

FIJI ROTUMAN ASSOCIATION

VISION: Sustainability Of The Rotuman Culture, Identity and Heritage Through Sharing and Nurturing.

MISSION: To Unite The Rotuman People Through Participation In Cultural Activities That Will Educate, Promote Cultural Values, Skills And Ideas.



ROTUMA DAY CELEBRATIONS, 2019 PROGRAMME

THEME - ROTUMA: ROTU MĀ 'ONTOU

My Identity & Heritage Is My Spirituality & Faith

DATE: 10th - 11th May

VENUE - FMF Gymnasium, Suva

TIME : 9am - 5pm

Friday 10th May

MC: Mr Makrava Wilson

DJ: Tropic Thunda

Band: Va'a Brothers

TIME

ACTIVITIES

- 6.00am **Preparations and Set Up**
Farmers' & Women's Artefact Annual Competitions.
- 8.00am **Gates Open**
- 9.00am **Community March**
Venue: USP Bus Bay
- 9.30am **Opening Ceremony**
Prayer: Mr Rupeni Fatiaki, Director, Social Welfare
Welcome: Gagaj Terotuam, FRA Council
Opening Address: Mr Paserio Furivai, Chairperson, FRA Council
- Community Awareness Talks (10.30am; 11.30 am)**
- Mr Rupeni Fatiaki, Director Social Welfare
 - Ms Laurel Vaurasi, President, Fiji Law Society
 - Mr Vamarasi Faktaufon, Snr Consultant, VAMA Law
- 10.30am **Morning Team Break**
- Mr Iosefo Koroidimuri, Divisional Manager, Eastern - Youth & Sports
- 11.00am
- 11.30am
- Police Community & Pacific Dialogue
 - Vote Of Thanks: Ms Surkafa Katafono, FRA Council
- 1.00 pm **Cultural Presentation– A Mamasa Ceremony**
- Hual ne pæega; he'ák ne koua; mamasa - mañiag forau.
- Students of 'IPA Learning Centre
- 2.30 pm **Outside Tent - Peer Learning**
Ms Makarita Samisoni: Flower Arrangement and Flower Making
- 3.30pm **Closing Ceremony**
- Presentation Of Prizes (March, Games, etc)
 - Vote Of Thanks - Mr Pat Veu & Ms Mari Etika
 - Prayer: Mr Sāga'itu Wasile, FRA Council

Saturday 11th May

TIME

ACTIVITIES

9.00am	Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ecumenical Prayer: Rev Jiare Wiliame• Welcome Mr Paserio Samisoni, FRA Council• Opening Address: Mr Paserio Furivai, FRA Council• Introduction of Chief Guests: Ms Susie Fesaitu, FRA Secretariat Chief Guests: His Excellency Mr Jonathan Curr & Mrs Florence Curr
9.40am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keynote Address: His Excellency Jonathan Curr
10.00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Dance: Suva Noa'tau Association
10.30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Dance: Suva Oinafa Association• Vote Of Thanks, Mr Peter Paul Fatiaki, FRA Council• Morning Tea Break (30 minutes) Chief Guests - Tour Of Competition shows
11.30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Dance: Suva Itu'ti'u Association
12.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Dance: Suva Malha'a Association
12.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ceremonial Presentation : 'IPA Learning Centre
1.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tautoag Fa: FRA Farmers
1.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FRA Council Presentation Of Gratitude
2.00pm	Presentation Of Prizes Farming and Artefact Annual Competition Annual Fundraising Trophy, 2019
3.00pm	Closing Ceremony
3.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Dance: Suva Pepjei Association
4.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Dance: Suva Itu'muta Association• Closing Address: Ms Agatha Ferei Furivai, FRA Secretariat, 2019• Vote Of Thanks: Mr Makrava Wilson, FRA Secretariat, 2020• Prayer: Fekau, Michael Stevens, Roman Catholic Church
7.00pm	RDC Island Night: Theme: Titiu Se Solnoho. Colour: Blue Band: Va'a Brothers

FIJI ROTUMAN ASSOCIATION COUNCIL 2019

Chairperson	Mr Paserio Furivai
A/Chairperson	Mr Peter Paul Fatiaki
Secretary	Ms Akesa Taito
A/Secretary	Ms Joan Wiliame
Treasurer	Mr Roger Emberson,
A/Treasurer	Ms Nina Filipe
Noa'tau	Gagaj Terotuan, Ms Mari Etika
Oinafa	Mr Saga'itu Wasile, Ms Rina Wasile
Itu'ti'u	Mr Marseu Munivai, Ms Surkafa Katafono
Malha'a	Mr John Rigamoto
Juju	Ms Agatha Ferei Furivai, Mr Iosefo Erenio
Pepjei	Mr Francis Jione, Mr Barry Jione
Itu'muta	Mr Victor Fatiaki, Mr Paserio Samisoni

Our Fiji Rotuman Association comprises of 20 Council Members of which 6 are elected Secretariat members who serve voluntarily for a term of three years. These elected members are from the wider Rotuman communities. These members are joined by the 14 representatives that are elected within the district association membership namely Noatau, Oinafa, Itu'ti'u, Malha'a, Juju, Pepjei and Itu'muta. These Associations represent Rotumans from the wider Fiji communities. Some district membership also include those of other divisions in our Fiji society. Together each of our FRA Council members can serve for a minimum period of 12 months or 36 months as per mandated by their own districts. The elected Secretariat however, has a maximum period of two terms in service. The FRA Council since its re-structure in 2015 is currently guided by its own Constitution, Annual General Meetings and periodical Strategic Plans of 2017 - 2020.

2019 THEME: ROTUMA: ROTU MĀ 'ONTOU.

As part of our observance of the 2019 Year of the Indigenous People, the FRA Council through this theme advocates for sustainability of its identity and culture. The theme serves as a reminder that change is inevitable over generations. Our Rotuman Islanders are now experiencing many changes as a people. We are caught in the paradigm shifts of rural to urban drifts, new ways of living, technological communication revolutions and the list is never ending. One of the main impacts of these challenges is our Rotuman mother tongue. Our Rotuman language is now in the fringe of endangered definitely (UNESCO Report - 4 May, 2018). Some of the factors of the language becoming extinct in the next two generations include the following:

- There are only 15,000 Rotumans in the entire world today and of these 7500 speakers (2002) only.
- *Less than 2000* Rotumans live on our mother land (Island Leaders stated that in the last census: (2017) there were only 1997 persons on the island)
- Rotuman Language today is spoken fluently by the grandparents generation but within internal domains;
- Rotuman is rarely or not spoken generally among children's generation.
- Rotuman Language is endangered because it is not spoken widely by the children generation.
- As many as half of the world's 7,000 languages are expected to be extinct by the end of this century; it is estimated that one language dies out every 14 days.
- Endangered languages, much like endangered species of plants or animals, are on the brink of extinction. According to UNESCO, a language is endangered when parents are no longer teaching it to their children and it is no longer being used in everyday life.
- A language is considered nearly extinct when it is spoken by only a few elderly native speakers.

It is important to note that when a language defines the people and the culture and when extinct is a huge loss to the world. Thus, in addressing these issues, we need to advocate for all Rotumans to take pride of their ethnic identity and cultural heritage. In the process to begin from oneself. It is our belief that as an islander, one's way of life is determined by one's acceptance and enhancement of one's surroundings, the environment, the values, the norms, customs and beliefs. Many of the Rotuman Islanders live in the major cities of Fiji and outside of their motherland. Today, we and our children are caught up with the tides of change, new communication technologies, new media, new diseases, new crimes and the list continues. Our theme asks of us to hold strong to the teachings of our parents and forefathers towards faith and sustainability of life. We can do so by embracing the changes for a more sustainable and prosperous future and to encourage our 21st century parents and children to want to learn our Rotuman Language and culture. The call is to begin now!

1. Community Awareness

Information sharing and educating our Rotumans with knowledge on issues and programmes that are available in our state departments, private sectors and institutions.

- Police Units: Cyber Crime, Sexual Offence, Drug and Substance Abuse and related issues.
- Pacific Dialogue: Human Trafficking & Community Police
- Social Welfare Department: Assistance for the elderly, disability and related issues.
- Legal Practitioners: Family Law, Property Laws, Wills and related issues.

2. Leisure Games Through Peer Learning

- Card Games for the elderly.
- Greening the Environment: Flower Arrangement, Flower Making for interested members.
- Fund Games for Children Using Coconut Leaves.

3. Cultural Presentations

- Mamasa - meaning to dry someone after a voyage over the seas. This is a ceremony that is accorded to anyone that the family wishes to welcome home. It can be accorded each time a person travels abroad to over to the island. Today, many people accord this to loved ones when they travel out of home for the first time.
- Chief Guests' Feast - a very formal and respectful way of feasting where food and kava are presented through processes. The preparation and cooking of food in an earth oven, the setting of significant mats, the chanting and serving of food and kava in acknowledgement first to our God, Ancestors, the Land and the People.
- Assisted by some elders, most of those serving in these two days' events are students between the age of 10 and 18 years.

4. **Cultural Dances** Five of our Associations will present our commonly accepted traditional dance performed by both males and females. The sequence of the dance are similar normally beginning with an entry dance, a sequence of chants and then songs accompanied by movements.

5. Annual Competitions

Root crop farming by our men and artefact weaving by women. The competition includes cultural skills in farming and weaving and related items and members compete with each other.

Acknowledgement

The **FIJI ROTUMAN ASSOCIATION** wishes to thank all members, supporters and partners of this 2019 journey:

- * To His Excellency Mr Jonathan Curr and Mrs Florence Curr and the New High Commission in Suva
- * Gagaj Kausiraf and the Rotuma Island Council
- * Gagaj Tuiporot and Juju District, Rotuma, Island
- * Gagaj ne Hanua ma Rotu
- * Gagaj Uafta ma hensasiga
- * FRA District Associations and Communities
- * FRA Farmers' Group
- * FRA Women Group
- * The Fiji Police Force
- * The Fiji Roads Authority
- * The Office of the Prime Minister
- * The Ministry of Health
- * Pacific Dialogue and the Community Police
- * The Housing Assistance And Relief Trust
- * The Rotuman Medical Personnel
- * Mr Rupeni Fatiaki, Director, Department Social Welfare
- * Mr Iosefo Koroidimuri, Divisional Manager, Eastern, Department of Youth and Sports
- * Ms Laurel Vaurasi, President, Fiji Law Society, Shekinah Law
- * Mr Vamarasi Faktaufon, VAMA Law
- * Bluebird Events PTE Limited
- * The BSP Life
- * The Fiji Broadcasting Corporations
- * The 'IPA Learning Centre