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Te Mato Vai has it all - political interference, shoddy work, unpaid damage bills, strife between working Groups

Warnings coming home to roost

Co-ordinating the components that contribute and make up the construction of the multimillion dollar Te Mato Vai (TMV) project is slowly becoming a headache that has no end in immediate sight. As the Chinese contractors China Civil Engineering and Construction Corporation (CCECC) roll out their construction they do so at the irritation and peril of others. Highly resistant to compliance requirements of the quality control standards CCECC are becoming difficult to reign in.

Rumours surfaced last October that CCECC wanted KEW Consultant boss Latu Kupa replaced as the Project Manager due to incompatible views on the quality of the work being delivered by CCECC. This year a TMV media release announced Kupa was being replaced in a sideways rearrangement in KEW. Kupa will be based in New Zealand involved in other KEW work but would make periodical visits to Rarotonga for TMV related business.

The TMV Construction Work Stream (CWS) which includes representatives from the utility services want an immediate clarification of CCECC's and governments scope of responsibilities under the ring mains upgrade contract. Te Aponga Uira (TAU) has had instances where CCECC would not take responsibility for damaging power cables in the course of construction works, stating they (CCECC) are not responsible and it is Government's responsibility to take care of such matters. Similar questions have been



KEW Consultant boss Latu Kupa

Damage done by CCECC to a power cable in Inave cost \$3000 to repair, CCECC refused to pay leaving KEW Consultants to pay half, TAU are yet to recover the remaining half.

raised by Telecom and Water (ICI).

Damage done by CCECC to a power cable in Inave cost \$3000 to repair, CCECC refused to pay leaving KEW Consultants to pay

half, TAU are yet to recover the remaining half. In November

due to digging too close to a power pole resulted in the pole collapsing. Due to safety issues the pole was immediately

shifted to the opposite side of the road and cables re routed at a cost of \$6000 which CCECC has refused to pay.

In many cases members of the group believe their organisations are being unfairly afforded responsibility by CCECC when the contractor does not wish to claim responsibilities for their own actions. In other instances CCECC have tried to pass off responsibility for road reinstatement and traffic control on to T&M Heather as if they were a separate party in reality the (T&MH) are CCECC's subcontractor, thereby making CCECC responsible for all their actions.

The CWS Group would also like to clarify the level of authority CCECC has under its contract, the group members would like to know how a government contractor (CCECC) is able to engage government Ministers to intervene on their behalf when there is a situation that is not suitable to the Contractor, does the contract allow for special circumstances?

In this instance when CCECC wanted to continue working during the Christmas period, Minister of Finance Mark Brown and Deputy Prime Minister Teariki Heather acting on behalf of CCECC tried to exert pressure for acceptance of CCECC's work demand. Latu Kupa of KEW Consultants intervened and closed down the work over the Christmas period due to their absence to have holidays. It's no wonder CCECC lobbied to have Kupa replaced.

The Group has grave concerns that associated organisations will be made responsible for

continued next page

T&M Heather scores \$50,000 plus in secret deal



Deputy Prime Minister Teariki Heather who is also Minister of Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI) and is the owner of local contracting company T&M Heather has notched up another sweet heart Chinese related deal this time in excess of \$50,000. With the arrival of the Claytons \$6.5 million freebie of heavy duty machinery from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC). That machinery had to be physically moved from

the wharf due to the lack of Ports Authority storage space. T&M Heather Ltd was engaged to move the machinery by truck and trailer three times including to T&M Heather's Arorangi yard at a cost of up to \$500 a move per machine. The latest move was to the reclaimed land on the seaward side of the Punanga Nui Market. The total payout most likely close to \$60,000. Knowing well in advance of the arrival and logistics

of storage for the machinery the moving contract was never publically advertised. No excuse can be used to justify that this contract was unexpected and needed to be executed urgently. Cook Islands General Transport who says they were unaware of the job could have been offered half of the work. Once again this raises questions of conflicts of interests by Minister Heather.

- George Pitt

Te Mato Vai has it all

the actions of the Contractor through no fault of their own and that political forces are being exerted on a project that should be managed at a contract level.

CCECC have confirmed three senior staff and ten workers have returned to China. They have stated the reduction is due to there being not enough work to support the work crew size. The employment of locals also impacted upon the need to reduce staff.

The CWS Group has requested an enquiry by Crown Law of the CCECC contract to clarify the exact scope of CCECC's and Government's responsibilities under the ring mains up grade project and an enquiry by the Contracts Principal (MFEM) as to why persons at a political level are playing a role in the project at management level. It is understood that person is the DPM Teariki Heather owner of

T &M Heather and Minister of Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI).

Also of concern to the CWS Group according the minutes of a meeting held on 9 December 2014 is the issue of land consent. Their minutes state, Construction Work Stream were not satisfied with response given by Legal Work Stream in regards to Contractors access to private land on the Stage1 Ring Mains Upgrade works. The CWS would like an explanation from the Legal Work Stream as why they have not done more to facilitate the difficulties faced by the Contractors and Utilities in addition to a statement from CIIC detailing their involvement in the Legal Work Stream as some of the CWS are not satisfied with the decision making and output coming from this work stream. The Group would like the matter to be raised at the Project Steering Group level if not improved.

- George Pitt



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Rasmussen losing grip as gloves come off in fight for Party control

Demo rank and file take matters into their own hands

At the best of times the Democratic Party have been a volatile lot freely given licence to express their views and voice opinions in political family forums but in recent times the wider Party has been denied their brand of freedom of speech and muzzled by a minority of self serving Members of Parliament and Party officials lead by former Opposition Leader Wilkie Rasmussen and his CEO Eddie Drollet.

In orchestrated meetings of the wider body every emotive physiological compliance influences have been used to dampen the call for a Party Conference. The Democratic Party Constitution no longer is the Party's compass of reference or guiding road map. Emotionally rehearsed outbursts have been tactically used in meetings to lace excuses as to the rationale for deferring a Conference.

Common sense, transparency and integrity have long been discarded by Rasmussen and Drollet's stooges, members have been mislead, bullied, lied to and manipulated by them for their own selfish ends. In simple terms the Democratic Party has been corrupted by its own leadership.

The anti corruption stance Rasmussen has championed is nothing but a cosmetic farce to camouflage his own scavenging of the Democratic Party for his own ambitious agenda of self enrichment. Having the embarrassing experience of being given the red card by his own people and his failed very expensive petition and appeal based upon his idiotic

interpretation of the County's Constitution. Rasmussen continues to manipulate a small remnant of loyalists with incentive promises.

Although a high earner (a minimum of \$100,000) as the former Opposition Leader and a practising lawyer Rasmussen made no personal contributions to his petition and appeal. Close followers Drollet and Tupou Faireka in the expectation of highly paid jobs personally forked out \$1600 each towards Rasmussen's farcical doomed to fail Appeal legal costs.

A disgruntled face saving Drollet had to maintain the pretence and went along with Rasmussen's scam despite acknowledging and admitting behind the scenes it was a lost cause. Blinded by the promise of the Public Service Commissioner's job Faireka threw good hard earned money into Rasmussen's deluded attempt to fulfil his own prophecy he would get the seat back.

Despite Faireka's audible prayers to God in the Court room when the Appeal judgements were being delivered, Rasmussen and his legal team could not manipulate the nation's Constitution like he did with the Party's one.

One by one the dominos have fallen the wrong way for Rasmussen and his now increasingly desperate devotees, despite all the "we are the government" hype and celebratory frenzy post the appeals for Mitiaro and Aitutaki nothing has eventuated as proclaimed by the inseparable Bishop and Rasmussen tag team.

When Rasmussen realised there



Demo Party Leader Wilkie Rasmussen

was no emanating change to the government, to save face and swift rejection from the Demos, the Vaipae/Tautu bye election in Aitutaki has become their focal point to change the government.

The enormity of the status seeking Rasmussen's cognitive distortion is evident he is playing for time and is no more than a delaying tactic to prolong his slippery hold of the leadership of the Demo Party.

The deluded Rasmussen presumes that with Bishop leading the campaign charge, Demo's Kete loane will win the by election but most disturbing presumption being propagated is that Bishop's self proclaimed close relationship with Tom Marsters will be turn key to becoming the new government.

Rasmussen and Bishop are absolutely convinced the Cook Islands Constitution will be over ridden by Tom Marsters in his capacity as the Queens Representative because Bishop

has had regular early morning intrusive uninvited breakfasts at Marsters' private Arorangi residence. In Demo meetings Bishop constantly boasts of his two hour breakfast sessions with Marsters. An early riser Marsters has often been gate crashed for breakfast before five am by Bishop.

The Constitution is absolutely clear The QR cannot change the government in the current circumstances outside parliament, a fact Rasmussen and Bishop are failing to accept. How intelligent Democratic members can so easily be gullibly hood winked by the Messianic nonsense Bishop projects is evident their overwhelming illusion of being government is a demonic possession.

The reality is the wider Democratic Party demographic have been set free by the truth and delivered from the false *continued of next page*

prophecies and messages of political salvation Rasmussen and Bishop have been preaching with evangelical fervour.

The illusionary bubble that Bishop is a political force in Aitutaki has well and truly burst, outside Aitutaki's smallest constituency Bishop is a light weight. As a cabinet minister he may have carried some weight but as an MP Bishop's political influence hardly stretches beyond his own relatives. No amount of treating by Bishop will convince V/T to vote for Kete.

When Puna went to open the CIP campaign last week he wasn't surprised to hear of the blatant freebies Bishop's team were arrogantly giving out to lure voters. Puna struck a high note of receptivity when he promised to fast track an exclusive referendum for Aitutaki over the commercial Sunday flights; this would settle the matter without any external influence. Such was the response to Puna's visit by supporters of both political Parties he delayed his return to Rarotonga.

The strong Rarotonga Demo base have finally come to the realisation Bishop's V/T involvement is detrimental

to their chances of securing a convincing win over the CIP. No longer prepared to sit back and watch their Party being hijacked by Bishop's One Cook Islands and tolerate Rasmussen's sell out to Bishop and his business sponsors and associates the battle to rescue the Democratic Party from the factional turmoil it is in has begun.

Rasmussen and his small mob's eager willingness to sell the Party for personal gain has backfired, Drollet no longer has control over the timing of a Conference. The centre of political gravity has shifted to Avatiu; last Monday's offer by CIP's Mark Brown of a Cabinet position to Albert Nicholas was considered on the Tuesday by the Avatiu executive then presented to the offer Opposition leader Smiley Heather and Drollet on Wednesday. No sooner had that meeting concluded Drollet began ringing around to spread the lie Nicholas was doing his own thing and had not consulted his Chairman Poko Keu.

Nicholas was morally bound to take the offer to his committee, Nicholas was morally bound to take the offer to the Demo Party leadership and Nicholas is morally

bound to do what is best for his constituency. Those who voted for him want what's best for them not a hand full of greedy Demos. Their hard work has contributed to the Demo cause for what? So that the non-contributing Rasmussen can continue to feast at the public trough at Avatiu's expense. Nicholas cannot be faulted and as a new MP he is showing political savvy beyond his experience.

Nicholas and some of his committee then began visiting other MPs to seek support concerning the CIP offer and the call for an urgent conference before the V/T by election. After taking nearly 40 years to win the seat for the DP the Avatiu committee were in no mood to sit back and be manipulated by a hand full of greedy people and be unrewarded and left out in the cold.

By Saturday Nicholas had a firm confidential offer of a Cabinet position from Rasmussen and Heather if the Demos win V/T. With a cabinet position on offer to Kete, a total of eight people have been made secret confidential offers of Cabinet posts in the Bishop lead coalition government.

Several Punas then decided to

meet last Saturday 24 February to discuss contentious issues surfacing in the Party.

Two weeks ago the Prime Minister Henry Puna had quietly flown to Mangaia to meet with their three MPs. Rasmussen with the help of his CI News friends went into a public frenzy denigrating Puna's visit even claiming he was rejected by the Demo MPs in a front page headline. By now small fires of discontent began to become evident in the Demo Party. Fires Rasmussen and his henchman Drollet could not predict or extinguish.

The Manganians have digested and discussed Puna's offer of a Cabinet post and are warmly receptive, their rejection could result in Mangaia being left in the political wilderness without urgent infrastructure rehabilitation being undertaken. The PM's offer is simply too good to refuse. Annoyed at being left in the dark over decisions being made in Rarotonga the Mangaian trio and their committees want inclusion. Suggestions to Drollet to include the Mangaian MPs and their committees in the meeting loop by Skype have fallen on deaf

continued of next page

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Our Frontpage model



Our frontpage model this week's Herald Issue 751 is 23 year old Jana Epati. Jana has just completed her conjoint degrees- Bachelors of Commerce and Bachelors of Law. She is currently doing her professionals course to be admitted to the bar to practice as a barrister and solicitor. You will be seeing her pretty face around more often as she is now living here in Rarotonga.

Check out our website www.ciherald.co.ck and facebook page: www.facebook.com/ciherald

ears. With so many eruptions happening, Drollet's currency of secrecy is being exposed and confronted.

MPs excluded by Drollet from Caucus meetings have reached a collision point that has exposed a practise of secrecy in the Opposition office. It is clearly evident Smiley Heather is a puppet leader for the Opposition. In meetings control freak Drollet now does all the talking on behalf of the bewildered and political inept Heather.

Now that the Drollet, Rasmussen remedy for possible political walkers is stretching their capabilities to keep pretending the Party is united is to offer secret confidential Cabinet positions, anyone who wants an elevated high paying influential position has to do is to start making hearable noises they will walk out to the CIP.

This should be no surprise to Rasmussen who after failing four times to win the Penrhyn seat as a Demo candidate crossed over to Sir Geoffrey Henry's CIP government of the day and won a bye election.

Watch for Titikaveka's Selena Napa to give up her promised for Takitumu Cabinet seat to the restless Captain Tama who is starting to ask more probing questions than Drollet can find convincing answers for.

And if Rasmussen's greedy lot think they've got all their bases covered they are more deluded than the masses already think they are.

At last Saturday's meeting in Puaikura about 35 representatives from eight of the ten Rarotonga Electoral Constituencies and two Outer Islands constituencies of the Democratic Party met to discuss the calling of an urgent conference for the Party which would see the elections of new office bearers and to discuss the best coalition partner option to form a Government of National Unity.

To comply with the constitution of the Party an executive meeting is being called for Wednesday 28 Jan where it is hoped a date for the conference will be set. Those who attended the meeting last Saturday would like a conference to be held before the Vaipae/Tautu By-election which is hoped to be 4 February 2015.

The meeting was chaired by Party vice president William Pera and one of the key-note speakers was Tata Crocombe. Opposition

Leader and Deputy Leader of the Democratic Party William (Smiley) Heather Jnr did not attend the meeting but he did send a representative from his constituency.

It was clear in the meeting Rasmussen and Drollet will not survive a challenge to their positions which are considered by many to be null invalid or vacated due to the lapsing of a conference for three years. The hypocrisy of Rasmussen and Drollet is such they are making every effort to crow bar the constitution as the reason a meeting cannot be held yet they themselves at their convenience make it their practice to blatantly ignore it.

Drollet's deliberate withholding of audited accounts of the Party is a serious breach of trust placed in him by the Party members. Financial transparency and accountability does not exist under Rasmussen's leadership, with a huge debt of over \$180,000 hanging over the Party there is the question of those owed money forcing them into liquidation. Only after the expulsion of Drollet and Rasmussen will the true financial state of the Democratic Party will be known.

Ironically, the Murienua battlers who never gave up the fight were the undisputed political landscape game changers that triggered the opportunity for the Demos to become the government are out of favour and have no place in the Bishop/Rasmussen cabinet.

If any constituency deserves to be rewarded with a Cabinet position it is the Murienua toilers, tenacious in their efforts to win that seat for the first time they have readily been cast to one side to placate the ambitions of the outsider Bishop and the loser Rasmussen.

Maybe to many of the rank and file Demos, the drive to be in government at all costs is becoming morally repugnant and politically suicidal. The Punas must wrestle their Party back from being sold by the power gluttonous Rasmussen and Drollet. Both must be expelled for bringing the DP into disrepute or risk the Party's continued decline into distinction. Rasmussen's legacy of losing and corrupt practises must be exorcised through a Party conference at the soonest opportunity. Roll on 4 February 2015.

- George Pitt



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Proud owners Fodil and Moana, with niece Anika, mum Vara, & sister Liana

Adding a touch of Crystal Blue to Muri

By Haley-Rose McNabb

Crystal Blue Lagoon Villas are a newly designed property, with a modern, fresh and clean look out in Muri established by Moana Hunter and her husband Fodil. Moana and her husband are 99% there with finishing the villas, so they still have a couple weeks left up their sleeves to complete everything before the official opening on the 1st of February 2015.

The Crystal Blue Lagoon Villas have four two bedroom villas, beach front villas that are 175 square metres that have two bedrooms and can fit up to four people as well as lagoon view villas that are 135 square metres.

Moana says that her very own mother, Mama Vara, as many will know her by, gifted the land to her. "She is our number one supporter and biggest fan, so I wanted to make the most of it and create something that was quite up-market, luxurious and something we would feel proud of," says Hunter.

The villas were designed by Moana's husband, and she is proud to have accomplished what they wanted out of building the villas. Marketing teams for the Crystal Blue Lagoon Villas have already been engaged in the USA, Europe, New Zealand and Australia to get the message out there about the new luxury stay in Rarotonga, as well as, help complement the other properties out on offer in the Cooks while enhancing the destination as a whole.

"There is no secret to achieving this goal but it all comes down to working hard, putting every single energy you have into getting the job done, dedication, believing in yourself, making sacrifices and saving hard because once everything has been completed you will have the feeling of success," says Hunter.

After all her effort, she can now put time back into her family and be the biggest role model she can for her children.



The lagoon view villa



Shared infinity pool



Lounges

Port authority charges Raro Cars staff for parking

By Charles Pitt

The Ports Authority has been targeting Raro Cars staff with invoices for parking their private vehicles on Ports Authority property at Avatiu wharf.

Raro Cars staff are being invoiced to pay a parking fee of \$3.50 and some are upset because they claim no signage exists warning the public against parking on the wharf.

Staff also question if members of the public who park in the same area on Saturday when visiting the Market, are also charged a fee.

Comments by Ports Authority CEO

Ports Authority CEO Bim Tou advised the Herald on Tuesday morning that Don Carlaw of Raro Cars (across the road) had been contacted about his staff parking their vehicles on Port Authority property and in the spaces where Port Authority tenants clients would park. Raro Cars staff he said, parked their vehicles in these areas for lengthy periods. Tou said there are several signs up warning persons about parking.

Tou said under the Ports Authority Schedule of fees and charges there is a fee for parking by persons who are not tenants of the Authority. This is the fee the Ports Authority is charging Raro Cars staff.

Tou also said tenants have complained when their clients cannot find a park because Raro Cars staff have parked in the area.

Other members of the public should also be wary about parking their vehicles for extended periods on Avatiu wharf especially in areas around the Ports Authority building, the building where Taio Shipping is based and John Scott's retail shop unless of course you have some business with these establishments.

2015 minimum wage review

In accordance with the Employment Relations Act 2012, the Minister Nandi Glassie, has confirmed a Minimum Wage Review Panel to conduct the 2015 review the current minimum wage rate in the Cook Islands. Panel members include Patricia Tuara Demmke, Ministry of Internal Affairs; James Webb, Ministry of Finance & Economic Management; Steve Anderson, Chamber of Commerce (for employers); Anthony Turua, Cook Islands Workers Association (for employees); and Nga Mataiao, community representative appointed by the Minister. The task of the Panel is to review the minimum wage rate and make recommendations to the Minister who will then decide on the current rate. Factors such as prevailing economic conditions, income distribution, protection for low income earners, and work incentives, as well as public submissions will be considered when the Panel carries out the review. In 2006 the minimum rate was set at \$5.00 an hour. In 2014, following the review, the rate was increased to \$6.00 an hour. a 20% increase on the 2006 minimum wage rate. The Minister is looking forward to working with the 2014 team once again, and welcomes new panel member Nga Mataiao.

New Principal Immigration Officer



Kairangi (Nani) Samuela was yesterday appointed as the new Principal Immigration Officer.

Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Immigration Myra Patai welcomed the appointment saying she is excited with the breadth of experience that Samuela will bring to the Ministry to progress much needed change to the service.

Prime Minister Henry Puna, responsible for Immigration under MFAI, supported the appointment with confidence in Samuela's abilities to take on the challenge.

"This is a key position as it carries significant responsibility in managing a broad range of sensitivities, particularly in terms of our community, as well as the business sector," the Prime Minister said today.

"The country is continuing to undergo tremendous change and it will be important to uphold our core values and goals as we develop and grow."

Nani has been serving as the Manager of the Cook Island's Women's Counselling Centre, Punanga Tauturu Inc. and been a gender equality advocate in the region for over 10 years. She has also been a Board member on the Cook Islands Family Welfare

and Planning Association as well as the Bank of the Cook Islands. She has previously served on the Tereora College PTA.

Nani has worked extensively on legislative and policy change to recognize and include gender based violence, as well as advance wider gender justice with other women in the Cook Islands and the Pacific. She is passionate about Outer Islands Development and Social Justice.

Nani has a BA in Public Administration and Management and Applied Psychology from the University of the South Pacific (USP) and a Postgraduate Certificate in International Relations and Diplomacy. She has a history of working in human resource development including four years as Human Resources and Administration Manager with the Cook Islands Development Bank prior to it becoming the Bank of the Cook Islands.

This varied experience will allow her to bridge the gap between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration and its stakeholders. She will lead the work on the development of a new Immigration Policy as well as other changes needed to improve the current level of service.

BTIB Calendar now available

The Trade and Marketing Division of Business Trade Investment Board have available their official Calendar of Events for 2015. The calendar consists of confirmed dates and venues for all events that engage BTIB. These events are organized in collaboration with government agencies, community groups and private organizations. Any interest regarding registration or further detail can be directed to the Trade and Marketing staff at BTIB. You can contact Trade & Marketing staff on Ph: 24296 or Email: Taimata.allsworth@cookislands.gov.ck or Nicholle.ama@cookislands.gov.ck or visit BTIB's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Business-Trade-Investment-Board-Cook-Islands/1390144427925951>. GO LOCAL, BUY LOCAL, SUPPORT LOCAL. Kia Manuia.

Calendar of Events 2015

FEBRUARY 10th-11th: Market Day -Developing Partners Conference

MARCH 14th - 15th: Pasifika Festival, Western Springs -Auckland

JUNE 3rd: BTIB Winter Fest Night Market- Punanga Nui Market

JULY 28th - 31st: Cook Islands Trade Days

JULY 23rd - August 7th: Te Maeva Nui Celebration, 50th Anniversary Self Governing

OCTOBER 16th: FAO World Food Day -Punanga Nui Market

NOVEMBER 23rd - 27th: Go Local Market Day, Vaka Eiva Festival

Further information and details will be made available
Contact Trade & Marketing Staff

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24th Men's World Handball Championships-Qatar

Qatar set to rewrite Handball history

By Norma Ngatamariki

Kia Orana and greetings from Doha, Qatar.

As the eighth finals of the 24th Men's Handball Championship draws closer, the teams are in a frenzy as they compete for top playing positions in their respective groups. Two of the most powerful countries in the competition, defending world champions Spain and host nation Qatar, are meeting face-to-face at the Lusail Multipurpose Hall. The match between the two will most certainly be a competitive one, as both teams remain undefeated so far. There is much to be said about the level at which Qatar is performing at because their stamina has been unbelievably strong of late. It has been noted that the last time they left a considerable mark on the handball world was well over a decade ago in 2003, as they were ranked 16th in the entire Championship. Many International Handball Federation officials consider that it is not too late for Qatar to rewrite history and at the rate they are playing, the possibility of finally winning the Men's Handball Trophy could become a reality.

Lusail was packed to the max as usual when the home team played. The game started at exactly 7 o'clock in the afternoon, with the crowds roaring support for their teams. It seemed that Spain would not only have to go against Qatar on court, but they would also have



to contend with their many fans as well! The match was an intense one as Qatar's left wing, Cuban-born Rafael Capote was scoring goals at a long range distance, striking with speeds of up to 113 km/h! That's as fast as a cheetah in its prime!

It was obvious that both teams possessed an impenetrable defence and a vicious offence, as they mercilessly attacked each other's goals. Spain was awarded many penalties due to Qatar's over zealousness in its attempts to take the ball. Ten minutes into the game and both teams were tied, 21-21. This alone emphasised that it was a serious match. Qatar most certainly did not want to lose face in front of its supporters while on the other hand, Spain was determined to see this game through without a loss.

As the game reached the final twenty-nine minutes,

the scoreboard read Spain 27 and Qatar 25. Qatar's national coach Valero Rivera called for timeout in the hope that his team would overcome the two point deficit and hopefully win. The Qatar players showed desperation in their final attempt to score more points, however they were no match against Spain's brilliant defence. In the end, Spain emerged victorious, winning 28-25. The Qatari fans were devastated, as they tried to come to terms with the loss by their home team.

Handball is seen by many people as a male-orientated sport because it can be physically demanding as well as time consuming. Also, the level of aggression and competitiveness is higher in men than in women. But this is just one of the many perspectives related to handball in general. Women are just as capable of participating in the sport if only they were taken

seriously. In the Cook Islands, we have a more gender-balanced society in terms of sporting activities, where both men and women are equally involved in handball. The Secretary General of the Oceania Handball Federation, Makiroa Mitchell John, is a woman! The singular view that handball is only a man's sport is too biased and restrictive. If given the opportunity, women's involvement with handball could flourish and is likely to become as popular amongst females as it is with males. Women in the Cook Islands have certainly shown interest in the sport and have even assisted in establishing the foundation of handball in country.

So, to top everything off, it has been a very eventful week for the media team here in Doha Qatar. We will continue to bring you the latest updates on the Championship as well as other interesting items.

24th Men's World Handball Championships-Qatar

Qatar, a land of character, culture and opportunity

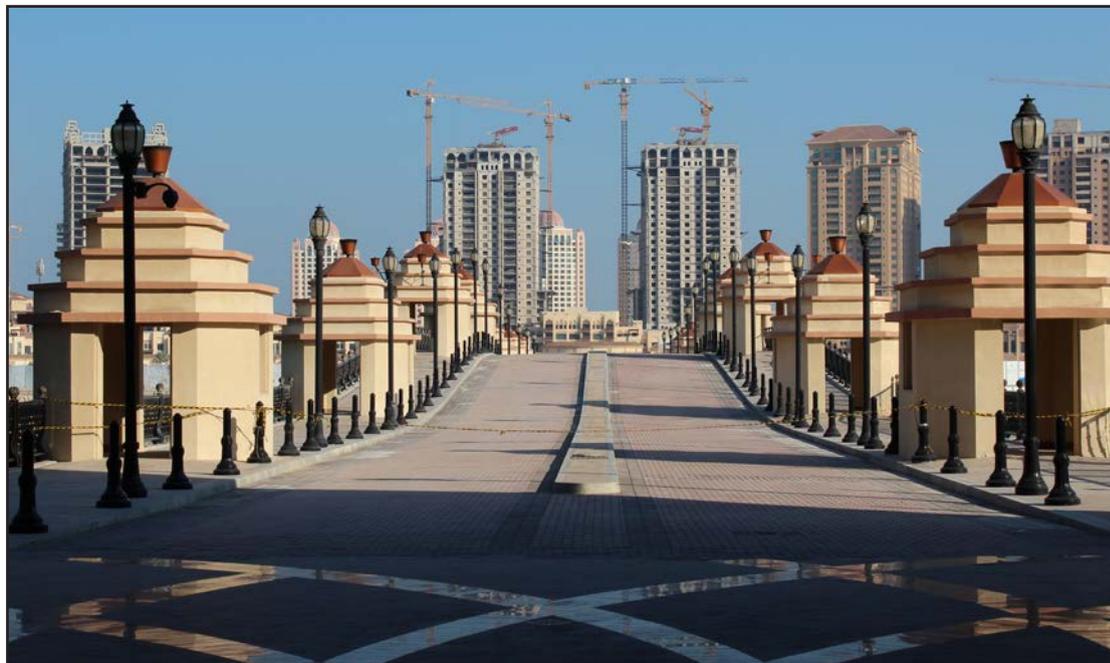
By George Turia

Imagine stepping off a bus and looking to your left and seeing nothing but miles and miles of wasteland desert. Then when you turn to your right, you immediately see amazing infrastructure development taking place as far as the eye can see and this is endless. Welcome to Qatar, a land that is rich in history and with a determination to become a leading figure in the economic and cultural world of international development.

Qatar is an Arabian state under the rule of HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamid Al Thani. Its GDP currently sits at 3% and it is the second largest nation in the world in terms of infrastructure development with current projects underway at a huge cost of \$280 BILLION. It has a population base of 2 million people of which ¼ are nationals (Qataris) while the rest are a makeup of other ethnic groups including; Filipinos, Saudi Arabians, Lebanese, Macedonians, African, European and Indian. 3/4 of the total population are Muslim. There are currently 90,000 people employed by Government. While its growth rate projections currently sit at 14%, unemployment sits at less than 1%.

To give you an indication of commitment, Qatar Government employed 12,000 workers in 2012 just to complete the 3 stadiums used for the 2015 Men's World Handball Championships to international standards. This they did on time and within budget. This is almost the same as our whole population in the Cook Islands.

Despite a continuing global crisis, Qatar has been able to expand its economy and create new jobs. It is renowned for having some of the best sports science and research, education and health facilities in the world. A lot of emphasis has been placed on ensuring everyone has the



opportunity to better themselves in education and health in an environment that will improve their quality of life. Qatar prides itself on quality and excellence and everywhere we have been, it is notable how much care they take in presentation in both its population, environment and infrastructure.

You will see from footage, the extensive construction going on around Qatar. It's everywhere. From high rise building complexes in inner city, to huge community facilities, residential complexes, public sector amenities and of course education and health facilities as well.

Qatar has set a roadmap to undertake major infrastructure developments over the next 8 – 10 years. This will consist of new rural facilities including retail, residential and tourist facilities as well as major works development in education, health and science fields. New subdivisions for housing are also being planned. Major infrastructure works will include more stadium venues for world events, harbours, roads a new rail metro system and of course a lot more hotels are also included.

A number of world events are already planned to be held in Qatar. They include the 2016 World Athletics Championships and the 2022 FIFA soccer World Cup Championships amongst many others.

Qatar is definitely the modern sporting mecca of the world today with its classy facilities and venues next to none built to the best environmental standards in the world plus integrating the best technological support systems available at each venue. This is simply amazing when you look at the architectural designs and the materials used to build these incredible facilities. They are also a world leader in terms of the concept "Go Green!"

As part of our excursion to look at infrastructure developments, we also visited a popular market site called Souq Waqif where evening festivities had begun as part of Qatar's Festivities Day celebrations. Again, it makes all the market places you would have seen look quite small as it is a huge indoor marketplace with hundreds and hundreds of indoor boutique stores and stalls selling everything from arts and crafts, pottery, clothing, linen, jewellery and yes you name it,

they had it! The streets were lined with an array of restaurants and diners where people sat to enjoy the traditional smoking from the pipe or to enjoy the beautiful exotic Arabian meals served fresh to tempt your taste buds.

The market place opens from 4pm to 10pm and is designed to attract families to visit and enjoy a night out that's usually full of fun and entertainment. On this particular night, we were mesmerized to see robots, ostriches, clowns and many other entertainment characters walking around mingling with the crowd as well as a host of other live entertainers including a real camel! There was something for everybody at this market and it's a pity we don't have one like this anywhere else in the Pacific.

I guess being wealthy says it all but for now, we can only dream of what could be should we ever get round to extracting the manganese nodules. In reality, Qatar is a land of character, culture and opportunity and they are to be congratulated for their forward thinking and involvement of their people in all aspects of decision making.

24th Men's World Handball Championships-Qatar

Much to offer in Qatar



By *Norma Ngatamariki*

Kia Orana and greetings from the media team in Doha, Qatar. We are going to take a step back from handball and spend a moment to appreciate the culture and subcultures of this amazing city.

The Government of the State of Qatar has taken great steps into subsidising transport in an effort to reduce the congestion of traffic, especially at peak hour in the city. It has launched a shuttle service by the name of West Bay Buses which travels all around the city, making a stop every fifteen minutes. The media have been given the privilege of using this shuttle service as a means of travelling between destinations, which is both efficient and convenient. Although there is plenty of parking space available in the Cook Islands and traffic

congestion is not a threat, the Cook Islands government should consider subsidising at least a quarter of public transport. In 2010, a school bus ticket cost thirteen dollars. Almost four years later, the same bus ticket now costs \$15, which could be spent in other areas such as lunch money or stationary supplies.

The fashion is quite modest, as it has always been in most Middle-Eastern countries. Qataris take great pride in their traditional attire. For the men, they wear a long, simple shirt with loose pants and a head dress called a gutra, which can be in red or white cloth, fastened with a black rope called an agal. For women, the hair is covered with a black head dress called shayla worn with a blacked dress called an abayha. Their faces are sometimes covered with a black

cloth called bourqa, however, this is entirely up to the wearer. Although, it has been discovered that adjustments can be made to suit your tastes. Women have opted for more bold choices, changing the traditional black for a more modern beige or neutral. There is no shortage of handbags either, ranging from exclusive brands such as Gucci and Louis Vuitton. Sunglasses are also necessary, not only for protection against the glare of the sun, but to remain fashionable. The Qataris sense of style is simply quite stunning.

The level of technology is also very impressive. Everyone seems to keep up with the latest trends not only in the fashion industry, but in electronic devices as well. The newly released iPhone 6 and Samsung S5 are proudly flaunted by businessmen all around. They

not only use these gadgets for the basic text and call, but to set up meetings with business partners half way across the globe. Social networking is also a popular feature here in the city. There is a common misconception that Middle-Easterners are traditional to the point where they do not appreciate the modern-day lifestyle, but that is not the case. Technology evolving in this country seems to have no boundaries, as the average consumer is constantly on the lookout for the latest update to their phones. Modern day technology has been integrated into the lives of these people and they have certainly made the most of it.

This is just a glimpse into what Qatar has to offer. There will be more in-depth updates coming to you soon.

It's a no brainer really

FAO/DCD Case Study 1 – Agriculture related

By Derek Fox

On a wall inside the kitchen where the staff of the Pacific Resort at Muri prepares all the food for their guests, there is a white board. On it is a list of all the products they would like to source locally. It shows the name, the quantity, and how much they will pay. The list is deliberately displayed in an area where people bringing supplies to the resort will be see it and can take note and maybe deliver the goods.

For more than a decade the resort has been working proactively with a few growers for products on that list, and takes pretty much all they produce. But it's still not enough.

They have begun working with a collective of growers too, to try and get more local foodstuffs. But the message that we want this, in this quantity and at this time, seems to be a hard one to get across. Many of the island's growers have got into a rhythm of their own, growing this crop at this time, never mind what the market may want.

So despite best efforts for over a decade, Pacific Resort at Muri is meeting only 16% - by value - of its food needs from local growers; local fishermen get about 7% of the food budget. On Aitutaki the percentages are slightly higher with the growers on 20% and the fishermen on 10.

So out of an annual food bill of \$1.2million about \$300-thousand goes directly into the hands of local growers and fishermen, the rest goes offshore via local importers.

Greg Stanaway the CEO of the Pacific Resort Hotel Group says he would really like to see far more product from locals. He says local foods are fresher and more nutritious.

With greater and more regular supplies he would make a feature of the local food in the resorts restaurants.

The encouragement Pacific Resort gives to local growers goes beyond just having the cheque book ready, the resort has extensive and well-established gardens and every scrap of green waste from them is taken to the

Titikaveka Growers Association to produce mulch for their organic gardens.

The visitor industry is the biggest money earner and employer in the Cook Islands. The biggest group of visitors who come here are from New Zealand. Trade figures between New Zealand and the Cook Islands show we do about \$98-million worth of business a year. Products we export to New Zealand – mainly fish – are worth about a million a year. But we import \$97-million worth – mainly food – in return.

A United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) representative who spent some weeks here at the end of last year, identified what Greg Stanaway already knows, that there is huge potential for the fledging agriculture industry to supply fresh produce – including juices - to the local market, not just for the visitors, but to locals as well. And that by replacing a lot of the imported processed foods and things like soft drinks, the country would save overseas funds and end up with better health outcomes too by eating healthier tucker.

Food security is a big issue for countries around the world. That's why Chinese entrepreneurs are buying up dairy farms in New Zealand so they can lock in a source of dairy products into the future. It doesn't seem such a big issue in Rarotonga when all the fruit trees are loaded, the fishermen are still catching fish and there are plenty of little pigs growing up ready for the umu. But as the figures show the millions of dollars worth of processed foods we import from elsewhere leave us vulnerable should others tie up those supplies, or if prices begin to soar.

Most resorts don't bother trying to buy local, it's easier to call the importers and wholesalers and place an order. That way you get what you want and when you want it.

If that's to change and we increase the consumption of local food, the supply side needs

to change too.

The FAO stated the obvious that most growers are getting on in age, and they have been doing certain things in a certain way for years. The industry needs new blood. At the moment regardless of how low wages are in the tourism industry they are better than working for very little out in the hot sun all day. As one local businessman told me 'agriculture needs to be made sexy'. The FAO stated the obvious again, that the land available for increased production is a problem. Holdings can be small, not much bigger than family plots, whereas a more 'industrial' approach to production is required.

Agriculture needs a 'champion' a leader, is there anyone waiting in the wings?

Resorts need to see the value in serving local foods and talking about it to their guests, and begin developing growing and purchasing arrangements with growers.

In the beginning the Pacific Resort used to pay its selected growers upfront for the produce they wanted. Now that those growers are on their feet, weekly payments are the norm.

Growers will need help to step up, but they have got to make some changes too. Some have been mesmerised by the retail prices paid for pawpaw and other products in New Zealand, and have channeled their efforts into trying to export. But they've shut their eyes to the 'costs' of getting those products to a market 32-hundred-kilometres away, and there are plenty of stories of people ending up with a 'bill' not a cheque, at the end of the exercise. And they need to attract younger people into the industry.

Greg Stanaway wants to see about a quarter of his food bill heading into local growers pockets. As small as 25% local seems, it would still require almost twice as much product as he currently gets. He also happens to have a couple of radical suggestions to help make that happen.

He thinks that somehow, the land tenure system needs to be

changed to allow more land to be brought into production; and he thinks we need to import labour used to working large-scale gardens. He thinks they should probably come from China and/or the Philippines. He knows that will be controversial but he says the workers should not be considered cheap labour and they should be paid maybe double the current minimum wage; and they should come here under a fixed contract and visa arrangement – say two years with another two maximum, and they should train locals to take over from them while they're here.

This year these islands are marking 50 years of self-government.

Fifty years ago almost no food was imported, today from one country alone – New Zealand – we import getting up to a hundred million dollars worth of products, mainly food and drinks; and that's just one country.

Each year Cook Islanders wave goodbye to scores of their family heading off on the big jets, mainly to New Zealand; sometimes forever. Many are young, just the sort of people you want to stay and keep building and serving the nation. Fifty years ago a handful of Cook Islanders lived in New Zealand. The latest New Zealand census shows there are now at least 62-thousand.

Ramping up local food production will provide jobs, better food and juices for the visitors and the locals, and much healthier outcomes for locals too.

There are obviously a number of ducks that need to be lined up to get the outcomes being suggested above, but lining up those ducks could be one of the most important things a Cook Islands government could do to set the country up for the next fifty years. Tourism, as vulnerable as it is as an industry, is set to be the main source of jobs and income for the foreseeable future.

Healthier food, healthier outcomes, local food for tourists, fewer imports and jobs too – they all seem like no-brainers really.

December 2014 tourist arrivals inch higher to new record

Data released by the Statistics Office on last week showed that 10,176 tourists arrived in December 2014, a 68 person increase (0.7 per cent) as compared to December 2013.

Despite the slow growth from 2013, the 10,176 arrivals is the highest on record for a December.

56 per cent of total visitor arrivals (5,681) came from New Zealand and 27 per cent (2,790) came from Australia.

Compared to December 2013, the increase was driven almost exclusively by New Zealand tourists (up 386) with a smaller contribution from the US market (up 44). Declines were spread across the Australian (down 177), Canadian (down 80) and other markets (down 115).

"For the last six months of the year, New Zealand tourism arrivals have not performed as well as we would have hoped (being 292 down on 2013), but the increase in December has brought them back up a little." MFEM Economic Advisor James Webb said. "However, the decline in Australian arrivals over the last six months (down 657 on 2013) is of most concern, as most of the growth in Australian numbers has typically come in the last half of the calendar year."

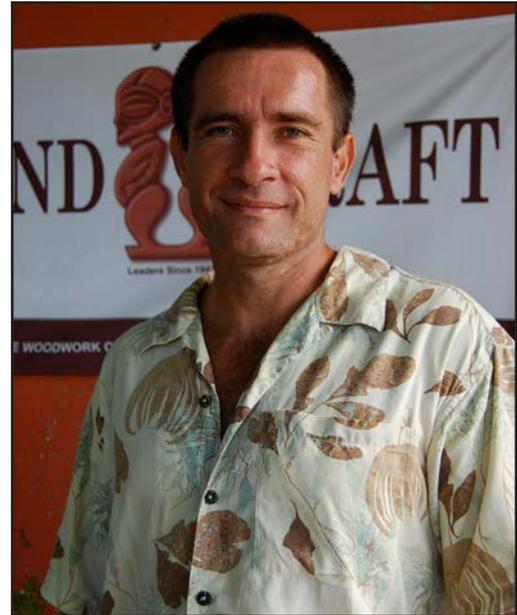
"While the December result is encouraging, being the highest

December on record, it is likely that we can expect similar slow growth (or even declines) going forward. Domestic retailers might find that they have to start becoming more domestically competitive, as their customer growth is unlikely to come from an ever-expanding market like it has in the past."

"As always, destination development, improved productivity, and improving the value for money of tourism services (particularly for accommodation) should remain the industry's focus going forward."

"The Australian market continues to be a key focus for the Cook Islands despite the large drop in November. Some key destinations in the South Pacific are noticing a general drop from Australian visitors this year. The Cook Islands continues to build strong relationship with key travel trade partners in Australia and the outlook is generally positive." Said Tourism Corporation CEO, Halatoa Fua. "The ability to hold visitor numbers from New Zealand is pleasing, given the fierce competition in this market and reduction in Cook Islanders in New Zealand returning to the islands for holidays. Consumers are also being bombarded with deals and offers from other island destinations and national airlines."

New Board appointee at FSC



Fletcher Melvin

The Financial Supervisory Commission (FSC) is pleased to announce that Mr Fletcher Melvin has recently been appointed to their Board of Directors as of 1 January 2015. Mr Melvin replaces Mr Heinz Matysik who served the Board well during his 4.5 years of tenure.

Mr Tangata Fletcher Melvin is currently the Managing Director of Island Craft Limited. He is also currently serving on the Price Tribunal and is an executive member of the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr Melvin's appointment is made by the Minister of Finance, Mark Brown, under section 4 of the Financial Supervisory Commission Act 2003. The appointment is initially for two years.

The Financial Supervisory Commission (FSC) came into existence in the Cook Islands on 1 July 2003, replacing the former Off-shore Financial Services Commission. The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) merged with the FSC on 1 July 2012.

The FSC:

- * Is an independent body responsible for the supervision of regulated financial entities and financial services in the Cook Islands;

- * Comprises the Board, the Commissioner, the Head of the FIU and its staff, supervisory staff and the Registrar of International Companies and International Trusts;

- * Is the licensing authority for all financial institutions being banks, insurers (including captives), money-changing and remittance businesses and trustee companies;

- * Operates the Registry of International & Foreign Companies, Limited Liability Companies, International Trusts, International Partnerships and Foundations.

The FIU function is to facilitate the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of money laundering, the financing of terrorism and other serious offences in the Cook Islands.

*Paul Heckles
Commissioner 22 January 2015*

Heavy plant and machinery for the Cooks

Part of an information pack provided by MFEM for the new machinery to be handed over on Wednesday 28 January by the Chinese Ambassador Wang Lutong & Yang Pengbo

What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of this project is to provide all inhabited Outer Island Governments with functional heavy plant and machinery that is adaptable to local environments.

One of the main challenges is the distances between the inhabited islands and their distance from our main economic and administration centre on Rarotonga (e.g. Mangaia 176km & Penrhyn 1395km distance). Government is committed to ensuring that all these islands maintain a viable and sustainable community and has already funded major infrastructure upgrades to harbours, water and energy systems with more planned over the 2013 – 2016 period and highlighted

in the Cook Islands Capital Plan released with the Annual Appropriation to Parliament.

The aim is to provide suitable plant and machinery for the Outer Islands to assist the Island Administration to undertake various projects to support development. Infrastructure underpins most of this economic growth and functional plant and machinery are needed to sustain it. This includes essential services such as cyclone recovery, off loading cargo, airport maintenance, road maintenance and supporting agricultural plantations.

What agreement do we have with the Peoples Republic of China?

The Governments of the Cook Islands and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC), with a view to further developing the friendly relations and economic and technical corporation between the two countries, have signed various Agreements on Economic and Technical Cooperation. These Agreements document pledges of grant funds by the PRC to the Cook Islands .

This project shall be paid out from a grant under the Agreement of the Economic and Technical

Cooperation between the Governments of the PRC and the Government of the Cook Islands signed on December 14th 2005, April 5th 2006 and February 20th 2008.

The PRC are responsible for the delivery of the machinery to Avarua and will dispatch technicians to provide maintenance services such as instruction, installation, operation and repair.



What machinery did we receive?

All 52 heavy machinery items, valued at NZD\$7.4 million have arrived in Rarotonga and are being stored at the Infrastructure Cook Islands Compound. They will be on full display for the official handover and blessing ceremony this week. The following is a list of the machinery that arrived on Rarotonga:

- 3 x 26 tonne Excavators
- 15 x 14 tonne Excavators
- 5 x 6 tonne Excavators
- 9 x 10 tonne Rollers
- 9 x 11 tonne Grader
- 8 x 10 tonne Wheeled Loader
- 3 x 8 tonne Backhoe Loader



How will the machinery be distributed among the Outer Islands and who will own them?

The machinery will be shipped in the coming weeks and will be divided amongst the Outer Islands and Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI). The following table breaks down specifically what machinery is going to what Outer Island, along with the NZ\$ Value.

Respective Island Administrations will become the

caretakers for the machinery they receive and will be responsible for delegating procedures and plans to be put in place to ensure a long useful life of the machinery.

	Excavators 26T	Excavators 14T	Excavators 6T	Rollers 10T	Grader 11T	Wheeled Loader 10T	Backhoe Loader 8T	Total	NZ\$ Value
Manihiki		2	1	1	1	1		6	686,598.58
Penrhyn		2		1	1	1	1	6	627,201.38
Pukapuka		1		1	1	1		4	433,223.77
Rakahanga		1		1	1		1	4	475,754.59
Aitutaki	1	2	1	1	1	1		7	964,891.08
Atiu	1	1	1	1	1	1		6	821,893.76
Mitiaro		1		1	1	1		4	433,223.77
Mangaia		1	1	1	1	1		5	543,601.26
Mauke	1	1	1	1	1	1		6	821,893.76
Palmerston		1					1	2	238,977.60
Nassau		1						1	142,997.32
ICI		1						1	142,997.32

*T – tonnes

*ICI – Infrastructure Cook Islands

Dramatic change since 1965

As the first of the major international meetings marking 50 years of self-government for the Cook Islands is about to get underway next month, the Minister of Finance – Mark Brown – says he has found it remarkable to look back at the development that has occurred and the changes that have taken place in his life time.

On the 9th of next month through to the 12th, the fifth Development Partner’s meeting will be held here, and about 35 visitors representing the 20 or so donor countries, development banks and other bodies who help us with our development, will be here to mark our 50 years

“I was two years old in 1965 and the Rarotonga I grew up in has changed dramatically. Back then there were no sealed roads. There were very few cars, there were some motorbikes, which were what every young man aspired to owning – but most people walked.

We walked everywhere. I remember the two picture

theatres being packed out showing double features and after the pictures people walked home.

The airport was still a grass runway where piston and turbo-prop aircraft landed from time to time.

The two harbours were where we kids used to swim, and when boats came passengers and cargo were still brought ashore by lighter.

Most of the kai we ate was locally grown and produced; imported food was a luxury. Our treats and ‘lollies’ were local fruit. I despair when I see the fruit on loaded trees just left to rot or fall on the ground.

I remember large cultivations of oranges, which sadly have all gone now.

So there have been big changes even in my time. Back then the schools were very basic, but it was a privilege to go to school, and at the end of the day we tidied up our school. Our education system has changed immensely since then.

So has our health system. I remember when the doctor used to travel round the island and if you or someone in your family was sick you hung a nappy or cloth out and the doctor would know that someone needed attention and call in. The medicines available now far far out number remedies available back then, both in quantity and quality.

By the time I left to further my education in New Zealand in 1981 the international airport was operating and tourism was starting to grow.

It was a big deal then to catch the big jet. You dressed up in your Sunday best; none of this turning up in shorts and jandals. And there was a big crowd to see you off or come home.

I was away on and off for 10 years and the rate of change continued.

One of the biggest changes has been the number of Cook Islanders who have gone into business. Back in the 60s and 70s

it was very rare to see a local in business, but now our people are seeing opportunities in things like the tourist industry and they have taken them. It’s great to see.

That’s why I want to encourage people to think about our five decades of development and nominate people, organisations or projects that have contributed since self-government to the ‘good of the country. Don’t forget too some of the major commercial developments – some of which are no longer here, not because of their fault but economic circumstances – some of them too helped develop our country for the time they existed.

There are five categories, one for each decade. There will be a supreme award and a people’s choice award. Get your nomination in now.

The awards will be presented at a special dinner and awards ceremony on February 10th, which will be held in a former ‘packing shed’. - Mark Brown

50th Celebration logo winner

KIA RAPA TU TAKU OE – OUR JOURNEY AS ONE PEOPLE

The entire logo symbolises the ‘pito’ – the umbilical cord. This signifies the birth of a person and relates to the founding of our nation from its infancy and its growth. It also represents connection - the connection of our people to our God, land, the sea and to each other.

The circle characterises journey – our shared journey of nationhood. It therefore also depicts unity – the key ingredient which will ensure that our journey is one which will progress all of us as a people and a nation.

The fifteen ‘mou rima’ in a circle further emphasises the need for unity and the linkages that our islands and peoples share. Only through the holding of hands and togetherness can we find strength as a people and a nation.

The 16 ‘manutai’, are the traditional ‘ara matangi’ – the wind directions that have scattered our people across the



Logo Designer Katarina Katoa receives her prize from the Computerman

globe. This serves to remind us that our development should not be restricted to our geographical boundaries and that our people abroad are an important part of our nation. The Cook Islands is made up of its people and our people are global. The ‘manutai’ facing outwards portrays continual growth – our need to continuously strive for progress

that will be beneficial for our country and people.

In the centre is the ‘Matariki’ constellation of stars. This is sometimes referred to by some of our islands as ‘Mata Ariki’ – the eyes of God. This reminds us that our belief in God is the foundation of our nation. Matariki also serves as a principal constellation

for traditional navigation and direction, cautioning us that we must always seek God’s guidance, direction and blessing in our nation’s journey. We are all born under the stars of Matariki and we all share the journey of the Cook Islands.

The logo is yet to be approved by Cabinet.

How to Establish the Right Foundation in Your Life *Part 2*

By Senior Pastor John Tangi

The main scripture reading is in Luke 6v46-49 which is The Parable of the Two Foundations. Jesus through this parable is showing the difference between the wise builder and a foolish builder, and what to do and what not to do. He also teaches us the importance of establishing the right foundation and how to apply this to our lives.

Firstly, in v46 Jesus said "But why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not do the things which I say?" The first lesson is to be doers of the Word. In Matthew 7v.21 Jesus said "Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." In order to establish the right foundation, we need to translate the hearing of God's Word into action.

Secondly, we need to fully understand that Jesus Christ is the only true foundation. Jesus said in Luke 6v47-48 "Whoever comes to Me and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat violently against that house and could not shake it, because it was built on the rock." In Psalm 62v2 David said "God alone is my Rock and my Salvation. He is my Fortress. I will never be shaken." Unless we establish Jesus Christ as the foundation of our lives, we will be unable to stand secure and unshaken when the pressures of life mount up on us.

Thirdly, we need to be willing to work. Luke 6v.49 reads "But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who builds a house on the earth without a foundation against which the stream beat violently and immediately it fell. And the ruin of the house was great." The reason why

this man builds upon the sand was because He didn't like hard work. He could not be bothered to take the time and make the effort to digging into the rock and make a strong foundation for his house. The sand was much more attractive and less work. This man was just not willing to work. He just wanted to concentrate on living rather than building up. Sad to say a lot of Christians and also people are like this. If this man had exercised wisdom he would have build a good foundation by digging down to the bedrock. Then his house would have been safe and secure when the floods came.

The path that follows Jesus Christ leads to security, both here and in eternity. If we are going to make Jesus Christ our foundation, then we need to be willing to work. The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15v.58 said "Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." There are no shortcuts in God. If we are going to establish the right foundation in our lives, we need to be willing to work hard. "No pain, No gain" We must be willing to sacrifice time, finance, energy and even resources. We must be willing to sacrifice whatever it takes, to have the right foundation who is Jesus Christ established in our lives. Galatians 6v.9 reads "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." We need to be willing to work.

Finally we need to have a long term vision. Luke 6v.49 tells us that after this man had build his house upon the sand without a foundation, the flood came and the house collapsed and was destroyed. The reason was because he made two important mistakes. Not only

Encouragement Column

With Senior Pastor John Tangi



was he avoiding hard work, but he was also short sighted. In other words, he didn't have a long term vision. This man never stopped to think what would happen in a few years time. As long as the weather was steady and the sky remained blue, there's nothing to worry about. And in Palestine it's not until 7 years after that another flood is expected. His motto is "Don't worry be happy" the Boys Brigade motto is "Sure & steadfast!" Girl Guides - "Be prepared!" If we are going to establish the right foundation in our lives, we need to have a long term vision; we need to have God's perspective, not man's perspective.

Houses that were made of rock lasted for generations and these provided security for

yourself and your the family. These people knew that for generations to come, children born in the family would have somewhere to live. Mud brick houses, would last at least seven years. Many Christians today are shortsighted. They are only interested in short term benefits. We need to cultivate a long term vision, knowing that as a result of our work, sometimes in the future, the children and the family will benefit. It is God's desire that we establish the right foundation, that we establish Jesus Christ as the foundation of our lives.

May God bless you and I encourage you to establish Jesus as the right foundation in your life.

Te Atua te aroa.

FAO support for Cook Islands agriculture

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation – the FAO – has entered into an arrangement with the Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce to provide funding support for local agriculture, including getting more women and young people involved in the

agriculture sector. The agreement is expected to strengthen the capacity of local agribusinesses and farmers' organisations, to improve the capacity of young people and women to participate through the Youth Enterprise Scheme, and to establish an Agribusiness Small Grants facility to enhance

opportunities for existing agribusinesses.

The FAO is putting 180-thousand US dollars into the project.

In practical terms the Chamber of Commerce will provide support for agribusinesses and farmers organisations with mentoring and training.

A database will be set up showing what the demand and supply is for local produce

– thus providing market intelligence that will help to fill gaps in the market and align growing patterns with demand.

Training will be provided for young people in business and agribusiness

opportunities; and both women and young people will be encouraged to get involved.

The Chamber will also set up and start operating an Agribusiness Small Grants facility.

The President of the Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce – Mike Pynenburg – says,

“We are very pleased to be taking part in this project. Firstly I want to congratulate our people who have been working with the FAO for some time to bring this about. It is very timely because in recent times we have seen that there are real opportunities to be had in providing more local produce in a structured way to the local markets, whether it be resorts or the local shops and people. We at the Chamber are looking forward to getting started.”

PUBLIC NOTICE



Business Trade Investment Board
Cook Islands

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Business Trade and Investment Board advises that the selling of food through outlets or directly to the public is an activity reserved only for Cook Islanders. Non Cook Islanders are prohibited from carrying on business by selling food unless if approved by the BTIB Board. For enquiries contact the Monitoring & Compliance Officer on 24 - 296 or email charlie.rani@cookislands.gov.ck

PUBLIC NOTICE

Triad Pacific Petroleum Ltd will be tar sealing the road from Triad Petrol Station Tutakimoa to CITY building, starting at 7am on Thursday 29th January 2015.

We would like to advise the general public to take extra caution whilst driving past these works
Meitaki Maata

MISSING

MISSING

Missing cat, black with white under chin and 4 white feet. Missing from Esther Honey- name is Socks. Please return or ring owner Minora 24646 evenings only.

VACANCY



VACANCY – COMMERCIAL MANAGER

This position requires a qualified professional to oversee TAU's commercial needs.

A full job description can be uplifted from the office of Te Aponga Uira, P.O. Box 112, Rarotonga, Cook Islands or by contacting Bettina Akania on (682) 20054 or email bakania@electricity.co.ck.

Applications close 3:00 p.m. Monday, 9th February 2015

TENDER



REQUEST FOR TENDERS

Date: 20 January 2015
Project Name: Distribution of Equipment, Machinery and Materials project
Tender ID: DCDCR027
Tenders close: Monday 2 February 2015 at 4pm

The Development Coordination Division (DCD) of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management invites suitably qualified freight forwarding service providers to tender for the delivery of containers of equipment, machinery and materials to various outer islands.

Tender documents can be picked up from the DCD, Third Floor of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management in Avarua. Electronic copies of the tenders are available by contacting the respective Tender Managers below.

All tenders are to be placed in the Tender Box at DCD, 3rd floor, MFEM Building. Avarua by the closing date of Monday 2 February no later than 4pm.

For Tender Information or any queries relating to the tender documents please contact:

Tender Manager: Boyd Ellison Ph Ph+68222226
Or +68254221
email:boyd@akairoconsulting.com

DPM's company is catering the food for the Chinese handover ceremony of the outer islands new toys! Umu Pork is on the menu for the 4pm slop up! And didn't the lads from Infrastructure do a superb job in mowing the grass on the reclaimed land near the Market! Will this be a permanent job for Infrastructure? Good thing the Health Minita is overseas or he might have a few words to mutter about serving nosh that is high in cholesterol, fat and other obesity building substances!



Ongoing confirmation the laws of physics do not apply in the Cook Islands. The local price for fuel continues to defy the gravitational force of a worldwide drop in oil prices! One fuel outlet has dropped its fuel prices twice but the other continues to defy the gravitational forces! In Kiwiland fuel prices have dropped so low, vehicle owners are smiling! Not so in this corner of the world it seems-a sort of Bermuda triangle!



December visitor figures are proclaimed to be a high at over 10,000. But chooks, how many of these were returning Cookies? There was no breakdown or analysis of the figures provided and no link to the website for further info! So what is the real picture?



Reports reaching Big Red over Coconut Wireless from the taro jungle tom toms are that at a pow wow of the Great Council of High Cardinal HOMs, consternation arose over the hymn books of a rumoured imminent demise of one of their holy number! This caused a number of HOMs to burst into song but not of the sacred song variety!



Get ready all you surfee types, start

waxing your boards! A big, 9 metre swell has been predicted for later this week thanks to a TD south of Lava Lava land! Opportunities like this don't come along often!



Now a local bed and breakfast is talking about contracting growers to supply guests. Why did it take so long to get around to this brain wave? Perhaps the Boss read about it in the Herald! It entered his subconscious mind then one day, "Presto!" A light bulb flashed on! Yes there have been many bright ideas in the Herald over the years.



Politicians love making vote catching noises about open government and transparency but that's all it is, noise! Why are some Ministries still conducting matters of public interest, in private? Hearings before government remunerated Boards should be conducted in public. If the tax payer is paying, then the tax payer should be entitled to sit in on meetings and hearings and see and hear what is going on!



Minita o te Moni Brown Marks laments the fruit rotting on the trees and the ground. A far cry from his youth when the

country exported crates of fruit overseas! But is he shedding crocodile tears? Was it not his Secretary o te Moni who said "Halten ze paw paw tranzshipmunt to Nouvo Zelandia!" Did he not change the grand heat treated paw paw export plan to one of supplying the hotels and local market? Then some smart grower asked what was to be done with the surplus of 2,000 paw paws ripening on the trees each day?



Whisper reaching Big Red on CNN-Coconut Network News- is that Sir Filchard Peeves, Lord High Counter of the Kingdom's Coinage in the Imperial Palace o te Moni, has had his Royal Parchments of Appointment torn up and that he has released his camel from the Royal Stables and is packing the dromedary with his worldly belongings for transporting to the vessel at the Royal Docks for sailing back to the land of the Black Stump. Just who is to replace the Knight at the Round Table of King Henry has not been announced but is thought it could be Sir Gareth Penderson.



Chook asks, now that the lowly pensions are cruelly taxed as income, can the Wizards of the State Purse advise what are

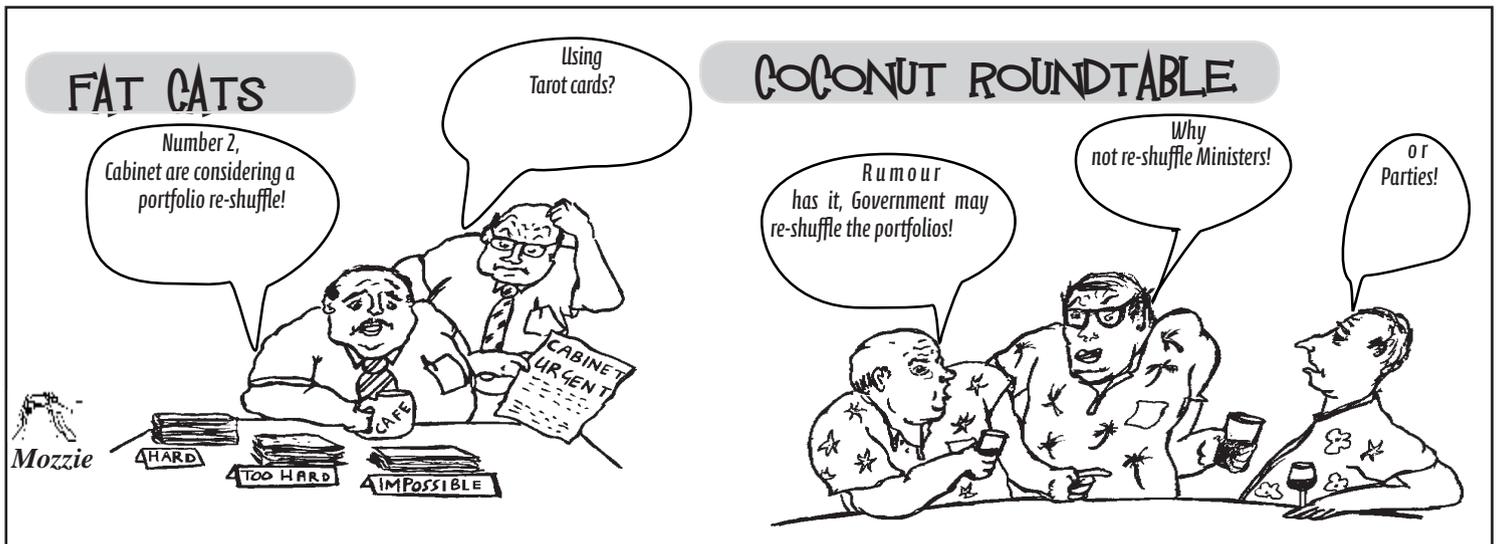
reasonable expenses claimable against this income? For instance, paying someone to mow the lawn, cut the hedge? Paint and repair the roof? Taxi to Church? Expenses incurred at 60 plus meetings? Expenses incurred attending Grey Power meetings? Clarity please-in simple English of the Realm- as all these extra returns will need to be meticulously done to avoid being hauled before the Committee of Inquisition and being persecuted as an economic heretic. More paper more work more waste.



Why doesn't MFEM just give a list of ALL the RMD numbers of the pensioners to all the 3 banks? Any pensioner without a RMD number is issued with one. Too simple? Breaching the Privacy Act? Or is MFEM lost in its numbers more like it? Even after applying for a number I have never been told what it is. This looks like a make work, keep busy operation. May as well have the RMD numbers tattooed on our foreheads!



Absolutely wonderful news that our hospital staff, at long last have the proper equipment to do their job in a safe and healthy manner! If they had not been donated a state of the art commercial steam iron by Rotary, some of them may very well have ended up in hospital suffering from OOS (Occupational Over-use Syndrome). The Hospital as an employer could very well have faced charges under the Health and Safety legislation. What other risks to worker safety and health exist at the hospital? Certainly warrants front page positioning and perhaps a mention by the Minister for Health at the next WHO regional congress in Manila.



VACANCIES



Ora Fiduciary (Cook Islands) Limited is a registered trustee company in the Cook Islands. We seek a qualified Accountant with at least 5 years post graduation experience to fill the role of financial controller within our growing business. References from previous employers is essential.
Please submit your CV by e-mail to puai@oratrust.com or by mail to: The Manager, Ora Fiduciary (Cook Islands) Limited, PO Box 92, Avarua, Rarotonga COOK ISLANDS.
Applications close at 4pm on 6th February 2015.



WELFARE DATABASE

The Ministry of Internal Affairs through the ADB-JFPR project seeks the service of an IT Consultant.

Applications are invited for a suitable qualified person in Information Programming to revise and develop the current Welfare database to enable the division to administer the Cook Islands Welfare Payments and provide accurate information to its stakeholders.

The successful applicant must have a broad experience with programming and designing of database. To provide a similar operational project that's been completed.

Written applications including CV should be addressed to the Secretary of Ministry of Internal Affairs, PO Box 98, Tupapa, Rarotonga or email eva.mapu@cookislands.gov.ck or ngatuaine.maui@cookislands.gov.ck for more information

Applications close 4pm, Monday 09th February 2015.



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Vacancy: Programme Officer – The SRIC-CC Programme

Climate Change Cook Islands requires a Finance Administration Officer. To receive a copy of the Terms of Reference for this position please contact Mrs Tina Samson-Hoff at the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) between 8am-4pm (Mon-Fri) on phone 25494 or 29300, or email tina.samson@cookislands.gov.ck;

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Taurupau Pt Sec 89 Takuvaine and Ngatairi Sec 25A Tutakimoa

A meeting of the landowners in respect of the above lands please attend meeting on Thursday 29th January at Margaret Karikas Palace, 7pm.

Minora Griffin asking for O/R

VACANCIES



Teller Vacancy

To be the best you need to mix with the right company!

At Westpac, not only do we pride ourselves on providing exceptional customer service, we also pride ourselves on providing products and services to help our customers achieve their financial aspirations.

As a Teller, you would play a key customer facing role in our branch network.

The goals of a Teller is to;

- Provide a great experience for our customers
- Contribute to our overall mission in becoming the number one service organization
- Ensure customers' immediate service needs are met

As part of our team, you'll be sharing our commitment to being one of the Pacific's most responsible companies - responsible to our customers, to the communities in which we operate and to our environment.

If this sounds like the opportunity you have been looking for, submit your application along with your CV to:

Toko Harmon
Branch Manager
PO Box 42
Rarotonga
Avarua
Cook Islands

Or email:
westpaccookislands@westpac.com.au

Applications will close on 30th January 2015

You're in good company.

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Cook Islands' Jobs- JOB OF THE WEEK

27 January 2015

DEMI CHEF
EDGEWATER RESORT
LOCATION: RAROTONGA

To apply for this role and view other vacancies available in Rarotonga and the Pa Enua please visit www.cookislandsjobs.com today.

EAT LESS

MOVE MORE

HEART FOUNDATION

NOMINATION FORM

The 2015 Development Awards - Honouring 50 Years of Development in the Cook Islands



- Closing date for nominations is **Friday 23rd January 2015**.
- There is no limit to the number of nominations made by individuals.
- Winners will be chosen by a judging panel representing business, civil society, youth, traditional leaders and others.
- Winners will be recognised at the 2015 Development Partner's Meeting Awards Dinner on Tuesday 10th February.

Jaewynn McKay, the Awards Coordinator, is happy to answer any questions you may have.
Contact Jaewynn by email: development@cookislands.gov.ck or by phone: +682 55 486

BACKGROUND

The 2015 Development Awards will recognise the country's best development achievements over the last fifty years. These 7 awards will honour organisations, individuals and the public and private sector for their efforts in creating positive change in the Cook Islands.

CATEGORIES

- Best Development 1965 – 1974
- Best Development 1975 – 1984
- Best Development 1985 – 1994
- Best Development 1995 – 2004
- Best Development 2005 – 2014
- **Special Awards**
- People's Choice
- Supreme Development 1965 – 2014

CRITERIA

Recipients of the 2015 Development Awards will have demonstrated to our experienced panel of judges that they or their project were at the forefront of the country's development.

These awards will recognise the most successful and innovative, people, projects, programmes and partnerships; entries will need to demonstrate how they have improved the physical or environmental quality of an island or islands within the Cook Islands or the economic or social well-being of a community within the Cook Islands.

Other criteria that might be incorporated include:

- The contribution and benefit to society and impact on community or nation by the individual/group/event or project being nominated.
- Their personal interest and involvement in the wider community.
- Details of any challenges faced and how they were overcome.
- The length of time living in the Cook Islands.
- Outline contribution to the Cook Islands development.
- Outline degree of difficulty in achievement.
- The involvement in establishing and/or setting the direction of a group, organisation or cause in which they have been involved.
- Value of contribution to the Cook Islands.

TIMELINE

- Call for nominations opens Monday 15th December 2014.
- Nominations close Friday 23rd January 2015.
- Judging panel convenes Monday 26th January to consider nominations and to short list up to three nominations per category.
- The People's Choice Award will be voted on by the public from the short list published on Monday 2nd February.
- The Supreme Award will be chosen from the category winners.
- Announcement of Awardees at the Development Awards Dinner Tuesday 10th February.

