3% in 2012.

Whilst this has brought some relief, the Union anticipates similar increases to continue so that teachers can finally catch up with what they lost in the last 8 years.

TRANSFERS 2014

All district Senior Education Officers are sorting out the 2014 transfers. The word from the Ministry is that they want all transfers to be completed by end of November.

Please notify the Secretariat immediately if there is a change in your district or school or change in postal address.

The Union expresses its gratitude to the District Education Officers as well as the Ministry's Primary and Secondary Sections senior staff for their cooperation and understanding.

CONFEDERATION OF PUBLIC SECTOR UNIONS

The Confederation is made up of FTU, FTA, FPSA and ATMAF. The Chairperson is Bro. Maika Namudu and the Secretary is Bro. Rajeshwar Singh. The Confederation submitted a log of claims to PSC on 1/10/2013.

A meeting of the members in the Central Division was held on 17/10/13 at the FTU Hall. Over 400 members congregated and expressed grave concern that no salary increase was made in the last 7 years, although the cost of living had gone up by about 40%. The meeting also noted that some sectors of the civil service, including the Permanent Secretaries had received huge increases.

The meeting further mandated the Union leadership to take appropriate action to achieve decent salary increase for the members. CPSU filed a submission for relative salary increase in the Suva High Court on 6th November 2013.

FIJI TEACHERS' CONFEDERATION [FTC]

The Confederation continues to work on all matters of common interest to the two unions. The matters currently being pursued are salary, COLA and Quality Public Education – including recruitment of quality teachers by providing attractive terms and conditions, the reduction of child labour by keeping children at school. The role of teachers in reducing dropouts / push outs is also emphasized in all communications to the members.

FIJI TEACHER REGISTRATION BOARD

The appointment of the General Secretary on the Board has enabled the Union to contribute effectively on the various roles of the Board.

The Board has agreed that:

1. A \$50.00 fee for lodging any complaint against a teacher.
2. All complainants must identify themselves with their address and phone number. In case of blatant false allegations, the teacher concerned could then take legal action and seek damages.
3. Professional Development Workshops to be conducted by the Board.

EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

Regional Conference

The Asia Pacific Regional meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 18th – 20th September 2013.

The National President, the General Secretary and Chairperson of the Women's Wing attended the meeting.

Our General Secretary was elected on the Executive Board with an overwhelming majority. The term is for 4 years.

Global Campaign – Mobilizing for Education We Want

New Delhi : 24th – 26th July 2013. The Conference for the Asia Pacific Region was held to assess the progress on the commitment made by the Education Ministers in Dakar in 2000. The commitment made was to invest incrementally in order to achieve quality public education for all by 2015. The Conference noted with concern that governments are increasingly shirking their basic responsibilities and making education more "user pay" type. It was also noted that teachers' terms and conditions of work have been eroding in the past decade. Fiji's problems were well amplified by the General Secretary, in his presentation at the forum as FTC rep.

FTC is planning for a joint action plan for public awareness on what should be and what is.

The Global Campaign was launched at the UNICEF HQ in New York and in Paris simultaneously on 4th October.

Mr. Gordon Brown, the UN Envoy addressed the guests in the New York launching. He strongly emphasized that quality teachers are essential for quality education.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Since its inception 2 years ago, the scheme has provided overseas treatment to 28 members and 65 have been treated locally.

The benefits are being increased incrementally, as reported in the post conference newsletter.

The National President and the General Secretary, together with the Broker and the Re-Insurer visited hospitals in India and inspected the facilities. The objective is to select the best quality services available for members. Members are urged to familiarize themselves with the policy, rules and the procedure to access the service needed.

If members decide to have the treatment at a Private Clinic, whilst the treatment is available at the Government Hospital, 75% of the private clinic cost or \$4,500.00, whichever is less, will be reimbursed. Previously, it was 50% or \$3,500.00.

MABS PROVISION - REMINDER

1. All claims to be forwarded within a month with original receipts.
2. Members who are retiring and are eligible for the retirement benefit must lodge the claim within a month also with MOE letters.
3. Members retiring and wishing to continue with honorary membership must do so within a month.

MABS – ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

- ✓ **Diagnostic Test** limit increased from \$100 to \$150.00
- ✓ Treadmill Test, MRI, CT scan, Endoscopy and ECG will be paid in full.
- ✓ Referral Letters - \$15.00 reimbursed if doctor deems necessary to refer patients.

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY

2013 THEME : A Call For Teachers

World Teachers' Day is celebrated annually on October 5th. Fiji Teacher Registration Board took up the leading role this year to mark the WTD. FTRB, in conjunction with FTU, celebrated the day at FTU Hall on Friday 4/10/13. The Chief Guest for the function was Dr. Akhila Nand Sharma, Associate Professor in Education, School of Education, USP. IRO, whilst addressing the gathering, thanked FTRB for the initiative taken in recognizing the contribution of the teachers in the education of the

children in Fiji. He said FTU was hopeful that in 2014 FTRB will organize the day at a larger scale.

POST PROCESSING

MOE is advertising and processing substantively vacant positions. Currently, MOE is advertising all admin positions. HOD positions are expected to be advertised on 30/11 or in December.

Members are requested to check the advertisements for vacant positions and apply promptly. Send a copy to the Secretariat.

Members are also advised to familiarize themselves with the revised MQR.

BRANCH WORKSHOPS 2013

Workshops have been conducted in the Branches as follows:

Navua	05/06/13
Tailevu	19/06/13
Nadroga	26/06/13
Rewa	13/07/13
Ba	12/09/13
Suva	16/10/13
Nadi	09/11/13

The Secretariat has liaised with the Professional Development Unit of the Ministry to add three to five hours as part of the teacher's requirement for PD.

2014 AGM AND CONFERENCE

The 2014 AGM and Conference will be hosted by the Labasa Branch.

Members, and in particular Branch Executives, are kindly requested to start preparation now so that we have a yet another successful AGM and Conference.

FIJI NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

GS has submitted to the Council for the salary review. The exercise is in progress and a positive outcome is anticipated.

NON RENEWAL OF CONTRACTS

At the beginning of the year, members had raised concern that their contracts were not renewed on time and thus their salaries were ceased. This effectively meant that all deductions towards social security, mortgage payments, payment of rents and other authorized deductions ceased.

The Union has drawn the attention of the Permanent Secretary to the predicament of these officers and we

have been assured that all officers would know of their positions before the expiry of their contracts.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

GS participated in the consultation meeting on the NCF in Suva. The forum discussed the NCF together with the CBA system. GS emphasized at length that the paperwork required by CBA was actually taking away quality teaching time, thus overburdening and demoralizing the teachers. MOE responded with an emphatic statement that a review would be done with a view to reducing the number of CBAs. GS also submitted that the consultation process should be extended to the Heads of School and practicing teachers. This was also assured of.

OFFICE CLOSURE

The Office will be closed from 23/12/13 to 3/01/14. Normal business will resume from Monday 06/01/14.

GS ON LEAVE

The General Secretary will be on leave from 21/11/13 to 09/01/14.

He will resume work from 10th January 2014.

Members needing assistance to call IRO on 9928096.

NON CTCL AND NON FTU MEMBERS

There are still some teachers who are yet to join one or the other organization to facilitate full membership.

Please note that you have to be a member of FTU to become a shareholder in the CTCL.

FTU – CTCL MEMBERSHIP

1. You can become a shareholder with a minimum share of \$20.00. You can increase / decrease your share depending on your budget.
2. A dividend of 4% is guaranteed on your savings for 2013.
3. Minimum share entitles you to full benefits, in terms of borrowings.

Retired Shareholders

1. Can make a lump sum deposit.
2. Can withdraw money as per need.
3. Can take soft / emergency loans. IMPS not covered.

Hideaway Resort Shares

1. Shareholders are guaranteed a dividend of 10% for 2013.

2. Those who were shareholders in 2009, your \$390.00 p.a. interest free loan will continue to go in your Hideaway shares until you acquire your full share of \$5850.00. Shareholders who do not want shares / additional shares must inform the office in writing.
3. Your CTCL share must be equal or more than Hideaway shares at all times. Withdrawal and rejoining results in full reimbursement of Resort shares as well.

Resort Free Nites

To qualify for free breakfast, \$20.00 per person per night must be spent on food /beverages.

FOC benefit must be used within the year. Use it or lose it.

Book early – call reservations on **6500177**.

[full details are in the Annual Report – familiarize yourself to avoid disappointment]



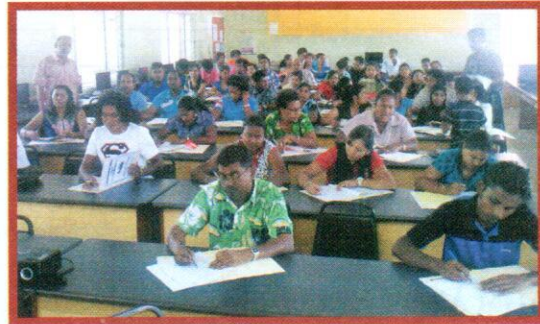
2013 Netball Winners Nadroga



Members in Suva Branch Workshop



WTDteachers with Dr. Akhila Nand Sharma



Members in Nadi Branch Workshop



Fiji delegation at E.I.A.P conference 2013



CPSU Rally at FTU Hall

