

FMA NEWS

At the Annual General Meeting of the Fiji Medical Association held in Suva on the 5th September, 1981 the following members were elected as office bearers of the Association.

President: Dr. K. Singh

Vice Presidents: Dr. A. Kurusaqila, Dr. B. Pathik

Secretary: Dr. S. Tuqa

Assist Secretary: Dr. S. Singh

Treasurer: Dr. R. Mitchell

Council Members

Dr. Taka

Dr. D.D. Sharma

Dr. V. Singh

Dr. S.R. Govind

The following Doctors were elected to the Fiji Medical Council at the A.G.M.

tya Nandam

Dr. D.D. Sharma

Dr. Karam Singh

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1980 - 1981

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Undoubtedly 1981 has been the most successful year for the Fiji Medical Association. Many pending issues were cleared; new posts were created and several senior colleagues were promoted to chief medical officer grade. A major project was successfully completed. These were achieved through the untiring efforts of your Executive Council and through your support.

Ultrasound Machine

At the Annual General Meeting last year a petition was signed by members present that an ultrasound machine be bought for Fiji. However, this petition fell on deaf ears of the Ministry. Consequently, the Executive Council decided that it should become a FMA project. An Ultrasound Committee was formed whose membership included some business people. By early March 1981 the Committee had only \$24,000 in bank (the prize money was \$40,000!). Towards middle of March Dr K.D. Sharma and myself started door to door appeal. This took us throughout the country. From this drive we collected over \$160,000 and we are pleased to report that we have \$120,000 in bank sufficient to buy the machines we need. The negotiations for the purchase have already taken place

and we should have the machines here shortly. To those who supported the project we are deeply indebted.

Overtime for Doctors

This you will remember became a major issue during the year. After reaching a dead-lock our case was referred to the Consultative Committee of the Tripartite Forum.

The Consultative Committee of the Tripartite Forum met three times on 22nd September 1980 and on 7th and 11th May 1981, under the chairmanship of the Rt Hon Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, K.B.E., Prime Minister at the request of the Minister for Labour, Industrial Relations and Immigration, to discuss the matter in dispute between the Fiji Public Service Association (FPSA) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) over the payment of an allowance to medical officers employed by the Government for "long duty hours."

After receiving representations from the parties (FPSA and PSC) and having considered the Report of the Sub-Committee comprising of Cyril Donald Aidney, (Chairman) Dr Ahmed Ali, Dinesh Lal Morarji, Laisenia Qarase and Winston Thompson; the Consultative Committee had decided that:

- (i) The Independent Review Committee on the classification and grading of posts in the Civil Service

classification and grading of posts in the Civil Service be asked to review the salary scales for medical officers with the view of making a report on suitable compensation for "long hours of work". The Consultative Committee shall make an appropriate award based on this Report which shall be made effective from the date of the Independent Review Committee's Report.

- (ii) Until such time when the award (if any) becomes available, medical officers shall be paid an interim consolidated allowance of 9% of their salary. Such allowances shall be only payable to medical officers that are placed on the "on call duties" on a regular basis, and who are required to work beyond their normal rostered hours on a regular basis. Such interim allowance shall be back-dated to 22nd September 1980 and shall remain in force until (i) above is implemented.

Maraj Report

The Association kept hammering the Ministry and the PSC to implement the recommendations contained in the Maraj Report. At a meeting held with the Minister on 24.4.81, the Minister told us that some 90 recommendations have already been implemented.

Upon request a copy of the recommendations implemented has been made available to the Association.

Degree Status

The representatives of the Executive Council met the Minister for Health on 24.4.81 and the PSC on 3.7.81 to find out where was the delay. We did not get any satisfactory answer. Therefore, two representatives of the Council saw the Vice-Chancellor on 14.7.81. The Vice-Chancellor, Dr James Maraj, informed us:

1. In 1978 the Minister of Health sought associate relationship of FSM with USP with award of medical degree to FSM graduates.
2. USP did not have the expertise and it was decided to establish a team of Consultants to advise the USP.
3. The Consultants assessed the FSM in 1978. One of their recommendations was formation of a Conjoint Committee. The Consultants had recommended that USP could award degree in Medicine provided certain conditions were fulfilled.
4. In December 1980, the USP Council decided on the basis of the Consultants report and the basis of what Conjoint Committee said was being done, agreed in principle to award degree in medicine. Announcement was made and the Ministry was informed of the USP Council decision.
5. USP went further to include in 1981. Calendar the conditions for entry to MBBS course. The minimum entry requirements for MBBS is to be the same as for BSc course.
6. USP decided that before the Senate met again Professor Cole should be invited to help out in finalisation of the Conjoint Committee report. This has already been done.
7. The Vice-Chancellor had indicated to Professor Cole, Principal FSM and Professor Hopkins that about 10-12 FSM graduates could do a two year conversion course in that one year could be done at N.Z. Universities and the second year in Fiji. On successful completion, the graduates could be awarded a USP medical degree. The idea was to have USP MBBS graduates in practice before the first of the new degree course students could graduate.
8. Regarding the intake of regional students, the Vice-Chancellor indicated that the regional members of USP Council had requested that the Ministry's attention should be drawn to regional intake. It was upon the Ministry to decide what numbers they should take. USP merely wants to facilitate the education development of FSM.
9. If Fiji Government, could not stand directly the

cost of external assessors, indirect form of payment could be made and included in Fiji Government's contribution to USP. Costs to cover recruitment of external assessors could be obtained by levying a registration fee which would be charged to each student. There are various ways finding the costs involved.

10. USP is already making a contribution towards teaching at FSM. Teaching of Behavioural Sciences is at present done by School of Education and Introductory Pharmacology lectures by School of Natural Resources. More assistance could be expected with affiliation. Aid in form of books could be directed to Fiji School of Medicine.

Following this we saw the Minister for Health again on 16.7.81 and the following was discussed.

On being asked the reason for delay, the Minister replied that before he went on leave he left certain instructions and so far he has not been briefed by his advisors. This has left him in a dilemma.

Further he said, that according to his advisors:

- i) USP would not award degree in Medicine unless the conditions were satisfied.
- ii) USP has not accepted the curriculum.

However, the Minister said that he would be the happiest person to see award of degree in Medicine. He went on to say that there were three or four ways of going about:

- i) Through USP after satisfying the required conditions.
- ii) Still going through USP but having students in overseas for a part of the time. This could be done at the beginning, middle or towards the end of the course. At the end of the course students to graduate with MBBS (USP).
- iii) The Director of Medical Services of Australia had recently met him. The possibility of New Castle type of curriculum was discussed. This could be tried here.
- iv) Award of MBBS by the Fiji School of Medicine, should USP put too many conditions. Alternatively, approach could be made to USP to award the degree with present set up.

The Minister then presented his line of action.

1. Have a meeting with USP as soon as possible where he would be present so that he would know what exactly would be involved in terms of costs to Fiji Government.
2. A paper will be presented to Cabinet.

Post Graduate Education

At a meeting held with the Minister on 24.4.81 and the PSC on 3.7.81 the Council expressed deep concern on the lack of post-graduate education in this country. It is very encouraging that both the Ministry and the PSC are willing to send doctors on refresher courses. We have been assured that an exchange programme will be initiated shortly whereby Registrars/Consultants can be sent for 3-6 months attachment to overseas institutions.

FMA Centre

At a meeting held on 24.4.81, we sought the Minister's help for a piece of land for a proposed FMA Centre. The Ministry was unable to give land, but supports the idea and has recommended to the Land Dept to make Crown land available to FMA. I hope this would be the next year's project for the new Council.

Fiji Medical Journal Association

Apart from the chronic problem of lack of articles we began having difficulty with the new publishers. It is hoped that the new Council will give priority to set the journal right.

FMA Conference 1980

This beyond doubt was the best medical conference in this country. We hope this year's conference will meet the expectations of the members and at least comparable to the last year's.

Ministry of Health

We are pleased to report that our relationship with the Ministry has taken a new turn. We are able to discuss our problems in a much more cordial manner than before. The Minister for Health, Hon Mr Ramzan with the new management is very conscious of our problems and is doing his utmost to assist us deliver the best possible health care under the circumstances.

(Dr Karam Singh)
PRESIDENT
Fiji Medical Association

Auditor's Report to the Members of Fiji Medical Association

As an audit procedure it was not practicable to extend our examination of subscriptions and donations beyond the accounting for amounts received as shown by the books and records of the Association.

Subject to the above reservation, in our opinion the above balance sheet and the attached statement of income and expenditure give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association at 30 June 1981 and of the results for the year ended on that date according to the best of our information and the explanations given to us and as shown by the books and records of the Association. We have obtained all the information and explanations we have required.

Price Waterhouse
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
SUVA, FIJI
3 September 1981

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 1981

1980		
5,081	MEMBERS' FUNDS Balance at 30 June 1980	7,030
1,949	Add Surplus/(deficiency) for the year	(385)
\$7,030	TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS AT 30 JUNE 1981	\$6,645
Represented by:		
4,646	CURRENT ASSET Cash at banks and on hand	4,278
150	LESS CURRENT LIABILITY Accrued expenses	200
4,496		4,078
2,534	TERM DEPOSIT	2,567
\$7,030		\$6,645

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1981

1980

Income		
3,730	Members' subscriptions	4,160
325	Seminar registration	836
100	Donations	4,608
40	Journal subscription	762
196	Interest received	282
88	Sundry	965
4,479		11,613
Less Expenses		
142	Printing and stationery	718
580	Honorarium	800
730	Seminar expenses	4,506
47	FMA Journal Publication	1,873
22	Advertising	211
146	Gifts and prizes	100
13	Postage and telegrams	158
100	Audit fee	217
322	Travelling expenses	1,935
58	General expenses	881
370	Council meeting expenses	599
2,530		11,998
\$1,949	SURPLUS/(DEFICIENCY) FOR THE YEAR	(\$385)

Note

The above statement of income and expenditure has been prepared on an accrual basis except for subscriptions from members which have been accounted for on a cash basis.

At its October meeting, the Executive of the FMA set up four subcommittees to look into the following issues:

- a) **FMA centre Committee.** This committee was to be chaired by Dr. Karam Singh, other members are Dr Tuqa and Pathik, who were to look into the possibility of building a FMA centre.
- b) **G.P.'s Grievances Committee:** This committee had Dr. Kurusaqila as chairman and with Drs Mitchell and Vinod Singh were to look into GP's grievances.
- c) **Submission to Review Committee:** Dr Taka (Chairman) together with Dr. S. Govind and Dr. S. Singh were asked to prepare the FMA's proposal to the Government's Review Committee.
- d) **1982 Seminar Committee:** Members of this committee were to be formed at a later meeting, once the theme for the seminar had been decided.

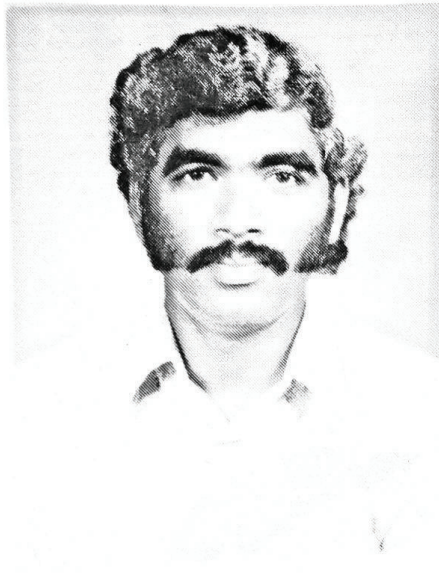
Northern Branch News

The annual General Meeting of the Northern Branch of the FMA was held at the Labasa Hospital Library on 29th September and the following office bearer were elected:

President	Dr. Vinod Singh
Secretary	Dr. Naseem S. Ali
Treasurer	Dr. Rajesh Chandra
Committee	Dr. A.D. Ram
	Dr. I.C. Patel
	Dr. R. Raj
	Dr. P.C. Sharma

The Branch plans to hold its first Mini Seminar on the 11th and 12 of December, the theme being "Emergencies in Hospital Practice."

Their next project is to set up a Coronary Care Unit at the Labasa Hospital and hope to raise funds to purchase a Defibrillator and a Cardiac monitor costing about \$6000.



The Fiji Medical Association would like to congratulate Dr. Balram Iyer (photo), the first graduate of the Fiji School of Medicine to become a member of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists.

Dr. Iyer was born in Ba and attended primary school in Ba and Tavua. He then went on to Shri Vivekananda High School in Nadi, Natabua High School and finally matriculated at the Suva Grammar School in Suva. In 1965 he entered Medical school and graduated in 1969. He spent his internship at C.W.M. Hospital in 1970 and worked at the Vatukoula Health Centre before being posted to St. Giles Hospital in 1971 as a Medical Officer.

In 1973, under the Roche Registrar exchange programme he worked as a Psychiatric Registrar for six months at the Auckland Public Hospital.

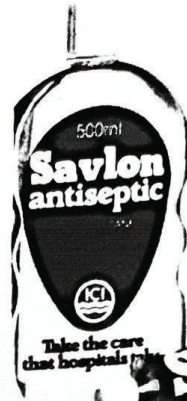
In 1976 he was awarded a New Zealand Government Scholarship to undertake a postgraduate course in Psychological Medicine at the University of Otago, and completed the Diploma in Psychological Medicine in 1979. He returned to Fiji in 1980 and was posted as the Consultant Psychiatrist and Medical Superintendent of St. Giles Hospital.

Paediatrics Prize

The management of the Rewa Co-operative Dairy Company have kindly presented a trophy to the final year Medical student who tops the examination in Paediatrics. The Rewa Dairy prize is to be an annual award to the top student and includes a Trophy and a voucher for Medical books worth \$100.00.

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