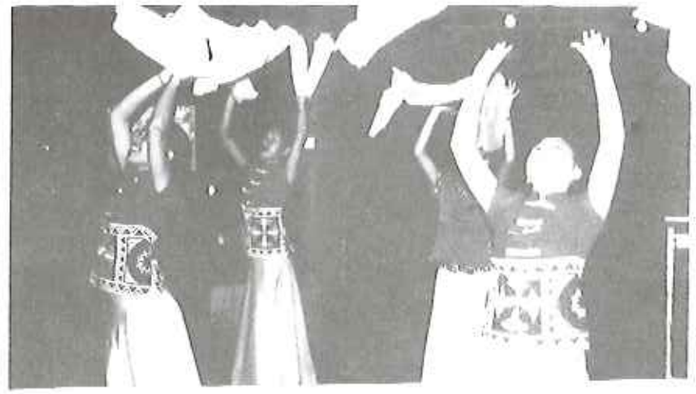
This page: 1. *Left*- Elizabeth Mealy and Sangeeta light up their candle for victims of human rights abuses.
2. *Below left* - Human Rights Commissioner Imrana Jalal, highlights the abuses suffered around the world and the candle of light as being a ray of hope.
3. *Below* - Sarah Pene and Ryan Collins walked away with this piece which was up for auction.
4. *Bottom left* - William Parkinson awards the Media Award to Pat Cradock receiving on behalf of Wansolwara Newspaper.

"The attainment of women's human rights is a condition for democracy."

Imrana Jalal, Human rights Commissioner, Fiji.

This Page: 1. *Right* - The Chinese Youth Cultural Centre perform a number.
2. *Below right* - Supporters of human rights enjoy themselves at the awards night.
3. *Below left* - Community Award winner, SPACHEE.
4. *Bottom right* - (left to right) Marie Chan accepted on behalf of Fiji Young Lawyers for the Law category and co-shared with Ana Wilikibau a Prison Officer. Peni Moore of Women's Action for Change, winners of the Arts category.



"Women want an end to violence against women. Violence against Women should be declared a violation of women's human rights."

In What do Women Want? Goals at the UN Human Rights Conference, 1994.

Post Cairo Seminar Held

The Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), UNFPA and ARROW[1] organized a two-day national seminar in Suva to discuss and review commitments made at The Hague, Netherlands during the International Conference on Population & Development (ICPD+5). It was held at the Forum Secretariat Conference Centre from Thursday 14th October to Friday 15th October 1999.

The Post-Cairo National Seminar, was opened by Minister of Health, Dr. Isimeli Cokanasiga,

This seminar (which is the first since the Hague meeting) offered both government and NGO's the apportunity to jointly assess/review the ICPD +5 implementation in Fiji - with a special focus on:

- Population and development strategies
- Reproductive Health, Family Planning and Sexual Health
- Adolescent Reproductive Health
- Gender and reproductive Health
- Advocacy information, Education and Communication in Reproductive Health, Family Planning and Sexual Health Programmes

Above: Mr. Jose Feraris the United Nations Resident Representative closes the Post Cairo Workshop.

Participants discussed initiatives since Cairo and the meeting was successful in that the participants were made aware of services conducted by the Ministry of Health. The main stakeholders in this health program are made aware of 'who is doing what' so as to avoid duplication of services.

Furthermore, participants drew up action plans on addressing adolescent and social and repsorductive health such as teenage pregnancy and abandoned babies. Moreover in addressing gender and reproductive health issues looked included things such as women's acess to breast clinic, the ability to choose safe contraception, pap smears methods and male responsibility in family planning.

The workshop was attended by government representatives, Family Planning organisations (government or NGO), Medical & Nurses Association, NGOs, Women Studies sections (USP & FSM) and youth representatives.

"Gender Violence is often tolerated even justified on historical or religious grounds, just as many nations once justified slavery. The international community should assert the universal value of women's human rights."

In What do Women Want? Goals at the UN Human Rights Conference', in *Human Rights: the new consensus*, Regency Press with UNHCR, London, 1994, p.79

[1] Asia Pacific Resource & Research Center for Women (ARROW) is a regional non-governmental non-profit organisation based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. ARROW's programme focus is on women and health, particularly reproductive health. The program aims at strengthening initiatives to re-orient health, population and reproductive health polices and programmes with women's and gender perspectives.

Paedophilia and Child Sex Tourism

On Thursday 11 November 1999, Paedophile Mark Mutch was found guilty of two counts of rape and four counts of indecent assault. This prompted the awareness of paedophilia in Fiji and the Fiji Times raised this issue as a special feature in one of their issues. Below is an account of Fiji Women's Rights Movement's stand on paedophilia and child sex tourism as questioned by the Fiji Times.

By Gina Houng Lee

1.What does your research reveal about the issue in Fiji?
FWRM has not undertaken any formal research. However from our work with the community and from cases reported to the police, FWRM considers this to be of serious concern. One should note that there is particular difficulty in reporting these cases to the police. There is difficulty in adults reporting sexual offences, so one can imagine the difficulty of children reporting these crimes.

2. What is your analysis of the situation here?
There is certainly reason for us to be alarmed. The fact that we have vulnerable children, for example street children, indicates that this problem of child sexual exploitation exists in Fiji. Furthermore the fact that pornographic videos and Internet access is available in Fiji indicates that this is of real concern.

The *Mark Mutch* Case is certainly not a one off case. What is particular about the case is that he used high technology such as digital cameras so that he could share his perversion with others through the Internet.

3. On Mutch's 7 year overall jail term sentence, do you think the penalty was appropriate?
We are not entirely happy with the sentencing of the case, however we are glad that he didn't get off with the usual 5 years. 10 years would not have been uncalled for. Under our draft sexual offences legislation we have recommended that a minimum mandatory sentence of 10 years be applied to sexual offences against children.

The sexual exploitation of children leads to serious lifelong consequences and affects their physical, psychological and social development. Here we have an adult who destroys young children's lives and will pay for it with 7-year jail term and yet these young children will be emotionally and mentally affected. Their young lives have been compromised because of an irresponsible adult. He should at least get more than 10 years.

However we are pleased that Justice Pathik applied the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In his 8-page judgment he applied 2 pages addressing the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is a significant milestone in Fiji's legal history as it is the first time that a judge has applied the CRC in his sentencing. This has far reaching implications for Fiji, as it will encourage wider acceptability of international conventions.

4. What has your organisation tried to do in relation to the issue? Similarly, what does it plan for the future?
We have raised awareness of this issue through our legal literacy workshops. We have also presented a draft sexual offences legislation to the Fiji Law Reform Commission in 1995, which calls for the minimum mandatory sentence of 10 years in cases of child sexual abuse.

5. What are some initiatives that you would propose the government and other stakeholders to undertake? Please elaborate.
We call for the government to look at the legislation in the area of sexual offences against children and for cabinet to allocate resources towards this initiative. We call on the community to report any suspicious behaviour of adults who are in the company of children. We must also create an environment for children to express their views and come to us with their problems. We encourage the community to discuss this issue and write to their member of parliament on the inadequacy of the law in protecting our children.

Just like government has set aside funds to review the gaming legislation, we call on government to prioritise the review of legislation on sexual offences against women and children. ***B***

Role of NGOs in Child Rights Convention

"The children of the world are innocent, vulnerable and dependent. They are also curious, active and full of hope. Their time should be one of joy and peace, of playing, learning and growing. Their future should be shaped in harmony and co-operation. Their lives should mature as they broaden their perspectives and gain new experiences."
(Source: Hmmaeberg, Thomas. (1995) In Making Reality of the Rights of the Child.)

Legal Rights Training Officer, Asenaca Colawai and Assistant Legal rights Training Officer, Zarina Begum attended a National Workshop on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) from 4 October to 8 October in Nadi. UNICEF and RRRT organized the workshop.

Artwork by Sumeet Chandra

The weeklong workshop was held to make CRC a reality for local stakeholders in Fiji. An aspect of the workshop was looking at the roles of NGOS vis-à-vis the Convention. There are at least four roles that NGO's have been playing. These are as follows:

1. Information dissemination and awareness raising
2. Programme delivery
3. Monitoring of child rights
4. 'Ombuds' organizations for children.

1. Information dissemination and awareness raising.
It was identified that changing society's values to put children first is not an easy task. However, a wide range of NGOs are already committed in this through conferences, meetings, political action such as demonstrations, marches and rallies, advocacy and lobbying work. The media has also been the focus of the NGOs through contacts to raise awareness with on the CRC.

2. Programme delivery
It was noted that NGOs do provide an important complement to government services by supporting basic education, organising nutrition programmes, mobilizing communities to attend to AIDS orphans for example. In fact NGOs become increasing actors for development. They have been in the forefront of some governments responding to particularly difficult issues. For example, problems unrecognized by governments, such as the need for special programmes for sexually exploited children and those that require labour-intensive and sensitive treatment such as the need for disabled children for activities that will help them to achieve the greatest degree of self reliance and social integration possible. These needs have thus been enshrined in the Convention as basic rights.

3. Monitoring of child rights
NGOs have assisted in the collection of information about health, education, nutrition, child labour etc. UNICEF on a national level is supporting the NGO group in the preparation of guidelines to create national NGO coalitions who will also have to share information with government agencies. UNICEF will be able to help in establishing ongoing dialogue between NGO groups and governments.

4. "Ombuds" organisation for children
It was stated that NGOS have been pioneers in providing avenues for recourse to individuals children whose needs have been unrecognized, or whose rights have been violated in invisible ways.

This was the main gist of the NGO perspective at the CRC workshop.

Above: Mr. Tiwari giving the opening address at the CRC workshop in Nadi.

Empowering workshop!

Fiji Council of Churches Advancement and Empowerment of Women through Communication Workshop. Red Cross Trainning Room, 8 - 10 December, 1999.

By Marama Tubuna

The aim of the workshop was to empower women through communication in line with the Beijing Platform for Action. The workshop began with the lighting of candles, which signifies hope. A moment of silence was dedicated to women who have been persecuted or continue to struggle in the fight for women. A participant dedicated the moment to women who cannot come out and fight for their rights. It was a very touching moment for all the participants, in the sense that it encouraged them to be able to open up.

Katalaini Duaibe, Communications Officer for the Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM) spoke on Media Education Today. Media Education was presented in the context of FWRM's projects. Katalaini explained the functions of FWRM and the two main projects of FWRM. The two projects are: Women's Employment and Economic Rights (WEER), and the Family Law and Legal Literacy Project. Katalaini focused on Communication, the evolution of it from oral traditions to the breakthrough in communication technology through worldwide webs and digitalisation. In addition, she focused on the need to have media education today so as to educate the public on what the Media offers in order to be constructive on media content.

FWRM Coordinator Gina Hong Lee, spoke on Human Rights and Women's Rights. She stated that criticism about women's rights were constant. She explained that women's rights is not about overpowering men and neither is a western concept but rather, a method of empowering women, in knowing their rights and using that power to do good things for women. Ms Lee gave an overview of the work FWRM has undertaken, for instance the 'Anti Rape Campaign' that created a lot of awareness. Discussion focused on how women are disadvantaged at Rape trials. Since rape is an electable offence, most cases are tried in the Magistrates Court. Women are being greatly disadvantaged in the sense that for such a serious offence, their cases are tried in the Magistrates Court and those that are representing the victim are not always qualified lawyers. The same goes for police prosecutors with no qualification background. Some Magistrates do not have a Law degree; some may only be practicing with a Diploma in Law. In comparison to this, the rapist on the other hand may have a better representative, which are the Director of Public Prosecution's best lawyers. The sentencing period of five years is not enough, taking into consideration the severity of the crime and the impact it has on the victim and her family. Ms Lee explained the need for corroboration and that the onus for past sexual history in a rape case ought to be removed. At present these are the two important issues currently being discussed with the Fiji Law Reform Commission and there has been a lot of support from Women's NGO's. Participants discussed the need for Magistrates to undergo gender sensitivity training and for young offenders to be educated on the seriousness of rape.

Further, Tupou Vere, President of the Fiji National Council of Women (FNCW) spoke on Monitoring Mass Media. She briefly explained the functions of FNCW, and the councils running by two coordinators and volunteers since 1968. She stated that the media is monitored because it plays a vital role in our everyday lives. FNCW monitors the media because of the impact it has on Public/Government Policy, for example, the impact publicity made on street children, commercial sex workers and beggars has on policy. Through this kind of media coverage, Government has formed a Committee to look into these issues and thus a way, which one can tell that the media is effective.

Brother Douglas, the coordinator Fiji Media Watch briefly touched on their function as an organisation. Fiji Media Watch is a World Association of Christian Communication (WACC) funded organization. Established in 1993, it comprises of 60 to 70 paid members. Media Watch's main task is to cause media awareness - to make people aware of the influence and effects of the media. Educating families on the media is essential. He stated that parents ought to sit, and watch programs with their children and at the same time educate them on the values of what is being watched, for example, when children are discovered to be watching Adult Only (AO) movies, parents should not just turn the screen off or yell at them, but are to be politely explained on the unsuitability of the movie because they do not depict good family values. He stressed that there are certain means of educating chil-

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Insuring Aganist Rape

This article was received by email from a friend of the Movement. According to the email, the article appeared in The Gurdian, a British newspaper.

Rape every woman's deepest fear is why we glance over our shoulders in dark, deserted streets; why we double lock our doors and install burglars alarms; why we avoid public transport late at night and unpeopled woodland by day. They latest innovation in one of it's markets by a leading British insurance company seems, however, a giant step backwards for mankind. They have cottoned on to a new opportunity: the risk that HIV has added to rape. It takes three months for HIV to show up in tests: agonized waiting for the beginning of a slow death. But a cocktail of anti-retroviral drugs, including AZT, taken within the first 24 hours, may ward off the virus. HIV replicates very quickly in the initial stages so it's important to counteract it as soon as possible. But these drugs are very expensive and not easily available.

Enter the guardian angel in the form of CGU's subsidiary in South Africa. This month it proudly unveiled the Rape Survivor, a pilot insurance policy for rape, which if successful will no doubt spread to other countries. On it's face, it seems sensible. In South Africa, one in three women can expect to be raped; some 25% of the population is HIV-positive. The health service cannot afford these drugs for rape victims and few health insurance policies will pay for them. The cost of about 500 pounds is beyond the means of most women. For 2.50 pounds a month, the Rape Survivor will provide the victim and her family with expert counseling and the most effective anti-HIV drugs on the market. The head of CGU in South Africa, Roger Wainless, says: "This policy is a compassionate response to a traumatic problem facing many South Africans today, empowering individuals." Except, of course, that compassion is hardly Mr. Wainless's motive; he – and his company – are driven by the possibility of making profits out of rape. Some women need to be raped, and many more live in fear of it, before they will hand over good money. Rather than "empowerment", the effect is more likely to be opposite. If you believe there is such rape that you build it into your monthly budget along with your household contents policy and car insurance, your sense of fatalism, of passivity in the face of its awful inevitability, must increase every time you look at your bank statement. It also institutionalizes and trivializes it, ranking the loss of self-implicit in rape alongside the loss of a TV or a car radio.

One can only assume that Mr. Wainless and the number-crunchers at CGU have no idea quite how debilitating it is to live with the real fear of being raped; of how one's first reaction to every strange man – and even some familiar ones – is one of corrosive suspicion; of the shadow that deadly perversion of the act of love can cast over the life-giving, life-enhancing real thing. And what this does to relations between men and women where rape is rife. Rape insurance also plunges rape mythology back into the old days of "its always the woman's fault": responsibility is thrown back on the victim. She must pay for the crime against her. This is, of course, entirely the wrong way round. It is rapists and the culture, which allows them to thrive that, must be targeted.

A previous attempt to introduce rape insurance came in India this year. The sate-run General Insurance Corporation offered to add rape to women's accidental disability policies for an annual premium of 15 rupees. Total disability as a result of rape would have netted her 25, 000 rupees; partial disability a mere 12,500. It foundered on the fury of women's orgnisations who said rape was hardly an accident, insurance gave it legitimacy, and it was a sleazy attempt by the government to exploit rape for political purposes. Here in Britain, anti-HIV treatment is not automatically available to rape victims. Guidelines for their treatment say: 'The risk of HIV acquisitions through heterosexual sexual assault in the UK is very low". Only if a Doctor accepts there is a reasonable possibility your rapists might have been HIV positive, will you be offered "post-exposure prophylaxis" (quite frankly, if I had been raped I wouldn't want to have persuade some strange doctor in a casuality ward or a special clinic, who might well have budgetary constraints in mind. Nor would I want rape insurance. Treatment should be mine on demand).

The only way insurance might be relevant to rape is as part of a travel insurance policy. If you're unlucky enough to be raped on holiday in parts of Africa or Asia where HIV is endemic, your policy ought to offer instant access to anti-retroviral drugs. CGU here says that, where local epidemiology dictates it, they do this. If the Rape Survivor policy proves successful in South Africa, the marketing possibilities are endless. There are millions of women being raped all the time and thousands of HIV-positive rapists. But if CGU really wants to help victims, they should donate to rape crisis centers; trying to make money out of rape seems almost as sick as the act itself. ***B***

Human Rights and the Environment

"The Environment is humanity's first right".
Kenyan Environmental activist, Ken Saro-Wiwa.

By Samantha Magick

Human rights are a complex often-controversial concept in our part of the world. But it can be simply described as "being able to live a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature."

Our lives are intertwined with our environment. As such, ecological damage is a violation of our human rights. The Sierra Club writes that this is especially true for "indigenous peoples and the rural poor whose day to day survival depends directly upon what nature can produce. Too often when these citizens speak out to protect the environment on which they depend, the infringements of environmental rights are compounded by direct violations of internationally recognised civil and political rights."

The phenomenon of global warming is a good example. People living on island atolls in countries such as Tuvalu and Marshall Islands face displacement and dislocation as the result of rising sea levels. While the global scientific community debates the cause of global warming and rising sea levels, most experts believe climate change is the result of human activity, especially the use of fossil fuels such as coal. The main consumers of this sort of fuel are in the industrialised west.

The Global Issues website says, "USA has four percent of the world's population, yet emits 21 percent of the world's carbon dioxide (and co2 is just one of many greenhouse gases)."

Yet international negotiations to reduce the use of fossil fuels and thus the rate of climate change and sea level rise have seen these western countries, especially the United States and Australia, play very obstructive roles.

To our thinking this is a human rights issue. The obstinacy of a small but immensely wealthy and powerful group of countries may force the relocation of a number of Pacific Island peoples. This will have all sorts of cultural, social, environmental and economic repercussions.

There are many more local examples of how human rights are being denied because of poor environmental activities. The plight of Vanua Levu villagers whose food source has died because of pollution and changes in the Qawa River is one.

It is a human right to have clean water, and clean cities, villages and settlements. But it is also our responsibility to make it happen. We need to bring politicians and local authorities to account over environmental issues. And we need to lead by example, by reusing and recycling materials whenever possible, and instilling these values in our children.

"Women's most violated right is the Right to Dignity. The violations fall under the category of civil rights: the right to peaceful assemble, to innocence until proof of guilt, to fair trial, and freedom from slavery, torture and punishment...

"Violence against women, especially in the Third World, constitute a long list of crimes against human rights: rape, incest, wife beating, bride burning, and forced marriages, prostitution, pornography, forced motherhood, compulsory sterilization, genital mutilation and castration, medical brutality, rape and torture of women activists, sexual harassment, persecution of non-virgins, unmarried mothers and lesbians, life-threatening work conditions in women-intensive, multinational industries - - -all committed in the name of "control", or "decency" or for capitalist profit".

Abdul de Leon, (1989) 'Women's Rights are Human Rights: A perspective for the Philippine Women's Movement', in *Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines*. Gabriela, Philippines.

FWRM holds Human Rights Awards

The 1999 Human Rights Awards was held on 10 December 1999 at the Forums Secretariat Fale. An event that was a component of the Communications Project, the Award Evening highlighted the awarding of individuals and organisations involved in the promotion and protection of women's human rights.

The initial planning of the human rights awards began in late August. This involved organising the nominations to reach as wide as possible outside of the Suva - Nausori Corridor. The nominations were open to individuals and organisation. Being the first national human rights awards event, it was focused more on women's human rights. Therefore the nominations were open in the following categories.

1. **Media** – local newspapers, television and radio
2. **Community** – to non-government organisations or community based organizations
3. **Corporate** – included in this category were companies, union, employers association, private and public sector organizations
4. **Law** – these were individuals or organizations that promote and advance the rights of women in Fiji through the practice of Law.
5. **Youth** – these are young Fiji Islanders who work in promoting and protecting human rights. They include young people under the age of 26, or organizations largely coordinated by young people.
6. **Arts** – these are individuals and orgnaisations whose work involves promoting human rights through their work.

Nominations were received from individuals and organizations that all were worthy entries in the area of human rights; interest even flowed in from individuals involved in the area of child rights. The nominations were accompanied by supporting materials and a testimony of a hundred words. The judges were made up of experts in the different fields. These were; Dr. Shaista Shameem, the Director of Fiji Human Rights Commission; Alipate Mataitini, the Press Secretary to the Prime Minister; Jon Apted, the Permanent Arbitrator, Praveen Sharma, a Management Committee member of FWRM and is with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Inoke Bainimarama a Television Personality with Fiji Television Ltd and coordinator of Youthmedia.

In judging, the judges looked for things that showed evidence of the nominees work in the area of women's human rights and that the nominee's work showed consistency. The judges faced a difficult time in deciding the winners for the different categories. However, their work was made easier with the lack of interest in the Youth category. Thus this category was struck of the list. All the other categories were worthy. In summation, the judges' chair stated that these people were awarded as winners because the nominees work in this area were outstanding and evidence of their work was recognised by the community in the various areas concerned. Hence, the awards were given in five categories to the following organizations and individuals:

1. **Media** – Wansolwara Newspaper. This is the University of the South Pacific student Newspaper. Their work features articles on human rights consistently throughout the year. The winning article was a special feature on human rights around the pacific region.
2. **Law** – Ana Wilikibau and Fiji Young Lawyers Association. Ana Wilikibau is a prison officer at the Korovou Women's Prison while Fiji Young Lawyers are an Association that provides free legal advice to women and men alike at the FWRM Office. Since Ana's term as prison officer began at the Women's Prison, visiting magistrates have remarked on the improved status of the women's prison to date. Her work was commendable in that she went as far as researching the background of a Canadian Prisoner in her own personal time showing that the prisoner was medically unfit when found in possession of drugs which she was imprisoned for.
3. **Community** – South Pacific Action Committee for Human Ecology and Environment (SPACHEE). A community based organization involved in the development of grassroots community through environmental programmes.
4. **Corporate** – non-award. The judges decision was not to award this category since it was essential to be sending out the message of upholding women's rights in the workplace
5. **Arts** – Women's Action for Change. An organisation that reaches out to the community through drama and theatre to raise awareness of social issues.

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Volunteer Work Celebrated

By Kylie Anderson

FWRM has always welcomed volunteers from both Fiji and overseas into the Movement. Volunteers provide much needed assistance and help with a range of assignments and projects from filing to research, preparation of proposals and assistance with workshops. FWRM has been fortunate to have a number of dedicated and reliable volunteers to assist us in the past. It was for this reason that FWRM was pleased to participate in the United Nations' 'International Volunteer Day' on 4th December 1999.

While the Day itself actually fell on a Sunday (where it was commemorated with an Interfaith church service), Saturday the 4th was a chance for many different organisations to join together in Sukuna Park to celebrate the contribution volunteers have made.

Representatives of the Japanese and Korean volunteer groups were present as were St. John Ambulance, the Red Cross, Fiji East Timor Action Group (FETAG), Fiji Cancer Society, United Nations, and, of course, us!

The day was opened with speeches, the congratulations of International Volunteer Day poster design winner, Eugenia Vuniwaqa (who was presented with a framed copy of her work), and the release of balloons. Kylie presented Minister for Women, Culture & Social Welfare, Lavinia Padarath, with a garland while Kata spoke about the many projects of FWRM as well as the Movement's work with volunteers in the past and the future.

Our FWRM stall proved a great success. Kata and Kylie looked after the booth for the whole day but were assisted in the setting up and decoration by Zarina and volunteers - Mona, Jennifer & Janice Maharaj. Assistance with decorations for the booth came from Abigail and Mereoni Duaibe as well as Marama.

We managed to sell six of our 'Women Against Rape' t-shirts in the space of 4 hours as well as give away many of our posters and stickers (all of which are still available from the office). A big thank-you to all that assisted on the day and, of course, to all of our volunteers (past and present).

If you are interested in volunteering at FWRM please do not hesitate to contact the office.

> "Within a system which denies the existence of basic human rights, fear tends to be the order of the day. Fear of imprisonment, fear of torture, fear of death, fear of losing friends, family, property or means of livelihood, fear of poverty, fear of isolation, fear of failure. A most insidious form of fear is that which masquerades as common sense or even wisdom, condemning as foolish, reckless, insignificant or futile the small, daily acts of courage which help to preserve man's self-respect and inherent human dignity."
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> Aung San Suu Kyi, 'Freedom from Fear', in Aung San Suu Kyi, *Freedom from Fear and other writings*, Aris, M., (ed.), Penguin Books, Australia, 1995 (second edition. First edition 1991), p.184.

UNFPA's Regional Media Seminar

Vice-chairperson for Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Dr. Mridula Prasad recently attended a Media Regional Seminar on Population and Reproductive Health organised by United Nations Population Fund and South Pacific Commission. The seminar was held from 17 -- 19 November 1999, at the Mocambo Hotel in Nadi.

The three day meeting raised various issues ranging from population issues, understanding of statistics, hands on training for print, radio and Television writing and production on sensitive issues.

The participants were from the region, representing various media orgnisations.

Mridula was part of the Resource Team, and was a panellist with Ms Shamima Ali, Coordinator of the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre in Session 7 on Gender and Reproductive Health issues. The session generated a lot of interest so the chair had to extend time for the discussion. She presented a slide show on how media affects the sexuality of women. Ms Bernadette Rounds Ganilau, Radio Trainer SPC Fiji was the facilitator.

As a resource person she was able to put a lot of input in sessions, working groups etc. Mridula believes that the Communications Officer would have benefited immensely as a participant on sessions by Ian Rolls, Graphic Arts specialist, SPC Fiji, Mr. Yaminiasi Gaunavou, SPC Fiji.

The Movement was pleased to know that in Mridula's personal capacity as advocate in the field of Reproductive Health and Population, she was awarded the Inaugural Award for Population and Reproductive Health Advocacy.

Ideas which Mridula came away with from the Seminar is that she will be happy to do the presentation conducted at the above seminar on any of FWRM's issues meeting or otherwise for FWRM to invite some media representatives to attend a panel discussion.

Another recommendation was the idea of contacting the South Pacific Commission's Media Centre for a short-term attachment for the Communications Officer.

Women Health and the Environment
8th Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Conference

"Studies are showing that women are at more risk to environmental pollution. This is due (to) the fact that our biological make-up is such that toxins tend to enter our bodies more easily and remain in there for longer periods of time compared to that of men. Toxins and radiation in the environment is distressingly affecting our health."
~ Patrina Dumaru in Women, Health and Environment Paper, 1999.

By Kylie Anderson

FWRM Collective member and Ecowoman Co-ordinator, Patrina Dumaru, represented the Movement at the 8th Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Conference in Tahiti during September. Invited by the NFIP secretariat, Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC), Patrina was asked to make a presentation at the conference with only a few days notice. FWRM has received several good reports about the speech which always reflects well on the Movement (particularly at an international level). The conference was hosted by *Tavini Haruitira* (a predominately pro-independence party) and was held at the Arue Conference Centre in Arue.

While the main focus of the Conference concentrated on issues revolving around the environment, nuclear testing and political independence for Pacific Island States, it is encouraging that the hosts also saw fit to incorporate the important issue of 'Women's Health and the Environment' (the basis of Patrina's presentation). With FWRM working towards the creation of Women's Health Centres, this is a subject of great interest to us.

Drawing on examples from around the Pacific, Patrina's speech touched on a diverse range of issues including the impact on women's health from environmental pollution and women's traditional and cultural links with the environment and health. Other subjects addressed included the affects of the environment on women's health, the need for an improvement in women's health services, increased participation of women in resource decision making, pollution, awareness raising and biodiversity.

** A copy of Patrina's speech and report on the conference is available to read at the FWRM office.*

Critique of Industrial Relations Bill

In the last issue of Balance we promised you readers that we would bring you the rest of the recommendations of the Critique of the Draft Industrial Relations Bill. These recommendations were put together after consultation with Women's NGOs, Ministry of Women and Ministry of Labour and Unions. To date another progress has been achieved. This was a lobbying workshop with Employers, conducted on 14 December 1999. Below is another lot of recommendations.

3 Paid holidays

Annual Leave

The Bill makes provision for paid holidays. (Part VII) The main feature is that after each year of employment the worker is entitled to ten days paid holiday, which the employer must allow to be taken in at least one continuous week. After three months and less than a year's work the worker is entitled to a five sixths of one days wage of holiday pay for each month worked if the work is terminated.

Public Holiday

Nine days of the year are deemed public holidays and the worker is entitled to be paid if they would normally worked on that day had it not been a public holiday.

There is no provision in the Employment Act for paid holidays, either public or annual.

Comment

These provisions are a significant improvement but still do not meet Fiji Women's Rights Movement's calls in *Labouring under the Law* for 15 days per year annual leave.

Recommendation

- Amend annual leave from ten days to fifteen days

4 Employment Data Records

Under clause 56, the employer must provide the worker with a written wage statement, when paying the worker, which details all aspects of the wages paid, including such matters as wage rates and overtime.

Under clause 57, the employer is obligated to keep wages and time records for every worker and make them available for inspection by a labour officer or inspector.

Under clause 73, the employer is obligated to keep a holiday leave record for each worker, which includes date of starting and finishing work, dates of leave taken and amount paid in paid holidays to which employer is entitled

Under clause 79, the employer who employs a worker whose wages are prescribed under the Act must also keep wage records.

Comment

These provisions are a significant and major improvement on the current situation. All workers in Fiji, including women, will be able to obtain a pay slip and their employer must keep full and detailed written records of their leave and pay, thus enabling an independent check on whether the worker is obtaining minimum wage and leave entitlements.

However, it is noted that there appear to be no direct enforcement provisions if employers do not comply with this provision. The lack of ability to enforce even existing law is a problem raised in Labouring under the Law.

Recommendation

- It is recommended that it be an offence for an employer not to keep a written wage statement, wages, time and holiday records for every worker.

5 Wages and leave records to be produced at request

It is noted that under the Bill the wage and time records are not to be submitted mandatorily to the Labour Ministry but only when and if requested by the Inspectors. See clause 79(2). In this respect the provisions remain the same as under the current situation.

Labouring under the Law considered this submission of records on a discretionary and ad hoc basis was a deficiency in the current regime and prefers a mandatory system. It suggests the laws applying to union accountability apply to employer.

The difficulty with mandatory submission and inspection is a resources one. A middle ground could be that the Bill provides that each workplace's records must be inspected every 3 years or other period. It is noted that there appears

EDITORIAL

Whew! It's alreadythat time of the year when we say merry Christmas and a fabulous new year, however, this year it is with a difference. Yes, for this New Year we turn the big 2000 and most of us are wondering what will happen when that minute comes around. Well, I leave you with this issue of *Balance*, with lots of interesting reading and updates of what the Movement has done since your last issue.

Human Rights are an issue that a lot of people still cannot grapple with. But have no fear, this issue is packed with reports on our human rights activities, and articles from others on the issue. Go to our center page spread on the 1999 Human Rights Awards and check out who the winners were for the 1999 Human Rights Awards.

Paedophilia, Mark Mutch's conviction has created awareness of the abuses that is happening and can happen to our children. Neither should we be ignorant of the role NGOs play in the Convention of the rights of the Child.

Furthermore, volunteer workers play a big part in the smooth running of the work of NGOs, which was a cause for celebration on December 4. Also the empowerment and advancement of women certainly comes about through increased communication. Likewise the health and sexuality of women – communication plays a big part!

Anyway, happy reading! Thanks to all those that have contributed to this issue of Balance. See you all next year and be safe this Christmas and New Year!

Cheers!

Kala

Bits & Pieces

A delegation on a Press Mission from Japan visited the FWRM office on 9 September 1999. One representative was from the Japan Broadcasting Corporation while the other two were from the Japanese Organisation for International Organisation in Family Planning (JOICFIP). The individual and group are based in Tokyo, Japan.

* * * *

While 10 December is recognized as World Human Rights Day, for students of USP it was also their graduation day. A long-standing member of FWRM Gaylene Osborne and a short-term attachee with WEER, Rosie Pao walked the walk on that day. Gaylene graduated with a Masters in Psychology while Rosie graduated with a Diploma in Economics. Congratulations to the both of them.

* * * *

The Director of the Fiji Human Rights Commissioner, Dr. Shaista Shameem presented the Commission's portfolio to FWRM. She stated that cases on sexual harassment can be dealt with by the commission under the Human Rights Act.

* * * *

FWRM are forever grateful to volunteers that frequent our office for their service. We are grateful to the following people; Marama Tubuna who is working on the CEDAW II digest, Rosie Pao who is assisting WEER project officer at the moment with compilation of statistics on women and work, Williamina Nadim who is assisting with the Health Information Centre Project Proposal, Marissa Apted assisting with administration and Reema Naresh who is assisting with the In-house trainning programme. A big thank you to them.

* * * *

The Draft Industrial Relations Bill was put out by the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations. Early this year, FWRM employed a consultant, Frances Joychild to critique this bill. After consultations with women NGOs, Unions and some government sectors, reccomendations were put together by the Consultant. FWRM presented the critique to to two important groups. On 14 December 1999, employer were consulted and on 16 December women Members of Parliament and members of the National Women's Advisory Council were presented with recommeded changes.

* * * * *

FWRM would like to wish all their members - active, supportive and friends a great Christmas and an unforgetable millenium. Psssst....don't drink and drive!!!

Continued from page 1

local volunteer organizations in celebrating this day. On the same day, the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) held an open day at the Centre. Their office doors were open to the general public, who filtered through wanting to know more about the work of FWCC and to clear up any misconception they had about their work. On December 9, the activity was taken to Raiwaqa. In conjunction with WAC, the group took the message of saying no to domestic violence to the suburbs to as wide as possible make known the issue of domestic violence with other social issues such as multiculturalism, youth problems and incest.

On 10 December, all these NGOs and groups came together in a march and rally as part of the NGO coalition on Human Rights activity for this year. The NGO's braved the rain, walked the streets with their messages, chanting slogans of a woman's right to her human rights. This rounded off with a rally at Sukuna Park. In keeping with the theme of World Human Rights Day, three organizations marked this occasion by awarding those involved in Human Rights Work in some way or another. Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) organized the Regional Human rights Awards that was awarded to the Tonga Catholic Women's League. On the other hand the Fiji Human Rights Commission organized a children's artwork competition. The winner's artwork was awarded $500 and won the spot for the Fiji Human Rights Commission annual report cover page. Their awards ceremony was held at the Forum Secretariat Fale. To round of the day, FWRM held their 1999 Human Rights Awards at the Fale. This was the first for Fiji and plaques were given to individuals and organizations involved in the promotion and protection of women's human rights in Fiji.

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dren as they have a good sense of curiosity. Therefore a good way is to give them an explanation for the reasons for not doing what they would like to be doing.

In addition, Reverend Ming Ya T. Tu'uholoaki, the Pacific Regional Representative for the WACC further elaborated on 'Monitoring Mass Media'. She stressed the point that people need to carefully elect the kind of people to sit on censorship boards, in order to prevent appalling decisions being made. An example of such a decision was based on a personal experience of Ming Ya. While watching a Vietnamese War movie in Asia sometime ago, a scene depicting a couple having obscene sex caused great uncomfort to the viewers. It was later known that the censorship board had censored the movie.

Finally, Bernadette Rounds Ganilau, of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, talked about the uses of mass or alternate media. She stated that mass or alternate media are the other means of transmitting information, for example, the use of star reading to identify a particular month of the year. She highlighted that expressing one's self is an important asset. Thus she encouraged the participants to practice what they preach, and to get out into the world and speak out for what they believed in. She stressed on building up networks of friends, which help individual empowerment, and she suggested starting from this workshop. Another aspect she highlighted was that by having friends in the media as being an important link - it is a great way, which will assist in getting a message through.

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no right of unions to have access to records. Union and other agent access and inspection is another important method of ensuring compliance with the Act's provisions about record keeping. If the records are inadequate it enables enforcement to be taken by unions as well as Labour inspectors.

Recommendation

- Wages and leave records to be able to be requested by individual employees, unions and other representatives as well as by Labour Inspectors
- Require employers to submit wages and leave records to the Secretary of Labour every three years for audit for compliance with Act.

* *Next Issue will carry more of the issues in the critique of the Draft Industrial Relations Bill.*

Continued from page 4

The Human Rights Awards were presented at an awards function held at the Forum Secretariat Fale, in Ratu Sukuna Road, Suva. The function was launched by Judge Sailosi Kepa and Chair of the Fiji Human Rights Commission. Ana Rakei of I'vulagi Danz Art performed a Fijian, Polynesia and Indian dance. The evening was marked by a candle light ceremony and a moment of silence for those who have suffered human rights abuses. Human Rights Commissioner Imrana Jalal remembered our sisters in Afghanistan and closer to home like the Solomon Islands. The evening included the exhibition of the Fiji Human Rights Commission Children's Artwork and the auctioning of a painting done by William Bakalevu. The evening wrapped up with two performances by the Chinese Cultural Centre. ***B***

At FWRM

Staff Movements

- Convention of the Rights of the Child, 4 Oct - 10 Oct, Nadi.
- Training of Trainers 25 Oct - 12 November, Brisbane Australia.
- Family Law Legal Literacy Workshop at Rewa Nari Sabha from 25 to 29 October and Deepwater, Tailevu from 6 to 10 Dec 1999.
- 26 - 28 October - 'Women and the Governance of Poverty' UNESCAP meeting, Bangkok, Thailand.
- Resourced the Public Service Commission Risk Assessment and Management Workshop - 25 November 1999.
- Critique of Draft Industrial Relations Bill workshop with Employers 14 Dec 1999 and with Women Members of Parliament on 16 Dec 1999.
- Fiji Council of Churches/World Association of Christian Communication workshop on Advancement and Empowerment of Women through Communication. FWRM resourced the workshop, 8 – 10 Dec 1999.
- Media Council of Fiji Launch of Code of Ethics – 26 October 1999.
- Post Cairo National Seminar – 14 to 15 Oct 1999.
- FWRM 1999 Human Rights Awards 10 Dec 1999.
- .NGO Coalition on Human Rights march and rally 10 Dec 1999.

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Visitors to the Office

- Jill Cottrell - Department of Law, University of Hong Kong
- Melissa Tapper - Vancouver, Canada
- Tomoko Omura - Reporter for Japan Broadcasting Corporation, Tokyo, Japan
- Reiko Nagano - Programme Officer for Japanese Organisation for International Organisation in Family Planning.
- Nancy Spencer - Commonwealth Secretariat of the Pacific Community.
- Phillip Pillay - Police Department, Suva.
- Neelam Lal - Young Men's Christian Association
- Veantula Salc - Vanuatu.
- Jennifer Brook - Lami.
- Yashmir Parmal - Vancouver, Canada.
- Dr. Shaista Shameem - Director, Fiji Human Rights Commission.

Fiji Women's Rights Movement
1st Floor, Old Narsey's Building, Suva.
GPO BOX 14194
SUVA.

Place Stamp Here

***Balance* is funded by Canada Fund**

Balance

FWRM

Newsletter of the Fiji Women's Rights Movement

"Balancing the Scales" October - September 1999

Human Rights - A Cause for Action.

Above: NGOs and supporters march into Sukuna Park on World Human Rights Day!

It is recognized internationally that 10 December is World Human Rights day. This year to mark this event, NGOs, Regional Organisations and United Nations bodies celebrated with a number of activities in Fiji. This special day also marked the last day of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence.

Celebrations began on 25 November 1999. Fiji Women's Crisis Centre began their active campaigns through the distribution of white ribbons and coasters carrying captions related to domestic violence. The coasters featured the non-violence wheel - a diagramatic representation of the factors contributing towards equality in a relationship. The coasters were distributed to bars and other public places. This period was also marked by the active lobbying and appeal by the Fiji East Timor Action Group (FETAG). FETAG is a group of NGOs, regional organisations and individuals that was put together to raise awareness in Fiji on the violation of human rights in particular, on women and children of East Timor. Appeal tins that were stationed in strategic places in Suva were brought together and counted. During the 16 days of activism, a booth was set up at the Downtown Boulevard shopping mall with displays of the situation in East Timor. T-shirts calling for a rebuilding of East Timor were selling and appeal tins were part of the display booth. The FETAG group is made up of the following: Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC), Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC), Women's Action for Change (WAC), Greenpeace Pacific, Citizens Constitutional Forum (CCF), Pacific Conference of Churches and Fiji Council of Churches (FCC).

December 4, marked the International Volunteer Day festivities. Organised by the United Nations Development Programme, the day was marked with festivities at Sukuna Park. Volunteer workers and organizations that utilized volunteers joined the United Nations and the Minister for Women and Culture in releasing balloons in the air to celebrate the tremendous work that Fiji benefits from through volunteer workers. FWRM and FETAG joined other overseas and

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What's in this issue.

* Convention on the Rights of the Child workshop in Nadi.
* Extract of Critique of Industrial Relations Bill
* Paedophilia and Child Sex Tourism in Fiji
* Post Cairo National Seminar update.
* UNFPA Regional Media Seminar
* 1999 Human Rights Awards pictures and more...