

MEDIA RELEASE

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Rotuman Language Week & Festival of Rotuma 2020 10th to 17th May 2020

RAK'AKIA 'OS FÄE'AG TA . SE 'OS LA'RIRI'I . LA SE MAO 'E TA AV TEACHING OUR LANGUAGE . OUR CHILDREN . FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

For a more a detailed programme and information – please see attached and visit www.rotuma.website
And please use this link for a Wikipedia article on the language
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotuman_language

The Rotuman Community of Aotearoa/New Zealand is excited to announce the **Rotuman Language Week 2020, featuring the Festival of Rotuma and the first-ever Rotuman Fashion Showcase.**

The theme for the Language week is : **RAK'AKIA 'OS FÄE'AG TA . SE 'OS LA'RIRI'I . LA SE MAO 'E TA AV** (Teaching Our Language . Our Children . For A Brighter Future).

The week-long activities will celebrate and showcase Rotuman culture, and culminate with a mini-Festival on Saturday 16 May.

The celebration of Rotuman culture is hosted by the Auckland Rotuman Fellowship Group Incorporated (ARFGI), and is a fully community-led initiative.

“Language is what makes us who we are, and is part of our culture and identity”, Mr Fasala said. ***“And it is our duty to preserve this invaluable taonga”.***

The Group hopes the week’s fun-filled activities will help bring people together, and showcase Rotuman culture. ***“We invite all Kiwis to come and join us, and celebrate being Rotuman”***, Mr Fasala added.

The feature events will be Rotuma Day celebration, including the “Ate Fak Rotuma” – which will be a traditional feast eaten off banana leaves, with everyone sitting together on mats on the floor. And the Fesitval of Rotuma will be held on Saturday. This year we also feature the first-ever Rotuman Fashion Showcase.



“It has not been easy for our community to keep our language alive in Aotearoa”, Mr Fasala said, “We pay tribute to our elders and leaders, who for the last 30 years, have continued to celebrate our culture in New Zealand, and for helping keep our customs and traditions relevant”.

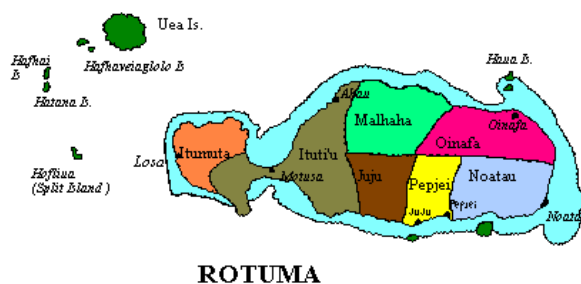
“Each day of the week has been allocated to the different groups within our community”, Mr Fasala stated, “With the Elders, Youth, Sports, Diversity and Religious leaders hosting their own days.”

Rotuman people are a separate ethnic group with their own distinct language, culture and identity, and originate from the polynesian Island of Rotuma.

Rotuma consists of the island of Rotuma and its nearby islets, and is located in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, about 500 kms north of Fiji, and 500 kms west of Wallis & Futuna. Rotuma was annexed by the British on 13 May 1881 ('Rotuma Day'). Although Rotuma is its own nation, it is currently administered by Fiji as a dependency.

The Rotuman language is listed on the UNESCO List of Endangered Languages as "Definitely Endangered".

Rotuma is described as an 'untouched paradise' with some of the world's most pristine and beautiful beaches.



For more information : please email : info@rotuma.website, or telephone Mr Faga Fasala 022-4028249 (Chairperson, ARFGI) & Mr Jioji Vai 021-02782216 (Deputy Chair, ARFGI)