TROPICAL Cyclone Winston swept over southern Taveuni, Lomaviti, southern Bua, Tailevu North, Ra, Ba, Cakaudrove and Yasawa with the most disastrous impacts on Saturday, February 20, 2016.

Category 5 winds, which registered on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, struck Viti Levu in eastern Fiji. This is the worst cyclone to ever hit Fiji by way of wind speed and destruction.

Of the 42 lives that were claimed by Winston, one was Manasa and Elenoa Rakula’s eldest daughter, 32-year-old Titilia Mua from Delaiyadua Village in Ra. Mrs Mua’s marital home was in Matainananu Village and only a flower garden divided her husband’s village from her paternal village of Delaiyadua.

At about 6:30pm on that fateful day Mrs Mua was to take two children from a neighbour’s house for safety when death struck her at the door.

A tree of about a half meter wide hit her to the ground and killed her instantly.

According to her mother, the winds then lifted the tree off and blew her body to the other side of the flattened house about eight meters across.

A team from the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) that was led by the General Manager Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua visited Mrs Mua’s family and relatives including her only daughter Salacieli Serevi, aged 11 in Matainananu. The team took food rations, blankets, water, and eating utensils.

Mr Kuruvakadua said this was part of TLTB’s responsibility to the people of Fiji and especially the landowners to show their respect in times of grief.

“We are glad to have been well received by the landowners in these three neighbouring villages of the district of Nakorotubu and we are happy to have seen them smiling after the killer cyclone,” Mr Kuruvakadua said.

Relief work carried out by TLTB staff during the past weeks included visiting the villages Delakado, Driti and Nataleira in Tailevu, and Nadogoloa, Matainananu, and Delaiyadua in Ra. Other TLTB regional offices also visited communities in Ra and Vanua Levu.

Mr Kuruvakadua said the visits were initiated by the staff.

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The impact of Tropical Cyclone Winston is huge given the path of the cyclone having severely hit most areas including southern Taveuni, Lomaiviti, southern Bua, Taveuni North, Ra, Ba, Cakaudrove and Yasawa. We pay tribute to the 44 lives that were lost as a result of this destructive cyclone – the worst to have ever hit Fiji.

This is the first quarter of 2016 and we are glad to have been able to produce this newly named and revamped TLTB newsletter, formerly known as the Na iRogo. The objective of the TLTB News is to focus on national issues and the development action plans in line with the strategic directions of Government. We will also be focusing on major leases and the different sectors of the national economy.

We are also glad that we have participated in a number of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities as part of our cyclone relief efforts in a number of villages including Nataleira, Driti and Delakado in Tailevu as well as Nadogoloa, Delayadua and Matainanana in Ra.

In this first issue of the TLTB News we have covered stories such as REDD+, Fiji Grown products in terms of a beef scheme, timber royalty increases for landowners, a new township and the small and medium enterprise (SME) development.

If you have anything to say about this newsletter or what it says about Fiji’s development as far as iTaukei land is concerned, please feel free to contact us.

Happy Reading!

Tevita Kuruvakadua
General Manager

The iTaukei Land Trust Board has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Fiji Development Bank (FDB) to formalise the working relationship between the two entities relating to best practices in land management and access to financial services.

TLTB General Manager Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua says that it is important to collaborate on land issues affecting the socio-economic development and growth of the economy.

“We are glad to enter into this agreement with the FDB to support and assist our tenants, the farming community and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in fulfilling the strategic directions that have been set by the Government towards its development action plans,” Mr Kuruvakadua said.

The MOU is also expected to improve the coordination and dissemination of information and to strengthen the daily interactions of the two entities for an improved service delivery.

FDB CEO Deve Toganivalu said, “the basis of this agreement is steeped in the fundamental belief that there is an abundant need to support both short and long-term coping mechanisms for development.”

“The bank’s lending operations move in tandem with the TLTB and this agreement will go a long way towards refining and streamlining services relating to native lease.”

Under the new agreement, bank clients with TLTB leases will have the opportunity to have their annual lease payments incorporated into their loan repayments.

“We are glad to enter into this agreement with the FDB to support and assist our tenants, the farming community and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in fulfilling the strategic directions that have been set by the Government towards its development action plans.”

Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua, TLTB General Manager
FOLLOWING a series of meetings with the Fiji Sawmillers Association (FSA), Department of Forestry, and iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB), a consensus has been reached to raise royalties based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rating.

As a result timber royalty for native tree species has increased with effect from 1st January 2016. TLTB General Manager Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua said this new rate will see a 21 percent increase in timber royalty across the board for all classes of Native species and for all three zones including Viti Levu, Vanua Levu and the Maritime Zones. This also includes royalty rates for minor forest produce such as Buabua and Nawanawa, Bamboo, Tree Ferns and fuel wood.

The Department of Forestry had presented several different ratings based on the data provided from a number of local sawmillers on the cost of operations and as data from the Forestry Research.

It was collectively decided and agreed that the new rates be used for the 2016 amended Royalty Rates. The new rates are as followed:

### REVISED ROYALTY RATES FOR NATIVE SPECIES CLASS 1-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ZONE 1</th>
<th>ZONE 2</th>
<th>ZONE 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Current</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$45.00</td>
<td>$54.27</td>
<td>$45.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$37.00</td>
<td>$44.62</td>
<td>$35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$14.47</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$8.44</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Royalty Rates are in dollars per cubic meter while the forestry scaling fees remains at $5 per cubic meter for native species defined within the four Royalty classes.

### REVISED ROYALTY RATES FOR MINOR FOREST PRODUCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRODUCTS</th>
<th>CURRENT RATE</th>
<th>NEW RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Buabua and Nawanawa Posts *</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td>$24.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Any other native species except Bamboo Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 1&amp;2</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$12.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
<td>$9.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 4</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$6.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bamboo</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$12.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Tree Ferns (m’)</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$6.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUELWOOD - ALL ZONES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Species Fuelwood (stack 1m3)</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>$1.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Post/Poles per 100 linear meter - in all zones ( ≥10cm to ≤24cm diameter at base).

Mr Kuruvakadua is adamant that landowners can realise maximum returns if they choose to invest in their own land and use their own resources rather than being beneficiaries of royalties.

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**MH bill pay eases land rent dues**

**MH bill pay eases land rent dues**

Lease payments can be made at Morris Hedstrom cashiers Fiji wide.

**21 percent rise in timber royalty rates**

TLLTB had presented a review of royalty rates based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The FSA found the CPI rates practical as they were based on public figures derived from data collected by the Fiji Bureau of Statistics and based on the national inflation rates.

Timbers royalties have increased by 21 percent

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**21 percent rise in timber royalty rates**

**21 percent rise in timber royalty rates**

Mr Kuruvakadua is adamant that landowners can realise maximum returns if they choose to invest in their own land and use their own resources rather than being beneficiaries of royalties.
The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) has completed all requirements expected by the Department of Town & Country Planning (DTCP) in regards to the Nabouwalu Satellite Town in Vanua Levu.

TLTB General Manager Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua said TLTB had done all due diligence including the issuance of a survey instruction in 2015 to carry out the survey.

"At this point we will have to wait for the approval of the survey plans on the proposed town boundaries and also the finalization of the Scheme Plan of the township. The scheme plan will consist of zonings of all properties within the proposed town boundaries," Mr Kuruvakadua said.

The site is located as part of the Nabouwalu Government Station and covers the foreshore and Nabouwalu Jetty. The area in question covers 9,20281 hectares and is subject to survey.

According to TLTB’s Manager Northern Jope Volai, the DTCP had paid their offer in October 2015 together with the survey instruction fees.

A series of consultations had been jointly conducted by the Town & Country Planning, the Provincial Council and the land owning units, which include the Yavusa Daviko, Mataqali Navuani, Mataqali Daviko, Mataqali Natukuta, and the village of Navave.

Mr Volai said that after the approval of the plans, the Board will then issue a registered development lease.

The Nabouwalu Jetty and surrounding areas can expect a hive of activity once the satellite town is established.

Mr Volai said that after the approval of the plans, the Board will then issue a registered development lease.

Taskforce to resolve pine issue

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) is hoping that their newly formed Fiji Pine Taskforce will ensure the stability in the macro-economic activities of the forest industry in Bua.

General Manager Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua said there were three major issues that form the terms of reference for the Fiji pine leases.

"The issues are the common ones that are relevant to all the Fiji pine leases in the Northern division including the demarcation of boundaries within the lease area and the demarcation of areas outside the leased area and the areas under reserve," Mr Kuruvakadua said.

TLTB Manager North Jope Volai said, “Initially there were enquiries on who granted consent over the reserve area and all records were shown to the land owning unit (LOU).”

In most cases, the LOU, Fiji Pine, and TLTB have a combined effort in trying to resolve these issues as best as possible.

These issues are similar to other Fiji Pine leases in the Western division and dwells mainly on the three major issues previously mentioned.

Mr Volai said TLTB’s concerns were multi-dimensional in terms of its fiduciary duties as trustees to the landowners.

“The Board has an important role to play in the local economy to ensure the security of land leases and that there is minimal disturbance to the tenant. At the same time the Board exists to ensure that the landowners do have a reasonable return and are informed on all the issues of concerning their land” he said.

There are 45 Mataqali affected in this project.
AGRICULTURE and residential leases top the arrears list for the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) as this is the area where most leases is being given by TLTB.

Senior Rent Collection Officer Asaeli Moce said that from a total of 13,922 agricultural leases that TLTB currently managed, 7,463 or $9.2m is in arrears and for the 20,802 residential leases, 10,106 or $5.2m are in arrears.

Mr Moce said measures have been implemented to recover these debts. The measures include the following strategies: service of notices by batches, interest waiver policy, recovering arrears through the court system, loading of defaulters names into the Data Bureau, advertisement for payment, e-pay and internet banking, credit card payment, MH payment facilities, commercial banks (ANZ, WBC, BSP), telephone calls, and the short message service platform.

Business arrears include banks, Fiji Electricity Authority, Telecommunications Fiji Limited, Water Authority of Fiji, and Housing Authority.

Mr Moce said arrears will be increased every six months because that’s when current arrears will be increased by the six months rent charge that is added to the current late payments.

“The challenge for us is to reduce arrears so that it has little effect on the reduction of arrears,” he said.

TLTB is targeting to reduce its arrears by 60 percent for the year 2016.

A PILOT site has been selected on iTaukei land for the Fiji National REDD+ Programme in Draubuta Village on the Mataqali Emalu, Yavusa Emalu in the district of Noikoro in Navosa.

According to Deputy General Manager Operations, Research & Development Solomone Nata, the forest area is largely untouched and is part of one of the few remaining primary indigenous forests in Fiji.

“The site is about 16,800-plus acres of forest land and consultations have been extensively carried out. TLTB has already issued an offer letter to the Director of Lands for the Emalu forest lands,” Mr Nata said.

REDD+ is a pilot project that is community driven and if successful, can be practiced on a larger scale.

With most of Fiji’s land mass being covered by thousands of acres of forest land that are virtually inaccessible, landowners may have a way to benefit from REDD+.

By issuing leases over these vast forest lands for the purpose of REDD+, they not only protect and conserve forests, they can also benefit financially from the protected areas in terms of carbon trading.

Mr Nata said the entire project and lease can be handed over to an indigenous based entity in the later stages of the project to be managed by the local entity.

This is seen as capacity building for the landowners, who can be entrusted in managing the forest land for future benefit.
THE iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) has implemented measures to weed out a lot of complaints especially with the handling of new lease applications. iTLB Deputy General Manager Operations Research & Development Solomone Nata said the concern was related to the delay in the turnaround time for the processing of lease applications.

"The main challenge now was the delay causing our teams to drag the pending applications from the previous year into the new year. When the new applications for 2016 are lodged, they are attended to immediately leaving behind the pending applications from the previous year," Mr Nata explained.

He said a lot of complaints were coming from the pending pre-2016 application cases.

The new teams will now have to work for the duration of four months to attend to the existing new lease applications while a project team will work on the pre-2016 applications until all is cleared.

Manager South-West Ela Manuku said once pending cases were all cleared collect rent. These officers are equipped with receipt books and EFTPOS machines. Defaulters will be able to pay rent or make payments at iTLB regional offices or at commercial banks such as ANZ, Westpac and BSP or any postal office or MH outlets in Fiji.

Mr Kuruvakadua urges all iTLB tenants to pay all land rent to avoid unnecessary personal, family, or business inconvenience.

100% waiver on interest extended

THE iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) is advising all its tenants whose accounts are in arrears to clear all their dues in order to enjoy a 100 percent interest waiver. The waiver will apply only if all rentals are paid in full from now until 30th June 2016.

TLTB General Manager Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua said the non-payment of land rent is a clear indication of tenants’ complete disregard for their legal obligations as tenants of iTLB.

“We will be taking extreme measures if tenants fail to comply including the submissions of names to the Data Bureau and legal actions. As a result, tenants may lose their properties,” Mr Kuruvakadua said.

The iTLB Arrears Team at all our regional offices (including Suva, Labasa, Nadi, Lautoka, Rakiraki and Korovou) has been deployed to issue notices on arrears and conduct an arrears drive, which is a common exercise to ensure the recovery of late rentals.
A MEMORANDUM of Understanding was signed between the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB), the Ministry of Sugar and the Sugar Industry Tribunal (SIT) for the use and sharing of digital geographical information on sugar in Fiji.

The database, called the Sugar GIS Info, was created through the development of the Sugarcane Web GIS Portal by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research and a group of consultants from Belgium. They were assisted by local industry stakeholders.

TLTB General Manager Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua said: "This partnership between TLTB, SIT and the Ministry of Sugar is part of the Board’s strategic plan to improve the integrity of its database and spatial information."

The computerised Sugar GIS Mapping Data System is a computer based digital graphic index of Fiji’s land boundaries that attribute data. Attribute data is information linked to the graphic framework of the Sugar GIS Info including lot numbers, plan numbers, areas, land names, road names, and farm boundaries.

The bigger Sugar Web GIS Portal can also produce information such as plot mapping, sugar production, cane access road, Fiji Electricity Authority power lines, Water Authority of Fiji pipelines, growers’ locations, sugarcane variety, sugarcane age, and farmers on non-sugarcane areas.

TLTB seals sugar GIS deal

Tourism gives top dollar to landowners

THE iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) is impressed with the assistance that it’s providing Fiji’s tourism industry via tourism leases on iTaukei land now valued at $935 million.

TLTB General Manager Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua said although there were only about 223 leases altogether being utilised for tourism purposes on iTaukei land across the country, it is recorded as the highest income earner for the Board.

“For the landowners, we believe that tourism leases provide the highest income in terms of the area used and the highest value that can be derived from it,” Mr Kuruvakadua said.

Mr Kuruvakadua believes that TLTB is now getting a lot of exposure through marketing and promotions of its available tourism sites.

“In the long term, the landowners are the ones who will be getting all the subsequent benefits through employment, training, scholarships, business opportunities, community development and their normal income from land rents. It is also important to ensure compliance in the terms and conditions of the lease and to process all pending applications,” he added.

TLTB’s Tourism Department is located in Nadi and Suva.

For the landowners, we believe that tourism leases provide the highest income in terms of the area used and the highest value that can be derived from it.”

Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua, TLTB General Manager

Pictured here are landowners and TLTB staff with the new owners of Kadomo.

Senior managers from TLTB, SIT and the Ministry of Sugar are pictured here following the MOU signing in Suva.
How to obtain a land lease?

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB), formerly known as the Native Land Trust (NLTB) was established in 1946 to administer, control and manage all iTaukei land for the benefit of the members of the iTaukei landowning units.

The purpose of the TLTB as a statutory organisation is clearly stipulated under the legal framework of the iTaukei Land Trust Act (formerly known as the Native Land Trust Act – NLTA), Cap 134. Section 4 (1) states:

“The control of all iTaukei land shall be vested in the Board and all such land shall be administered by the Board for the benefit of the iTaukei owners.”

This means that although all iTaukei lands belong to the iTaukei owners, the administration and legal powers over such lands are vested with the TLTB. TLTB is given legal powers to administer iTaukei lands for the benefit of the iTaukei landowners.

In applying for a lease one should first seek the advice and assistance of the staff of the Board. This is considered important even if one has identified a piece of land or established a relationship with the landowners.

**TYPES OF LEASES ON iTaukei LAND**

Leases on lands within an iTaukei (native) reserve may only be given to an iTaukei. These are known as Class J leases. Land outside iTaukei reserve may, through the TLTB, be leased by anyone. Leases may be given for building of houses, factories, hotels, farms, timber mills and schools are some of the well-known purposes. There are five different classifications with each category having different terms and conditions:

1) Agricultural
2) Residential
3) Commercial
4) Industrial
5) Special (Other Leases)

Premiums or the New Lease Consideration levied by TLTB that are required to be paid on the grant of a lease depends among other things, on the area of the land, zone, class and accessibility to infrastructure, utilities and other services.

1) **AGRICULTURAL LEASES**

Agricultural Contracts: Contracts under an agricultural lease include activities such as: root crops, cane, vegetables, dairy farming, poultry farming, and timber plantations.

**Duration:** Most agricultural contracts are governed by the Agricultural Landlord & Tenant Act (ALTA) and some under the iTaukei Land Trust Act (TLTA). Lease shall be for a minimum term of 30 and 50 years within ALTA exempted area or entity under the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) agricultural policy.

2) **COMMERCIAL LEASES**

Included within this category are the following sub-categories:

a) Development
b) Entertainment (eg. Cinemas etc.)
c) Retail & Wholesale
d) Services (eg. Financial Institutions etc.)
e) Commercial

**Duration:** Commercial contracts are governed by TLTB with prescribed contract terms not exceeding 99 years.

3) **INDUSTRIAL LEASES**

This category includes heavy industrial mining-related leases and leases for quarries and light industrial such as assembly plants, sawmills, textile factories etc. The TLTB governs all industrial contracts and under this Act, a contract may have a long term not exceeding 99 years.

**Requirements for Agricultural, Commercial & Industrial Leases:**

- Investment Fiji and the Department of Immigration approvals for overseas applicants;
- Evidence of registration if the applicant is a company;
- Evidence of income, period of employment, business projections and cash flow;
- Five-year business plan;
- Locality/Plan of area applied for;
- Majority consent (60 percent) of landowners aged 18 years and above for dereservation if land is within native reserve.
- Environment Impact Assessment (EIA), if required;
- Application Fee of $100.00 (For agricultural leases only);
- Application fee of $50.00 (For commercial leases and industrial leases only);
- Majority consent (more than 60 percent) of landowners for de-reservation, if land is within a native reserve, with an application form together with application fee of $50.00 (For agricultural leases only);
- Landowners’ consent with the majority of more than 60 percent for dereservation

4) **RESIDENTIAL LEASES**

Contract normally has a maximum term of 99 years. Applicant must submit completed application form together with application fee of $50.00.

5) **SPECIAL (OTHER LEASES)**

Generally classified as Class 1 special contracts with the following sub-categories:

a) Educational;
b) Government/Local Government;
c) Recreational;
d) Religious;
e) Tourism
f) Other cable/pipeline way leaves tramway and easements.

Applicant must submit completed application forms together with application fee of $500.00

**SAND & GRAVEL EXTRACTION PERMIT & LICENSE**

Permits will be issued for the casual extraction of limited quantities of aggregate: 460 cubic meters for a month. The extraction period is one month only and quantities should not exceed the 460 cubic meters.

Applicant must submit:
- Completed application for a permit to extract sand and gravel form;
- Complete a landowners consent form;
- Application fee of $75.00
- EIA Report.

**SAND & GRAVEL EXTRACTION LEASES**

This will be issued for periods of up to 12 months to parties wishing to extract aggregates in quantities greater than or periods longer than those permitted by extraction permits.

Applicants must submit:
- Completed application for a permit to extract sand and gravel form;
- Completed landowners consent form;
- Application fees of $500.00

For further information please contact the TLTB headquarters in Suva or our regional offices in Suva, Nadi, Lautoka and Labasa.

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**Head Office and Central/Eastern Region**

Level 2,
TLTB Building
431 Victoria Parade
GPO Box 116, Suva, FIJI.
Ph: (679) 3312 733
Mobile: (679) 9995 933
Fax: (679) 3312 078

**South Western Region**

Level 1, Airport Central Complex
Namaka
Private Mail Bag, Nadi Airport, FIJI.
Ph: (679) 6723 771
Mobile: (679) 9995 907
Fax: (679) 6723 249

**North Western Region**

Level 1, Khans Complex
10 Mana Street
PO Box 73, Lautoka, FIJI.
Ph: (679) 6661 744
Mobile: (679) 9995 924
Fax: (679) 6651 254

**Northern Region**

Level 1, TISI Sangam Building
Nasekula Road
PO Box 32, Labasa, FIJI.
Ph: (679) 8811 122
Fax: (679) 8818 748

Toll Free No: 0800 3312 533 | Email: info@tltb.com.fj | Website: www.tltb.com.fj | Facebook: iTaukei Land Trust Board | Twitter: @iTaukeiLand