The Pride Journal

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
Editorial 2
Comment 2
Thank You Note 3
Gay friendly Fiji? 3
Unaffordable Lands 4
The world in focus 4
Health Corner 4
Recipe 4
Community Notice 5
Entertainment 5
Contact us 6

JUNE 2014

Youths meet to prioritize the Post 2015 development agenda

The Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights (YCSRR) brought together 21 youths from different movements and regions around the world to a 3 day strategic meeting towards the Post 2015 development agenda in Hong Kong from the 27th to the 29th of July. They also had a one day training for LGBTIQ activists as a way to ensuring sexual orientation and gender identities and expression (SOGIE) are a key component of the Post 2015 development agenda.

This one day SOGIE training was indeed a great reflection that they were serious about getting LGBTIQ issues as a priority. This was like music to my ears because i firmly believed that LGBTIQ had to be explicitly mentioned. For too long LGBTIQ has been a part of either the “vulnerable communities” or “gender equality” in high level meetings. However in country it may have different interpretations hence creating a loophole for governments to disregard LGBTIQ issues and lived realities.

Meeting these 20 other youth activists was indeed a great pleasure. They were clearly all forward thinking individuals who believed in equality of all people, therefore discussions like gay rights, abortion and transgender health was a breeze. By far in all the meetings I have attended this group was the only one in which no one opposed to or cringed at the mention of the word abortion a memory that will remain for life.

With no doubt this group was indeed the best head hunted ones to work together towards building a future that we all envision as feminist and activists all around the world.

Although there was no transgender person at the meeting we tried our very best to address their unique healthcare needs as well.

The thematic priorities of the youth strategic meeting were:

Health & SRHR

Employment

Gender equality, SOGIE and women’s rights and

Peace and security

Good Governance

The post 2015 development agenda needs to ensure that the LGBTIQ communities are part of all discussions that lead up to the final recommendations, nothing about us without us. If the post 2015 development agenda is truly striving for free, equal and just societies it needs to have very specific and clear recommendations related to the LGBTIQ communities. A necessary first step towards this is zero tolerance on any form of discrimination based on SOGIE. Nothing about us without us to achieve a future we want. A future we envision to be where we all live a healthy and happy life, life without poverty and an environment that is self sustainable.
From the editorial desk

Oceania Pride has been a part of the Global youth strategy meeting on the post 2015 development agenda. This meeting was very crucial for us as an organization for two reasons—first that Pacific was represented at the meeting as often when clustered together with Asia, Pacific voices die out. And secondly we wanted our mandate being the rights of the LGBTIQ community reflected in the process leading up to the development agenda.

Gearing up for September elections we also have an article from Be the Change team who highlight what all independent candidate Roshika Deo is all about as a youth in the political sphere.

Youths are a major constituent this years election and we take a look at youth advocacy with Tamani.

We are all about equality and diversity and in this issue Krishneer is calling for sign language inclusion in the school curriculum. After all it is an important communication tool and it can help mainstream hearing impaired into national schools without discrimination. A necessary first step to ensure no one is left behind.

The auditor generals report is an important public document that helps its citizens hold governments accountable and promotes transparency, and so naturally we briefly discuss that in this issue as well.

Paradise is what Fiji is known for in the tourism sector. Ashar takes a closer look at how this paradise has been for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and the queer communities in Fiji.

We take a closer look at India and its transgender community and since the cold season is here we bring you a delicious soup recipe and talk about sexual health and HIV.

Not forgetting our community notice board as well as our reviews.

Don’t forget to tell us what you think of this issue and happy reading.

Elections in Fiji are scheduled to take place on 17th September 2014.

The significance of these elections cannot be understated especially considering the fact that it has been eight years since Fiji’s last democratic election and, perhaps not so coincidentally, the country’s last coup. This year, the reduction of the voting age to 18 will be one of the most influencing factors in this year’s election outcome. With 43% of registered voters being below the age of 35 years (as at 17th June 2014) and a massive 64% of this ‘youth’ group voting for the first time, a new challenge has emerged for political parties and candidates to capture this virgin demographic.

Roshika Deo, a 33 year old feminist activist and passionate social worker is one young person wishing to enter the parliament as an independent. In mid-2013, she was one of the first people to declare her interest to stand as a candidate. Roshika had started the ‘Be the Change’ Campaign with a view to get youth and women informed, interested and engaged in political activity. The Campaign’s main objective is to move youth and women from the sidelines into mainstream politics where they can contribute to nation-building and creating a sustainable democracy. She seeks to implement these ‘women and youth’ campaign ideals through what the campaign members have termed Transformational Leadership.

Roshika believes that the ‘Be the Change’ campaign should transform into a movement of young people and women who demand their inclusion in decision-making processes. As such, her campaign group is composed of primarily of passionate women and young people. They are the brains and driving force behind this innovative campaign.

To learn more, get involved or get in touch with Roshika Deo and her campaign, like and follow her on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/pages/Roshika-Deo-Be-The-Change-Campaign
Youth Power through advocacy

By: Tamanirama Jone

I was fortunate enough to be part of the Second National Youth Forum that was undertaken in Nadave from the 7th to the 11th of July, last week.

During the three day forum, discrimination was a hot topic that seems to stand out in most of the discussions. The Violence against women and the LGBTIQ society is found to be on the rise.

Sex Worker’s Representatives from the LGBTIQ community also shared their experience of their daily challenges. Being discriminated on the grounds of sexual orientation in any form has been in existent for ages. People’s mindsets are still archaic and thus there is a need for a lot of advocacy work in this area. Tackling society’s view on Women and the LGBTIQ group takes great courage and enthusiasm as it will not only take time for people to grasp this issue with more understanding and acceptance. The mere fact these two groups are very active and participative in society and to be denied their basic Human Rights is really saddening.

Resorting to violence on the grounds of “HATE” and ANGER should be discouraged. Minorities and Women have Human Rights that need to be uphold at all times and this will lead to a healthier nation.

At the same time, I take my hats off to Ian Thorpe for his recent coming out as “JUST” another Gay person. This is another milestone that signifies HOPE for those who are reluctant of coming out and it also goes to show that ADVOCACY and ACTIVISM work by the various LGBTIQ organizations is getting their message across. Let Thorpe’s coming out be sound of JOY and also further inspire people to be WHO they are in WHATEVER way they LOVE to be!

Sign language inclusion in school curriculum

By: Krishneer Sen

Iliteracy and semi-literacy are serious problems among Deaf people in Fiji and around the world.

Like all children, deaf children must have access to equal and quality education. Deaf children are born with the same basic capacities for learning and language as all children; they can and should reach their full potential with quality educational programs. Deaf children and hearing children learn best in sign language from birth. A bilingual approach is becoming more popular in many countries. It means that teaching language in Fijian Sign Language (FJS) in all subjects for Deaf children.

At the same time, it has a strong emphasis on teaching reading and writing skills of the language used in the country. Sign languages in each country are natural languages of Deaf people. I encourage all schools to include Fijian Sign Language in their curriculum like Physical Education (P.E) and Art classes.

Auditor Generals Report needs to be seen before elections are declared free and fair

By: Jasmine Kaur

The auditor generals report has not seen the light of the day since 2006. This means that the citizens of this country don’t know how their tax paying money has been spent. So I cant help but question how can this years election be free and fair? How do we know that the regime government has indeed thought of the welfare of its people and that it was a corruption free period?

If the military government truly believes in democracy and free and fair elections why haven’t they released the auditor generals report since the last coup? These are some questions that not only the citizens of Fiji but also international agencies should ask our current government.

After all international pressures can really shape Fiji’s future into a positive direction. If countries wish to remain “A Political” then UN agencies and the common wealth need to intervene. Quite simply put a trade and travel ban is not enough! They should do more to pressure the government to do the right thing that is release their spending while in power.
I was trying to think of what to write for this first in a series focusing on issues to do with men who have sex with men (MSM) and after a little Google love, came across a heading for a Tripadvisor “Gay Friendly Fiji.” A man from Melbourne in Australia and his husband had impulse bought two return tickets to Fiji and after the fact inquired further about his surprise discovery that “Fiji is not a very gay friendly country.”

To the LGBTIQ community and their allies here in Fiji this may not be news, but it struck me for the mixed message our ‘island paradise’ has when it comes to national identity around this issue. What’s o.k. for tourists and what’s o.k. for locals and why are they different on such important issues? If our LGBTIQ neighbours can be shocked that a nation widely praised worldwide for its friendliness might exclude such warmth to a significant part of its population, what does that say for the knowledge of the various plights of our island paradise? To ask our brothers and sisters in our neighbouring Western countries to also help raise awareness of the violence, discrimination, exclusion, and bigotry faced by everyday LGBTIQ Fijians some more than has happened to date?

Threatening the tourism industry of Fiji to gain rights towards full equality is problematic, I’m not ignoring that matter. Tourism is Fiji’s biggest industry and thus putting it in the spotlight it risks threatening people’s livelihoods. But perhaps it might also serve as a wake up call to the hypocrisy of a friendliness to outsiders, hostility to locals reality? I don’t think you can underestimate how delusional thinking can be around this contradiction. Recently in a LEU Facebook page discussion on same-sex marriage in Fiji, a poster (as is regularly posted about the topic) exclaimed on one hand how supportive Fijians were of their LGBTIQ members, and then in the next breathe told them all they would be going to hell, and were as immoral as paedophiles and people who committed bestiality.

Hopefully to the reader the contrast is obvious, but clearly to a significant and arguably powerful part of the community it is oblivious to those internal inconsistencies.

Whatever happens next depends on a number of factors, but I think it matters that everyday LGBTIQ Fijians, their friends, families, and allies be at the forefront of that direction. What do you think might be some powerful ways forward? Let us hear your stories and ideas? Do you think negatively geared rapprochements like boycotts from overseas would be helpful, or do you have other ideas in expanding our LGBTIQ peoples rights in a struggle towards equality? Drop a line into our editor and I’ll share your stories in upcoming columns, while keeping your identity confi-
India recognizes Transgenders

India is widely known for their Transgender community that are referred as “Hijras”.

According to the Indian Penal code section 377 same sex relationship is an unnatural offence and is punishable by 10 years jail term.

Earlier this year the Supreme court gave recognition of the third gender. This now means that transgender people can now have a third gender in their legal identification cards.

However legal experts say the judgement puts transgender people in a strange situation: on the one hand, they are now legally recognised and protected under the Constitution, but on the other hand they may be breaking the law if they have consensual gay sex.

In the latest findings from census data of India, it has now been calculated that India currently has 490,000 citizens who identify as transgender. This is the first time a number has been put on India’s transgender community’s population, and is a definitive blow to the Supreme Court judges who, just last year, referred to the LGBTI community as a “minuscule minority.”

With the regressive stance of the Supreme Court in December 2013 when it re-criminalized same-sex activity.

The census report gives the LGBTIQ activist in India a great figure to use in their activism, however what it translates to in the government and judiciary is a whole new ball game. But this should definitely re-ignite their passion and commitment for the LGBTIQ communities to fight harder and be more radical.

Health Corner

An HIV test is a blood test. Blood is taken at the hospital and then sent to a lab where it is tested for HIV. HIV testing is an important part of any HIV prevention strategy. When people know they are HIV positive, they can take steps to keep themselves healthy and prevent the spread of infection to others.

You should consider a getting an HIV test if:
- You have engaged in high risk sexual behaviour like having sex without a condom.
- Someone you have had sex with tests positive for HIV.
- You are pregnant and your doctor suggests an HIV test as a necessary part of diagnosis or treatment.

You have sustained a workplace injury and have reason to suspect you have been put at risk of infection.

Be sure to use condoms while having sex. Use two if you feel the need or if you like to get a little kinky and have rough sex or BDSM. Don’t shy away but make sure you cover up!

Ingredients
- Chicken strips 250 grams
- 1 medium carrot cut in thin strips
- Long bean chopped in 1 inch strips
- 1/2 stalk spring onion
- 1/2 stick celery chopped as desired
- Red & green capsicum chopped 1/2 inch cubes
- Choy sum chopped
- Chicken stock if available or 400 ml water
- 1/2 onion cut in small cubes
- Red Bongo Chilly finely chopped
- Garlic bread

Method
1. Heat chicken stock or water in a pot. Throw in onion, carrot, spring onion, chicken and ginger juice and chilly.
2. Let it simmer until flavours are infused. Season with salt, Chinese salt to taste.
3. Add the rest of the ingredients and cook for further 3 minutes. Remember not to overcook the vegetables.
4. Garnish with spring onions.
5. Serve hot with Kakana Dina (Cassava or Dalo) of any type and with lemon wedges on the side together with garlic bread.

Yum bites - Kai Viti winter Soup

By: Kajal Kritika

Kai Viti Winter Soup

By: Jasmine Kaur
Entertainer of the month

Song: **Try**

By: Colbie Caillat

I was impressed as soon as I heard this song for the first time! After Mary Lambert Colbie Caillat brought the attention to beauty in a new way. For years I have heard songs and seen celebrities that make teenagers starve themselves to look beautiful.

This song is here to break that cycle. The lyrics are very powerful and it compares the perceived beauty standards and shuns it. The singer further encourages girls and women to take their makeup off and be themselves. To truly embrace their beauty the way it came. After all who needs makeup to look beautiful right? So get your beautiful self out there and claim it!

I give this song a 10 and you must hear it!

---

TV Series: **Mistresses**

By: Kajal Kritika

This TV series is about four women and their close friendship surrounded by their love life. Their friendship is one where they read each others mind, finish each others sentence etc etc.

What I find interesting about his drama series is the sex scenes. No I don’t mean it the way you’re thinking!

I found the sex scenes a little homophobic! On one hand they have heterosexual sex scenes that are long and shows more passion, skin etc. And on the other hand when they show lesbian scenes it’s quite short and very brief. The passionate love making that they show in the straight couples seems to disappear in the lesbian sex scene. The storyline is somewhat ok but I was extremely disappointed that they fell into the routine of heteronormativity and disregarded diverse sexualities.

---

Community notice board

**Actors wanted!**

We at Oceania Pride are looking for volunteer actors for one of our video projects called - "Silence = homophobia".

We cannot pay for talents but we assure you that the course it is for will definitely win your heart.

It’s a very short act so before you get camera shy we would be done with the recording.

We are looking for at least 10 to 15 people for this particular video.

Please drop an email to oceania.pride@gmail.com to register your interest and to get more information.

Help us combat Homophobia, together we can make a huge difference!

**Encourage diversity**

Do you believe in human rights?

Are you someone who wants everyone to be treated equally?

If your answer is yes then we want to record your message on camera!

Be a part of "The Acceptance Project" and help us inspire members of the LGBTIQ community feel accepted to be themselves.

After all it people like you that encourage us to keep up the good fight and inspire people to accept diversity.

So get started and email us today and be a part of the project that will inspire many others like you to help create a culture of acceptance for the LGBTIQ community.

Oceania.pride@gmail.com

**SIDS Conference**

The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States will be held from 1 to 4 September 2014 in Apia, Samoa, to be preceded by activities related to the conference from 28 to 30 August 2014, also in Apia, Samoa. It will focus the world’s attention on a group of countries that remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities.

The overarching theme of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States is "The sustainable development of small island developing States through genuine and durable partnerships".

The deadlines have been extended so apply now to be a part of this very important meeting.
Founded on September 13th, 2010, Oceania Pride’s mission is to promote, respect, protect and realise the human rights and fundamental freedoms of lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and the questioning (LGBTIQ) community and people, including the elimination of all forms of discrimination against the LGBTIQ. A reality that needs to be reflected in the policy and legislature enshrine equality and diversity and guarantying equality before the law.

Join us

Name ______________________________________________________
Address ______________________________________________________
City ______________________________________________________
Email address ______________________________________________________
Postal address ______________________________________________________
Phone ______________________________________________________
Signature ______________________________________________________
Date ______________________________________________________

Type of membership
__ Paying member ($5 annually)
__ Non-paying member

What will your level of participation be in Oceania Pride?
__ Attend monthly / bi-monthly meetings
__ Networking
__ Serve in other capacity – please list
__ Volunteer
__ Take part in actions and campaigns
__ Receive newsletters