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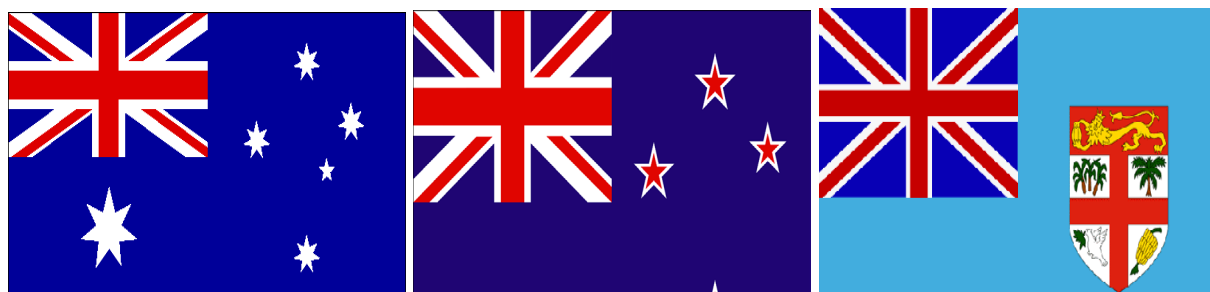
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Trilateral Talks



New Zealand, Australia and Fiji Foreign Ministers held talks in Sydney which resulted in a joint agreement to restore High Commissioners in the three countries. Previously, following the 2006 military coup staged by Commodore Frank Bainimarama for the expulsions of resident high commissioners left the posts vacant, with acting deputies in charge in the interim. New Zealand saw three heads of missions expelled from Fiji in the aftermath of the Bainimarama coup. The late Mr Michael Green was

the first NZ High Commissioner expelled by Fiji, followed by Ms Caroline McDonald and later Mr Todd Clever. Diplomatic relations between Fiji and New Zealand have remained somewhat strained. New Zealand Foreign Minister Mr Murray McCully visited Fiji recently as part of the Forum group of ministers, later he traveled to Sydney for joint talks with his Australian counterpart and Fiji's military installed minister.

Nailatikau Visits India's President

Fiji's military appointed President, Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, called on Mr Pranab Mukherjee, newly elected President of India at Rajstrapati Bhavan. Nailatikau was visiting Delhi to see the new Fiji High Commission. He is the son in law of Fiji's elder statesman, late Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. Nailatikau was



a former commander of the Fiji military.

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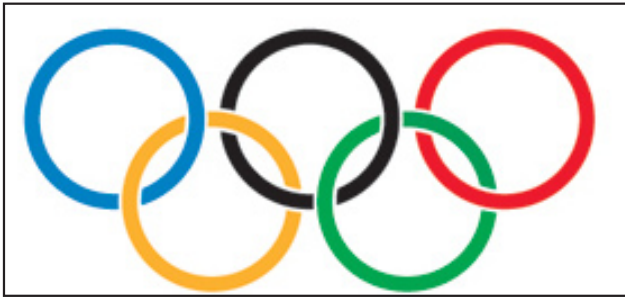
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Olympic Cheer



London has achieved a sound plus - the success of these games was due in large measure to finite planning and its execution. From the spectacular Opening Ceremony through to the last moments memories were forged, on the field, in the pools and in the water, on the roads, in the arena. Top marks to the organizers and a big thank you to the hundreds of sportsmen and women who provided us with such delight. This kind

of friendship and friendly rivalry gives a fresh meaning to our world family. What a pity we allow dogma and fundamental beliefs to divide the world into factions and see warfare in so many places.

NZ High Commission Prize Giving

The 2012 National Essay Competition Prize Giving brought winning students to Suva, to be welcomed by Acting

High Commissioner Phillip Taula. Among special guests who attended were principals, heads of departments,

teachers, proud parents who mingled with the Fiji Director of Secondary Education, Mrs Basundra Kumar. Mrs

Kumar offered her praise of the annual event. As did the High Commissioner of India in Suva, Mr Vinod Kumar,

who said it was always a pleasure to meet young leaders of Fiji. Several remote schools were represented among

the winners - Edwin Saladoka from Cawaci, Ovalau took the top award with Devnal Shamal Singh from Sigatoka. In his address, Mr Taula acknowledged the efforts of teachers who each year, encouraged their students to think

on important issues and to write their essays. A winning student from Suva's St Christopher's Home for

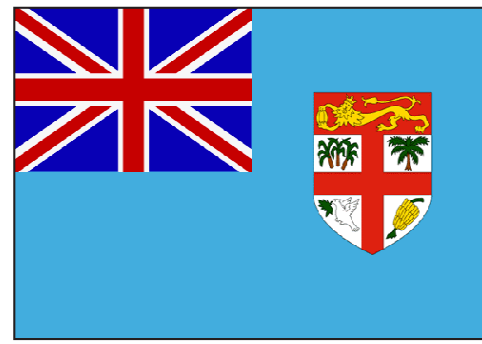
Orphans, sixteen year old student from



Nakasi High School voiced the view s of her fellow students when she said the competition was a unique and interesting way for them to be involved on issues which affect their communities. Significantly, Fiji TV coverage was appropriately given and the 2012 event closed well. Congratulations to all winners and the participating schools.

Fiji's Onward Path

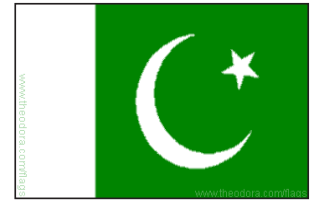
The Fiji Constitutional Commission has been hearing from citizens though not in the large numbers that was expected. One hopes this will change and more groups and individuals will come forward. The Chairman of the Commission, Professor Yash Ghai has stated that people should not be afraid to express their views and he has received an assurance from the military chief, Prime Minister Bainimarama. One has to remember, the past few years have brought many negatives to the forefront with arrests, media clamp downs, dismissals and the army entrenching itself securely in the nation. With many decrees that caused conflicts there can hardly be expected the citizenry will rise immediately to forget such things and to trust those who snatched power by means of guns. Fiji has many levels of healings in the future. One such matter will be the place of the military. Traditional belief that the military must remain out of the civilian government and away from the executive has taken a severe knock. Just ask the youngsters born after 1987. They have



seen nothing but a cycle of coups where might is right has become a yardstick. There has also been a migration pattern of those who left Fiji, not wanting to have their sons and daughters pass through more of the same. Fiji's onward path is now a matter of crucial significance. The nation should be encouraged to find ways to repair fences, to develop a new set of rules which safeguard democracy and also the values of the people. In the weeks ahead, as the Commission moves around the country, citizens should make use of this opportunity and make submissions. Professor Ghai's assurance on freedom of expression should be accepted.

14 & 15 August

In 1947 two nations were born from the ashes of the British Raj - India and Pakistan. Astwo



sets of rules were adopted and neighbors found themselves facing extraordinary challenges, partition brought a stark reality. Can anyone ever forget the conflicts which resulted and the long road to co-existence as neighbors? 14 and 15 August will be celebrated by India and Pakistan as well as their compatriots around

the world. It is often said we are a global family, a brotherhood which should be a focus of positives. Such a vision can make the world not only peaceful, but also, open doors to a future that is a wonder to behold. We each have the capacity to do this. Let our celebrations marking 14 and 15 August be a time of mutual good will. Happy independence day to Pakistan and Happy independence day to India.

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NZ'S Olympic Victory

It was amazing that many commentators from around the world mentioned NZ as a small nation making a contribution in sports that is far above the expected scope for its size and population. Bring it on.



New Zealand's success in Lon was something we loved. Each day Kiwis were glued to the TV screen waiting for special moments when our sportspeople made us so proud. It takes a great commitment. The national psyche is built on the Can Do philosophy. New Zealand is well known for its heroes - not just

sportspeople but others who go out to make a difference - in arts, science, research, medicine, law, international affairs, culture and many more fields. We have the ability to rise above our isolationism and we also

have the ability to accept our special place as a Pacific Nation. Ours is that extraordinary place, a nation where its citizens take pride of belonging to a great nation. Our warm congratulations to each Olympic participant from NZ - Our immense gratitude to those who won medals! Well done!

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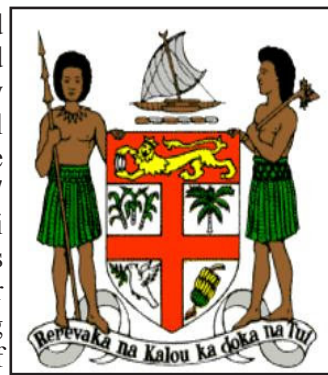


The new High Commissioner of India, Mr Avandira Kumar Pandey presented his credentials to Governor General Sir Jerry Mataparae recently. Mr Pandey has previously served in various overseas posts including Brussels and Male. His Excellency is most welcome here, among a large Indian community widely settled in Wellington, Hamilton and Auckland as the major areas. Auckland has the largest number and has been a very active scene for events spread throughout the region, spearheaded by many vibrant organizations. There are many Indians from numerous backgrounds, settlers who came directly from India, others from Fiji, South Africa, Malaysia and locations around the world. It was Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi during a visit to Auckland who reminded Indians they are the ambassadors of their land of birth, no matter from which second or third destination they came from to New Zealand subsequently. The rich tapestry of Indian heritage shines brightly in all such communities. We can be very proud that as far removed as fifth and sixth generation families residing in New Zealand have links with India. New Zealand and India have strong relations in trade, education, agriculture, migration to name a few features.

Perhaps some of the outstanding New Zealanders whose impact has created everlasting impressions in this friendship are Sir Edmund Hillary and Lady June Hillary, Mr David Lange, Sir Don McKinnon, Sir John Turei and others. New Zealanders will always recall with pleasure the humble manner in which the Indian Prime Minister appeared on New Zealand TV in a special This Is Your Life tribute to Sir Edmund Hillary. Mr Rajiv Gandhi endeared himself to our nation forever, praising the great Sir Ed's achievements. In recent times, New Zealand and India have embarked on many close ventures in commerce, some of which was instigated by former Foreign Minister Mr Phil Goff and currently spearheaded by Trade Minister Mr Tim Groser. Last year the Prime Minister Hon John Key launched the NZ Inc as a positive way to advance strategic growth aims. There is a great desire for both nations to engage more closely on issues such as the region around us in the neighborhood, importantly, Fiji among topical matters. The new High Commissioner will certainly find a varied pace and an interesting assignment in New Zealand. We wish him well, welcome to our shores.

Fiji/NZ Diplomatic Relations

Traditionally Fiji and New Zealand enjoyed cordial and mutually beneficial relations. It all turned to custard in the aftermath of the 1987 coup staged by Sitiveni Rabuka. Relations became strained. Mr David Lange was among the most ardent critics of the coup makers in Fiji and kept up the heat on Fiji at various international forums. His good friend Mr Rajiv Gandhi was a similar critic and both leaders were adamant Fiji should return to democratic governance. Meanwhile hundreds of Fiji citizens left. New Zealand saw a vast number settle and many businesses were established. In the aftermath of the Interm Government in Fiji, the High Commissioner of India was expelled. This led to the Indian embassy being closed by the Government of India, as the Foreign Office recalled all staff from Suva. The crisis in Fiji caused by George Speight and his allies brought down the elected government of Mahendra Pal Chaudhary. A former NZ Governor General Sir Paul Reeves was appointed Chair of Fiji's Constitutional Review Commission to introduce a new set of rules for the coup riddled state. The 2006 coup staged by Frank Bainimarama and his allies ended another elected government. So it goes. New Zealand's stance has been to strongly condemn these military takeovers. The Travel Ban became a bone of contention for the military and



its allies in Suva. Three heads of missions at the New Zealand High Commission were expelled. Missions in Wellington and Suva saw a downgrade with Acting Deputy Head of Missions taking charge in the interim. This is now set to change when both countries will revert back to High Commissioners at both posts. It was not only a regrettable past but a very un-necessary one to revert to the point of expelling diplomats. Fallen fences caused many missed opportunities. However, it was to the credit of Wellington that Fiji was assisted during every disaster that occurred even though diplomatic links were suffering. As a near neighbor NZ kept many projects in tact to assist Fiji citizens. However, there was a perception in Fiji, that NZ did not comprehend the complex issues of Fiji's political lifestyle and was a big brother with a stick, ready to criticize. There is no doubt Fiji and NZ relations have suffered in fundamental ways. It is time to repair these. The result of the Trilateral Talks in Sydney may well see an attempt to see this happen. A start is good. The road ahead is longer than many envisage.

Mother Teresa born 26 August

The Albanian born girl in 1910, became the face of India's poorest and dying – she rose to become Mother Teresa, founder of the Missionaries of Charity which scooped dying people in Calcutta off the streets to give them some dignity in their last hours. Mother Teresa was known as a modern day saint, long before any Vatican regulations and rules were rolled out to examine her current status as a Blessed person. She went where few wanted to, she became the conscience of the world. Mother Teresa's Order spread across India to many countries to administer to the poorest of the poor, to the dying and those without hope. When she won the Nobel Peace Prize and was invited to the traditional banquet held for Laureates Mother Teresa asked that her portion of the money for the banquet be given to the poor of India. She walked with Kings and princes. She pleaded for help for the poor. Mother Teresa, Companion of Merit of England, Companion of the Order of Australia, Padma Shri of India, Nobel Laureate and a string of other title holder, wanted peace and equality. When asked by a famous reporter – What can we do to promote world peace? Mother Teresa replied 'Go home

and love your family.' One of the world's richest women, perhaps the most glamorous and most known, Princess Diana saw in Mother Teresa something extraordinary, something beyond description. She was not the only person. From all accounts, Mother Teresa had many such followers, including President Reagan. She had the ability to go straight to people's heart. Mother Teresa placed herself behind any cause which could assist her poorest kindred and made no apologies for this effort. She lived to serve the poor. Her death in 1997 was mourned by India and the world. The woman who lived in poverty, worked among the poorest and the dying on the streets, was accorded a State Funeral – perhaps reminding us again of the great paradox that is life. Mother Teresa advanced the cause of other kinds of "poor" people, such as those who were unwanted or unloved in homes and in nations around the world. She told an audience being unloved or unwanted, forgotten, was worse than the poor who had nothing to eat, because their very souls were destroyed. Mother Teresa's legacy lives on and on 26 August, we remind ourselves of her vast contribution and also remember, to do something for others.



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2012 National Essay Prize Giving – New Zealand High Commission, Suva



Edwin Saladoka, from St John's College Ovalau, Supreme Co-Winner



Devnal Shamal Singh, from Nadroga Arya College, Sigatoka, Supreme Co-Winner



Winners assemble at the High Commission



Acting High Commissioner Phillip Taula welcomes Guests



Dr Singh addresses winners



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2012 National Essay Prize Giving – New Zealand High Commission, Suva



Fiji Education Director Mrs. Kumar shares the reception with winners



DAV Suva winner Noshal with his English Teacher at the Prize giving



St Joseph's Secondary School Winner Jin at the Prize Giving



Children of Class 1, Gurukul School, Lautoka were smiling brightly as they received new desks from the NZ High Commission and some books from the Fiji Association in Auckland

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