



FAKATUFONO NIUE

# TAU TALA NIUE

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September 17th 2010

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## *From Fale Fono:*

**Premier Talagi is pleased with the announcement from MFAT that Mark Blumsky is Excellency Mark Blumsky looking pleased at having conquered the trip to Talava Arches. His Excellency Mark Blumsky looking very pleased with himself having conquered the Talava Arches walk. Pleased at having been to Talava Arches has been officially appointed as the New Zealand High Commissioner to Niue. The big pluses in Mr Blumsky's appointment are that he is not from the normal 'diplomatic pool' as have other High Commissioners in the past [with the exception of Sandra Lee Vercoe] he is an ex-parliamentarian, a former Mayor, a successful businessman, an author including other qualities that will help lead Niue positively forward especially in developing our tourism potential.**



*New Zealand High Commissioner to Niue, His Excellency Mark Blumsky [right] with Hon Minister Pokotoa Sipeli*

Mr Blumsky told BCN in an interview last week that in reality the issues that confronted Wellington [during his time as the Mayor] ‘is no different from Niue, except in terms of scale.’ He is looking forward to work with the Premier and his government and with the community, walking the talk in the same direction and to add value to the nation’s economic development, a requirement that Prime Minister John Key insisted on when he visited Niue last year.

Premier Talagi, who wants to run Niue like a business corporation now has Mr Blumsky to help him because both ‘have good business sense and they speak the same language. He expressed his satisfaction with spending plans over the next three years and attributes the progress to Wellington’s special envoy, Mark Blumsky.

According to an interview with Radio New Zealand International reporter Don Wiseman, Premier Talagi, ‘Niue’s objectives have always been outcome-based and targeted on tourism, with an emphasis on private sector



involvement... says Mr Blumsky’s pragmatic approach has been refreshing, and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs Special Relationship Unit is taking his lead in ensuring a system that is less process-based and more outcome-driven.”

TTN would like to wish Mr Blumsky well during his term as the New Zealand High Commissioner in Niue. We are sure that with his demonstrated positive attitude and that he ‘loves to make things happen’ the future of our nation is looking bright already.

- Hon Minister Pokotoa Sipeli is away overseas this week and Ekepule Billy Talagi will be responsible for the Minister’s portfolio matters
- SOG Richard Hipa will be away overseas this week – please refer all SOG related matters to Secretary of Justice, Mr Justin Kamupala who is Acting SOG for this week

### *Notes from the Fono Ekepule:*

A total of five motions were presented with the following results:

- ‘...for the Fono Ekepule [hereafter to include the Premier, Ministers and Ekepule members] to share equally the \$400,000 from the European Union among the 14 villages rather than giving it to one village, namely Avatele to build a new hotel.’

The motion took three hours of heated debate but was narrowly defeated, 10 votes to 8.

- ‘...that the Fono Ekepule to seriously consider the public servants’ who are nearing retirement before asking them to retire as is the case now.’ The motion was carried 8-3
- ‘...that the Fono Ekepule not to sell the government houses at Fualahi that have been given by the New Zealand Government, as announced on BCN.’ The motion was defeated 8-7
- ‘That Cabinet introduces an Honours List for local Niuean residents.’ Carried, 10-5
- ‘That Cabinet introduces a ‘smoking ban’ in all public and work places.’ Carried, 8-3

[more from the Fono Ekepule in next week’s issue]

### *Pacific Languages Fighting for Survival and Largely Unsupported by the Ministry of Education,’ claim researchers.*

Pacific Language researchers, Judy Mcfall and John Mccaffery, have expressed grave concern that the New Zealand Ministry of Education, ‘...is not supporting Pacific bilingualism and has recently stopped the production of all Pacific languages reading resources for schools,’ and further revealed that ‘...unless this changes soon the future looks very grim indeed for all Pacific languages.’

Although Mcfall and Mccaffery’s two year research project published this week focused primarily on the people from four major Pacific islands currently living in New Zealand - Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands and Niue, it is the latter two groups that is causing the most concern.

The research showed that only 5% of Cook Islanders [60,000 living in NZ and 12,500 ‘at home] and 11% Niueans [22,000 living in



*Niue Education with a 1000 Booklet Titles in the local language*



NZ and 1,600 ‘at home’) born in New Zealand could speak their ancestral or heritage language, an indication according to John Mccaffery, ‘that when the languages disappear completely from New Zealand mainland among the child bearing age populations in the next 10 years, they will also disappear from the islands themselves as the language imbalance in families



*is well past a critical stage for maintenance or bilingualism to survive.'*

The project also showed that both languages are the languages of NZ Citizens and the counties of the Realm and that they are protected by many NZ Acts of Parliament, International Human Rights legislation and the recently signed Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples. However the research also shows little has been done to date to ensure their legal and official place as official minority languages in NZ society.

Bilingual education programmes within the New Zealand curriculum according to the researchers would go a long way towards addressing this situation but found that there are no Bilingual schools or programmes for the 80% of Cook Islanders and Niueans who live in the Auckland region and 'the effort appear to have been too little too late.'

The media coverage last month of the 2009 NCEA results for Pacific Islands' students in New Zealand revealed that Cook Islands and Niuean students scored poorly in the National examinations which seemed to suggest that the findings by McFall and McCaffery might be correct and directly related. Media sources suggested that perhaps that the problems these students are severely and directly impacted by their inability to speak and write in their own respective languages.

### *Niue Public Health treats Members of Parliament to a 'hearty' breakfast*



TTN's view of the Niue Public Health's novelty approach in drawing the attention of the nation's Members of Parliament to the Launching of their **'Niue Moui Olaola: An Integrated NCD Action Plan 2009-2013'**, by offering them breakfast was quite refreshing and original.

"But this breakfast 'shout' is not only about a lesson in nutrition," DOH Anne McLean told her invited guests. "I would like to tell you about our Moui Olaola Integrated NCD [non-communicable diseases] Action Plan 2009-2013, what we have found out from past projects and surveys but more important what we are going to do about it. We view this as a problem for the whole of government, not just for us at Health; therefore we need your understanding, awareness, support and cooperation in order to achieve our goals. The bottom line is that NCD will be an impediment

to economic and social development in our country."



DOH McLean expressed the concern by the Public Health Division staff members who are alarmed with the growing number of NCD patients in the four main groups: Diabetes, Cardiovascular, gout and cancer.

A Nationwide Health Survey in 2002 for example found a total of 118 [out of 724 people surveyed] cases of people with diabetes [51 females and 67 males] In the 2006 Diabetic campaign there were 149 cases [68 females/81 males] which has increased again to 163 [90 females plus 2 deaths/ 67 males plus 4 deaths] from the SOPD Records in 2008.



***The Public Health Team who did all the hard graft...from left - Ms Grizelda Mokoia, Patipati Sionetama, Mrs Puasina Tatui [Staff Nurse, Ms Figo Kulatea [Assistant Health Manager] and Senior Public Health Officer, Manila Nosa***

There are other diseases related to diabetes that are causes for alarm: for example we have patients from here with renal problems [all are in New Zealand undergoing treatment] and the incidences of high blood pressure cases [higher among females compared to males in 2002] will probably increase with each passing year.

The scenario is probably the same with other NCDs and the risk factors are increasing steadily – people are putting on more weight [obesity/physical inactivity/poor diet] smoking and alcohol dominant in men [cardiovascular and lung/liver cancers] and gout.

The implications for the nation according to Niue Public Health dire unless we do something about it – 75% of deaths per year will be related directly to NCDs and unless we do something about it, the epidemic will take many lives; disable hundreds; overwhelm our limited resources and erode economic development.

What can be done?

- Refer to the Niue Moui Olaola NCD Action Plan for 2009-2013
- Include NCD on the Government Agenda, and
- Invest in NCD Prevention

Or better still DOH McLean suggested in concluding her address to her guests, “If I had it my way I would ban all imports from this country!”

September , 2010 Press Release from the Community Affairs Department

### ***“When a tupuna dies, a library burns”***

There was standing room only inside the Catholic Mission Chapel last week end, including outside where special open air shelters were erected, as people jostled for space while waiting to say good bye to yet another valued tupuna, who passed away just over a week ago – Mrs Alitasi Hipa’s life, it seemed had touched all of us who were there in one way or another.



The Obituary account, delivered by the family's spokesperson, son Richard Hipa, took almost an hour yet we all know in our hearts and minds that we heard only a fraction of Alitasi Hipa's life journey, much of it belongs in the family's memory banks but the remainder, a veritable library went into the grave with her.



By all accounts the family spoke of their mother in 'Earth Mother' terms - warm, loving, caring, generous, fiercely loyal to her family and her church, but to the women of Niue [she was a founding member of the Niue Women's Council] she was highly respected as a person, an organiser, a craftsperson, a friend,

utterly dependable and a confidant to be trusted.

Two of the most visible gifts Alitasi Hipa left behind that are manifested in her children and grandchildren were in the dances and music for which she was well known, both of which, fortunately have been willingly shared with the rest of us.

Alitasi Hipa was interred in the Catholic Mission grounds, a resting place of her own choice. It is said that the Gates to Paradise can be opened only by the tears of those left behind. May she Rest In Peace.

### *Stephanie Tauevihi wins Best Supporting Actress Award in the 2010 Qantas Film and Television Awards*



Gaining an acknowledgement in a Qantas Film and Television Awards in New Zealand is no mean feat because recognition is highly competitive within this branch of the entertainment industry. This is the second time that Stephanie Tauevihi's has won this award, which by the standards of the industry the recipient of such an award is a name to be remembered.

What is in it for us is that Stephanie's personal trademark [according to the person who sent this information to TTN] is that she never fails to publicly acknowledge her roots – her family, her village and her island. Well done, Steph – we are proud of you!

#### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **Key Stakeholders on Niue dialogue on the Advancement of Women in Decision Making Processes**



Key stakeholders from all sectors gathered at the Millennium Hall in Alofi this week to share knowledge and information on the advancement of women in the decision making processes. Out of the 20 representatives in the Niue Legislative Assembly, four are women. Niue is one of two countries in the region who had achieved the 20% representation of women in Legislature, without special measures.

The four women members of Parliament, including the Minister for Women Affairs, Honorable O'Love Tauveve Jacobsen who has been in Parliament for 22 years, openly shared their experiences as MP's. They spoke about how they overcame challenges and obstacles they faced during campaigning and life in politics.

The youngest member of the Niue Legislative Assembly, Ms. Gustava Esther Pavihi, (36 yrs) spoke of the cultural challenges in terms of 'respecting the elders' and how her male counterparts have supported and shaped her journey through parliament.

*"I have been fortunate because there are many great women who have gone before me in the Niue Legislative Assembly and who have paved the way for us as young women to now have a voice in the highest levels of decision making,"* Pavihi said.

*"For me, the challenge is not so much being a woman, but more about being a young woman in a position of authority."* Pavihi is the Chairperson of the Public Expenditure Committee, and the Vice Chair of the Constitution Review Committee.



*from left: Ekepule Maihetoë Hekau, Ekepule Hon Va'aiga Tukuitonga, Ikipule Hon O'love Jacobsen and Ekepule Esther Pavihi [Niue's youngest MP]*

Honorable Va'aiga Tukuitoga, who is the only woman MP to have won a village constituency seat, spoke of how she approached the campaign trail as a "peacemaker", willing to serve the people. *"My objectives and intentions were clearly reflected on the flyers that were prepared for the campaign and I went from door to door distributing them and visiting the families,"* Tukuitoga added.

Tukuitoga has had three successive terms in the Assembly and broke ground when she toppled the Niue Premier and sitting MP for Alofi North in her first time in Parliament (1999). Assisting Minister Honourable Maihetoë Hekau spoke of the attributes of becoming an effective member of parliament of being strong willed and not easily influenced by others

views and opinions. She highlighted the need for further training orientation once women become MPs to be able to make significant contributions, to benefit the nation as a whole.



The participants identified the Village Constituency seats as the most difficult seats for women to conquer because of strong traditional and cultural views that the men are still considered as the leaders of the community

and head of the household. Niue has 14 village constituencies and 6 Common Roll seats open to national candidates.

Depopulation is a key issue which was discussed at length as women's efforts to move forward hinges on this critical factor. There are serious implications for the small island nation with a total population of 1,625 (2006 census) and its continuing decrease.

Key recommended actions to progress the way forward for the women of Niue included suggestions for a Women's Forum to host a Mock parliament session adapted from the Niue National Youth Parliament model. The recommendations from the two day meeting have been captured in a National Action Plan for Advancing Women's Representation in Decision Making Processes which will feed into the Sub Regional Action Plan for Small Island States (SIS).

Representatives from the SIS will gather in Nadi in November to discuss the Sub Regional Action Plan and endorse a strategic way forward for the work in this area. Three representatives from Niue will participate at this Conference.

The national and sub regional consultations are being coordinated by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) in partnership with UNIFEM Pacific and UNDP Pacific Centre. The funding for the activity has come from UNIFEM's Gender Equality Fund. PIFS and the SIS are the only regional recipients of the Catalytic Fund distributed by UNIFEM globally to accelerate progress on gender equality in line with National Development Strategies (NDSs) and advance commitments to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Beijing Platform for Action, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and other global and regional agreements.

#### Private Sector business

The Government of Niue is always in the forefront when it comes to support activities in the village communities that helps retain population numbers, community vitality in terms of ensuring that the people are happy and content

#### Premier Talagi explains shifting within the Niue Public Service Building



## *Tau Talanoa*

- **Reef Shipping Schedule:**

**Forum Pacific V 006** is due to arrive in Niue on September in the afternoon, local time

**Forum Pacific V 007** –freight cut/off 29 September  
Departs Auckland, 06 October  
Arrives Niue, October

**Forum Pacific V 008** – Freight cut/off, 21 October  
Departs Auckland, October  
Arrives Niue, 06 November

- Thanks to BCN for screening the two programmes last week, ‘Pacific Beat Street’ and ‘Fishing with Geoff.’ We are pleased that both programmes featured our island paradise pointing out the ‘fun’ parts of our life that our people had



forsaken in their preference to seek a ‘better life’ in New Zealand.

*Pacific Beat Street Team from NZ TV 3...*

The Pacific Beat exposure was particularly interesting for our young people which showed the crew appeared to be having a wonderful time hunting uga, weaving mats and hats, the making of a canoe and fishing from it, swimming in popular spots, visiting tourism icons such as Talava and Matapa, and attending church services to listen to the congregation singing.

One of the members that TTN spoke to before they left said, ‘that Niue does not really need to be ‘revved up’ in order to have fun while living here. There is a lot of potential around for your young people to take life as it comes and to actively engaged in continuing to maintain and preserve your culture and traditions, the things that will mean something to them when they grow older.’

‘Fishing with Geoff Thomas,’ a popular outdoors Television programme in New Zealand, is a boon to our tourism enterprise,’ according to Mr Hayden Porter, Niue Tourism’s Senior Tourism Development Consultant. “Think of the advertising that we get out of Mr Thomas’ presence here in Niue that we do not have to pay for, and think of those fishermen in New Zealand who would love to come here during winter and enjoy the lay back atmosphere that we take for granted, out in the water catching wahoos and tuna!’

The winner out of both programmes was local entrepreneur and businessman, Mr Willie Saniteli who featured prominently in both programmes. And why not? Mr Saniteli was there on the spot personally taking our guests on an uga hunting expedition and on the water joyously involved making sure that his visitors were granted their wish in catching the fish they wanted.

- BCN's Radiothon continued yesterday to raise funds for the victims of the Christchurch Earthquake. The total funds raised by the public will be matched by the Government of Niue.
- The authors of the research into the fate of the four main Pacific Islands languages in New Zealand is to be applauded, especially in championing the cause for Cook Island Maori and Niuean speakers who live in New Zealand. Now that the possible causes for the deficiencies have been exposed the authors, Judy Mcfall and John McCaffery, will be turning their attention towards how this can be fixed if at all, a case of 'the effort [to be fixed] has probably too little and too late.'

Judy McFall and John McCaffery were here last year they found that with the exception of the church services we ourselves in Niue are not really loyal or helpful in trying to preserve our heritage language, preferring instead to speak English in public functions such as haircutting and ear piercing ceremonies, workshops, beauty pageants for example.

The McFall/McCaffery solution [that we think at best a compromise] lies with Bilingual Education. We hope that they are correct.

Vagahau Niue is still strong here in Niue, the critical issue is that there are not enough of us to sustain it and with only 1496 (residents in country - Niue Population Estimate, 30 June 2010 from Niue Statistics) compared to the 22,000 Niueans living in NZ (2006 Census), it is going to be a real challenge for all of us.

- Unless you are unable to see very well, we notice with pleasure that spring is already here. The shoots of yams are seeking support to climb on and the frangipani trees are loaded with flowers of white, cream, pinks and reds. This is an excellent opportunity to string together a strand or five to greet the visitors as they come through the airport. There is nothing like a fresh flower garland to introduce our visitors to our island home.

- There were many issues that came out of the 'Advancement of Women in Decision Making Processes Workshop last week that were not included in the Press Release [see above] from the Community Affairs Office.



1. That together with Palau we are the only Pacific nations with 20% or more representations in Parliament. We add the number of women who also hold

senior positions in the Niue Public Service as Heads of Departments, Divisions and sub-divisions. At last count there are 24 [42%] such positions held by women

2. For women to break into the traditional village seats during the General Elections [Hon Va'aiga Tukuitonga was the first to achieve this] the reason, as one participant from Mutalau explained, 'is that we still need to respect and hold dearly to the traditional ways in which our village candidates are selected.' We guess that this might be interpreted in this way: 'if it works, don't fix it.'
  3. "We are happy for our men to take the lead in the decision making processes," said one. "We have been brought up by our men to believe that all we should do is 'stay home, look after the family and look pretty. I really like that last bit."
  4. One of the aims of the workshop was to discuss rather than formalise the issues regarding women's representation in the decision making processes.
  5. There was a noticeable lack of representation from our young women in this workshop. The majority of them works in the Public Service and special leave must be sought otherwise they will have to take leave to attend such workshops.
  6. A total of 14 men took part [although not all the time] in the workshop
  7. "This workshop is not about the setbacks, not about how badly we have been treated, not about the adversity that we face in our day to day lives but about what we can do to rise above all that."
  8. We need to be educated so that we can be noted, respected and listened to...
  9. We are expected and looked upon to be the guardians of our cultural heritage, and the backbone of our country.
  10. One male participant expressed that it is women themselves who marginalise women. So a lot of work in ironing out all these differences needs to be addressed by the women themselves.
  11. Women are also keen to explore a similar model like the Niue National Youth Parliament in the near future.
- A meeting was held this week at the Niue Public Service Building between Premier Talagi and staff to explain the reasons behind the reorganisation of staff within the building and thanking the staff for their cooperation:
    1. To ensure that staff in each Department are quartered in the same vicinity
    2. To maximise the use of space within the building
    3. Proximity to share expertise with senior members of the public service being more accessible to junior staff
    4. Removing of barriers [storage] from the main working areas so that we all see what we are doing. The open plan arrangement is purpose built and barriers therefore defeat this purpose.
    5. We envisage developing cooperating large group bonding among the staff in order to achieve goals more efficiently
  - Members of our under 19 Relay Team who are currently competing in Cairns did very well to win the finals in this event but the team was unfortunately disqualified when one of the runners overran the lane marker. It was a certain Gold Medal for the team except for the eagle-eyed official who spotted the offending baton change and lodged a complaint that cost our boys our first track Gold.

But don't feel disappointed because Michael Jackson Junior gained us a Bronze in the 200m Finals with the 100m events still to come.



These are Oceania level Games which serve as a dress rehearsal for the Commonwealth Games, therefore we think that our boys did very well.

- It is encouraging to know that the private sector businesses are beginning once more to bond with village communities the way we used to in the early years of the Constitution. We all know how important village communities are to the economic, political, spiritual and social development of our country – manifesting in the way they live, such as Show Days in which the Government play a large part with annual village council grants.



*Bernard's Marketing owner - manager, Mrs Teuila Kalauni hands over Club Uniforms to Andre Siohane, [right] President of the Hakupu Darts Club.*

Hakupu village for example has been very fortunate in having the Perth based Halatau family who continues to contribute financially and in kind towards this once thriving community, in the hope that the present residents are comfortable and contented. Financial assistance to the Hakupu Netball Team, the Youth Canoe building project, musical instruments for the youth group – all ‘grist to the mill’ as the saying goes.

More recently the Hakupu Darts Club, soon to embark on a tour to New Zealand on a reconnection with families, goodwill tour and bridge building exercise with former residents. For this trip Bernard’s Marketing, a private business from Alofi North, has stepped in and paid for the team’s uniform in a sponsorship arrangement that will somehow benefit both in the future. These are the kinds of sponsorships that keep our living communities viable and sustainable, particularly with the activities, such as sports clubs, of village communities to keep its members happy and healthy.

In a way, it also raises confidence and independence of the community and avoid the hand-out mentality and relying on Government for everything.

What was on last Week end?

*Alofi North’s annual Village Show Day at Paliati! I you weren’t there then you certainly missed out big time....*

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