



Tsunami scare

A MAGNITUDE 7.3 earthquake struck offshore of Japan's crippled nuclear power plant early Saturday, triggering small tsunamis but causing no damage.

An earthquake official with the Japan Meteorological Agency said the quake was an aftershock of the magnitude 9.0 earthquake and tsunami that struck the same area in 2011, killing about 19,000 people and devastating the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant.

There was no damage and only one minor injury was reported, the national Fire and Disaster Management Agency said. Tsunamis of up to 15 inches hit four areas along the coast, but a tsunami advisory was lifted less than two hours after the quake.

Officer convicted

SKIPPER lieutenant Roland Wilson of RN Reserves was convicted, failing to keep a proper lookout and two counts of impeding the passage of a vessel following a five-day trial at Southampton Magistrates' Court. *The Herald Scotland* reports.

The court heard Wilson, of Stanley, Perthshire, was in charge of the 33ft yacht *Atalanta* of Chester when it collided with the 870ft *Hanne Knutsen* on the first day of the regatta in August 2011.

The accident happened despite Wilson having seen the tanker from five miles away.

Footage of the incident has since gone viral on Youtube in which one crew member suffered minor head injuries and another abandoned ship.

Deaths on container ships

GREENS leader Christine Milne is horrified by the prospect of piles of dead asylum seekers being found in shipping containers coming to Australia, *news.com.au* reports.

The report stated people smugglers in Indonesia are offering to transport asylum seekers in sealed shipping containers to get them to Australia or New Zealand.

Senator Milne says the report demonstrates that cruel deterrence strategies are not working because increasingly desperate people may resort to even more desperate measures.

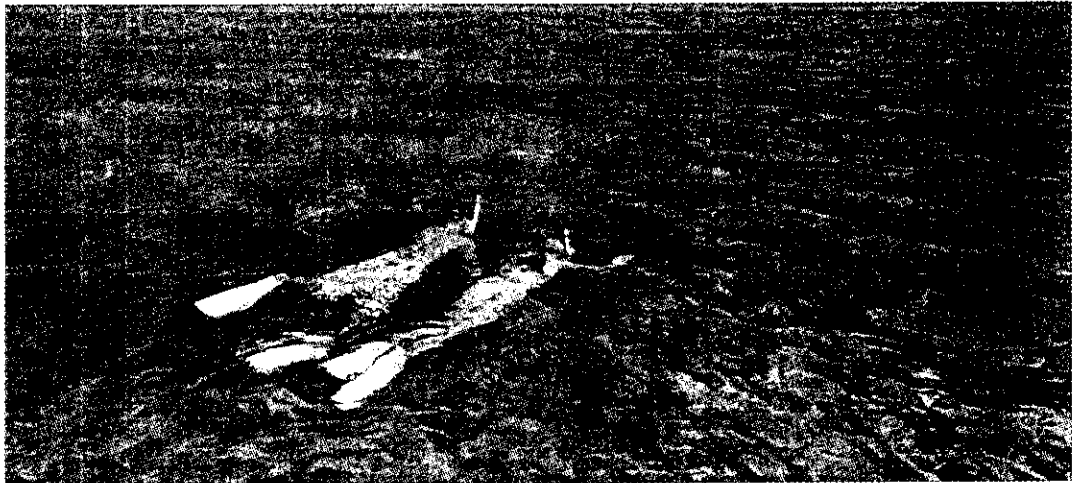
"What sends absolute shivers down my spine is...we're going to find shipping containers on wharves in Australia and New Zealand and when they're opened we're going to find tragic scenes of a whole lot of people who have died," she told ABC TV on Sunday.

Study shows breach

THE California Current System along the US West coast is among the richest ecosystems in the world, driven by nutrient input from coastal upwelling and supporting a great diversity of marine life, *Science Daily* reports.

Like coastal regions in general, it is also heavily impacted by human activities. A new study led by scientists at the University of California, Santa Cruz, reveals areas along the West coast where human impacts are highest on marine predators such as whales, seals, seabirds, and turtles.

The study found that many of the high impact areas were within the boundaries of marine sanctuaries.



A whole host of activities are available on the 11-day Lau cruise on board the *MV Reef Endeavour*.

Picture: WWW.TRAVEL.FJI

To Lau and beyond

By FREDERICA ELBOURNE

EVERYBODY'S bucket list should include a cruise on Captain Cook Cruises' *MV Reef Endeavour* to the Lau Group of islands.

From the untouched paradise that it is, to the celebrated isolation that distance can often permit, the beauty of this group of islands may very well lie in absence of the influence of international hotels and flights.

General manager of Captain Cook Cruises Karl Evans said the inaugural 11-day trip to the remote Lau Group, which set sail from Port Denarau last week, followed numerous requests from past passengers for new experiences in Fiji.

"The island life is very simple, and the people are poor in material terms but rich in others. Most villages have a store, but there is little for sale.

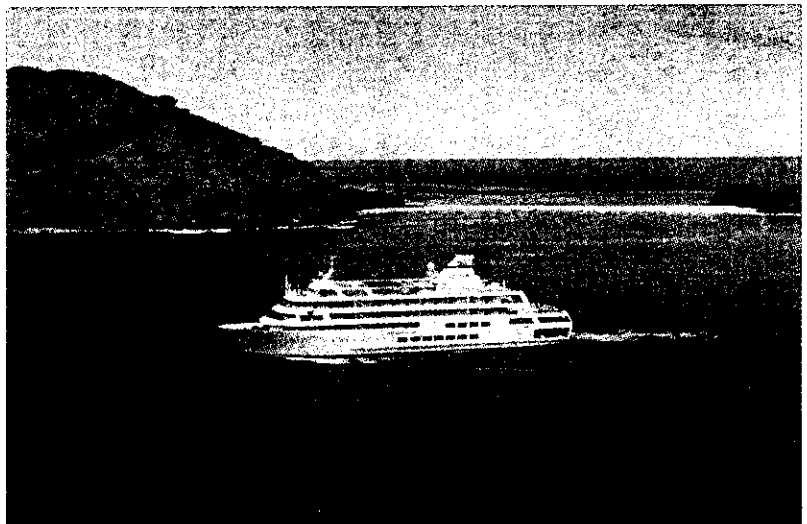
"Fresh fruit and vegetables are hard to find, and villagers are not used to the idea of selling these things that are normally shared freely with friends and family," Mr Evans said.

He says the trip, which will cover 1376.04 kilometres, is for those who are prepared to venture off the beaten track.

"Over the years, because of restrictive permit requirements, it has been very hard for yachts to visit the Lau Group," Mr Evans says.

Coupled with the fact the island group offers great diving, rich cultural experiences and beautiful scenery, the villagers of the Lau region follow a subsistence lifestyle not so different to their ancestors, he said.

"Unlike on the large islands there are few people of other races and only rarely has land been



The *MV Reef Endeavour* sails to the Mamanuca and Yasawa Islands every week.

Picture: WWW.FJI.TRAVEL

sold out of indigenous ownership.

"It is very important that visitors respect traditions that underlie daily life, as careless or disrespectful behaviour can lead to animosity, and damage to the fragile ecosystem," Mr Evans says.

Captain Cook Cruises observe the *sevusevu* protocol where they take *yaqona* to villages they visit.

"In these remote islands, gifts of basic stores, schoolbooks, pens, pencils, paper, and both school and medical supplies were greatly valued," Mr Evans said.

According to joint managing director Semi Koroilavesau, who is on board the *MV Reef Endeavour*, the 130 passengers, most of whom are foreign and return passengers of the trip, have enjoyed

a series of beach sports, island exhibition and inland tours at all 14 stops that were mapped out for the trip.

The 14 stops included Lavena, Wailagilala, Vanuabalavu, Daliconi, Bay of Islands, Sawana, Fulaga, Kabara, Naikelayaga, and Unisea in Kadavu.

"On Wednesday (last week) we were at Lavena hosted by the village touring and enjoying the waterfalls and beautiful beaches around Lavena and its surrounding bays," Mr Koroilavesau said.

MV Reef Endeavour sails to the Mamanuca and Yasawa Islands every week.

Mr Evans said she cruises to the North at the beginning of the month and alternate month. *MV*

Reef Endeavour cruises the North to visit four cultures — in Kioa, Rabi, Labasa and Fijian villages.

MV Reef Endeavour has 50 officers, crew, engineering, hospitality and catering along with dive and spa operators. The vessel also has PADI Viti Water Sports Dive operation and Senikai spa both operate onboard.

"Part of the planning included a scooping voyage aboard the *SV Spirit of the Pacific* to meet the villages and plan the itinerary *SV Spirit of the Pacific* is a 108ft topsail schooner originally built as a sail training ship for the youth of New Zealand.

She now operates charters and day cruises with Captain Cook," he said. The next such trip to Lau is

No matter what.

HAMBURG SÜD