

Letters to the editor

Write to Solomon Star, PO Box 255 Honiara or email: solstar@solomon.com.sb

Our students

Dear Editor - I would like to thank the government, if it's true that scholarship award has been increased from 99 to 400.

We should not deny the rights to education for our young children.

They deserved to be award-

ed scholarship.

However, it's important to be strict in selecting those students who deserved to be awarded the scholarship.

I know that more than 400 students have been left out this year and may not return this year.

It's a sad story for us indeed.

For that action, I have

also blamed the government for the students' failure.

Because at the beginning of each semester their allowances are slow to arrive and it really affects the students. We all know this.

We should also look at the other side of the coin rather than firing most of the students who are capable.

The students have raised

the issue, that because of late allowances, most of the students have missed out on their classes or go to lectures with empty stomach and mentally affected.

The national training committee and the minister responsible should also consider these factors before issuing such an order to terminate most of the students.

They have valid grounds to claim why they have performed badly.

So why not give them a chance.

It's important for the government to update to date with its allowance payment and be strict with their policies.

For me, it's the government which failed our students.

I would not be surprised if allowances for this first semester are not paid on time.

So please government prove me wrong and pay up the students' allowance.

Good luck to all our sponsored students this year.

Fraji Jon Jar
Honiara

"We need healthy villages"

The country must move into the concept of healthy village setting as a way to achieving healthy lifestyle.

Healthy village is an important plan the ministry of health and medical services (MHMS) has put it place in partnership with Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and other relevant stakeholders that will be implemented throughout the country.

Interestingly, there is total commitment and seriousness the MHMS officers and the Honiara City Council advocating for this must happen.

In fact this plan was already implemented at communities and villages at Guadalcanal, Honiara and Malaita.

The health teams from the pilot provinces (GP, HCC, and MP) have introduced Healthy Village in some villages since 2012.

Guadalcanal province's healthy village model includes Naro, Komuvaolu, Savekau, Bulukalal, Hautahe and Niumalele.

Three healthy village models include Wind valley, Mataniko and Ohiola. Malaita province has Fiu, Fouuo, Naraikera, and Kuwainakiu as its healthy village model.

The Healthy Village guideline was endorsed by the ministry of health in a meeting held on the 31st January, 2014.

The guideline will be used widely by the health workers and stakeholders in all provinces and communities in Solomon Islands.

Healthy Village is one of the settings approach where people in all the settings such as village, school, workplace, market and identify and realize priority health issues, identify the impeding needs, and change or cope with the environment problems in a participatory and self-reliant manner.

It's a good approach, but it implies our people must take ownership to maintain such standard of healthy setting, to ensure it pass on to the next generation to live the same.

Quite flabbergasted about this approach, that



Community training (rubbish segregation)

JICA has taken the lead to see and telling us to clean up our mess at our villages. In fact we supposed not to be told but rather be responsible.

Our closest neighbouring country, Fiji some of their villages such as Nabila have engaged in healthy village setting such as smoking is banned 1995, it becomes a common practise now.

At present the standard of healthy setting sets good precedence to future generations to continue with it

Maybe some may think that how this would be possible, because they don't comply with a law that ban smoking, and encourage healthy setting.

This is not a law but it's a practise that people adopt and applied it to their communities.

It takes unity and one-mindedness to achieve that.

Because, stronger chiefly system in Fiji assisted in the effort to establish the healthy setting villages.

When the chiefs make a decree, everyone has to follow.

COMMENTARY

By ELLIOT DAWEA

At Nabila smoking is banned in the village. If you are a smoker, you have to walk out the village to smoke.

Logically speaking, once people's mind change it will affect the way they live and think, this is exactly what happen in some villages in Fiji.

As the saying goes an educated society is a healthy society.

I suppose the important things are a good water source, a good way of disposing of human waste not close to the water supply, keeping domestic animals out of the village, good housing (traditional or western) and some program to keep the village clean.

Socially, there needs to be enough of a local governing structure (chiefs, clergy) to moderate things

such as drinking, rowdiness, parties, conflicts between villagers.

Many villages are fine but many have social problems. Also because so many of the men are in Honiara, many villages have a big majority of women and children.

It would be better to have economic opportunities closer to the villages so men can stay at home. The present situation divides families and causes social problems etc.

Fundamentally, the MHMS with relevant authorities should concentrate on the really important stuff such as water supply, sanitation, medical care (clinics), animals, and not the less important stuff such as betel nut.

Since Solomon Islands gained its political inde-

pendence in 1978, there has been some commitment, for example, thru grants by MPs, building of clinics, water supplies, etc. However, not enough has been done to stop urban drift by providing economic opportunities in villages.

Also roads have not been adequately built and maintained, that would allow villages to have stronger economic lives.

On Wednesday last week's senior officers in MHMS, HCC, JICA and provincial health officers and directors of all the provinces, stakeholders and partners attend present in the seminar.

Officers have agreed on that this approach will be becoming robust in the years ahead if there is strong political will to support MHMS and HCC for resources to be utilised at the process of implementation.

The primary aim of the seminar was to disseminate good practices, challenges and lessons learnt from Healthy Village activities which were piloted in Guadalcanal, Honiara

and Malaita and enhance Healthy Village activities in the whole country.

MHMS promotes "Healthy Village," which empowers the community to act on their own health issues with some assistance from the Ministry of Health or NGOs.

Activities conducted include community training, community profiling, development of community action plan and monitoring and evaluation.

JICA through the Project for Strengthening of Malaria Control System Phase 2 had supported the Ministry of Health to implement Healthy Village in Guadalcanal Province, Honiara City Council and Malaita Province.

The aim of establishing an effective community based health promotion model in this project is to control and prevent malaria.

The Health Promotion Division in the Ministry of Health had developed the Healthy Village Guideline and tools and provided some training for provincial health officers and nurses to facilitate Healthy Village activities with the support of the project.

There are a lot to be done until each village achieve their own vision of Healthy Village. But some villages have successfully adapted healthier life style compared to the time before the introduction of Healthy Village in the area of keeping clean surrounding, proper rubbish disposal and sleeping under mosquito nets and malaria incidence had reduced accordingly.

"This is an indication that the public are now realising the importance of healthy living."

To reach a state of complete physical mental and social wellbeing, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realise aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment.

This Healthy Village seminar entreated all the participants to be part of Healthy Village intervention to make more health promoting villages and work together with the people in the communities.

ANOLPHA SHIPPING SERVICE

P.O BOX 1980 HONIARA

M.V. MAETALAU SCHEDULE TRIP FOR WEST & EAST ARE ARE FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2014.

DATE	DEPARTURE TIME	PORT OF CALL
05 Feb 2014	10:00 pm	Hnr/Uhu, Afio, Nu'usi Masupa return to Afio/ Hnr.
12 Feb 2014	10:00 pm	Hnr/Kiu, Wairokai, Pipisu, Afio, Nu'usi, Masupa return to Afio/Hnr.

FOR ANY INQUIRIES CALL US ON PHONE: 22719 / 7715486.