



Wansolwara

An independent student newspaper and online publication



8&9

INSIGHT

FORESTS are vital for the security of Pacific Island nations. Is enough being done to protect it?



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PROFILE

KELLY Thomas loves the ocean. This affinity has led to him to study marine science. Recently among friends, he has earned the tag of a defender of sharks. That's because he will be the first local to acquire a Masters in shark conservation.



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ROAD SAFETY

WHY does the carnage on our roads continue to rise? A team of first-year journalism students investigates the issue.

Youth fund

Report moots regional initiative to resolve lack of progress

by **PARIJATA GURDAYAL**

THERE is a need for a regional youth fund to provide youths with the needed resources to address their issues.

This was one of the recommendations in the *State of Pacific Youth 2011: Opportunities and Obstacles* report that was released by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) last week.

The report calls for specific attention to providing youths

with the opportunities to propose projects that have a strong community focus.

"The absence of available resources is a major reason for the lack of progress at the regional country level in addressing youth issues," it said.

The report proposes a system for addressing this gap through a regional agency such as the SPC to set up a regional youth challenge fund.

The fund could call for proposals from governments, non-governmental organisations, churches and youth

associations to address the various youth issues.

"Specific projects could be funded to improve female and male access to higher levels of education or basic literacy, or providing more educational or livelihood opportunities for young people with HIV & AIDS, or physical or mental disabilities," it said.

To attain a stronger community focus, the report recommended the use of schools as community service learning projects.

This would be closely tied

to the formal curriculum and involve working closely with partners in the community, such as local government and church groups, it noted.

An alternative was for the projects to be proposed and run by youth-led associations that involve school leavers.

"The creation of links between communities should be an important focus to lift the level of social trust with and between communities rather than fund activities that are limited to one community," the report said.



PICTURE: USP's Development, Marketing, Communications & Alumni Office

NEW BEGINNING: Solomon Islands Governor General Sir Frank Utu Ofagioro Kabui, who was installed as USP's 18th chancellor at the graduation ceremony last Friday, presents Shavindra Nath with his postgraduate diploma.

First degree no longer enough: Chandra

by **NANDNI VANDHANA**

THE two-fold increase in the number of USP students who completed post graduate studies this year is a sign that the first degree is no longer sufficient.

This was the observation offered by University of the South Pacific Vice Chancellor Professor Rajesh Chandra in his graduation address on Friday.

He said of the 800 graduands, 54 per cent were graduating at the post graduate level. Last September, graduands at this level made up 23 per cent.

"This is a reflection of the new knowledge society where the first degree is not enough anymore," said Chandra.

He said enrollment at USP increased by 10 per cent and was indicative of the

confidence families placed on USP to produce quality graduates.

"It is not about getting a degree but getting a quality degree as USP graduates are special," said Chandra.

"You will be the strength of your family, as well as the community."

On academic reforms, he said the necessary changes were being implemented to increase the university's credibility.

"We aim to transform USP from a good university to the best," he said.

"The academic transformation and reforms are undertaken through the Strategic Total Academic Review (STAR) and will be completed for implementation in 2013."

On USP's finances, Chandra said

it was well-positioned to react to the future and that funding from donors increased by 25 per cent.

He offered special gratitude to the Fiji Government, the university's largest financial contributor.

"Fiji has been a generous and hospitable host and this has allowed the university to grow," said Chandra.

Among plans for growth next year is the opening of a new halls of residence that will cater for 144 students.

The university is also developing a fourth campus in the Solomon Islands and plans are underway to renovate the Kiribati campus. Chandra said these works were essential in ensuring the university remains central to achieving high quality education.



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REGULAR FEATURES

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Final year journalism students explore the forestry issues of Fiji and the Solomon Islands.

REGIONAL, p12: Water chores are a life-threatening exercise for women in the Solomon Islands. Many of them suffer the trauma of rape and harassment silently, a research has found.

MEDIA, p13 : Poll finds majority of Fiji's citizens disagree with the censorship of the media.

REVIEW, p14:
Students review films and book.



SPORTS, p16:
Much remains questionable about the selection of Fiji's team, says veteran commentator Graham Eden.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

...of the utmost importance (is) that we should all feel and inculcate among the people and circulate amongst them what I would call a sense of compatriotism

- AD PATEL, founder of the National Federation Party

YOUR SAY

Which party did you vote for in the recent USP elections and why?

LANI MAIWAQA



I voted for the Pacific Alliance Party as it is a multiracial party making it easier for all students.

LOATA TUBUKOLO



Did not vote as there was false advertising by one of the party members and on top of that the elections area was jam-packed.

ALAN TAKINANA



I voted for the Pacific Alliance Party as the candidate contending for the presidents position is my friend.

FILOMENA WAQA



I voted for the Pacific United Party because I am more familiar with the candidates contesting in the election.

NEWS

President promises better management

by NEOMAI QALITA

REPORTS of the student body's finances will be distributed every month, said the new president of the University of the South Pacific's Laucala Campus student body.

This was one of the commitments Ratu Poasa Veidreyaki made in his campaign speech for the presidency, a day before polling.

"Few things I hope to achieve are restructuring and reforming, transparency and accountability," he said.

The land management student, who campaigned on a Pacific Alliance Party ticket, hopes to see students in Laucala Campus are a part of the decision making at the student council level.

"Regardless of a students' colour, race or gender, each student must work and move together as one," he said.

He stressed the need for transparency in terms of keeping students updated with how their money was being spent.

"This will be achieved by distributing monthly financial reports and also having open fo-

rums for students to raise issues or ask questions to the executives in the committees," he said.

"It's our goal in making sure that money is not only well spent but spent on things that will benefit all the students and not only just a few."

He was referring to the social events hosted by the various cultural groups.

"Not all students go to the Tara Koro or play sports or are religious, so what we plan to do is not focus all the funds to a particular area but on a greater picture and not on an individual

basis," said Veidreyaki.

His party beat the United party with a clean sweep of all the seats. No independent candidates contested.

A noticeable aspect of this party is that the candidates hail from the different countries in the Pacific.

"The party was founded by these cultural groups so we made sure that our candidates are from these different cultural groups," Veidreyaki said.

The new office holders are to serve for two semesters.



Picture: KALESI MELE

USPSA to raise awareness on role

by SAJNEEL ROHIT

THERE is a need to raise awareness among students about the service role of the student body, says USPSA Laucala president Poasa Veidreyaki.

"There had been reports in the past that students walk straight into the Deputy Vice Chancellors Office rather than visiting their governing student bodies which are originally elected by the students themselves to help cater for their needs," he said.

"I believe students need awareness about the importance of the USPSA," said Ratu Poasa. He hopes to organise an event to highlight the role of USPSA.

He said there were many plans in the pipeline and among them was the upgrading of the Student Service Centre to solve the congestion problem, and vigorous lobbying for the sheltered path from the Bus Bay (opposite Cost U Less) to the Southern Cross Restaurant.

NEW LEADERSIP: Pacific Alliance Party members who took over the USPSA Laucala office. President Poasa Veitayaki is in the front row, second from the left.

One-year term too short: Tuiloa

by ELIKI DRUGUNALEVU

THE one-year term for student body executives is too short, said former USP Student Association Laucala Campus President Tevita Tuiloa.

In an interview prior to handing over to the newly-elected executives, Tuiloa admitted the term in office was not long enough to implement all the projects they wanted.

"We still had plans that we wanted to see eventuate but un-

fortunately time was not on our side and before we knew it our time in office was over," he said.

"One of the things that we wanted to see, as we were planning on it, was the installation of the sheltered walkways from the main bus stop (opposite Cost-U-Less) to the labs and also at the upper gate to the library."

Of his team's achievements, he listed the acquisition of new computers and the construction of ramps to ease access for those with physical disabilities as their main projects.

"We took into account that we had students with disabilities and since we are a recognised institution it is important for us to cater for the needs of ever students on this campus," he said.

"Another thing was the installation of new computers in our labs for our students as you can see and we are very happy with what we have done."

Changes in the finance procedures to allow cultural groups' better access to student funds was another achievement, he said.

Tuiloa thanked his team for their hard work.

He also acknowledged the help of their secretary, whom he said was instrumental in getting them up to speed.

"In our first few weeks in (office), we had trouble settling in because there was no proper handover from the previous office bearers," he said.

"It was like they just gave us the key to the office and the password to the computers and that was it nothing else."

NEWS

Family rejoices in sisters' milestone



DOUBLE SCOOP: The Inoke family

by NANDNI VANDHANA

IT was a proud moment for mum Kelina Inoke, who travelled all the way from the Kingdom of Tonga to see her two daughters graduate.

For Malieta and Seiloni Inoke, they were both "over the moon" as they smiled to the flashing cameras of friends and family present to witness this moment of a lifetime.

"I feel awesome because I am graduating with my sister," said an elated Malieta, the younger of the two sisters.

She graduated with a Bachelor in Commerce with Information Systems and hopes to get a job related to the field.

Seniloli graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree majoring in Politics and Policing.

Husband, wife team graduate

by KALESI MELE

A HUSBAND and wife were among the 800-plus students who graduated at the University of the South Pacific's graduation ceremony on Friday.

Lauheilani Lui Young, a ginger farmer, said they made education a priority because it would give them more opportunities.

"I think it's ideal if you work and study at the same time because academic achievements will help add to your income in the near future," said Young.

"This really is to give me more options and something to fall back on."

Young graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce Degree. Young, who is from Naitasiri, met his wife while at university. They have two children. The couple said hard work and determination was the reason for their success.

"I am very happy and also relieved because I left farming for about a year ago to come and complete my degree," he said.

Mrs Young said she was very happy and excited.

"After this we head into work and possibly to pursue further studies," she said.

System failure to blame for job woes

by PARJATA GURDAYAL

THE lack of support mechanisms to secure employment after school contributes to the high unemployment rate among Pacific youth, says a recent report on the region's youth.

"It is usually beyond the consent of education providers to continue supporting their graduates once they have left school," said the report, *The State of Pacific Youth 2011: Opportunities and Obstacles*.

"Young job seekers usually have to rely solely on their own limited networks to find work."

The report was prepared from research findings by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

It also identified the lack of opportunities and resources as an obstacle to young graduates in making productive contributions to their communities.

"Young people with higher levels of

education attainment have expectations of good future prospects but in many cases, they have been frustrated by their failed attempts to find suitable work," it said.

The report warned the situation was serious and could lead to social unrest. "If other conditions in a country are conducive to unrest, such as poor governance, a weak economy and a sudden economic or natural shock, the situation may turn out to be very different," it said.

Unemployment, in many countries, topped the list of young people's concerns. The report said a large proportion of Pacific male youths in the 20 - 29 age group were neither working, nor studying.

The issue is particularly serious in Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Samoa, where about half or more of young men aged 20-24 years were not engaged in productive activity.

"The figures are 58 per cent of males aged between 20-24 years in Kiribati, 4 per cent in Marshall Islands and 46 per

cent in Samoa," it said. The problem of being jobless persists for 25-29 year old men in Kiribati, Samoa, Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands, where between a quarter to more than half the men in this age group are out of work.

Samoan youths at Savaii and Upolu interviewed last December said more employment opportunities should be provided. Unemployment was an issue raised by American Samoan youths between the ages of 20-24 years. These youths suggested attracting overseas investment, retiring those who have completed 20 years of service for the government as ways of providing more jobs.

The Tahitian youth consultation group said when it came to employment opportunities, it was about who you knew rather than what you knew.

Youths also highlighted the need for experience. They said it was hard to secure the first job and there was little support for starting a new business.

Emalus team wins moot

by PRATISH RAJ

THE University of the South Pacific Emalus team is through to the PAN Pacific Mooting Competition this year.

This was secured after it won the moot competition two weeks ago at the Law and Culture Conference at USP's Emalus Campus in Vanuatu.

They competed against a team from USP Laucala, the University of Auckland and the University of Otago.

The PAN Pacific Mooting Competition is a major annual event featuring New Zealand universities and will be hosted by USP Emalus this October.

USP Laucala Moot participant Krishneel Gosai said despite the loss, he gained a lot from the experience.

"The moot being decided by Supreme Court Judges, Justice Daniel Fatiaki and Justice Spears made the competition realistic," he said.

The moot competition is part of the Law and Culture Conference. It first started as a small exchange conference in 2008 between USP Emalus and University of Otago.

"The success of these conferences led the organisers to broaden the conference and in the 2010 the first of the Law and Culture Conference was hosted by USP Emalus," said the Conference Committee Chair Anita Jowitz.



ANNUAL MOOT: Some of the mooters with Justice Daniel Fatiaki, right, at Emalus Campus

Introduce marine studies, says academic

by SHEENAL SHARMA

THERE is a need to introduce marine studies early into the school curriculum, says academic Associate Professor Joeli Veitayaki.

This, said the Head of USP's School of Marine Studies, will ensure the younger generation is well educated and informed about their marine resources

and know how to preserve it. "If people are aware, then they will be better responsible for the consequences of their action and will be prepared to take up resource management activities to become agents for positive change."

The School of Marine Studies last year hosted the International Conference on International Pacific Marine Educators Network (IPMEN).

As a result of the conference, the school has been working closely with the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) on the proposal to introduce marine studies.

Veitayaki said the future of our oceans was largely dependent on the younger generation, hence the need to ensure they were knowledgeable to make the right choices.

"The sad truth is people throw out things into the sea because they think it is not their problem," he said.

Veitayaki said whatever we do to the environment today will influence how our environment will service the future generations in the future.

"If we want to protect and preserve our marine species, we better act now rather than never," he said.

The sad truth is people throw out things into the sea because they think it is not their problem

Secure our forests



ZUBNAH KHAN
Editor

Pacific Island people face the risk of losing cultural heritage sites

THE abundance of trees felled every year for monetary gain is surprisingly insane, especially in this information age when many more are attuned to environment issues like climate change.

Unsustainable logging has been linked to many environmental woes and is a major contributory factor toward climate change.

Unfortunately, many Pacific Island nations with lustrous forests are contributing to the crisis because their mechanisms are inadequate to protect their forests from exploitation.

Although logging has its benefits, such as providing employ-

ment to locals and increasing the overall cashflow in an economy, the rate at which it is pursued does more harm than good.

Unsustainable logging, in some cases illegal, is an increasing threat to Pacific ecosystems and communities.

The Pacific Island people face the risk of losing cultural heritage sites as well as their daily means of livelihood including food, water, building materials, medicine and other important valuables.

Soil erosion poses a threat to the people in the Pacific.

This waste pollutes the natural water system of the Pacific

Islands and the living organisms in the streams and the rivers are harmed causing a decrease in the source of living for the population.

The fact that there is still an increasing amount of logging in the Pacific Islands is a great concern as there was once a time when the Pacific Island countries such as Fiji and Samoa were covered with forests but they are now facing drastic deforestation and soil erosion.

Looking at the political aspects, locals are engaging in disputes with the government over the land as many of the areas are known to be cultural sites and cutting down trees in these areas

causes tension between them.

The Solomon Star News reports that from the 233 countries surveyed (Pacific Island Countries included) between 2000 and 2010, more than 13 million hectares of forests each year were converted for use in agriculture, or lost through natural causes.

So the question arises as to what are the Pacific countries doing to conserve and protect the natural forests?

Fiji Forestry, for instance, has two types of conservation, which are the forest and the nature reserves.

The forest reserves allow forest activities but on a mini-

mal research scale whereas the nature reserves are protected where no person can conduct any activity on the site. There are 13 forest reserves and five nature reserves altogether.

But are the efforts enough to provide a better and secure future for the generations to come? Does it answer the question as to what we have to offer them?

Sadly though, many in the Pacific Islands feel that economic growth is the way to a better future and lose sight of the bigger picture that a protected environment is essential to a secure future.

Talanoa

Anti-cooking policy

I BELIEVE that life nowadays is a struggle and campus life is not a breeze.

The University does not make it any easier for students who are living in the campus hall.

Cooking is not allowed which forces students to buy food daily.

Outside food is very expensive and to add on it is also unhealthy.

The University should approve the cooking on campus as this would be less costly for students and this would help them financially.

PAULINE ARADHNA
Suva

Toilet conditions

I WOULD like to urge the USPSA-Laucala Campus to please maintain proper condition of the toilets as toilets play an important role in our lives.

Sometimes when we enter the washroom and the condition is like entering a rubbish dump.

To put more flavor to this there aren't any toilet paper available and we all know that we are uncomfortable in carrying toilet paper.

We pay students fees and we would be grateful if proper services are provided.

MANISH KUMAR
Suva

Empty promise

THE students have been promised a lot of times by USP that they are going to make a water shed.

It should be constructed from the Bus Bay to the Southern Cross Restaurant as it is normally the main point of entry.

We students are still awaiting for that promise to be fulfilled.

ASNEEL KUMAR
Suva

Exam trips

THIS is my final year (in USP) and I would like to discuss the issue of travelling to exam sites.

This should be catered for by the university as this often is a burden on students as some of us are financially limping and can't afford it.

This basically refers to the exams held at Khatri Hall.

SUNNY DEO
Suva

Mobiles in the library

THE use of mobile phones should be allowed in the library when there's an emergency.

It could be likely that students may miss out on important notices such as death in the family, because we never know what might happen in today's world.

AKSHAY KUMAR
Suva

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MEN AT WORK: Painters at work outside the second floor of a USP building. They wear no safety gear to harness or protect them in case of an accident. Yet the signs before them read: 'Wear Safety Belt', 'Safety is everyone's responsibility'.

Picture: WANSOLWARA STAFF

64 back on scholarship

by **NANDINI VANDHANA**

SIXTY-four Solomon Islands students returned to USP after their government reinstated their scholarships this semester. The University of the South Pacific students had appealed against the termination of their scholarships.

A majority of these students are first-year students and failed to meet the requirements stipulated by the scholarship committee in the Solomon Islands.

Solomon Islands Permanent Secretary for Education Charles Viva said the students failed three of their four units and were

issued warnings of scholarships being withdrawn. "They did not meet the academic criteria that warrant their continuation in the context for value for money," he said.

He said many students missed out on scholarships, so those who have the privilege must perform well to ensure money is

not being wasted. "The Solomon Islands government spent \$67.9m this year to educate students at USP alone," he said.

"This is 75 per cent of the total scholarship fund of \$92.4m so you see why the decision was made." Cameroon Para, a first-year student majoring in

politics and sociology, said he was relieved to be back on scholarship.

"I failed three of my four units and this is because I was sick," he said.

Andrew Tausima, a first-year student, was also relieved to have his scholarship reinstated.

"If I had not gotten my scholarship back, my year

would have been wasted," said Tausima. It is unclear whether the Solomon Islands government reinstated the scholarships because students won the appeal or because of a change in policy.

After several follow-up e-mails and phone calls to Viva, he declined to comment on the matter.

Students to explore new Pacific Worlds

by **BIUTOKA KACIMAIWAI**

THE University of the South Pacific will soon introduce a generic course, 'UU204: Pacific Worlds'.

The course covers four broad themes that basically cover the history and culture of Oceania.

Director for Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies Dr Vilisoni Hereniko presented the course at the Oceania Centre on August 4. Hereniko said that the new course is to help Pacific students learn more about their identity.

The presentation also highlighted that placing less emphasis on Pacific studies could lead to culture loss.

"Pacific societies and culture, in terms of this cluster, is always putting culture and people in the forefront of what we do," Hereniko said.

The course co-ordinators are Dr Kauvaka, from the University of Hawaii, and Jackie Ete, from the University of Wellington.



RECORD CROWDS: Undergraduate Sherita Sharma talks to curious students at the Journalism Programme booth during the University of the South Pacific Open Day in August

USP rates open day a record success

by **ZHIYAD KAHN**

MORE than 10,000 people attended the University of the South Pacific's Open Day, which for the first time was televised live across the region.

Vice Chancellor Professor Rajesh Chandra said it was likely the most successful open day, with the numbers up in most aspects compared to previous years.

"There were more VIPs attending this year compared with last year; there were many more students and schools participating; the displays were done very well; the opening ceremony went very well and the cultural programs throughout the day were wonderful and enriching," he said in an e-mail addressed to the USP community.

A total of 62 schools took part in the event with close to 6952

students.

The Development, Marketing and Communications office said that the broadcast gave the chance for other campuses to see activities in Laucala campus.

The Pacific cultures were also celebrated with dance and music taking centre stage after the tours

An extensive marketing campaign was embarked upon for this year's Open Day.

Top hip-hop dancers visit USP

by **FARANISESE RATU**

TWO members from the renowned hip hop dance group "Philippians All Star" performed at the University of the South Pacific earlier this month.

Lema Diaz, 32 and Vince Medoza, 23 showed the USP students their expressive dance moves which amazed the crowd.

Their team has taken part and been winners of a number of international dance competitions such as the World Hip Hop Championship. A few students were brave enough to challenge the performers and enjoy themselves.

"I didn't know what to do. I just got pushed in by them and then when the music started, I knew I had to do something, so I just let the music control my movements and I did enjoy myself," says Brandon Hazelman a student majoring in Economics and Law.

They were hosted by Saltwater Productions of the Events Management, Film and Media industry who aim to produce and organize events of world class caliber.

Saltwater Productions is aiming to raise awareness on creative arts with young people in Fiji. This attempt is to make people to understand and appreciate what creative art is in forms of dance like hip hop. Diaz and Medoza spent a week in Suva and took time to give lessons to interested youths.

HIP-HOP STARS: Lema Diaz, left, and Vince Medoza



Late allowances anger scholars

by **MINNIE EDMANLEY**

NI-Vanuatu students studying in Fiji have only received half of their scholarship allowance.

The \$2,500 that the majority of received is to help them through the first two months of the second semester.

The students were told last month by scholarship officials that the rest of their allowance would be paid after two months.

Several scholarship holders, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said no date was given on when they would receive the funds, although they asked for a clear indication. They said they also received their allowances late, about two months into the first semester. They received their money in the first week of August.

An email from the Vanuatu Ministry of Education was sent to the 66 scholar-

ship recipients on August 2 that their fees and remaining allowances would be dealt with as soon as the government approved the VT96million (FJ\$1.94m) supplementary budget.

Chairman of the National Education Committee (NEC), Les John Napuati said the "shortfall was a result of the former NEC decision".

He said he did not "wish to venture into" its details.

The students said most of them had paid for their accommodation and textbooks and were relying on their meagre balance to get them through the two months.

Lucy Kapp, one of the scholarship recipients, hopes her remaining scholarship money will be enough to last her.

"It would be best if the people responsible could come over to Fiji and give us a reasonable explanation and also see how life is like in Fiji" she said.

University raises academic policies

by **DINGLE MULEKOPA**

STUDENTS of the University of the South Pacific must attend 60 per cent of their tutorials or fail their course.

This is part of the revised academic policies to come into effect next year.

Tutorials cover face to face, distance flexible learning and satellite tutorials.

The USP Senate Report said the academic honesty policy and procedures, tutorial attendance and standardisation of grades policy will be applied by all faculties.

All written work by students is to be submitted through the turnitin program, via moodle and should account for a score of 20 per cent and above.

In light of the report, standardisation of grades will be rewarded equally and fairly, regardless of arts or science programs.

The new academic system requires students to work harder in order to pass.



WALKING THE TALK: Tourism tutor Apisalome Movono leads students in the White Glove Movement.

Picture: KALESI MELE

Nature's custodians

Tourism students lead clean-up campaign

by FARISHA AHMED

EVERY Friday, a group of student volunteers armed with white gloves and plastic bags clean up within and around USP.

Called the 'White Glove Movement', the initiative is the brainchild of Lomani Pacifica Initiative, a campaign formed by the Tourism Students Association. It has emerged with the aim to promote cultural and environmental sustainability.

Lomani is a word that describes care, love and stewardship in the Fijian language, a word strong in meaning and will. Apisalome Movono, the campaign organiser and tutor, said the project was to raise awareness.

"This is an awareness process where we hope to carry out clean-up campaigns in our environment surroundings."

White Glove Movement conducted its first weekly campaign on 29th July, 2011 where the

members spent two hours collecting rubbish and plastic bottles around the campus.

As a result sixty by 50 kilograms bags of landfill bound trash and a total of 87 bottles was collected which reflects the amount of trash generated by USP staff and students (excluding the cleaning done by the laborers).

With all the bottles collected, a pontoon will be built in October to formally launch the Lomani

Pacifika initiative which includes adopting the USP foreshore from Muanikau road to Marine Studies Lower Campus.

"We are working on the pontoon project which will be sponsored by the Holiday Inn," said Public Relations Officer for TAHSA Sefanaia Navuda.

More than 40 volunteers were part of the campaign, with a hope that the public will join in to promoting stewardship towards the environment.

School earns elite membership

by SHEENAL SHARMA

SCHOOL of Tourism and Hospitality Management was recently awarded Associate membership of THE-ICE The International Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education.

Head of School Professor David Harrison said THE-ICE is a new programme funded by the Australian Government.

"The element of status about being a member of THE-ICE is what we are doing is worthwhile," he said. Harrison said members of THE-ICE gain access to marketing and other facilities, as well as a chance to advertise their programmes internationally.

He said this commemoration will help the people to know that the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management is striving to promote tourism in the region by working with international organisations.

"This membership shows that we have been benchmarked," said Harrison.

Student/internship Coordinator Lorissa Hazelman said THE-ICE was very beneficial, especially in terms of marketing because it was the ideal international medium to promote the University of the South Pacific's tourism programme.

Drodrolagi to reapply

Interest group seeks university affiliation despite setback

by KALESI MELE

FAILURE to adhere to procedures cost the Drodrolagi Movement (DroMo) their affiliation with the University of the South Pacific Student Association - Laucala Campus.

DroMo is a student group that advocates for the rights of those with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity.

In a letter to DroMo president Kris Prasad dated April 14, Mr Tuilola indicated the concerns that were raised by the council, one of which stating, the group should be an association and not a movement. Amongst other concerns



PRASAD

raised was that the movement lacked academic perspective considering the University was an academic institution and that it was against moral values. The letter was in response to an email received from Mr Prasad concerning the rights of the movement members as stated in the letter.

"As stated in your email, we all agree that we all have human rights and that personal opinions should not be forced on others," Tuilola said in the letter.

In response Mr Tuilola voiced the concerns of the council stating, "all students have rights and no one is more special than the other."

Tuilola said DroMo also failed to present their agenda on time.

"The council did not approve because they had brought their agenda into the meeting and not 14 days prior. Members of the council need to be well informed before they make their decisions and therefore it was not approved," Tuilola said.

The student body by-laws state that any interest group seeking affiliation with the University would need endorsements from at least 10 cultural leaders, one of the crucial aspects DroMo did not gain.

"We find at the University that some interest groups are dominated by one or two cultural groups, because the money that we have is for all students and not just some, therefore we need the endorsement from these cultural leaders," Tuilola said.

Meanwhile, Prasad said the movement hopes to gain affiliation with the university this

semester. "We have been told that the matter is up for consideration in the second semester of 2011, and we are assured there will be a fair and positive resolution of this issue at that time," Prasad said.

He hopes that through this (affiliation), member's rights would be better addressed.

"Justice and human rights for those with diverse sex, sexual orientation and gender identity is certainly our prime concern," he said.

"We continue to grow and develop as we work together," Prasad said.

FNU wins Europa Shield

by KOILA VALEMEI & ROPATE VALEMEI

FJI National University (FNU) came out winners in the second annual Inter-University debate, narrowly beating out University of Fiji and also taking out the best debater award.

Funded and organised by the European Union, British High Commission and the French Embassy, the Europa Shield event is quickly becoming an academic must-see.

Head of the EU's Delegation to the Pacific's Political, Trade, and Media Section, Adam Janssen said the debates were part of the EU's efforts to train future leaders in the art of rhetoric.

"We are here to give you training and advice on the art of rhetoric so you can stand up in front of your peers and take full advantage of the stage that we have provided for you," said Janssen.

European Union Media team representative Lice Movono said the topics for debate were decided after consultation with development partners working in the relevant fields.

Organizers had sole responsibility for the selection of all competition statements.

"Most of the topics being debated on were topics that needed more awareness in the region, such as climate change, woman's role in society, and regional integration," said Movono.

USP fielded two teams. They were eliminated at the semi-finals.



Picture supplied by: EU Delegation to the Pacific

DEBATE CHAMPS: Fiji National University's winning team Indrani Krishna (Best Debater), Navneet Narayan and Shanistika Shivani, far right, with their Dean for the Faculty of Humanities Dr Eci Nabalarua

Pacific's acceptance overwhelms comedy duo



PACIFIC HUMOUR: Laughing Samoans Tofiga Fepulea'i, left, and Eteuati Ete at the Oceania Centre USP's Laucala Campus. Picture: MASEKULA NIUMATAIWALU

by GLEN VAVAITAMANA

THE Laughing Samoans' are in awe of the reception they receive from all Pacific islanders

"It is amazing to see how no matter where we go in the Pacific, we are claimed by the people as one of them," said Eteuati Ete.

"There is no better feeling for a Pacific Islander." It was one of the highlights of the job, he said.

Ete was speaking at the exclusive university event with his fellow comedian Tofiga Fepulea'i.

They were well received at a packed Oceania Centre where they shared a few anecdotes on their lives, their careers and how comedy felt natural for them.

"It does not feel like a job. You cannot call it a job if you are doing what you

want to do" said Tofiga.

Tofiga emphasised the importance of choosing the right friends.

"You may have 5000 friends on Facebook but you need to pick your real friends," he said. "Pick those who will support you all the way."

"My parents wanted me to be a lawyer or a doctor, but I always wanted to be in the entertainment business."

He said the Ete brothers were instrumental in order to showcase his natural talent.

The Laughing Samoans were part of the 'The Pacific Performing Arts Inspire Series', which was organised by Oceania Centre director, Igelese Ete who is the brother of Eteuati Ete.

After the session, the duo entertained the crowd with material from their 'Chock-A-Block' routine.

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Accept homosexuals, church minister urges

by KALESI MELE

HOMOSEXUALS can enter God's kingdom, says Reverend Akula Yabaki of the Citizens Constitutional Forum.

"God is creator and has created differences. That is the life they chose to live and we must accept them as they are," he said.

"The Kingdom of God is where God is in charge of affairs and the values that are associated with it are in Matthew 5 and 6."

He was responding last week to queries on his paper 'Same Sex Couple: A Story of Love', which he presented at the first public forum on homophobia in May at USP.

Yabaki was asked at the forum what the Bible preached on homosexuals. He replied that the kingdom of heaven was not an area where man could pass judgment. He said God gave everyone life

and hence every man must be treated equally. He said in Genesis 19, the destruction of Sodom was attributed to homosexual acts.

"The Sodom story focuses on homosexual acts. Its judgment is upon the homosexual rape of divine messengers, and its larger judgment appears to be against social injustice and in

hospitality to strangers as revealed in Ezekiel 16: 49-50," said Yabaki.

He said the gist of his stand is for the acceptance of homosexuals.

"Rejection would mean a violation of God's creative intent," he said.

He expects opposition, largely based on the issue of procreation, but he is confident in his beliefs.

"To achieve human fulfillment, all these values can be sought and found in both sexual (orientations)."

"If these people are in that relation-

ship and enter into another relationship that that would be judged as unacceptable," he said.

He said there were those who were born that way and have not changed their sexuality since growing up.

He adds that the Bible (Romans 1:26-27) directs that homosexual lust was understood as the consequence of idolatry.

"Such homosexual acts were performed by heterosexual persons who freely chose to act contrary to their own natural inclinations," he said.

Yabaki said people with diverse sexual orientation be given a chance to be heard.

"The issue is sensitive and controversial but the authority is to listen to those in the relationship and to judge people as they stand, that there is no discrimination but acceptance," he said.

"Those halls were never built with a kitchen in mind," she said.

New campus quarters includes kitchenette

by MARLENA MAERZ

STUDENTS living in USP's new singles quarters are allowed to cook for the first time.

The new 10th hall of residence is equipped with kitchenettes to allow students to cook.

This is a first for the singles quarters. Prior to this, cooking was only permitted for married quarters.

"The new hall is designed as an apartment style complex," said Dorothy Browne, manager of the Halls of Residence.

For each unit or apartment, eight students are accommodated and share the facilities, including a kitchen, a common room and a bathroom with a washing-machine.

"The students love it that they are able to cook" said Browne.

The need for a kitchen in the singles quarters has always been high on the students' agenda.

However, Browne doubts kitchen facilities will be provided in the other halls in the foreseeable future.

"Those halls were never built with a kitchen in mind," she said.



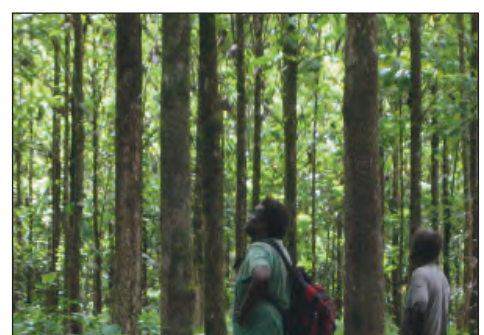
FORESTS: A conservation challenge for Pacific people

Solomon's forestry: Is it too late?

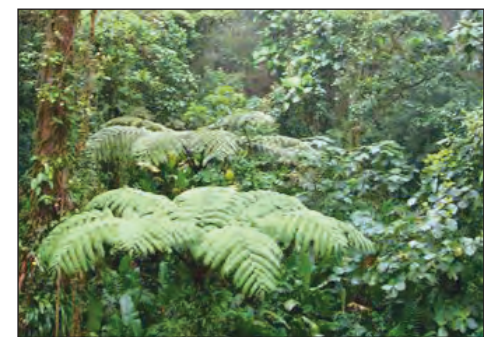
by ZUBNAH KHAN & JASVIN LALA



Marovo - logged out and idle



A teak plantation in Kohigo Island



Solomon Island's Cloud Forest

BERAKI Jino, Solomons High Commissioner to Australia believes logging is a great threat to the country. "We have a real concern... about the logging in this country because it covers about 60 per cent of the country's GDP," he said.

Timber has become the main exporting product in Solomon Islands with logging earning about 70 per cent of the total export earning contributing to ten per cent for the government.

Solomon Islands is known to be an archipelagic state which lies in the South West Pacific Ocean.

With an estimated population of about 539,000 which is still ever-increasing today, more of the economy is vastly dependent on logging for a better future for the country.

Solomon Islanders have long depended on the forests for food, medicine, building materials as well as other various materials needed for their very survival.

The Solomon Islands forestry collected close to 70 million Euro in export earnings, which equates to 18 per cent of total government revenue.

This year is the International Year of Forests and the theme is, Forests for People.

The concept is to celebrate

the central role of people in the sustainable management, conservation and development of the world's forests.

Forests also play a vital role in maintaining a stable global climate and environment.

Commercial logging first started in the Solomon Islands about 30 years ago with the Government-owned land to the customary land which largely includes about 87 per cent of the entire land in the country.

Customary land logging was greatly influenced and taken over by the foreign company loggers with the number increasing as years go by.

Denton Rarawa, the Governor of the Solomon Islands Central Bank, says that the Government should seriously look at the number of investments coming into the logging sector to combat the issue of increased logging activities in the country.

"I think it is probably important to restrict new investors coming into the sector because

the more they come, the more the stock of our forests decline fast," he said. Logging brings about the threat of losing the natural forests of the Solomon Islands within the next decade.

The latest figures released by the Monthly Economic Bulletin from the Central Bank show

"But it is a challenge to come up with other sources of growth to really fill that gap," he added.

Apart from unsustainable logging another issue that plagues the logging industry is the practice of illegal logging.

Bradley Tovosia, the newly appointed Solomon Islands Forestry Minister, says that illegal logging is of concern in the country and it will take him sometime to understand the issues involving illegal logging.

He also said the lack of understanding among landowner groups about the Forestry Acts and the country's code of logging practice was worrying.

"There are complaints from the landowners with the companies who sometimes create problems themselves and think they own the land and what's on the land.

"Sometimes people say one thing and do the other.

"That's exactly what's happened to this country, especially people who deal with loggers," said Tovosia.

"Reforestation programme should work well for Solomon Islands," he added.

The future of forestry in the Solomon Islands now depends on the contribution by both the Government and the locals.

restrict new investors coming into the sector because the more they come, the more the stock of our forests decline fast



Islanders blame greed and logging for loss of livelihood

by ZUBNAH KHAN & JASVIN LALA

IRRRESPONSIBLE forestry actions have been seen to be the cause of corruption within the industry in the Solomon Islands.

Martin Kafoa is a Solomon Islander who comes from the province of Malaita.

He believes many of the problems of forestry lies with the middlemen.

"A lot of problem(s) face(d) by Solomon Island citizens whose resources were used is the middle person who negotiates between the Asian logging people, resource owners and land owners," he says.

"Most of the time, money was not used properly and was not distributed out to people who owned the resources at home, so the middleman is always the one who fills up his pockets with the money earned from logging."

"The government in one way or another is trying to stop logging operations".

"They could ban it but that could be the biggest question as since independence, Solomon Islands' biggest revenue has been through logging," he adds.

Logging is largely carried out in the Western and the Isabel provinces in the Solomon

Islands, moving further on to the isolated lands. The people living in Vaghena, one of the isolated lands earmarked for logging, are crying foul about the ongoing logging on their lands as they witness the effects on their natural, and heritage sites.

Francis Ho, another Solomon Islander from the province of Isabella, says "all the tress in Solomons is depleting because of the operations and all the promises made to owners of forests are not fulfilled".

"As soon as they complete the operations they leave with what they have harvested, especially their aim to get money and then they leave all the mess behind".

Logging has also depleted their stable food source, breadfruit, he says.

"Before there were plenty; we would go to the forest and get it but now they are gone," says Ho. Lilita Waleanisia, another Solomon Islander from the Western Province, Malemale, says earning money is considered to be the most important factor in forestry.

"Many people are seeing logging as means of earning quick income so they allow logging companies to do logging on islands regardless of the impacts it will have on the people and the environment in the years to come," she said.



GREEN GOLD: The Colo-i-Suva Forestry nursery is one of Fiji's largest plant nurseries.

FUTURE GENERATIONS: What do we leave behind for them?

Beyond the million journey

by SAJNEEL ROHIT

PAST experience has led Fiji to significantly reduce logging and to cushion forestry practices with conservation campaigns that ensure its green wealth is protected.

Part of the conservation efforts is the Department of Forests's 'Plant a Million Trees' campaign.

Deputy Conservator of Forests Ratu Tomasi Kubuabola said the department was fortunate to exceed the target of planting one million trees.

"By December 10th last year we had planted one million ten thousand trees and as of today we have planted one million seven hundred and twenty two thousand and thirty trees," said Ratu Kubuabola.

"When speaking of forestry, most people picture logging at the back of their minds but gone are those days, now people concentrate on conservation, sustainability and prosperity basically for the future."

He said most of the trees were planted in the west and majority of them were coconut trees. Some teak (tropical hardwood) trees were also planted. The aim of the campaign is designed to ensure future generations continue to enjoy an economically and environmentally safe Fiji. It was so successful that it was

decided the campaign, which was initially scheduled to end last April, continue indefinitely.

The campaign is multi-faceted as addresses other issues that impact national, regional and international levels.

These issues include climate change, deforestation, soil erosion, carbon emissions, flood mitigation and clean water supply.

"Although the importance of trees has increased due to alarming climate change issues, people still tend to value forest for economic reasons rather than social," said Ratu Kubuabola.

He added Fiji has spent millions of dollars in conserving forest and continues to get international and regional aids.



KUBUABOLA

...gone are those days, now people concentrate on conservation, sustainability and prosperity basically for

New policy and conservation efforts safeguard forests

by SAJNEEL ROHIT & HALITESH DATT

FORESTRY is the art and science of tree resources, including plantations and natural stands.

The challenge of forestry is to create systems that are socially accepted while sustaining the resources that might be affected. Fiji has one of the biggest forestry industries in the Pacific Islands, consisting of about 45 per cent of its land. 815,000 hectares is forested whereby most of the land is owned by the mataqalis (native landowners).

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests to raise awareness on sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. Fiji is very sufficient in solid wood products but imports its paper products and its most important forestry export is plantation-grown woodchips. In terms of forest conservation, Fiji is advanced compared to other Pacific Island countries. It has 18 forest reserves which are sub-divided into nature reserves and forest reserves.

Nature reserves are places where no one is allowed to conduct any form of development activity as it is strictly allocated for forest conservation.

Fiji has five of these reserves, of which two are in

Viti Levu and three are in Vanua Levu.

On the other hand, forest reserves allow development to a minimum. They usually serve as areas for information gathering and includes the Savura Water Catchment in Wailoku, Suva. There are 13 forest reserves in Fiji with 11 on Viti Levu and two in Vanua Levu. The forestry department's Rafaele Rabolaku says Fiji's policies to safeguard its forests are advanced compared to other island nations.

The Senior Scientific Officer says on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the optimum), Fiji stands at 8.

"We have identified major species under threat and we are trying to study and propagate the species and distribute it to natives to reforest," he says.

"Studies and restoration of genes of flowers and species like santalum yasi has been successfully done so far."

Programs like REDD+ also contribute to global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen the socio-economic status of its forest resource owners and protect its forest ecosystems.

The REDD+ program works towards Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation. Fiji is the first Pacific country to adopt REDD+ as policy and its participatory development process seeks input from all relevant stakeholders. The policy provides a national framework for implementation to interested REDD project developers.

Fiji is also one of the few countries which uses palm wood of old palm trees. It has extensive coconut palm plantations and more than 30 years of experience in processing.



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A defender of sharks

by MERVIN SINGH

BEAUTIFUL is not a word I would use to describe sharks. But for Kelly Brown, it's the only word he would use for the creatures he is so passionate about.

Brown is the first USP student to pursue a Masters in Science, majoring in shark conservation. The frequency of shark attacks in Fiji does not deter Brown one bit.

He is determined to complete a proper study of sharks in Fiji.

Brown's passion for shark conservation began when he was very young. He always had a love for the sea.

After completing his undergraduate studies in Marine Science, Brown was undecided about what to research for his Masters.

It was a shark dive with friends that got him interested.

"During the shark feeding in Beqa I couldn't believe how awesome they are" he said. He said sharks were fast becoming endangered from overfishing, largely because of their valuable fins.

He hopes he will be able to contribute to the global fight against shark finning.

A cruel and gruesome way of getting the valuable shark fins which sell for up to US\$200 a kilo.

The practice involves capturing sharks that have been caught in the long lines, then simply slicing off the fins and then throwing the sharks back into the water to



CONSERVATION: Kelly Thomas works to protect the ocean's majestic sharks

drown. "The fins don't even have a taste or any proven medical properties, they are simply used as a status symbol" said Brown. And like so many species, it seems the shark is going down the same unfortunate road: untended to the point of extinction and all in the name of status.

But now Thomas' grant has been approved. His research, which is a first for Fiji, will focus on sharks' densities, habitats and nurseries. He said the only literature on Fiji sharks was written in the 1970s. He said his study will really

capture the habits of this awesome creature. According to Thomas, sharks are more than just hunters who eat anything and everything. "They are an important part of the marine ecosystem and act as police to ensure that fisherman don't compete with other preda-

tors for fish," he said.

According to www.ohio.org in Australia, lobster fisheries are threatened because the declining shark population cannot control lobsters eating octopus.

The Pew Charitable Trust and the Coral Reef Alliance are also helping Kelly monitor Fiji's black tip and white tip reef sharks.

The research, the first most comprehensive study of its kind, will be conducted mainly in Vanua Levu's surrounding waters.

As in most endeavours of this importance, government support is critical to monitor shark numbers and species and to put in place the correct and proper legislation to protect sharks.

The Marine Department is also working with Kelly because the sharks are an important part of the tourism industry in the form of shark feeding operators and current exports are not being monitored.

"Right now shark fin exports are tax free (and) the marine department wants the industry monitored to ensure the sharks are not exploited," said Kelly.

He said the Great White, which is the most famous of all sharks, does not visit Fiji.

"New Zealand scientists tagged a Great White and tracked it close to the Yasawas but it then moved away," he said.

So the next time you go on Facebook, add Shark Defenders as to your friends list so that we can help Kelly in his fight to save these awesome creatures.

West roads accident-prone

by VILISITAMANI

SIGATOKA, Nadi and Lautoka have been identified as 'black-spot' areas, because of the high frequency of accidents on their roads.

Land Transport Authority of Fiji (LTA) statistics records that 52 people died in road accidents last year, of which 12 occurred in Lautoka, and six each in Sigatoka and Nadi. General Manager Road Safety Timoci

Satakala said the areas were labeled 'black spot areas' because they were considered to be "accident-prone areas."

In 2007, there were 59 fatal casualties, of which 11 occurred in Lautoka, eight in Nadi and six in Sigatoka. These made up 43 per cent of the total road death toll.

In 2008, 14 road deaths were from Nadi and seven each from Lautoka and Sigatoka. The total fatalities on Fiji's roads was 66 that year. Mr Satakala said the high road

fatality was mainly caused by bad driver attitude.

"The West has often recorded the highest numbers in terms of fatality on the roads, and this is mainly due to the attitude of drivers," he said.

"Many West drivers are repeat traffic offenders and the high incidents of accidents on their roads is a reflection of their driver attitude."

Meanwhile, 2009 recorded 47 road

deaths. This was the lowest annual road death toll in the past 22 years. The positive change, said Mr Satakala, was the result of a successful road safety awareness campaign.

"The low road toll in 2009 was mainly due to aggressive campaigns conducted throughout Fiji and particularly in the West," he said.

He hopes campaigns will continue to arrest the road death toll and ensure the public knows.

Speeding the main cause of deaths

by VILISITAMANI & PRATISH RAJ

SPEEDING continues to be a major factor for road crashes in Fiji.

Statistics provided by the land transport Authority (LTA) show that each year, speeding is the cause of the most number of road fatalities.

As of August 29, speeding has claimed 16 out of a total of 30 deaths.

Last year a massive 78 per cent of road deaths were caused by speeding which accounts for 41 out of 52 deaths.

The authority has taken on initiatives so that the general public be better aware of road issues.

"Speeding is the (highest) cause of accidents on our roads, and at the moment, there are speeding, drink driving and seatbelt campaigns going on, all at the same time to educate the general public about road safety issues," said general manager road safety, Timoci Satakala.

Meanwhile some motorists are unaware of the importance of taking safety measures when on the road, moreover the penalties associated with it.

USP student, Ravnil Prasad said, "I was unaware of these harsh penalties".

"I have once been booked \$80 for over speeding and thought that that was it," he said

Section 97-99 of the Land Transport Act states that penalties for over speeding ranges from a minimum of \$500 or 3 months imprisonment or \$2000 fine or 12 months imprisonment.

Offences which lead to death or injuries have harsher penalties ranging from a minimum fine of \$5,000 or 5 years imprisonment to a maximum fine of \$20,000 or up to 14 years imprisonment.

Mr Satakala said due to the many awareness campaigns they have been conducting, they will now start to come down hard on offending drivers.

"Demerit point regulations are also going to be enforced in order to stop drivers from over speeding. Once a driver incurs 9 demerit points, their license is automatically suspended," said Satakala.

Other causes of road deaths in Fiji include hit and run accidents, careless driving, improper overtaking,



JAYWALKING: Spot fines have been introduced to discourage jaywalking.

Fatal road accidents

Districts	2007	'08	'09	'10	'11
Suva	3	6	4	2	1
Nasinu	2	8	1	4	4
Nausori	2	3	1	2	2
Tailevu	3	2	3	2	-
Lami	2	4	-	2	-
Navua	4	2	-	3	2
Sigatoka	6	7	6	6	2
Nadi	9	14	6	6	7
Lautoka	11	7	6	12	2
Ba	6	3	4	4	3
Tavua	-	1	2	1	3
Rakiraki	4	1	2	2	-
Labasa	2	5	3	3	-
Seaqaqa	3	1	3	-	-
Savusavu	-	2	-	1	-
Taveuni	-	-	1	1	-
Serua	-	-	5	1	-
Lau	-	-	-	1	-
Wainibuka	-	-	-	1	-
Koro	-	-	-	1	-
Rotuma	2	-	-	-	-
Total	59	66	47	52	30

Change attitude, says LTA

by MAISEKULA NIUMATAIWALU

PEOPLE with a tendency to jaywalk must stop and realise it is dangerous and illegal, says Timoci Satakala of the Land Transport Authority.

Satakala said 29 have died in road accidents this year and of these, three were jaywalkers.

LTA has introduced a spot fine of \$10 for anyone caught jaywalking. The penalty is the second phase of a joint campaign with Fiji Police to educate road users on proper pedestrian safety behaviour.

"The walking behaviour in Fiji is such that we think that it's normal," said Satakala, the general manager for road safety.

"We need to change the walking behaviour and mindsets of people in this country. It's not easy but it can be done."

The initiative has drawn mixed reactions from the public.

Jovilisi Waqa, a first year Bachelor of Arts student, said this was a good initiative and that the campaign had made him more appreciative of laws that had the people's wellbeing at heart regardless of how frustrating it might be.

According to the Global Status Report compiled in 2009, road accidents are the ninth major cause of death in the world and the leading cause of death in youth between the ages of 10 to 24.

Prosecutor calls for fine increase

by PRATISH RAJ

FINES for speeding should be increased to deter motorists, says Divisional Prosecution Officer (Southern), Isikeli Raisuni.

He said he believes this would motivate drivers not to exceed the speed limit.

At present, fines for speeding ranges from a fixed penalty of \$50 to \$120 with driver's demerit points of up to three, according to the Land Transport (Fees and Penalties) Regulations 2000.

The maximum penalties under the regulations ranges from a fine of \$500 or three months imprisonment to a fine of \$1,000 or 12 months

imprisonment. These penalties are implemented by considering the ratio of the speed limit exceeded.

Harsher penalties are listed in section 97, 98 and 99 of the Land Transport Act 1998 for speeding offences leading to death or injuries.

These penalties range from a minimum penalty of \$5,000 fine or 5 years imprisonment to a maximum of \$20,000 fine or 14 years imprisonment.

Raisuni also raised that another challenge for his men was the collection of evidence at an accident site.

"Providing strong evidence is the most important thing in a traffic case," he said.

"In accidents resulting from

speeding, the speed of the vehicle is the major evidence".

Inspector Raisuni said it becomes very difficult for officers to determine the exact speed of a vehicle on impact and that is the major challenge they face while presenting the matter in court.

"We also rely on eye witnesses to describe the scene of the accident to provide evidence for our case," he said.

He added that eye witnesses were not always co-operative. "Some witnesses don't want to get involved and don't show up for cases. We have very limited resources to work with in terms of providing evidence."

He said traffic cameras in accident-areas may be helpful.

Family joins cancer campaign after loss

by PARIJATA GURDAYAL

AT an age when most toddlers are running around and enjoying their childhood, Daksha Diya Narayan bid farewell to her family and friends after bravely battling cancer for 13 months.

"She was two years and eight months old when she died," said her father, Vijay Narayan.

The cancer was detected when she was about 19 months old. "All of a sudden we noticed symptoms in November 2009 and after the initial diagnosis in Suva, we were able to quickly move her to a children's hospital in Sydney for further diagnosis," he said.

The heartbreaking confirmation came in mid-December 2009 and thereafter began the painful journey.

She went through aggressive chemotherapy and radiation treatment in Sydney. Daksha fought all odds and showed signs that she had actually won the battle.

"Even her medical team was excited about her recovery but suddenly all hopes diminished after I returned to Sydney," he recalled.

"In the ninth month of her treatment, the aggressive tumor remerged and left the medical team with little option but to recommend palliative care and so in October 2010, my wife Sadhna and I made a very strong decision to return home to Fiji with her (Daksha) to reunite with her sister and grandmother."

"Caring and supporting for someone suffering from cancer is a very painful experience and in our case it was even more difficult as we were away from home and we could only console each other to remain strong," he said.

"At the Children's Hospital at Westmead in Sydney, the hospital over

the years has developed systems to stand by every family with kids suffering from cancer and they ensure that support is provided to the kids and families in all terms," said Narayan.

Support came in the form of counseling, social services, recreational and education support for other siblings, parental networks, and seminars for caretakers and family members, social events, retreats, parent's room in the hospital amongst other support services.

"We still get follow up calls from the hospital on how we are settling down with our loss but here in Fiji, our health system currently does not have most of these support services," he said.

Narayan was all praise for the pediatric team at the Colonial War Memorial Hospital's Children's Ward. He said despite their limited resources, they were welcoming.

"Daksha's charm and her resilient character won their hearts in a matter of days," he said. He said they were also very grateful for the support of their families and friends.

He said such support was crucial for families who are experiencing such hardship. Narayan said there was a need for better networking between the hospitals, the Fiji Cancer Society, and most importantly, the volunteers.

"It can be as simple as somebody volunteering to spend time with the children and engaging them in arts and craft while the stressed out parents can take a nap or shower for instance," said Narayan.

"Already they will be faced with the shock of cancer and on top of that there is the issue of financial support. Parents during such difficult times need as much



PICTURE: Fiji Cancer Society

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Wows have done much to raise awareness on cancer. INSET: Daksha and her mother, Sadhna, on one of their strolls

support they can get as possible."

Narayan said his family have been greatly helped by the moral support of their family and friends.

Their support network extends to the Tae Kami Foundation.

He said after their daughter's death, they decided they would support the cancer campaigns.

"Our Daksha share and care attitude always gave us this message: 'Please Papa and Mummy, care for not only yours but others as well,'" he said.

The couple have since joined the Tae



PICTURE: Vijay Narayan

Kami Foundation.

Narayan was also one of the nominees of the Walk On Walk Strong (WOWS)-Shave it or Save it campaign.

His appeal raised \$2,500 for the Fiji Cancer Society WOWS Fund for Children.

MSG appoints Forau to secretariat

by MAGALIE TINGAL

THE Solomon Islands' Peter Forau was appointed the new Director General of the MSG Secretariat last week.

This was announced in a communique after the special meeting of the Melanesian Spearhead Group in Nadi.

Forau holds a Masters Degree in Development Assistance from the Australian National University (ANU)

Prior to his appointment,

Forau worked with the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and also served as the deputy secretary general of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat for five years.

Forau replaces Papua New Guinea's Rima Ravusiro, whose contract expired on July 9, 2011.

The communique also confirmed that the inaugural Melanesia Games would be held in New Caledonia in 2013.

It was suggested that the event coincide with the MSG

leaders' bi-annual summit.

The events, said the communique, would give MSG leaders the opportunity to reaffirm their commitment towards self-determination and independence for the Kanak people.

The MSG member countries also signed the MSG Framework Treaty on the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expression of Culture.

This will protect the inalienable right of indigenous peoples of Melanesia, it said.



MELANESIAN BROTHERHOOD: Solomon Islands Foreign Affairs Minister Peter Shanel greets Tutugoro of the FLNKS

Picture: MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

Water chores 'risky'

Reports by MINNIE EDMANLEY

CARTNG water to their homes is a dangerous and life-threatening chore for many Solomon Island women, reveals a report by Amnesty International. Women are raped, harassed and sexually abused in their efforts to collect water, it said.

The long distance between their homes and the water sources makes their daily journey long and dangerous. Maria, a 38-year-old woman from Honiara, said the water pipe was very far from her home and so her morning walks to collect water was always filled with fear.

"I always dread walking in the morning because some of the men in the settlement will be up drinking from the night before and more often than not they will turn their attention to me and harass me," she told Amnesty International. Another abuse victim is a 21-year-old unemployed woman in the Kobito settlement. She said young girls like her were always worried about being attacked by men.

"My friends and I are always worried that we will be punched and raped by the drunk men," she said.

"If we refuse we can be beaten or raped. We have no other place to go so we don't complain and just keep quiet about it. We are already in overcrowded homes living with relatives. If we cause trouble we can be kicked out," she said.

...if we refuse, we can be beaten or raped. We have no other place to go, so we don't complain and just keep quiet..



HEALTH RISK: Women and children in a Honiara slum use a dirty stream to bathe and wash clothes

Picture: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT

Acute water shortage in slum settlements

CLEAN water and proper sanitation are scarce in the slum settlements of Honiara, says the Amnesty International's September 2011 report.

It said one third of the 64,600 people in Honiara live in slums. Of these, 92 per cent of house-

holds do not have a regular water supply and are forced to rely on other water sources.

Water shortages are frequent and so the people rely on relatives and other families to provide them with water or resort to using streams and well

water. Contaminated streams, wells and river are used by 20 per cent of the households. In many of the small communities families use stream and well water for cooking, bathing and washing. This has led to a rise in the health risks that are

constantly faced by the people of the community. In their visits to the Green Valley community, Amnesty International found residents drawing green, dirty water polluted with rubbish from a well that was then used for washing utensils and clothes.

Lift sanctions, poll on Fiji finds

by ZHIYAD KHAN

AN overwhelming majority disagree with Australia's sanctions against Fiji, according to the recent Lowy Institute Fiji poll.

The poll was based on a face-to-face survey of 1,032 adults who were randomly selected from the major urban and peri-urban areas of Viti Levu and interviewed between August 19-21. According to the poll, 81 per cent said the Australian government should 'lift all sanctions and re-establish normal relations with Fiji'.

Only 13 per cent said the Australian government should 'keep existing travel sanctions' and a tiny 5 per cent said it should 'impose more sanctions against Fiji'.

The respondents' views on Fiji's regional relations were also gauged.

The poll found that although the Fiji Government had worked hard on its relationships with fellow Melanesian countries (Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), "the Fiji people were less enthusiastic about the value of these relationships to Fiji".

Instead, the respondents held the Pacific Islands Forum in higher regard. About 79 per cent disapproved of Fiji's suspension from the Forum.

Also, about 66 per cent of those polled believe the Methodist Church and other religious organisations should not be involved in politics. Only 14 per cent of the respondents said the church and other religious organisations should be involved in politics, while 20 per cent said it was acceptable only to "a little" degree.

Fiji citizens want independent press

by ZHIYAD KHAN

NINETY-five per cent of the respondents in a recent survey say a media free from censorship is important to them.

According to the Lowy Institute report on Fiji, majority of the 1,032 adults polled believe in the need for an independent media.

The survey also found that 43 per cent of the respondents found that the media's performance since the 2006 coup had improved.

These respondents said it had become either a little more reliable or a lot more reliable and trustworthy. About 24 per cent found the media less reliable, while 31 per

cent believe the media's performance since the 2006 coup had not changed.

Also, an overwhelming 95 per cent of the respondents support the right to vote in a free election, the right to vote in national elections and the right to a fair trial.

As for the military's role in governance, the results were mixed.

Some 31 per cent of the respondents strongly approved of the role played by the military while 37 per cent partly approved and 31 per cent disapproved.

But, 46 per cent said the military should not play a permanent role in politics, while 24 per cent felt otherwise.

The Lowy report also registered a strong approval rating for Commodore Bainimarama.

About 66 per cent were happy with his performance, saying "he was doing a good job". A similar number said they believe Fiji is heading in the right direction.

Some 83 per cent of the people believed Fiji should be left alone to sort out its return to democracy, and sanctions against the country should be lifted.

In terms of the new constitution, 83 per cent said it would lead to a better democracy in Fiji while 70 per cent strongly agreed that it would end racial divisions and inequalities and end Fiji's coup

culture.

Meanwhile, the permanent secretary of information Sharon Smith-Johns said the poll demonstrated the people's support for the government.

"The citizens of Fiji approve of the Prime Minister and the Government by a huge margin. So if our own people think we're doing a good job and that's all that matters," she said.

"The Bainimarama Government has never wavered from its roadmap towards parliamentary democracy and this is clearly shown through the results of the report and the support of the nation," she added.

Mobile phones to advance agriculture

by KALESI MELE

THE use of mobile phones to relay agricultural messages could be a step forward to making agriculture part of communities.

Riten Chand highlighted this at the regional training workshop on Best Media Practices to Promote Agriculture and Rural Development in Nadi earlier this year.

"Wherever mobile coverage is available, you can get information across to farmers," he said.

Chand won the Agriculture and Rural Development and Youth in the Information Society (ARDYIS) essay competition last year.

He said mobile access would greatly help commercial farmers.

"Mobiles have the highest potential and farmers can get vital information that is supposed to be disseminated to them."

"Farmers can then plant crops or vegetables that are in demand and have the potential of meeting the export market," said Chand.

He said there was a need to make agriculture compulsory in schools.

"Some schools don't even teach agriculture," said Chand. He highlighted negative stereotypes associated with agriculture.

"We need to get rid of this attitude, this stereotype where nobody wants to be a farmer," he said.

"We need to get agriculture focused on younger people."

Chand's winning essay was titled "The Use of ICTs to Solve Information Poverty and the Reluctance of Farmers to Commercialise in the Fiji Islands".

Fiji TV partnership boosts course



FILM ACTION: Journalism students Lusia Lagilevu, left, and Marlena Maer, second right, produce their documentary with the guidance of a Fiji TV cameraman.

Picture: KALESI MELE

by MARIA VULA

THE hands-on learning environment at Fiji Television Limited is a major highlight for USP's journalism students.

"As a class, we have had hands-on exercises on how to operate the camera and to conduct interviews in the first three weeks," said second-year journalism student Yvette D'Unienville.

Magalie Tingal, another student, said she found learning from Professor Robert Hooper to be very rewarding.

Professor Hooper is from the University of California in San Diego. His work with the television course is funded by the United States of America's State Department.

At the formalising of the arrangement between USP and Fiji TV earlier this year, Vice Chancellor

Professor Rajesh Chandra said the opportunity to co-teach the journalism television course with Fiji TV was an important contribution toward improving communications through the media.

Fiji TV's manager training Merana Kitione said it would benefit students in the theory and practical aspects of television journalism upon completion of their studies.

Soundtrack of local film gets airplay

by ZUBNAH KHAN



IN THE STUDIO: At the launch of the single are, from right, Naziah Ali, Jasmine Duxbury, Abhi and Anurag Subramani with FBC's Sophie Delanimati, left, and Allen Stevens.

Picture supplied by ANURAG SUBRAMANI

Fiji film *Detour* marked the launch of its first single from the original soundtrack at the 2dayFM radio station last Friday.

The single, *Glowing Silhouettes*, is a mix of hip-hop and rock music.

The original soundtrack consists of 10 songs, featuring Abhi, Jasmine Duxbury and Tamsyn Cornwall.

It also features the local music groups *Who ate the Pie?* and *SurgeLight*.

In a press statement issued last week, *Detour* producer Anurag Subramani said the film had the elements of horror, thriller and black comedy. It features four stories woven together

to form a single interlinked narrative with surprise endings, he said.

The film plot was written by director Mitesh Mudaliar, a former Fiji resident now living in Christchurch, while the script was written by Subramani, who is also a lecturer in English Literature and Creative Writing at the University of the South Pacific.

The movie is being shot in Fiji with a vast cast of local actors, musicians, cinematographers and costume designers with the choreography by Masti Arts and Dance. Subramani said *Detour* promotes local talent.

Detour is produced by local production company Bloody Marvelous Pictures.

Tuvalu banks on forum project to reclaim shores

by YVETTE D'UNIENVILLE

A PROJECT to salvage Tuvalu's shorelines has been introduced.

Sponsored by the Japanese International Cooperation of JICA, the project aims to accelerate the natural process of producing foraminifera, a type of coral.

These organisms asexually reproduce and turn into sand when they die.

Accelerating their growth is expected to increase the island's sand, which is crucial in the natural protection of the islands against sea level rise.

Tuvalu is among the Pacific's

low-lying atoll islands experiencing the full brunt of climate change and sea level rise.

JICA's project advisor Minoru Tamura the combined threats have degraded the local ecosystem interrupted nature's way of making and transporting sand that builds the islands.

"In addition to global threats, local human activities such as the degradation of the coastal environment, jetties, seawalls and population growth on the main island of Funafuti have slowed down the natural process of making sand and change the current that transport the sand,"

he said.

"The main focus of this project is to make sandy beaches to protect the islands against sea level rise by rehabilitating the natural island formation process of sand production, transportation and sedimentation."

Tamura said this method was deemed best suited because Tuvalu was formed from coral debris and foraminifera.

He said his team in Funafuti had successfully developed a forum aquaculture system to enhance forum reproduction and create a favorable habitat for forum.



CORAL CULTURE: Former Tuvalu Prime Minister is shown the foraminifera that is grown at an accelerated rate

Picture: JICA

A reading treasure

By SARAH VAMARASI

As a people, we have been through much, and we continue to sojourn on regardless. A fact of life in Fiji is that no matter how old or young we are, we cannot escape the divisions that exist. However, we can temper our reaction and the way we think and behave in general, so that we contribute to the greater good.

This is one of the many invaluable lessons the Roko Tui Bau and former Vice President Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi imparts in his book, *A Personal Perspective*.

The book, which is available at the University of the South Pacific's Book Centre, is a compilation of his speeches.

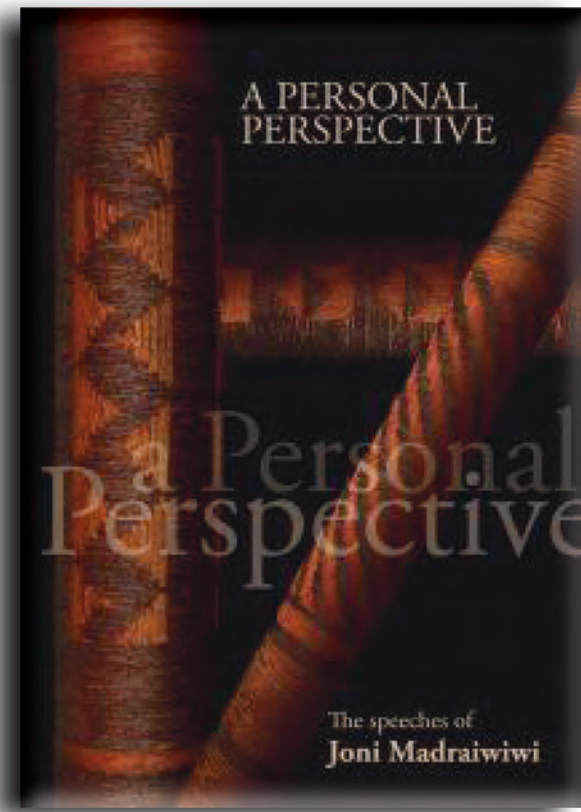
There is a speech for everyone in this book. Those of us who live here will be able to relate to much of what he says.

He utters many simple truths, some of which we may have taken for granted.

For instance, in his speech at the Rotary Club, Suva, October 5, 2006 he touches on social ties and our evolving identities.

"Weddings and funerals are not just for the new couple and the dead, respectively but are important social occasions where we renew ties with the living," he writes.

"Whether in merriment or sorrow, they remind us that family members and friends give life meaning and depth. They also underscore the importance of blood and kinship ties."



Ratu Joni's speeches traverse a wide terrain, from human rights, education, politics, law and even spirituality.

There's much on tolerance and reconciliation.

"Reconciliation has to be encouraged in the words and conducts of leaders, in the policies of institutions, the nature of our

relationships and the values we impart in our education systems and communities," he said in one of his addresses. His witty observations and anecdotes that reflect the unique

niceties of our people and the frankness at which he lays the challenges ahead bare, make *A Personal Perspective* an

enviable addition to the home library.

Na'ia, a dolphin's tale of humanity

By ROPATE VALEMELI

NA'IA, The Legend of the Dolphins is a marine documentary, which was filmed around the world. With the theme "Their Power, their message to humanity, their survival" is the enchanting film about nature's wonderful miracles.

Igelese Ete, an internationally renowned composer, director and the Head of School for Performing Arts at the University of the South Pacific was asked to score a scene for Megan Fox (The Spinner Dolphins of Hawaii) and Whoopi Goldberg (The Common Dolphins of South Africa) of Hollywood.

"The Canadian Director, Jonathon Kay just gave me 3 days to write it. I wrote and put it on to their documentary and also on their trailer", said Igelese Ete.

"You can see Pacific islanders in there to sing the song and the soloist who won the NZ idol, the Samoan girl, and my church choir".

Mr Ete said that it is a source of income for some of the Pacific Islanders but for him it's always what he loves to do.

"I love to do those kind of things where we can do world-class things," he said. "I always feel that we should not underestimate what we do. So yeah! That was a privilege."



Talks begin on inter-tertiary competition for Oceania New regional platform

by ZHIYAD KHAN

THERE are ambitious plans for regional inter-tertiary games with rugby sevens earmarked to start the ball rolling.

This was confirmed by Vice President of Oceania University Sports Association (OUSA), Albert Miller.

"There are big plans in the near future for development of sports in the region and Oceania Inter-tertiary competition is one," he said.

Miller who is also the Vice President of Fiji University

Sports Association (FUSA) said the idea of having regional games is going to be a good boost for participating countries.

"We are hoping to get universities from the around the region (Australia and New Zealand included) to compete in high-level competition," he said.

For the first time ever, rugby sevens is expected to draw universities from the around the region next year.

"Rugby is a popular sport in the region and we hope to have an inter-tertiary competition for that next year and hopefully include

more sports later," he said.

While the venue hasn't been confirmed at this stage, Miller believes Fiji could host the inaugural meet.

"We can host it; we have got the facilities, the resource people and there is also a lot of interest," he said.

Miller believes that inter-tertiary games could potentially be the regions answer to sustain athletes.

"Most athletes just compete for a few years of their lives and fade away even though they have a lot more to offer, we need initiatives

like these to keep these athletes, he said.

"This is going to be a breakthrough in Oceania, and tertiary sports could be a vehicle that gives life to this idea," he added.

Athletes from Fiji performed exceptionally well at the recent World University Games in China.

Leslie Copland created a new national record in javelin with a throw of 80.45 meters, a feat that has also enabled him to qualify for the London Olympics next year.

Miller said that its accom-

plishments like these that create widespread interest.

"The interest has grown and I think it's a wonderful opportunity as it will give our athletics other avenues," he said.

"I strongly believe the University Games is it. It would be a wonderful opportunity to use these games as a build-up for events like the Pacific Games," he said.

"But we need a wider base of support. I think it is important we make sure there's support from all stakeholders," he added.

Nakarawa proves his mettle

by RANOBA BAOA

IT was his first Rugby World Cup encounter, yet Leone Nakarawa has already made his presence known.

The 23-year-old lock, who is a towering mass at 6'5", has marveled local rugby fans since coming into the limelight early this year.

He was one of three players to score a try against Namibia.

In an interview prior to their departure, Nakarawa expected competition to be tough. Fiji is in the pool, dubbed the Pool of Death, alongside Namibia, South Africa, Wales and Samoa.

Nakarawa resigned from the military to ensure New Zealand's travel sanctions did not stop him from playing at the Rugby World Cup.

He said he had no regrets when it came to rugby.

His message to young people who wish to play rugby professionally is to work hard.

"Manage your time well and do your best if you want to have a rugby career," he said.

Respected rugby commentator Graham Eden singled out Nakarawa as a worthy player.

"The new players are totally worthy," he said.

"...(Nakarawa) may not have been needed to play in this year's RWC, (but) he could be the crux of the next World Cup because he's only a youngster," said Eden.



RIISING STAR: Lock Leone Nakarawa poses for Wansolwara at Ratu Sukuna Park. Picture: RANOBA BAOA

Hard work pays off, says QVS captain

by RANOBA BAOA

NOTHING could wipe the smile off his face when the siren signaled the end of the match.

Captain Apisai Kalivakara was on the bench when it dawned on him that the dream had been realised.

His Queen Victoria School under-18 side had won the inaugural Deans Final Championships Under-18 trophy.

The Vulinitu team beat Ratu Navula to secure the win at 19-13.

"We are so happy to have won the first U18 Dean's final trophy and grateful for the team's persistence in maintaining a lead in the first half," he said.

"By the end of the first half, we knew we had to work twice as hard in the second-half, and we did just that."

The number five said he had been playing for his school ever since he was in form three.

Despite winning the U14, U15 and U16 categories in previous years, Kalivakara's team lost last year's U17 Dean's final.

"Last year was definitely a wake up from God for us to work and train harder," he said. "We have done that by giving our best shot right from the start. Ratu Navula was a tough opponent but we managed to pull through despite having tied in the second-half, 13 to 13."

He conceded that his team's ability to maintain possession for most of the last 20 minutes of the game, ensured their victory.

Kalivakara's next mission is to gain admission at the University of the South Pacific.

"I have dreams for playing internationally but my first priority right now is to make it to USP," he said.

Aroma-scope and spy kids

By ZHIYAD KHAN

WHEN I was first told of a 4D movie, my initial reaction was, 'seriously, what now?'

After all the guessing, I later confirmed that the four sense was to do with smell.

As we were ushered into the Village Six cinema, my friend and I were each given a numbered card with eight scratch-and-sniff scents.

The card was to supposedly provide the added dimension of smell. It's technically called Aroma-Scope. It works quite simple.

When a number flashes on the screen during the feature, you are required to scratch the corresponding number on the card and smell it. All eight scratch-and-sniff scents on the "Aroma-Scope" card I was handed smelt the same to me (smell of chewing gum).

The whole exercise was quite a nuisance because the exercise was distracting.

As for 3D effects, I still believe there is yet to be a movie that can really pull off *The Avatar's* breathtaking and scintillating effects, although *Transformers-Dark of the Moon* wasn't bad either.

Although there may be

a good dosage of action and drama, the movie lacks the intensity and spontaneity that were present in the first two installments.

While the kids will enjoy it, the ones who've enjoyed the earlier three parts might be a little disappointed.

The moral lesson in this story would have to be the need for families to spend quality time with each other.

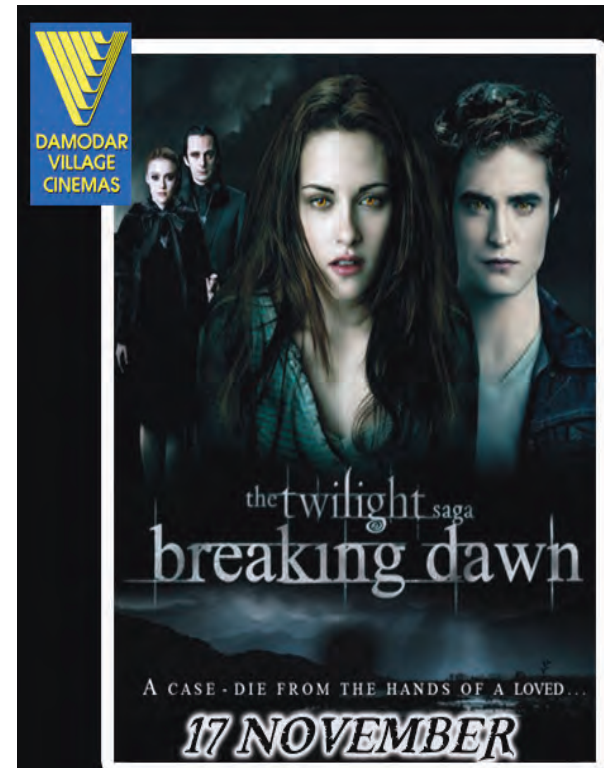
It reminds us that we do not have all the time in the world.

It especially cautions parents not to make the mistake, that it is better to spend the time now with their children rather than regret after you've lost the opportunities.

It's also about kids becoming more mature, and about pulling together as a family. For us in the Pacific, time is something we don't really hold dear. Deadlines are pushed and being late is now being accepted as a form of popular local culture.

To sum it all up, if you really want to try out what this 4D craze is all about, go for it. Otherwise, you have "all the time in the world" to watch it anyway.

For us in the Pacific, time is something we don't really hold dear





Positive signs

Employ attacking game, says former Fiji coach



Picture: RANOBA BAOA

FIJI'S HOPE: The Flying Fijians at their last public event at Sukuna Park before departing for the Rugby World Cup.



JOHNSTON



EDEN



GONEVA



DOMONI

THE Flying Fijians did very well in their first Rugby World Cup game against Namibia, but need to lift their performance in certain areas, says Brad Johnstone.

The former head coach of the Fiji team to the RWC in Wales (1999) said special attention must be directed to improving their attacking game.

"We lacked in our tackles as our players were waiting for the Namibians to come to them rather than them going and shutting them down," he said.

"This is one major area which needs to be improved."

He commended the scrum halves, whom he said did a better job. Johnstone listed Number 8 Netani Talei and winger Vereniki Goneva, who set a new record as Fiji's first player to score four tries in a RWC match, as the best players in the game.

"Four tries to Goneva in the first game is a marvelous achievement, I hope it improves in the next game," he said.

Lock Leone Nakarawa and wing Naipolioni Nalaga also grounded a try each at the Ro-

REPORT by:



SAJNEEL ROHIT



RANOBA BAOA

torua International Stadium to secure Fiji's win, 49-25.

"Our boys started off very well in their first game, which is a very positive sign," he said.

He also singled out centre Seremaia Bai, who booted 19 points, for his "outstanding" accuracy.

It is the second time Fiji and Namibia have played each other at a world cup. Fiji won on both occasions. In the Saturday game, Namibia took an early lead through a penalty by Theuns Kotze, who later slotted three drop goals. Meanwhile, in an interview before the Fiji team's departure, veteran rugby

commentator Graham Eden questioned the decision to take an extra forward at the expense of the backline.

"The controversy of this is the difference in selection of the players in each position," he explained.

"The standard of selecting the 30-member squad for 15s is 16 forwards and 14 backs, but in Fiji's case there has been an over-duplication of some positions."

He said there was no need to take an extra flanker.

"Three (flankers) are very capable and there is again a duplication. This shows the selectors have taken from the backs an important position where they might have best used another player."

He said instead of cutting out a half-back, the selection team

should have kept the original number of three half-back positions.

"If they haven't a specialist half-back, the question is: 'Who

' is to play in the position should both half-backs be down?', he asked. He said this was particularly worrisome given that several of Fiji's best wingers had chosen to play for other countries. "Fiji has supplied 20 wings who play around the world and we would have the weakest set of wings that are playing at home"

should have kept the original number of three half-back positions.

He said this was particularly worrisome given that several of Fiji's best wingers had chosen to play for other countries.

"Fiji has supplied 20 wings who play around the world and we would have the weakest set of wings that are playing at home," he said. Eden said overall about three-quarter of the team had his support, especially the locks position.

"There are about 18 players who are World Cup players," he said. "They've left out a couple of players who would have joined that grouping but they've been replaced by lesser ability players."

He was particularly scathing about the inclusion of two veteran players, which he preferred not to name. He said while vast experience was an asset, selection should largely be on the basis of physical capacity.

"It is understood that human body resilience becomes less tolerable as you grow older," said Eden. "It would have been best to take on another younger player."

But Flying Fijians coach Sam Domoni disagreed when the comments were put to him.

"This could be the best selection team we have seen in many years. We have a promising forwards and backs," he said.

"Our performance is based on everything that has been provided for us. This includes the sponsors and support from the public which we are very grateful for."

Fiji plays the defending champions Springboks on Saturday.