

# Fiji to take centre stage

## Fiji Pod - ready to roll out

WITH the Fiji Pod theme of "Building Bridges through the Journey," Fiji is geared up to put on the WOW factor at the World Expo 2010 Shanghai.

With its 340 square meters pavilion space, the Fiji Pod will be focused on its people, journeying to Fiji's beautiful and sacred places and introducing visitors to the Products and Services that are unique to Fiji.

The Pod is designed to include a replica of a 'Drua' (canoe) and a platform for 'demonstrations' by artisans (carvers/weavers) and hosting mannequins with selected gowns from the Fiji Fashion Week.

In addition, the backbone of the Pod structure will be supported by 14 panels reflecting Fiji's theme under 'Places.'

The panels will consist of "magimagi" weaves of different patterns as well as images, and designs that represent Fiji's 14 provinces and is symbolic of the unity and diversity of the friendly people of our beautiful nation, and the "bridges" that bring Fiji together.

The interior of the pod will encompass traditional as well as contemporary elements that celebrate Fiji's diversity today.

On the promotional front, the Pod will have a display of Fiji-made commodities including water, body products, pearls, and furniture brands to name only a few.

These products will be displayed for the duration of 6 months; a wonderful opportunity for promotion to the world! Exhibitory items will also include mounted pieces of weavings, *Masi*, Sculptures, Fashion, Textiles and Wearable Arts.

Our local exporters have been extremely supportive in terms of providing samples and promotional materials for exhibitory purpose at this Event.

All items collected for exhibition, booth décor and additional props will leave Fiji's shores for China, around March 14th. A small team, led by the Commissioner General, will be in Shanghai early next the month to assemble and display all items, ready for the May 1st opening.



Product samples, handicrafts and paintings that will be on display at the Fiji Pod during the World Expo 2010 that will be held in Shanghai scheduled from August 6 this year.

COUNTRIES at Shanghai Expo 2010 will focus on and honor Fiji on 6th August which has been designated as Fiji's National Day.

With the focus of the whole world at the Expo solely on Fiji, Fiji intends to put on a grand display of culture and tradition over the week, naturally with the main "attractions" and official ceremonies scheduled for August 6 itself.

Commissioner General Ms Annie Rogers said that "during this time, we will have center stage to showcase our beautiful People, Places and Products and at the same time to let the world 'see' our unique culture and heritage through entertainment and craft displays, to name a few."

Leading the Fiji Delegation, the Prime Minister, Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama, accompanied by Mrs Bainimarama and Government officials will be at the forefront of this 'publicity campaign' to showcase Fiji's history, heritage, culture, people, places and products to China and the World.

Fiji's National Day will commence with an official opening ceremony coordinated by the Shanghai Expo Organizing Committee followed by the traditional Fijian welcome ceremony and performances by the Republic of Fiji Military Force which include the *Meke Wesi*, *Meke I-Wau*, and the *Vakamalolo*.

A detailed programme for the Fiji Week celebrations is still being finalised with the Shanghai Expo Organizing Committee.

The National Coordinating Committee, chaired by the Commissioner General has stated that they will ensure that Fiji gets maximum exposure at the entire 6-month Expo, and on the National Day in particular, through promotional DVDs, brochures, catalogues, giveaways and utilizing media outlets both locally and in China.

There will be extensive media coverage facilitated by China's Shanghai Events Committee during National Day as well as coverage by Fiji's media officials through the Ministry of Information.

For more information on the above, please contact Sovaia Marawa on 3305411, email: smarawa@govnet.gov.fj or Kelera Cavuilati on 3315988 or via email: kelera@ftib.org.fj.

# The race is on - Shanghai 2010

AS Fiji gears up for Shanghai World Expo 2010, every participant in this grand gathering will be vigorously promoting all aspects of their country and testing the waters for new markets.

For Fiji, tourism will be one of the key 'drivers' at the Fiji Pod and there is no doubt that this will generate strong interest in the six month long mega event.



Commissioner General Ms Annie Rogers.

While the World Expo originally began as a platform for commodity exchanges and display of products, Fiji intends to fully promote trade and investment opportunities in Fiji, alongside Fiji's mission to promote its heritage, its culture, its people and its products.

On the promotional front, the Fiji Pod will be displaying a diverse array of Fiji-made commodities, to be showcased to the entire world. Fiji's products will be on display to countries that will be at the Expo, notably the markets of China, India, South Korea, Thailand and Malaysia to name a few. Although many countries have the capability and technology to produce similar commodities, these countries will have an opportunity to witness 'original,' unique, and niche commodities from Fiji.

Furthermore, it is not just China and other Asian countries that will

be in Shanghai; the entire world will be there. Fiji's traditional markets will also be there and although they are familiar with Fiji, the Expo will be an excellent avenue to lift Fiji's profile and present all aspects of Fiji to new, potential markets. Bringing it closer to home, the Expo is a marvelous opportunity for Fiji to build rapport with new 'customers,' and to network and

showcase its products with the rest of the 14 island nations that Fiji will share the Pacific Pavilion with.

A huge portion of preparations for Shanghai has been dedicated to the commodities and exhibitory items that will be shipped around March 14th.

All 'goods' have already been loaded on the ship, awaiting departure. With this being done, many are keen to see how Fiji's products will compete against the rest of the world.

The fact that the "Chinese can make practically anything and everything" has not deterred the Commissioner General for Fiji, Ms. Annie Rogers's commitment to put Fiji, her sectors, and products back on the map.

When asked about Fiji's strategies for promotions against manufacturing 'big guns' like China, the Commissioner General

countered: "I do not think we should be focusing too much on what China can produce ... yes they can make things so easily, and are also able to take advantage of economies of scale.

"However, when the product is 'Fiji made' from our own natural resources it has a more genuine feel to it. Consumers do lean towards a natural and untapped image with unique quality and that is the essence of our products that will set it apart from others in the market.

"Our niche products have broken into other markets and we hope to do this with new markets also. I believe the fact that our products have been manufactured from our natural resources will make it appealing."

Products on showcase will not only include Fiji's renowned Pure Fiji but will also highlight those exportable products that have not yet penetrated the markets as much as Fiji's big exporters.

The exhibitory items include 'Lako Tu' footwear from Soqoiwasa Marketing. Seeing that the global demand for footwear remains high, this company blends international fashion trends with local designs and is developing a range that is marketable.

Another product is Noni, which will be on display through noni juice, body products and capsules. Companies that have brought in

samples for exhibit include Blong Noni, Bula Noni, Kahuna Noni, Noni Miracle and Royal Noni. Fijian Noni Juice is a remarkable gift from Mother Nature that is now available in nine different countries worldwide and is growing in popularity in the Asian region.

The Fiji Pod will also be showcasing its vast mineral water resource. Aqua Pacific, AquaSafe, Island Chill and



Mahogany carved Drua that will be on Display at the Fiji Pod.

Viti Blu have provided samples for exhibit of their notable natural artesian water. Kava samples provided by Gurdoyal Sons & Brothers, Lami Kava, and Veivanua Kava are another product set for display that will draw attention to the Pod.

The 14 panels that make the

Pod will also have a wide display of traditional artifacts ranging from *tanoa*, walking sticks, Fijian headrest, a range of women's baskets, and traditional clubs to the more contemporary art pieces that our youths of today are well versed with. The exhibit of both the traditional and contemporary pieces depict that Fiji evolves with time and better portrays the overall Expo theme "Better City Better Life."

The Fiji Pod will also include products from Agriculture Marketing Authority, Bio Pacific Ltd, Fiji Fashion Week, Fiji Niu, Fiji Sugar Corporation, Flour Mills of Fiji, Frezco Beverages, Foods Pacific, Foods Processors, Foster's Group Pacific Ltd, Mokosoi, Niu Living, Organic Earth Fiji, Origins Pacific Ltd, Pacific Green, Portion Pak, Radini Farm Produce & Services, Sino Pacific Trading & Development, Spices of Fiji, University of the South Pacific and Walt Smith International Ltd, illustrating Fiji's manufacturing and other capabilities and the huge milestone that Fiji has achieved in bringing

its products up to international standard. Other exhibitory items will also include the following from the Arts and Crafts: mounted pieces of weavings, *Masi*, Sculptures, products in the Design, Fashion, Textiles and Wearable Arts and live entertainment from Performing Arts Groups that will be participating at the Expo.