



Wansolwara

An independent student newspaper and online publication



Queen glad to be back 'home'

SHE'S the reigning Hibiscus Queen but, among her friends at the University of the South Pacific, she's more than that.

She's part of the family. The Journalism Students Association held a congratulatory afternoon tea in her honour.

JSA President Vilisite Tamani said her 'family' at USP was extremely proud of her achievement.

Drue, a first-year journalism and marine science major, said after the "amazing" experience, she was glad to be away from the spotlight and relax among 'family'.

She is now focused on catching up with her school work before she steps up preparations for the Miss South Pacific pageant.

Miss Hibiscus 2012 Drue Slatter, wearing crown, poses with members of USP's Journalism 'family'.

Feature and pictures on Page 8

Lift media standards

Scholar bemoans poor state of journalism

by KOILA VALEMEI

FIJI journalism needs a lot of improvement, says USP's Deputy Vice-Chancellor Dr Esther Williams, in her opening address at the 2012 Media and Democracy in the South Pacific Symposium at USP yesterday.

"Reports in the print media are riddled with editorial mistakes, they grow shorter and shorter, while those in our news broadcasts are even shorter and the quality of English is pretty poor," she said.

"Our papers in Fiji for instance have sizeable coverage on entertainment and consumerism adverts," she said. She added that on the morning radio programmes "editors become obsessed with stories that will report on conflicts more than anything else".

The state of affairs, she said, pointed to the urgent need for professional capacity building in this sector.

Journalism educator and former head of USP Journalism Shailendra Singh said training alone was not the solution to lifting quality

because significant improvement in journalists' salaries and conditions were needed.

"Many journalism students move in and then move right out of mainstream media into public relations because of poor working conditions but developing that experience is key to writing analytically and providing more in-depth quality stories," he said.

"In Australia, there are so many older pot-bellied, balding journalists who churn out analytical pieces but in Fiji, there is a dearth of such experienced, older jour-

nalists. "A journalism education will have a bearing on earning capacity so there's less chances of leaving; more experience will be gained...along with a more analytical, interpretative approach and this will also mean, being less likely to be manipulated by government," Singh said.

Permanent Secretary for Information, Sharon Smith-Johns said the government wanted a "vigorous media but with certain conditions that are prerequisite in most countries: not fuel racial division, not threaten peace and order, not

damage economy and people's jobs". She urged Fiji's journalists to take advantage of the lifting of censorship to begin fully informing media consumers.

"You will hear a lot about self-censorship, the notion that journalists in Fiji are too afraid to report fully and without fear or favour," she said. "Such fears are understandable in the transition from censorship to freedom. But I urge journalists not to use this as an excuse not to do their jobs."

More stories on the media symposium on pages 3 and 12

Members of the public are invited to a **SYMPOSIUM** on:

MEDIA & DEMOCRACY in the South Pacific

WHEN: Wednesday & Thursday (Sept 5-6)

VENUE: Japan Pacific-ICT multi-purpose theatre

Rio+ a 'political theatre'

by SHERITA SHARMA

THE Rio+ 20 outcome document did not meet expectations according to a representative of Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN).

Speaking at a panel discussion organised by the School of Development Studies at USP **WHEN??**, Noeleen Nabulivou said the summit's outcome document titled 'The future we want' was not a fulfilling document.

"This development is mostly driven towards the benefit of developed nations," she said.

Leaders meet short of success: DAWN

Nabulivou said the document was mostly the affirmation of existing commitments as per the 1992 Agenda 21 document, Convention on Sustainable Development (CSD) and other international development and human rights agreements.

"The document stated very early specific Rio principles and the threads really started to fray then," she said.

"The discourse at Rio was such that we referred to it as the po-

litical theatre, where all the actors debated on sustainable development issues," said Nabulivou.

She added the political theatre was divided into two- the North, which consisted mostly of developed states, and the South, referring to those in developing stages or the G77 countries.

"What we noticed at the summit was that the north is shaping the narrative," Nabulivou said.

"The North-centric countries are looking ahead while the South

is putting forward the question- what about our resources?"

"One south negotiator spoke openly of three hundred years of stolen resources, and a need to now define sustainable development for ourselves," she said.

Nabulivou added that G77 countries held contradictory positions relating to extractive industries such as mining.

"They are forced to show strength on environmental sustainability while at the same time

trying to resist being controlled by public and private mining contracts," she said.

"However, G77 called for any reference to mining industries being managed, regulated and taxed to be deleted."

Nabulivou also said the paradigm of sustainable development has been restricted to the concept of the 'green economy'.

"The green economy is skewed towards the economic pillar, which emphasises growth over equitable development and without any ecological limits," she said.

Campaign stresses proper disposal

by LUSIA LAGILEVU

ABOUT 200 students and staff made a sweep of the Laucala campus last Friday, in an effort to reinforce the importance of proper rubbish disposal.

Deputy Vice Chancellor Dr Esther Williams reminded everyone of the difference they could make as individuals.

"You students can make a big change, not only on campus but outside as well," she said.

She said maintaining respect for the environment was the first priority on the university's strategic plan.

Miss Hibiscus 2012 Drue Slatter, who also took part in the clean-up, also encouraged her peers to do the same outside of the campus.

She commended the campaign participants for their conscious effort as well as those living on campus for keeping the university clean.

The campaign was organised into 10 zones.



CLEAN FUN: Students were enthusiastic to take part in the Litter Sweep. □ Picture: LUSIA LAGILEVU

Youths' vision not accepted at conference: Activist

by SHEENAL SHARMA

THE Rio +20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development did not represent the future we want, said Krishneil Narayan, an environment activist.

Speaking at the USP-organised panel discussion on 'What happened at the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, and what does it mean for the Pacific?', Narayan said the Rio summit was more in favour of transnational companies.

"Our call to protect the voices of future generations through establishing an Ombudsman for Future Generations was removed from the text on the last days of Rio +20," he said.

Narayan said active participation of young people in decision-making processes was recognised.

"But it left out any reference as to 'how' that active participation of young people could be achieved," he said.

Narayan said deep concerns about continuing high levels of unemployment among youths were identified and the need for a global strategy on youth and employment building on the work of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) was also recognised.

Narayan said the need for non-formal education came up in most of the road to Rio +20 youth Preparatory Committee however, the youth found nothing about it in the text in Rio +20 conference.

"The youths asked the Co-Chairs of the Drafting Group if they could introduce this new language."

"The Co-Chairs gave them one hour to persuade the government delegates," he said.

"This is one example of how, against all the odds, the youth got one small change into the language of the Rio outcome statement.

"Non-formal education to youths about sustainability should be given more importance as it is more effective than classroom cognitive teaching on the subject."

He said it was critical for the voices of young people to be heard in this process.

"Give us a voice by including us in your discussions, he said.

Resident's passion sets eco-tourism project in motion

by EDWARD TAVANAVANUA

THE government has granted the establishment of a cultural ecotourism attraction at Laucala Beach Estate, Suva.

Restoration works is set to start on the old Naivoco war fort, which is also part of the National Trust of Fiji reserve.

Apisalome Movono, lives across from the site raised and concerns about the

government not playing an active role in maintaining the reserve.

Movono, a teaching assistant at the University of the South Pacific, said his goal is to restore the site to its glory days, a suburban eco-sanctuary. He has been working closely with local organisations to restore one of the remaining war forts in Fiji.

"My dream will be an oasis in the middle of Suva," he said. "Somewhere you can

come and see something that you don't see every day, and have that authentic, natural experience."

"The project titled "Ring ditch fortification site" aims to highlight the cultural attributes of the area by refurbishing the site with natural flora and fauna," said Movono.

The first archaeological digs will be conducted during USP's mid-semester break.

Pageant costume from USP drama

by KALESI MELE

THE costume of Miss World Fiji was first used by USP's Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture in one of its productions.

The feathered costume, which was presented to the world as Fiji's national dress, drew hostility from the larger public because of its misrepresentation.

Rising artist and USP student Sadrishan Vellaidan said he wore the owl costume for his *lulu* (owl) role in the musical *Vaka: The Birth of the Seer* in February.

Vellaidan said Miss World Fiji director Andhy Blake asked for permission to use the costume for the 2012 Miss World in Mongolia.

He said apart from adding more feathers and sequins to the attire, the costume remained the same.

The costume sparked public debate and questions resurfaced over the lack of quality control for representations of Fiji on the world stage.

Questions over the credibility of Blake's operations were raised in July when the Miss World Fiji was steeped in controversy because of the inclusion of the 16-year old Torika Watters, who was underage and did not meet the entry criteria.

Watters, who won the crown, was not selected by the panel of judges.

After the Miss World organisers refused to alter its criteria to accommodate Watters for this year's pageant, the first-runner-up Koini Vakaloloma stepped in.

This was not before Watters issued a public statement to claim other irregularities and to dissociate herself from Blake.

Blake has since apologised on national television for his poor choice of costume, which he had adamantly defended earlier.

He said it symbolised wisdom in the *iTaukei* culture, "and also with the Hindus where it is a messenger to the Goddess Lakshmi".

However, Director of the Department of Culture and Heritage Peni Cavuilagi said the *lulu* in Fijian culture.

Cavuilagi said he hoped people would be considerate when displaying culture especially in world expositions.

"I appreciate the opinion that we need to think outside the box but you have to ensure that you create something that is not completely opposite to what is traditional," Cavuilagi said.

USPSA admits failure

Academics call for separate student body for postgraduates



USPSA President Poasa Veidreyaki explains that his team is working hard on improving the student body's culture. Picture: VILISITE TAMANI

by KALESI MELE

MOVES are afoot to have postgraduate students represented by a separate body from the University of the South Pacific Students Association.

The Faculty of Arts, Law and Education's Associate Dean for Research Mohit Prasad said nothing had been confirmed because the proposal would require amendments to the university's constitution.

The need to break away was discussed at a forum organised for postgraduate students last week. The research deans for the university's three faculties agreed that the needs postgraduate students needed urgent attention, especially if USP was to realise its vision of becoming a great university.

He said postgrad student's needs would not be met if the body were to be affiliated under

USPSA. "When we are dealing with Post Grad students, it's a different kind of ball game," said Prasad. "You have to relate to them in a different way.

"Every successful institution around the world that centers around research, their postgrads have separate student bodies to that of the undergraduate," Prasad said.

"Having affiliation with USPSA tends to be complicated with all types of reporting, multiple aims that are centered on different groups and thus postgraduates will not be able to concentrate on a key area that they are supposed to."

USPSA President Poasa Veidreyaki said a different student association could only be accommodated by amending the university's charter.

"As far as I am concerned, the charter states that no other student body can exist, for that to change we will need to have the endorsement of

the minister of education from all member countries, as well as that of the representatives from Australia and New Zealand and as well as the students," he explained.

He admitted that the student body had failed to meet the demands of postgrad students in the past. Veidreyaki, who was elected into office last semester, vowed that this would change.

"There is one whole reason that USPSA exists and that is to support the students and that means undergrad and postgrad, but, honestly speaking, we have been tapping into undergrad most of the time and very little concern is being given to the postgrad," he said. "So we have just started to change our attitude and our mentality so we can address concerns from both the undergrad and postgrad levels."

He added that a proposal to have more postgraduate students on the council was being discussed.

Journalism for the people essential for democracy: Hackett

by KOILA VALEMEI and KALESI MELE

JOURNALISM that contributes to the goals and values of development is essential for democracy, says academic Professor Robert Hackett.

The media educator from Simon Fraser University said it was also important to remember that journalism and the media can only contribute to change over the long term after it becomes entrenched in the culture of respective societies.

"Only then can it undermine authoritarian systems," he said. He made the comments in his keynote address at USP's media symposium yesterday.

In a later interview, he said there

was a need for "structural pluralism" that allows for "all kind of media and no one kind for all".

"The bottom-up structure gives voice to ordinary people and looks critically at how they are affected by government programs and policies," he said.

He said this was opposed to the top-down development journalism model in which the media is subjected to government scrutiny.

"The bottom-up development structure allows for a collaborative situation where the media can inform both the public and the state," he said.

Director for the Pacific Media Centre at Auckland University of Tech-

nology Professor David Robie said the power of investigative journalism was a crucial aspect of development journalism.

"In development journalism, journalists are encouraged to travel to the interiors and get stories from those at grass root levels," he said.

"Deliberative journalists seek to expose the truth and report on alternatives and solutions."

Journalism educator Shailendra Singh said there was a need for a media structure where government was "hands-off". "We need a type of journalism which is separate from government and a media that will invest in their staff," he said.

Students call for full review

by VILISITE TAMANI

THE constitution of USP Laucala's student body will undergo a full review following a majority vote at the annual general meeting yesterday.

The motion for the repeal was on the basis that it had "several loopholes and discrepancies".

The constitution review committee will be headed by law lecturer Aman Singh.

Meanwhile, the audited financial reports for 2010 and 2011 were tabled yesterday.



Let's speak and be heard



SHERITA SHARMA
Editor

“Fijians share a unique, multicultural identity. In order to preserve that, we need to advocate for a constitution that will be representative of all groups.”

A CONSTITUTION is the supreme law of a country. Fiji having had a tumultuous political history has already had three constitutions.

The first drawn up in 1970 was abrogated in Fiji's second coup, in September 1987. The second, created in 1990, was a short-lived one; it was a discriminatory set of laws which did not represent the nation of Fiji. The 1997 constitution survived for 12 years until the late president Ratu Josefa Iloilo abrogated it in 2009.

Now, three years later, we have again started the process of formulating a new constitution. Fiji's people, from our seniors to our young ones who are mature enough to understand the significance of this process, have been encouraged to share their opinions and emotions. The constitutional commission, headed by Professor Yash Ghai has been going around the country, in an effort to get the public more involved.

The commission is reaching out and going the extra mile. This shows they are taking the initiative to accept and in-

clude a diversity of ideas from the public.

Sadly, many are not taking advantage of this opportunity. We, the students in our journalism programme, are not letting this opportunity slide. The Journalism Students Association is rightly moving on our collective submission. Everyone is excited about the opportunity.

Fijians share a unique, multicultural identity. In order to preserve that, we need to advocate for a constitution that will be representative of all groups.

Conditions on equality, freedom of every individual to express opinions, participate in national decision-making as well as other basic civil and political rights need to be emphasised.

The government has given Fijians the opportunity to register to vote in the 2014 elections. This initiative shows the government's commitment to have elections as soon as possible, so Fiji can have a democratically elected authority in place. Clear guidelines must also be set out on the country's electoral systems in the constitution. A fair

constitution upholds the rights of every individual in society. It adheres to the international law that emphasises everyone's right as a human being. We need a strong, all-inclusive set of laws that will not be abrogated. Policy-makers should create a set of laws that is bound by a strong clause and will be 'permanent'.

Otherwise there will be no respect for the rule of law, and people will just assume that a constitution is something we can easily abrogate. It is a step towards democracy because people are actually participating in the political dialogue.

The constitutional consultation committee is a very accessible body. We must grab this opportunity and share our hopes, our frustrations and our vision for Fiji.

We, the people, cannot claim to not have had the chance. We must take interest despite our busy lives. We must take part in the political affairs because it affects every one of us; young and old alike.

We must promote a democratic society. Let's do this for Fiji's future, for our future.

Talanoa

USP campus crusade ban

IT is a sad day for USP students and for Fiji when USP on the 6th of June 2012 banned Student Life from its campuses.

Christian Missionaries came onto our shores 176 years ago on 12th October, 1839. Fiji was the darkest place on the face of the earth with rampant cannibalism, the strangling of widows, the abominable sexual immoralities, infanticides (the killing of babies), tribal warfare, and demon worship.

Yet the missionaries sacrificed their lives. Many died on our shores. Some were cooked and eaten.

Please read "Fiji and the Fijians volume 2" by James Calvert.

Today though, Fiji has been voted as the "happiest place in the world".

What we, Fijians, are today is because of the basic Christian upbringing we were raised in.

We cannot help but hear our visitors say that the secret to Fiji, is its people, people and people.

We are not perfect but please respect the faith that changed the people that



changed the nation. I am not perfect either, but I am a life that was guided and changed at USP in the 1980s by the Campus Crusade for Christ (Student Life).

I have a son and a daughter cur-

rently attending USP and I am always happy when I hear that they sometimes attend the Student Life meetings. It is a comfort to me as a father to know that there is someone reliable and trustworthy looking after

the welfare of my children. This kind of move is new to USP and also to Fiji and I am sure that it did not come from (Vice Chancellor Professor) Rajesh (Chandra), whom I personally know, and who has been in USP for

most of his life. I hope and pray that whoever was responsible for this ban will seriously reconsider the decision.

SEMI TUKANA,
Suva

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CAPTIVATING: Roshika Deo's confidence was obvious during her reading.

Picture: LUSIA LAGILEVU



ABOVE THE REST: Seona Smiles is all smiles after her poem was declared the best.

Picture: LUSIA LAGILEVU



WALKING ON: Mental Health activist and youth leader Gary Rounds is a regular at the poetry slams.

Picture: LUSIA LAGILEVU

Smiles' poetic brilliance

by **KALESI MELE**

DRAWING from her experiences as a 'pseudo-Indian' helped Seona Smiles win the recent Poetry Slam competition at USP.

Her prose, titled 'I'm only a pseudo-Indian,' is about her experience as a woman married to a Fijian of Indian descent and from her reflections of people who are visitors to the Pacific. She used the term Pseudo-Indian in her piece to indicate how she became assimilated to the culture in Fiji as she herself was had only been living in the country for the past thirty years.

"The verse I read about 'I'm only a pseudo-Indian' came mostly from observing people who come to the Pacific from overseas with worthy intentions of doing good, and who think they know all about the place and the people in five and a half minutes," she said.

"I draw from my own experiences as a woman, as a woman in Fiji, as a woman in Fiji with a family; elements of the physical, social and cultural environment come into that," Seona adds.

Smiles said readers at

the poetry slam were mostly self-reflective and had developed an oriental perspective to give their works a more universal application. She said at times people's first impression of others become tragic mistakes and sometimes lead to a cultural confusion.

She said, at 67 years of age, her performance at the poetry slam would be the first and the last because she felt she needed to let the young "strut their stuff".

She added that most of the performers mirrored the way Pacific writing in general worked; through colonial and immediate postcolonial years, touching on the experiences that weren't solely about them.

Smiles reflected on the young performer's use of 'colourful colloquialisms' saying she loved the lively and often very apt expressions she heard on the streets.

She said she understood that these were portions of everyday life and were reflective in good writing.

Poetry slam co-ordinator Mohit Prasad, who is also a dean for research at USP, said the poetry slam was very successful as it involved 18 readers and a dozen performers.

Internet quota doubles

by **VILISITAMANI**

UNIVERSITY of the South Pacific students in Fiji and across the region have received a 100% increase in their monthly updated internet quota.

The increase which came into effect on September 1. USP staff have also received an increase in quota.

USPSA President Poasa Veidreyaki says the increase for students is a result of meetings his office has been having with the IT department to push for additional student quota.

"From last year we have been meeting with ITS management and have continuously pushed for the quota increase," he says.

"Courses like UU200 and 204 were eating up student quota because of the amount of course related materials that students have to access online," he added.

First year student Filipe Vuniwai welcomes the increase and says it is timely one.

"It's about time they did it because now lecturers are putting up more and more online notes and readings for us to access and it's not just in the UU courses," Filipe says.

He added that students are also turning to the internet more when doing their assignments and projects because everything is "online now".

Manasa a third year student is also happy with this increase.

Users	Before	After	Increase Amount
Undergraduates	400 MB	800 MB	100%
Postgraduates	600 MB	1.2 GB	100%
PhD Students	1 GB	2 GB	100%
Staff	2 GB	3 GB	50%

The table indicates the new and old internet quota of staff and students.

"It is such a relief that they have finally decided to increase the quota.

"Sometimes I've had to buy extra internet quota because the monthly \$80.00 is just not enough anymore. IT should periodically look at increasing the quota every 2 years because the internet usage for students is sure to increase every year," he said.

Vandhana Rao, a third-year Information Systems student, also welcomes the increase but said USP's IT also needed to review their rates.

"While the increase is a good thing, they should also look at decreasing their usage rates," she said. "At the moment their download rate is 20c per MB which is too much. The other internet provider rates are much lower than that," Vandhana said.

Manaema Takashi, a third-year student, says that IT should go further and look at making some popular sites free to access.

"Students are using social networking

sites like Facebook to communicate with other students and even as a source of information so IT should try and make it free of charge to access," she says.

"When students want to find out what topics will be covered in their test, when their assignment is due, what USPSA has planned for the week or even where to buy cheap text books, they don't check on their MOODLE page or check their student webmail. They go to Facebook and ask their friends about it. Plus, most of these student bodies at USP also have Facebook pages which students access a lot," she adds.

Poasa has also stated that the quota system once limited to Laucala campus will now be implemented across all campuses.

"Most students based in other campuses in Fiji and in the region did not have internet quotas for students. The internet is open for all, but there are restrictions on social networking sites," he says.

"And there were instances where for example a DFL student studying in Tokelau comes to Laucala to do something for a week, previously she would not have been able to access the internet when she logs onto the USP computers. But now she will be able to access it the same way Laucala campus students can," he adds.

Poasa says as USPSA Federal Chair, he also has a responsibility to raise not only IT related issues in Laucala, but in other campuses too.

"We are also looking at IT issues in other regional and local campuses as well," he explains. "In the Solomon Islands, there are around 300 students based there, but we've received reports that sometimes there are only 30 PCs working.

"In Lautoka campus there is a need for more computers," he said.

Poasa says he is also liaising with them to ensure that internet connection speed in the other centres are also improved.



One social for all races

by SHEENAL SHARMA

THERE should only be one big social event for all our students instead of having several to cater for the various ethnic associations.

This is the dream the newly-elected president of the University of the South Pacific's Student Association (USPSA) Ifereimi Naruma hopes to realise during his term in office.

"One of my aims is to promote the Pacific way of unity and harmony amongst different racial and ethnic groups," he said.

"As the president I believe I can change their perception," Naruma said.

"We want to promote regionalism and not judge people according to their races.

"Our team will go step by step to improve what needs to be improved, change what needs to be changed, and serve with integrity and transparency."

Naruma, a senior member of the Pacific United Party who had served as the representative of students in the Faculty of Arts, Law and Education, said

the wish to consolidate the social into one big event for all would require changes to the USPSA Constitution.

He said a proper review of the constitution was needed because several clauses were no longer relevant.

"Some parts of the constitution contradict other parts and that is why I will ensure that the review will be done," he said.

Naruma said he was grateful to the students who placed their trust and confidence in him to take over the leadership.

The annual general meeting was held yesterday at the USP Gymnasium.

Manaema Saitala is the new vice president while the treasurer is Jallen Willie. The other executive members include the chairpersons for the associations various committees.

They are Adi Talatoka Cama (Culture), Peni Nabukelevu (Religion), Niko Rabuku (international and community relations), Paul Taavao (Sports), Nicholas Manuel (Social), Makasini Tava (Education) and Rex Solo (Welfare).



Students check the rolls for their names before casting their votes.

PICTURES: Lusia Lagilevu



A student casts his vote at the polling station at the university's gymnasium



Pacific United Party's members distribute free sandwiches on polling day

Flashmob's a first for USP Open Day

by RASHI KUMAR

USP's Open Day this year was a memorable event for many but particularly so for a group of students who executed the first flashmob on Laucala campus.

The decision to stage a flashmob was taken only three days before the open day but with the help of students from other programmes, it was realised.

Journalism seniors Sherita Sharma and Sheenal Sharma said the initiative was first put forward by journalism's Neisau Tuidraki, who suggested a flashmob would be a great way to start the open day.

"It definitely was a success," said Sherita.

"It was fun to watch and everyone at the hall enjoyed it. We did not even realise that we would be able to attract such a large crowd."

Sheenal said their flashmob was different because they had a message to relate.

"We even had a message written on the backs of the mob's t-shirts, saying free media," Sheenal said. The organisers said they wanted to get people

to know about USP journalism and the flashmob was the perfect way to appeal to USP's younger community. Choreography was led by Sarah Vamarasi and Lusia Lagilevu.

"It seemed like a crazy idea at the time but we managed to get a lot of people to participate in it", said Sherita.

Salameta Taukei, who participated in the flashmob, said, "It was awesome. I had never done anything like that. For me, that was like coming out of my comfort zone".

"The flash mob was an amazing idea to get the people interested in what the journalism school was up to," said Paayal Chand, who witnessed the flashmob's performance at the dining hall.

She said she surprised and amazed at the vibrancy. At one point, one of the mob's Samoan students jumped onto the tables for a brief, impromptu performance, before joining the flashmob.

The students also used the Wansolwara newspapers as a dancing prop. Journalism students have since received two requests for the group to perform.



USP's flashmob pioneers surprise patrons at the dining hall during the USP Open Day. PICTURE: Rashi Kumar



Rise in 'junkivores' to blame

by NANDNI VANDHANA

MORE people are becoming 'junkivores' and are adopting a complacent attitude toward their health, and these poor habits are largely to blame for the high incidence of cancer cases in Fiji, says Health Minister Dr Neil Sharma.

In an interview last month, Dr Sharma said most people were consuming a lot of junk food and yet they complain when they get diseases.

"People should eat well, exercise everyday and look after their body well to avoid getting cancer," he said.

He said Fiji's populace was becoming increasingly obese and as such, he expected the number of cancer cases to continue to rise.

"The problem is the people; they are not responsible for their health," he said.

"Most people also stay in denial over diseases and do not seek treatment. When people are diagnosed with a sickness, they blame the doctor and the facilities."

Fiji has five major hospitals, 78 health centres, 18 sub-divisional hospitals and 109 nursing stations.

Dr Sharma said people should make

use of these facilities for early detection of diseases for faster and quality treatment.

He said while it was true that Fiji lacked cancer specialists, the real problem was that people only sought treatment when they were at the later stages of the illness.

Work is underway to have radiotherapy accessible at the Colonial War Memorial Hospital. This, said Dr Sharma, would mean a complete complement of cancer treatment services at Fiji's main hospital.

At the moment cancer treating facilities available in Fiji include surgery and

chemotherapy. The ministry also plans to have a medical scientist in the country in the next few years.

"In five to ten years, we want to have facilities that will be run by our own people," Dr Sharma said.

The Ministry will also re-introduce the HPV vaccine in September for girls between the ages of nine to thirteen years; this is to reduce the chances of girls getting cervix cancer.

There are two ways cancer can infect a person: firstly through infections and the second depends on the lifestyle that we live.

Calls for early check up

by MUBEENA SHAHEED

LATE detection of cancer is one of the reasons for the high number of cancer deaths in Fiji, says the Fiji Cancer Society.

Society president Nirmala Nambiar said that this is why it is vital to create awareness on this issue.

Nambiar said the biggest challenge they faced is getting more people to assist because it is a voluntary organisation.

"We need more people to spread the word out there, to talk about it, to visit patients, help us in any area, we appreciate that," said Nambiar.

"In early detection, there is a cure but when it comes to the late stage, there is a minimum chance of getting cured."

"Staying in denial is also a contributing factor to increase in the number of cancer patients in Fiji"

1091 people in Fiji were diagnosed with cancer last year.

In the last decade, there has been 125 recorded cases of cancer in children, and the Fiji Cancer Society recorded that leukemia and brain cancer are the most common forms of cancer in young children. Breast and cervical cancer is most common in women.

A health team from the Colonial War Memorial Hospital was at USP to conduct free medical clinics for staff and students as part of its initiative to create awareness on cancer.

A 2005 survey published by the Pacific Health Dialogue Journal showed that 38.2 per cent of women succumbed to breast cancer in the Pacific while 43 per cent were victims of cervical cancer.



Many volunteers who shaved their heads in the effort to raise funds shared their personal stories of how the WOWS movement has touched their lives.

PICTURES: Wansolwara



Legend FM personality Alex Elbourne yields to pressure to also have his eyebrows shaved to raise more funds for WOWS



Activities at the WOWS campaign included entertainment from various artists, including the Rako Cultural Dance Group

Pacific songbird backs WOWS

by NANDNI VANDHANA

VANESSA Quai, a singing sensation from Vanuatu was in Fiji in support of the "Walk on Walk Strong" campaign.

Quai, who recorded her first music album at the age of eight, performed at the WOWS concert to help raise funds for treatment of cancer patients in Fiji.

She was also present at the Oceania Centre of the University of the South Pacific to give the students a preview of what to expect at the main concert.

Quai has been singing for 15 years now and dedicates all her songs to God, who she says has been her source of strength.

"My songs come with a message, mostly to empower and help those in need," she said.

"I am currently with youths in my church in producing a song for them, on the issues that we as young people face"

She said that the WOWS campaign was a worthwhile cause as it helped raise funds for treatment of cancer for victims.

100 new doctors to solve crisis

by NANDNI VANDHANA

DOCTOR shortages will soon be a thing of the past when more than 100 medical interns graduate as doctors next year, says Dr Neil Sharma.

This will be an increase from the usual 30 that would normally graduate yearly.

The Ministry has also increased the in-

take for nurses at the Fiji School of Nursing from 90 per year to 300.

He said this was all part of the government's plan to have enough health professionals in the country.

"The Ministry is also bonding medical doctors in the country; a doctor is required to serve in the country for nine years for six years of study."

This is all part of the process to building on the number of health professional in the country.

The Ministry is also providing incentives for rural doctors and nurses by giving them free housing and facilities.

"We are trying to reduce the push factor and make it more comfortable for them to stay in the country," Dr Sharma said.

The country's medical profession has long suffered from the migration of doctors overseas. Last year alone, 120 doctors left for Australia.

"We cannot do much as overseas countries offer more to their pocket and so every year, health specialists are leaving our shores," he said.

Out to inspire

An insider perspective on our new Hibiscus Queen

by DAWN GIBSON

THE words I remember very clearly from Drue Slatter's crowning night were "thanks so much for controlling the 'maji,'" as she acknowledged her hairdresser and waved at the crowd, tears flowing and that impeccable crown atop her head.

Indeed, she is our new Miss Hibiscus and we are every bit proud of her stunning performance throughout the Hibiscus Festival. Getting to know Drue has been and continues to be an ongoing experience for me.

The first time I met Drue, she was 16 years old and fresh out of Cuvu College in Sigatoka.

If I recall correctly, she did not want to be disturbed and was seemingly lost and standing outside a classroom at International School Suva (ISS). She was the new owner of a two-year scholarship and already hating the different environment around her.

"Hi I'm Dawn, my teacher asked me to come over and see if you needed anything," I said.

"Hi I'm Drue, I'm not from here but I'm fine!" she replied in a rather shove-offish manner.

Coming from a local school myself, I empathised with her reaction straight away and, to be perfectly honest, had I not told her my background first, we would not be as close as we are today.

"Oh! You're from a local school too? Thank goodness," she'd added, smilingly and with a lot less pale face.

Drue grew up in Sigatoka, surrounded by family, sand, sun and beach; referring to herself as "one who loves playing guitar and snorkelling"

She spent most of her Primary school life at Saint Joan of Arc, and forms three to five at Cuvu College. "Growing up in Sigatoka was a lot of fun and both

schools that I attended were seriously good schools, particularly Cuvu College, which gave me really good grounding," she said.

Scholarships were a large part of Drue's life, having achieved two scholarships in her high school years alone - one for Cuvu College and another to attend ISS, where she graduated from in 2011.

"ISS was the biggest culture shock for me, everything was different there, but I have never once regretted applying for the scholarship that got me to that school

"The local education system is terrific and certainly necessary, but ISS taught me about spontaneous thinking, to think for myself, to analyse anything I'm told and to question everything. I consider myself so lucky because I got that chance to explore both the local and international schools and essentially I got the best of both worlds," she said.

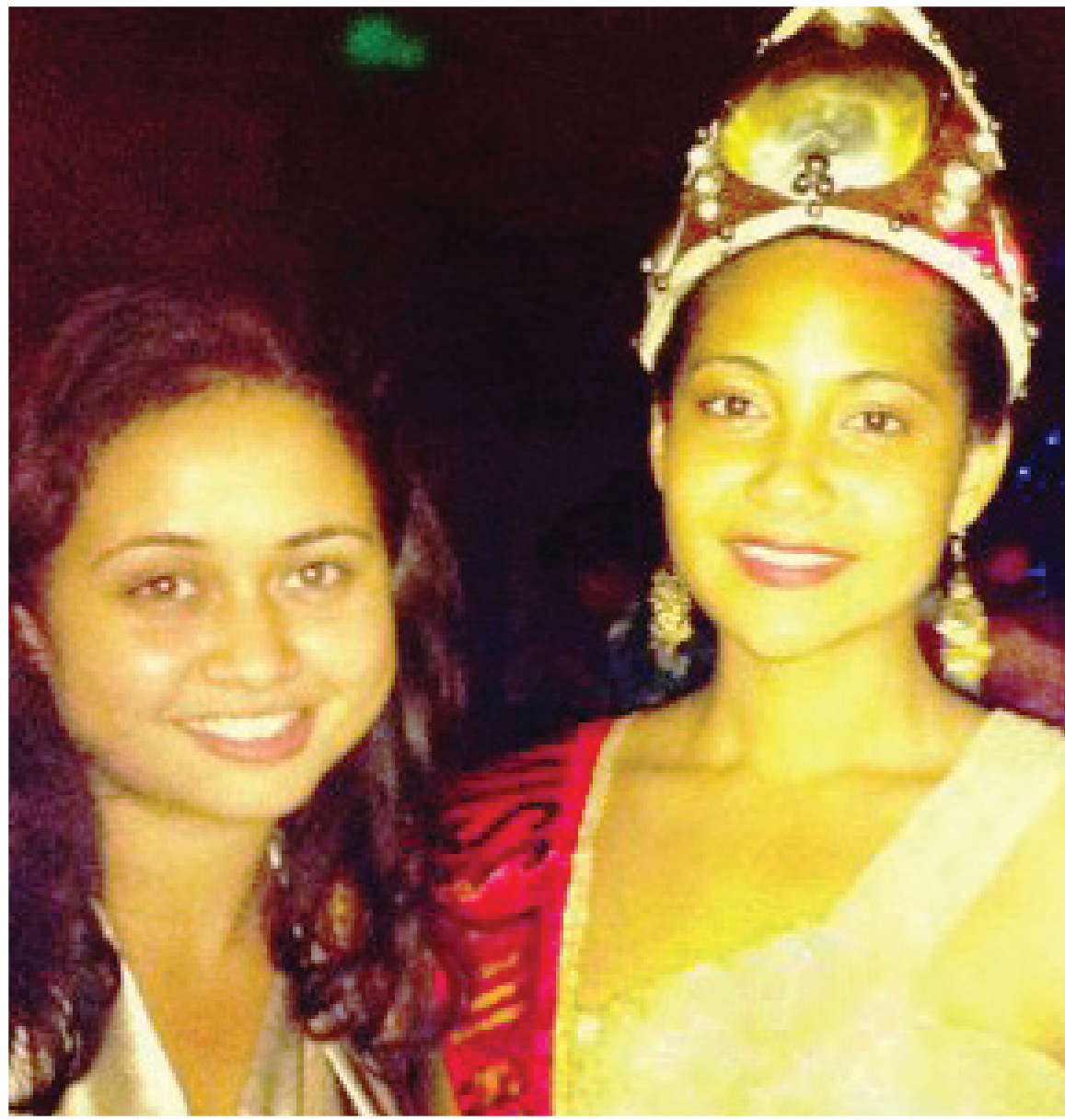
Drue eventually became a familiar face around my house once she was more comfortable at ISS and although it was because she'd become the bonafide girlfriend of my brother, it gave me a chance to get to know her better.

Today, Drue Slatter is a double major student at the University of the South Pacific (USP), where she studies journalism and marine affairs

"I was really worried when I first came to USP because the campus is so big and there are so many options to choose from, I honestly thought I was going to get lost trying to choose something

"But journalism certainly stood out for me and I went with my love for the sea when I chose to do Marine Affairs because, honestly, my passion is in the ocean," she said.

Drue's life then took a bit of a turn when she agreed to become Miss Mai Life Magazine after being interviewed by MaiLife Editor, Naziah Ali.



HIGH SPIRITS: Drue Slatter, right, and Dawn Gibson, moments after the crowning. PICTURE: Neisau Tuidraki

"Firstly I was really reluctant to do it because of the misconception that surrounds pageants, but I gave it a shot because so many people told me that they didn't think I could do it and I wanted to prove them all wrong

"But also, being young and wanting to say something, but not having the platform to do so is really hard. I then realised that Hibiscus gave me the opportunity to do just that," she said.

Admittedly, Drue refers to her first days as a contestant as "very shifty"

"Some days I would get up and think to myself 'I can't do this anymore,' but it was during those times that my coordinators and close friends and family would build me up again and I really appreciated that"

Some of Drue's 'rocks' as she terms them include her mother, Tessa Miller Campbell, her father, Desmond Slatter, her Step-dad, Brad Campbell, Naziah Ali and her boyfriend, Ben Gibson.

"Hibiscus didn't change me, it simply made who I am a better role model and I am more than proud of that achievement," she said.

"I like to think I was as real as possible during the Hibiscus - a typical, young Fijian



Several of Drue Slatter's USP journalism classmates took part in the floats procession on the final day of the festival.

PICTURE: Neisau Tuidraki

woman - and if the judges liked me that'd simply be a bonus, but this whole thing has been unforgettable," she said. Drue is taking everything one step at a time at the moment and looks forward to the exciting journey ahead - the Miss South Pacific Pageant.

"I take so much pride in being a Pacific Islander.

There is now a whole wave of young people who take pride in being Pacific Islanders and this is such a great time to be representing that wave

"All I really want to do at the pageant is to represent Fiji fully and do it justice because it is simply amazing. Sure, we have our problems, just like every other

country, but I want to represent how much potential Fiji has, not only in the South Pacific, but also as a participant in the international community."

"I can do many things as current Hibiscus Queen, but mainly, to have inspired any number of people will have been my definition of a successful Hibiscus reign."



Media & Democracy in the South Pacific

by RONISH KUMAR

A FREE press is essential because it ensures accountability and transparency.

Responding to queries, the former head of USP Journalism, Shailendra Singh, said a free press was a democratising agent that allowed people to have a say, and kept a watch over those in powerful positions.

“A free press is a complicated concept because it is about balancing societal responsibilities with commercial imperatives,” he said.

Human rights activist Robert Hanlon agrees.

He says the alternative guarantees more trouble.

This, he explains, is because a press under tight state control is unlikely to reflect the whole or true picture of itself.

This would in turn, most probably, deprive the society of reaching an understanding of how it can improve itself.

He said if there is no free press in a country then it will lead to other dramatic problems.

“Of course, all societies have some type of restrictions and there may be cases of national security, public safety or liability where restrictions must be applied,” he says. “However, I do

not believe economic development improves with media restrictions and I have yet to see any convincing study that proves otherwise”.

Singh says, “If the press is shackled, it will encourage transgressions and it will be easier for the transgressors to get away”.

He adds, “the press too has powers which if abused harms society and endangers press freedom”.

The recent News of the World’s phone hacking scandal exposed the heights of press power and its corrupting influence.

Overall, Hanlon says media restrictions will mean the inability to hold bureaucratic officials, judicial mechanisms or politicians accountable for their actions since they could not be scrutinised in public.

“This can heavily weigh on any incentive structure a government may have to improve its services since there is no accountability,” he said.

“Also the government will not be able to test policy by using the media to investigate public reactions.”

He said a lack of press freedom could also lead to fear within the journalistic community and force good reporters to self-censor, undermining their professionalism and independence.



Symbolism for the media’s role to ensure it treats everyone objectively and spreads no lies. □ INSETS: Images of media practitioners at work.



Standards suffer when the media take sides: Naidu

by FARISHA AHMED

FIJI’s media are compromising their quality and content by choosing to take sides, says USP academic in governance, Professor Vijay Naidu.

“The media should retrace back to what its multiple roles are and should push forward and create space for itself,” he said.

“It should push the lines drawn between and ask for further liberalisation and for freedom of speech.”

He said the harsh penalties stipulated in the Media Decree forces the media

to self-censor even further. He said so far the media had been playing a dubious kind of role.

He added that the media quality was “disastrous” and that a whole lot of work needed to be done to ensure the media “can be respected and ensure free representation of all sides of the story”.

Professor Naidu said while the government had removed its censors from newsrooms and lifted the PER, whether the press will be able to freely fulfill its role remained to be seen.

‘Can (the media) ensure free representation of all sides of the story?’



A Fiji TV cameraman waits for the game to start at the TFL National Stadium. □ FILE PHOTO

Society must ‘engage’ to lift quality

by RONISH KUMAR

SOCIETY must remain engaged with its media to ensure quality reporting, says human rights expert Robert Hanlon.

“A disengaged society can let press freedom get away from itself by allowing inaccurate or biased reporting become per-

ceived as fact and the public has a responsibility to provide checks and balances over the media,” he said. David Dyck, editor of *The Peak* student newspaper at Canada’s Simon Fraser University said some forms of restrictive laws were useful and kept the media accountable.

“I’m sure that media might manipulate news stories to slap the hand of the government, perhaps unjustly, in an attempt to sell news,” Dyck said.

“However, other media, citizens, and the government should act to check validity and honesty of the media.” Sandra Tarte, a

senior politics lecturer at USP, said the recent saga involving News Corporation’s News of the World’s phone-hacking scandal, was evidence of how such power can be abused by a so-called free media.

Professor David Robie, of the Auckland University of Technol-

ogy, says profits are clouding the media’s perceptions of its role.

He quoted development journalist Kunda Dixit who argued that the public service role of media was being usurped by businesses which defined news as: “news has to sell, otherwise it is not news”.



Media prepares for polls

by YVETTE D'UNIENVILLE

ONE of the main roles of the media is to keep citizens informed on issues that affect them.

Thus, it stands to reason that at a time when the government prepares to keep its promise of holding a national election to return to a government elected by the people, various media houses have begun to ready their staff for 2014.

The Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited's acting TV news ed-

itor Edwin Nand said plans were underway for proper trainings to be conducted in preparations for the 2014 election. He said staff would be given refresher workshops on political lobbying and issues of balance and transparency.

The government-owned media house has 16 reporters. Nand says they will need to boost their numbers to provide quality coverage.

"It's a national exercise which needs more people on the ground. We usually rope in staff from other departments as extra hands,"

he said. He added that while FBCL had not conducted any sort of analysis on its coverage of the last elections, they planned to clearly set out the guidelines for all election coverage when 2014 draws nearer.

The national daily, *Fiji Sun*, has adopted a different strategy. Deputy Editor Maika Bolatiki said they would wait for work on Fiji's constitution to be completed "then we will see what we have to do in preparation for the covering the 2014 elections".

"We are working very closely

with the government and in that our work had evolved mostly in line with the constitution, informing and educating the people how to make their submissions for the Constitution as well as the electronic voting registration and letting them contribute their views," he said.

The Fiji Times has embarked on preparations, and have organised several training sessions.

"As part of the training, we will do in-house courses on balanced and fair reporting and go through the media decree again to high-

light the boundaries in which we will work," said deputy editor Ilaitia Prasad. "We endeavor to give everyone a fair go in the run up to the election, and ensure our reporters are trained through the vote-making processes."

The Pacific Islands News Association's manager Matai Akauola said it would work closely with its members to ensure fair and balanced coverage. He said most of the PINA members who covered the 2006 general election were still in the country and could offer help if needed.

Naidu: shift focus to 'real issues'

by KASIM NAZEEM

THE print media failed in its role because they gave political stories too much prominence compared to stories on economic and social issues that directly affect the people, says Professor Vijay Naidu, a prominent scholar in development studies.

"The media in general, and the print media in particular, overly focused on the 'political', and much less on many real social and economic issues that affect the citizens of Fiji and the region," he said.

"There is considerable scope for media and government to work together to promote economic and social development. Not enough has been made of this. There are many areas of development that are little understood or covered by the media. For instance sectoral areas such as agriculture, fisheries, banking and finance, solid waste disposal, education and health services, as well as more broadly, nation building," said Naidu.

He said a journalist operating under a development model was entitled to give information on positive, as well as negative aspects, of development projects.

This, he said, would open a democratic space for meaningful public participation in the process of development.



A student reads a poster on free speech that is pinned on the Wansolwara noticeboard outside the newsroom. The poster relays that the freedom to dissent is essential for a strong democracy.

PICTURE: Lusia Lagilevu

Good journalists vital for strong democracy

by SHEENAL SHARMA

GOOD journalists are important to ensuring a strong democracy, says two journalism scholars.

"If you want to have democracy, you need a free and a responsible press," said University of the South Pacific's head of journalism Dr Marc Edge.

"Journalists must know how democracy operates to be able to talk about democracy," he said.

Fiji National University's head of journalism Elia Vesikula said experience alone was inadequate if one wanted to be a good journalist.

"Experience could be a way of get-

ting knowledge but it is only one type of experience," he said. "It is very limited knowledge that you have because you are doing the same thing for the last 15 years."

However, the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited's Acting Editor Edwin Nand disagreed. He said he and many other professionals in the field were proof that someone straight-out-of-high-school and with on-the-job training could become a very good reporter.

"They must have the passion for the job, the right mindset and are intelligent," he said. "I am a high school dropout. I have studied only up to

Form 6 and I can proudly say I am one of the best at my job. I have seen people come out of university with degrees and they haven't been able to do it," said Nand.

He said many of the journalism graduates who failed, either could not take the pressure or they just did not have the intelligence to be reporters because they found it difficult to be analytical.

"If you want to become a journalist, you need to have the passion for the job," he said.

Nand said it was one of those trades in which you did it for the love of the job, rather than for the money.

Scholar warns of power to destroy

by KASIM NAZEEM

THE media is a powerful tool that can be used to either ensure democracy, or undermine it, says academic Professor Vijay Naidu.

He shared the observation while urging the media to also make submissions to the constitutional review commission.

This, he said, will encourage people to speak.

"So we all can have freedom of speech and a more respectable and balanced press," says Professor Naidu.

"It is something that is incremental and, despite the shortcomings of the government, hopefully, as we have the right to talk and make submissions on the constitution, we can move towards a more peaceful country," he said.

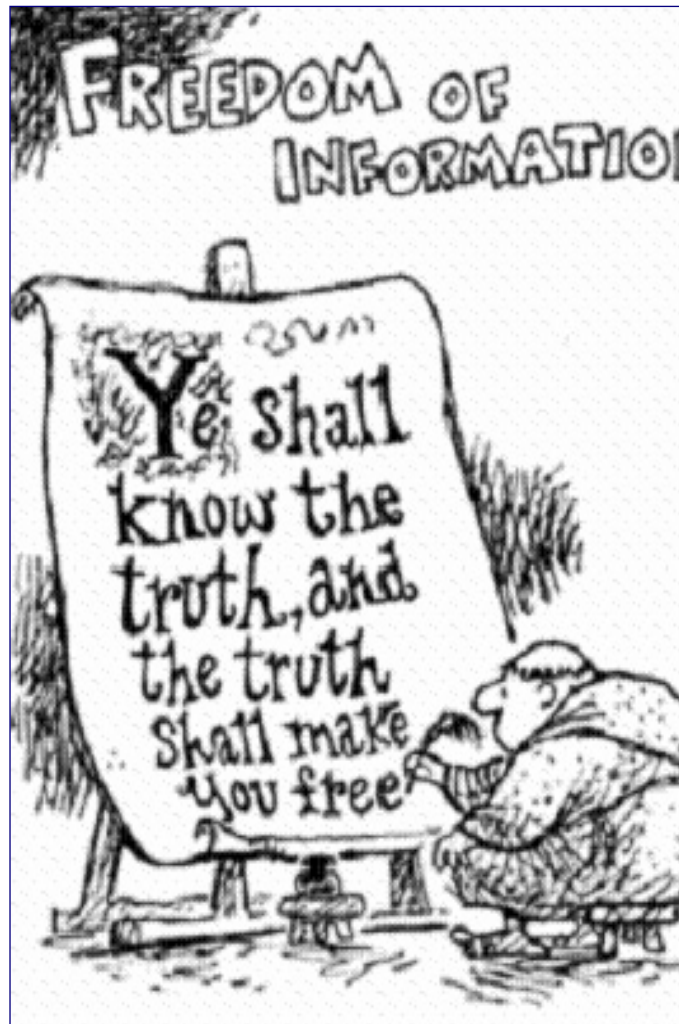
On the subject of media freedom, Naidu said it was often forgotten that press freedom was the right of the public to be informed, and not just the right of journalists to be heard.

He admitted that journalists face a range of obstacles that make it difficult for them to hold those in power to account.

Nevertheless, he said it was no excuse for journalism to be "race-horse politics".

“The free flow of information ... lies at the heart of the very notion of democracy”

Access is a ‘human right’



SOURCE: porkbrainsandmilkgravy.blogspot.com

by SHERITA SHARMA

FREEDOM of information is best defined as the freedom to access information held by public bodies.

Such an enabling capacity has, after much lobbying, become recognised on the international stage as an essential human right.

In case you are wondering what is the link between this essential right and democracy, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General, Communications and Information Abdul Waheed Khan frames it well when he said: “The free flow of information and ideas lies at the heart of the very notion of democracy and is crucial to effective respect for human rights.”

Many of the world's developed and developing nations are making an effort to enact freedom of information (FOI) laws. Fiji is among them. The commitment to do so was enshrined in the 1997 Constitution. Nothing else has eventuated since.

Attorney-General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum said such a law was essential because an FOI essentially meant “members of the public, citizens, in this case, Fijians, have the ability to access information that af-

fects them”. “Sometimes, laws need to be implemented because they are the right thing to do,” he said. “From an average Fijian's perspective, they want to know about issues that will affect them on a daily basis.

“You may apply for a scholarship and be refused.

“You may apply for a taxi permit. You may apply to lease some land and you know that you may have had a valid proposal but the other person got it.

“You want to know why they got it. How did they arrive at that decision? These are the everyday issues that we should be focused on,” he said.

Sayed-Khaiyum said FOI laws are also empowering because it helped to hold those in power accountable.

Another aspect which he said must be remembered was the need to ensure FOI laws were not abused.

“So there needs to be all safeguards to protect also personal privacy,” said Sayed-Khaiyum.

“Personal privacy is another side of the equation; not any Tom, Dick or Mary should be allowed to access information unless you are the directly-affected party.”

The media too would need to exer-

cise a certain level of responsibility and not make frivolous applications, he cautioned.

“There needs to be certain limitations, otherwise you will find everybody in the ministry- all they're doing is trying to dig up papers rather than trying to concentrate on their daily work,” he explained.

Regional journalist and Pacific Freedom Forum founder Lisa Williams-Lahari said journalists needed to be ethical when evoking the FOI laws.

“Media workers can therefore lead and shape the debate on FOI as they really are the ‘frontline’ of sunshine legislation.”

She added that the public would benefit greatly from FOI laws, ‘through access to information and being better informed about decisions being made, and having awareness of how decisions are made’.

“Eventually this builds a momentum towards input and comment into decision-making processes or feedback into government policy and regulations, which is all good for the notion of democracy and participation by the people in the decisions being made by leaders and officials of the day,” she said.

Media and Democracy in the South Pacific

TODAY 6 September Programme

0900 Panel #3 – RECENT REPORTS ON PRESS FREEDOM IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

- Lisa Williams – Lahari, International Federation of Journalists
- David Robie, AUT
- Alex Perrottet, AUT

1000 Paper session #3 - FREEDOM OF SPEECH, FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

- Lucie Macku, Canterbury, “Perceptions of media freedom.”
- Mosmi Bhim, FNU, “Constitution – making in a stifled democracy.”

1100 Tea

1115 Paper session #4- GIVE PEACE JOURNALISM A CHANCE

- David Robie, AUT, “Peace journalism in the South Pacific: A critical reflective approach to Timor-Leste and West Papua”.
- Rukhsana Aslam, AUT, “Entering the realms of investigative journalism: a defense case for peace journalism.”
- Heather Devere and Courtney Wilson, Otago, “Peace/Conflict Journalism in the New Zealand media? Reporting on ‘the Arc of instability in the Pacific.’”

1230 Lunch

1330 Panel #4 – PEACE JOURNALISM: IS IT A SOLUTION FOR PACIFIC MEDIA?

- Bob Hackett, SFU
- Shailendra Singh, UQ
- Heather Devere, Otago

1430 Paper session #5 – FIJI MEDIA IN TRANSITION

- Salesh Kumar, USP, “Hindi Media in Fiji.”
- Paul Geraghty, USP, “Domo ni vanua: The history and future of Fijian-language media.”

1530 Tea

1545 Panel #5 – JOURNALISM EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY IN THE PACIFIC

- Vicky Lepou, NUS
- David Robie, AUT
- Marc Edge, USP

1645 Panel #6 – STUDENT DEBATE: USP Journalism vs. Faculty of Business and Economics

- Topic: “Press freedom is essential to the future of democracy in the South Pacific.”

**SYMPOSIUM
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Japan-ICT
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Theatre**

Foreign journalists 'insensitive': Lepou

by KALESI MELE

FOREIGN journalists should adhere to the protocols of Pacific culture when covering stories in our region, says an academic at the USP symposium on 'Media and democracy in the South Pacific' yesterday.

Vicky Lepou, a journalism lecturer at the National University of Samoa, said journalists outside the Pacific tended to be culturally insensitive when reporting on Pacific stories.

"Foreign journalists should have a local contact when they come into Pacific countries so that they can better address the local challenges," she said.

She offered that a solution would perhaps be to give overseas journalists "a local handbook".

Lepou, while relating her experiences of the September 2009 tsunami that hit Samoa and killed 119 people, said foreign media used images of dead people in their reports, which was unethical.

This, she said, compounded the trauma of a people who were already struggling to cope with the shock and pain of their loss.

"The tsunami was a disaster for us," she said.

"It was a time of crisis and uncertainty for us and we had people watching unedited videos and at the same time were mourning for their loved ones, which at the time



Samoa's Vicky Lepou suggests a local handbook be compiled to help foreign journalists report accurately. □ PICTURE: LUSIA LAGILEVU

was unethical and we strongly objected to."

Professor Robert Hackett who

was chief guest at the symposium said the foreign journalists needed to have a deeper understanding of

culture before reporting on it.

"Situations differ in every country," he said.

"Obviously for foreign journalists to better report they will need to talk about cultural attitudes, cultural economy and class structure," Hackett said.

Lepou added there was need for improvement in the Samoan media.

"We have a lot of work to do in Samoa, our industry needs to work together and have this sense of immediacy in terms of reporting the news."

She said there were instances where foreign media reported on events first and the local media later and this served as a barrier for people seeking access to timely information.

"It comes down to the fact that we need more training, in the field of journalism, she said.

Among participants at the symposium several media practitioners and academics from the region, including the founder of USP's journalism programme, Professor David Robie, and former programme head Shailendra Singh, who is on a scholarship to complete his doctorate in Australia.

The symposium resumes today and members of the public are invited to attend.

It will end at with students debating the topic 'Press Freedom is Essential to the Future of Democracy in the South Pacific'.

HIGHLIGHTS

SAMOA PRAISES CHINA'S LEADERS

SAMOAN PM Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi has highlighted the distinctive support China has been providing to developing Pacific Island states during the 43rd Pacific Islands Forum meeting at Rarotonga.

In an exclusive interview with Xinhua, Malielegaoi said, "The uniqueness of the Chinese assistance is its flexibility and very quick response by the authorities in China".

He added he is also impressed with Chinese leaders as they are always available to meet with them when visiting China.

○ SOURCE: XINHUA/PACNEWS

\$320M AID FOR GENDER EQUALITY

WOMEN'S rights in the Pacific will receive a \$320 million boost from Australia to help tackle gender inequality.

Australia PM Julia Gillard made this announcement at the PIF in Rarotonga.

The funding will be for 10 years and will go towards the supporting of increasing the increasing the proportion of Pacific women in leadership and decision-making roles, improving women's access to financial services and markets, and improving safety for women, through better violence prevention, and access to justice, health and counselling services.

The Pacific Islands Forum will also make a declaration on its commitment to gender equality.

○ SOURCE: AP/PACNEWS

COOKS CALL TO REVISE SIDS NAME

COOK Islands PM Henry Puna has called on Pacific Island leaders his suggestion of advancing the current regional identity of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to Large Ocean Island States.

Puna said his call for a new regional identity is not new and that it required the commitment of all regional states to make it a reality.

He added the "proposed new identity will not take away the special island uniqueness of the Pacific but augment it with a more balanced, and committed view of ocean and islands".

Cook Islands chose this year's theme, "Large Ocean Island States – the Pacific Challenge" to reflect that vision of shared identity and shared challenge.

○ SOURCE: PACNEWS

Regional mining protocol aims to protect seabed

by HENRY YAMO

WITH looming exploitation of the Pacific Ocean's mineral riches on the horizon, a regional protocol has been launched to ensure deep seabed mining was controlled in a "conserved manner".

This is the first regional legislative and regulatory framework for deep seabed mineral exploration and exploitation, introduced at the Pacific Island Leaders Forum in the Cook Islands.

Cook Islands Deputy Prime Minister Tom Marsters launched the regional framework put together by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in response to the leaders' call in the 2009 Forum.

"The completion of this important framework and its release by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) provides a key message from us gathered for the Forum, themed 'large Ocean island states: The Pacific challenge'," he said.

The framework was called for by Pacific leaders as one of the

key priorities of the Pacific Plan for the 2009-2012 period.

The framework seeks to provide Pacific Island nations with the tools necessary to make a decision about whether or not to engage with the emerging deep seabed mining industry.

SPC Director-General Dr Jimmie Rodgers said the legal framework was targeted at providing tools and guidelines for Pacific Island countries to develop their own national legislation in for seabed minerals.

Framework needed
"The framework is needed here in the region due to the fact that many Pacific Island countries have substantial deep sea minerals within their exclusive economic zones but lack the capacity to develop their own legislation," he said.

"This new framework will now enable respective countries to comply with relevant standards for the deep-sea mining industry within the region."

Marsters said that because of growing commercial interest in

deep sea minerals in the Pacific, nations needed to develop national policies and regulations for "sensible management".

He pointed out that the Cook Islands was the first country in the world to have enacted legislation, the Seabed Minerals Act which was designed to regulate future seabed mining in its exclusive economic zone.

Papua New Guinea had issued a seabed mining licence to the Canadian company Nautilus Minerals Niugini to commercially develop the seafloor for high grade massive sulphide deposits – a major source of the world's copper, gold, zinc and silver – in its exclusive economic zone in the first such operation in the world.

The government faces mounting opposition over this project.

Other Pacific island nations – including Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu – also have or intend to issue exploration licences within their exclusive economic zones.

Nauru and Kiribati had each

sponsored companies that had been granted approved programmes to work by the International Seabed Authority "within the area" (being the seabed areas outside the national jurisdiction), the first developing states to do so and the programmes were expected to take place over the next 15 years.

He said that with "exciting times" the region had shared responsibility to protect and preserve the health of the Pacific Ocean and this objective needed to continue to be at the forefront of national, regional and global agendas.

The framework was completed by the SPC Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC) for the Pacific (ACP) African, Caribbean and Pacific states.

□ Henry Yamo is a post graduate student and journalist at AUT University reporting for the Pacific Media Centre and Cook Islands News.

Sacrifice for success

by ROBERT COTTRELL

IF you choose to start a business, you must be prepared to live frugally for the first three to four years.

This was the advice from businessman Mohammed Reazz Ali, the proprietor of the Best Buys outlet that opened at Garden City in Raiwai, Suva, in July.

Ali's business had first opened in Nadi, where it was popular because of the unique range of household items it sources from USA.

"Best Buys concentrates on selling affordable, low mark-up American overseas products for the middle-class Fijian consumer," he said.

"We wanted to bring quality American products to Fiji, and make them priced for accessibility to the Fijian consumer."

"We sell products that you can't get anywhere else, at least not affordably in Fiji," Ali said.

He opened his first store in Nadi in 2009 but eight months later, he lost everything in the floods.

That didn't deter him.

"We were on the knife's edge from

2009 until 2011 but with the support of the community, we reopened and continued to sell our affordable products."

"My wife and I wouldn't give up, we believe the day you start running, you'll run your whole life," he said.

"So we stayed and tried the business again."

Ali had an entrepreneurial spirit from a young age.

"When I was young, I would sell the food my mother made for my lunches," he shared.

"I asked her to make 10 instead of one, and I would come home with a profit."

Ali said his family was very poor.

"I sold vegetables in order to get through high school and college," he said.

"I even paid for my siblings schooling, using my skill in selling vegetables."

Ali said he believed one had to have the skill and tenacity to be an entrepreneur.

He said it was a selfless business, especially in the beginning for start-up companies.



A shopper is intrigued with the colourful variety of children's socks at Best Buys, loacted at Garden City in Suva. INSET: Outside the shop. Pictures: LUSIA LAGILEVU

'Right character' essential for tourism graduates

by ROLLAND GITO

HAVING the right attitude is the key to a successful career in the tourism and hospitality industry," says Holiday Inn's food and beverages manager Shalvin Kumar.

"It can only grow if workers in the industry cherished the kind of attitude that builds a healthy relationship," he said.

"Workers need to have an open state-of-mind to be able to perform their tasks and relate to their clients."

Kumar said even though tourism is a growing industry in Fiji, it will not cater for the huge number of graduates from the various institutes produced every year.

He said only those who can prove themselves can get a job and not just graduates.

"These are people who possess the right qualities and personal attributes," he said. "It is important to learn those qualities while at your training institution."

Kumar added that one needed to be passionate about their job in order to succeed.

"If you are passionate about your work, you will see a difference in yourself and your clients," he said.



Tourism students man their kebab stand.

PICTURES: LUSIA LAGILEVU



The hot dogs prepared by the School of Tourism and Hospitality were the most popular.



Students of USP's School of Tourism and Hospitality strike a pose



Home-made costume jewellery are many at the market

Check maturity levels

Expert urges parents to be vigilant against violent games

by **ARNOLD CHANEL**

PARENTS need to check the maturity rating of games to ensure it is suitable for their children.

This was the advice of psychology academic Gaylene Osbourne, who lectures at USP.

“Parents should let their children play games which teach problem solving, math and reading,” said Osbourne.

“They must strictly look at the games maturity rating before letting their children play it.”

“We as concerned parties must also look into the new problem and raise awareness in this issue.”

Osbourne said many problems could arise if children were al-

lowed to play video games without supervision.

“Children could develop bad eating habits such as overeating or not eating at all,” said Osbourne.

“Many children also have underlying psychological issues such as child abuse or other trauma and violent video games may cause them to touch base with these problems.”

“Children with such issues who play violent video games stop viewing violence as a big deal and act out in game violence in real life,” said Osbourne, explaining the recent school shooting incidents in the United States.

have been urged to closely monitor their child’s video game re-



Video gaming is so popular among children that stakeholders are questioning whether gaming shop owners should accept a greater level of responsibility. □ Picture: LUSIA LAGILEVU

lated activities. Long time gamer Mike Raymond said there had recently been an increase in the number of school students entering internet cafes to play video games.

“You see kids in internet cafes straight after school,” said Raymond. The people behind these games are quite incredible and it’s easy for kids to become hooked.”

“I can control it now but when I first started I couldn’t stop playing,” he added.

Another long time gamer Ben also had a tussle with video game addiction.

“I found myself playing two nights in a row and eventually skipped a few classes.”

“explained how kids could become addicted to video games.

“Like all addiction, video games feed a reward center in the brain causing it to release a “happy hormone” called dopamine,” said Osbourne. “The child then becomes dependant on this happy feeling they get when they play thus, stay in the game forever.”

Raymond admitted gaming caused many problems with children. Kids sometimes steal things and sell it off so they can have money for games.”

Internet cafe owner Archie Angco however said parenting was not his job.

“When kids come in uniform during school hours I automati-

cally disallow them from entering the cafe,” said Angco.

“However sometimes kids come in civilian clothing and it is not my fault anymore.”

“Let’s face it we are running a business, if we don’t have any particular game then people won’t come to our cafe.”

Angco, a firm believer of corporal punishment, said parents needed to instil discipline in their children. Osbourne also advised parents to ensure their kids play the correct type of games.

□ Catch the full video of this story called “Video Games Hit Fiji” done by third year USP students on Youtube.com.

27th September

LOOPER

27th September

OMG

13th September
(in 3D & Normal Version)

FINDING NEMO

13th September
(in 3D & Normal Version)

RESIDENT EVIL: RETRIBUTION

20th September

HEROINE

20th September
(in 3D & Normal Version)

DREDD



Poor venues hinder progress

by LUSIA LAGILEVU

FIJI needs to improve on local sporting venues to facilitate athletes during training especially at Olympic levels said Javelin Coach James Goulding.

Goulding said Leslie Copeland had to resort to alternative training strategies after the closure of the Post Fiji Stadium before leaving the country.

"The closure came at a critical time where training was at its essential moment and

this posed as a challenge for us," Goulding said. He added there was a stigma in Fiji where athletes had to train overseas to be world class.

"You can train here but compete overseas to get you that exposure and feel of competing against athletes with different training methods, strategies as well as expanding your skills," he said.

"As a coach, we must get the message across to administrators that we must encourage our athletes to train in our own

country and get local coaches to be training world class levels," he said.

Goulding said there was a need for coaches to lift their standards of training.

"I used to be a javelin thrower for 21 years. You think when you quit, you know a lot about the sport. But when I got into coaching, I realised I was only scratching the surface, I had to take it upon myself to do as much reading as possible to get into another level."

Chef De Mission to the London Olympics

Chris Yee, said coaches needed to have the right credentials to be able to teach athletes with the right technicalities.

"Coaches also need to learn from other coaches with regards to the different techniques they employ and the impact that it has on their athletes," Yee said.

Goulding echoed Yee's sentiments and said the Olympics was an eye opener for his coaching techniques.

"We learnt a lot from this, the opportunity to work with some of the best coaches in

Scrum moratorium 'long overdue'

by ASHNEEL SINGH

THE University of the South Pacific's rugby coaching staff have welcomed the scrum moratorium regulations introduced by the Fiji Rugby Union.

Coach Viliame Gadolo said the decision was well overdue and that the procedure would ensure a player's safety.

He added that the new regulation was an opportunity to improve the standards of rugby especially for those making transitions from university to top level rugby.

"The new regulations have just come in time and are adequate for the front rowers to improve in the scrum areas," he said.

Fiji Rugby Coaching Director Frank Boivert said clinics would have to be conducted around the University to ensure that students are employing the correct methods. "Students of all age group need to know about this new structure in place."

"We need qualified coaches to demonstrate this technical aspect which I think Fiji is lacking and is one of the major reasons why Fiji is unable to orchestrate proper scrums internationally," he said.

With the new regulations scrumhalves have three seconds to put the ball in after which the scrum can be contested.

Under-19 Rugby Competitions apply the International Rugby Board (IRB) law variations which stipulate that the scrum cannot be pushed more than 1.5 meters.

TIPS:

CROUCH-FRONT row crouch knees but not back
MIDDLE row -one knee on the ground, 8 can stand,
FRONT row players - get heads in semi engagement next to their opposite number's head.

POSITIONING

PLAYERS position themselves in scrum (middle rows can lift knees) referee - check hat all positioning are safe.

PAUSE

PLAYERS hold their safe positioning.

PLAY



Fearless Johnny Narawa, right, during a warm-up Hapkido session in USP last week.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Kalesi Mele

Invest in your security, urges Hapkido master

by LUSIA LAGILEVU

HAPKIDO chief instructor Leonard Aitchison is calling for people to invest in their security.

Aitchison said the form of martial arts was a gift to the community that people above the age of seven should take advantage of.

"With crime, corruption and confusion existing in every community, Hapkido allows people to defend themselves when the situation arises," Aitchison said.

He added that the art also enabled the students to be more conscious of their surrounding and identify dangerous or life threatening incidents.

Johnny Narawa, a 13 year old who hails from Serua said he was inspired by martial art movies but took on the classes to better protect himself.

"I have a great interest for the art of Hapkido because it is the quickest and shortest way to defend yourself," he said.

Aitchison said there was a gradual increase in participants, 60 per cent

of which are tertiary students.

He added that it was crucial that warm ups be conducted before proper training to ensure proper circulation of oxygen throughout the body which would in turn enhance coordination.

"Practicing the skill without proper coordination can be deadly, said Aitchison.

The Hapkido classes are held every Mondays and Wednesdays from 6pm to 7pm at the University of South Pacific multipurpose gym.

Players aim for clean-sweep

by LUSIA LAGILEVU

THE USP Football team are out to stake a clean sweep for both the Mens and Womens division at the Fiji University Sports Association annual Intyer tertiary games later this month.

The teams had dominated in both divisions last year with the women only losing out to Fiji School of Medicine in

the Futsal competition. USP Football coach Sekove Tama Vosuga said they had been preparing since the start of second semester to ensure retaining the title.

"The whole team is leaving no stones unturned in a bid to be successful again this year with daily training taking place from Monday to Saturday with regular build-up matches with district teams of Suva and Lami," he said.

Vosuga said to increase their chances of performing well, the players have been playing in the local leagues competing with different districts.

"I always emphasise on the importance of training hard and it is very pleasing to see the level of commitment these boys have towards soccer although they are here for studies. Just shows how passionate they are about soccer," he said.



Four years, not two

*Olympic javelin
thrower calls
for better
support*



Leslie Copeland, who finished 13th in the javelin at the London Olympics, calls for better support of athletes. Picture: KALESI MELE

by LUSIA LAGILEVU

THE national Olympic body should support athletes to the Summer Olympics four years before the Games instead of two, says Fiji's top javelin thrower Leslie Copeland.

On a break since his performance at the London Olympics, where he finished at 13th place, Copeland expressed his concern that real help was hard to come by for serious athletes.

The javelin thrower, who was 20cm short of competing in the finals (80.19m), said he appreciated the support of the Fiji Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee (FASANOC) but two years was simply not sufficient to prepare for the world meet.

He said the assistance received could only send him to two international competitions before the Olympics.

"We should have at least four years," Copeland said. "We need a proper support system to enhance Fiji's performance in upcoming javelin competitions if we are to perform competitively against top throwers in the world."

Coach James Goulding said, "In fact, if you look at the preparations for an athlete, it takes about eight years; four years is an extremely short time".

He pointed out that worrying about the availability of funds also adversely affects an athlete's psychology.

"People abroad compete with the best. Between January and May, we probably get only two competitions while those overseas are training every week."

"But for people like Leslie they train to compete with the highest level," Goulding said.

Increased financial support should allow

athletes more exposure at international meets, he said. Copeland is sponsored by Red Bull. The multi-million dollar energy-drink company has supported Copeland since 2009.

Athletics team manager Roy Ravana said while there was no binding contract with Red Bull, the company has met all of Copeland's requests for help with his travels.

Meanwhile, *chef de mission* to the London Olympics Christopher Yee said each sporting federation should take the initiative to raise their own funds before seeking assistance.

"Raising funds before seeking assistance all comes down to proper management and planning," he said.

"You need to have a strategic work plan set out and not rely entirely on handouts."

"We do understand the economic condi-

tions and we hope the next budget would be increased to be of further assistance to sporting federations."

Copeland's next hurdle is to improve his throw at the International Association of Athletics World Championship in Russia next year.

He said he was satisfied to have accomplished his dream to compete at the Olympics.

"It was a great sense of pride standing next to the best and representing Fiji," said Copeland.

He added that none of this would have been realised without hard work.

"Aspiring athletes should be dedicated and there are no short cuts," he said. "You also have to enjoy yourself. It's a lot of hard work and days of dedication."

Copeland also thanked his family and his supporters for their continued assistance.

Members of the public are invited to a **SYMPOSIUM** on:

MEDIA & DEMOCRACY in the South Pacific

WHEN: Wednesday & Thursday (Sept 5-6)

VENUE: Japan Pacific-ICT multi-purpose theatre