

Grant will help group

AS PART of the Cook Foundation's charitable work, Atupa Youth group received a \$2000 in the form of outdoor power equipment this week.

The equipment included chainsaws, blowers and power pruners and was officially handed over by the Minister for Youth and Sports, Internal Affairs and Ombudsman Albert Nicholas.

Nicholas said the equipment was obtained through an application by the group and was designed to assist their beautification programme in the Atupa district.

"The group is tasked with maintaining cleanliness and tidiness of our public area, making it attractive and presentable," Nicholas said.

He said the actual cost of the equipment had amounted to \$1999, just one dollar under the grant limit of \$2000.

This was well spent as this group has been active for six to seven years in the beautification programme.

"They used it as part of a fundraiser for their community and because the programme does not pay a lot of money, it is important we seek funding

and look at other avenues to lessen the cost on the group of maintaining their work, Nicholas said.

On behalf of the Atupa Youth Group, he acknowledged the generosity of the Cook Foundation for accepting the group's application.

"We guarantee that this is a community-based initiative and we are thankful to the foundation especially its chairwoman, the Cook Islands Speaker of Parliament Niki Raitile," Nicholas added.

■ **Losirene Chand**

Big day for speech finalists

EIGHT young orators from various secondary schools will come together to take part in the WW100 Secondary Schools Speech Competition at Ngatapa, the New Zealand High Commissioners residence at 5pm today.

The New Zealand High Commission says the competition will help encourage local children to learn more about the history of the Anzacs and World War One.

Students from years 11 to 13 from across the country will be speaking on the subject: Impact of WW1 on the 500 Cook Islands soldiers.

"The competition hopes to encourage and inspire the creative talents of young people and

provide a platform for students

to deepen their understanding of the significance of WW1 and its impact on the 500 Cook Islands soldiers who served," a High Commission news release said.

The contest finalists will have to impress the judges who include representatives from the New Zealand High Commission, Ministry of Education, the Cook Islands Police Service and the Cook Islands Returned Services Association.

"The winning students will join competition winners from Niue, Samoa and Tonga to attend the New Zealand commemoration of the Battle of Somme in France in September."

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Participants will also receive a certificate of participation.

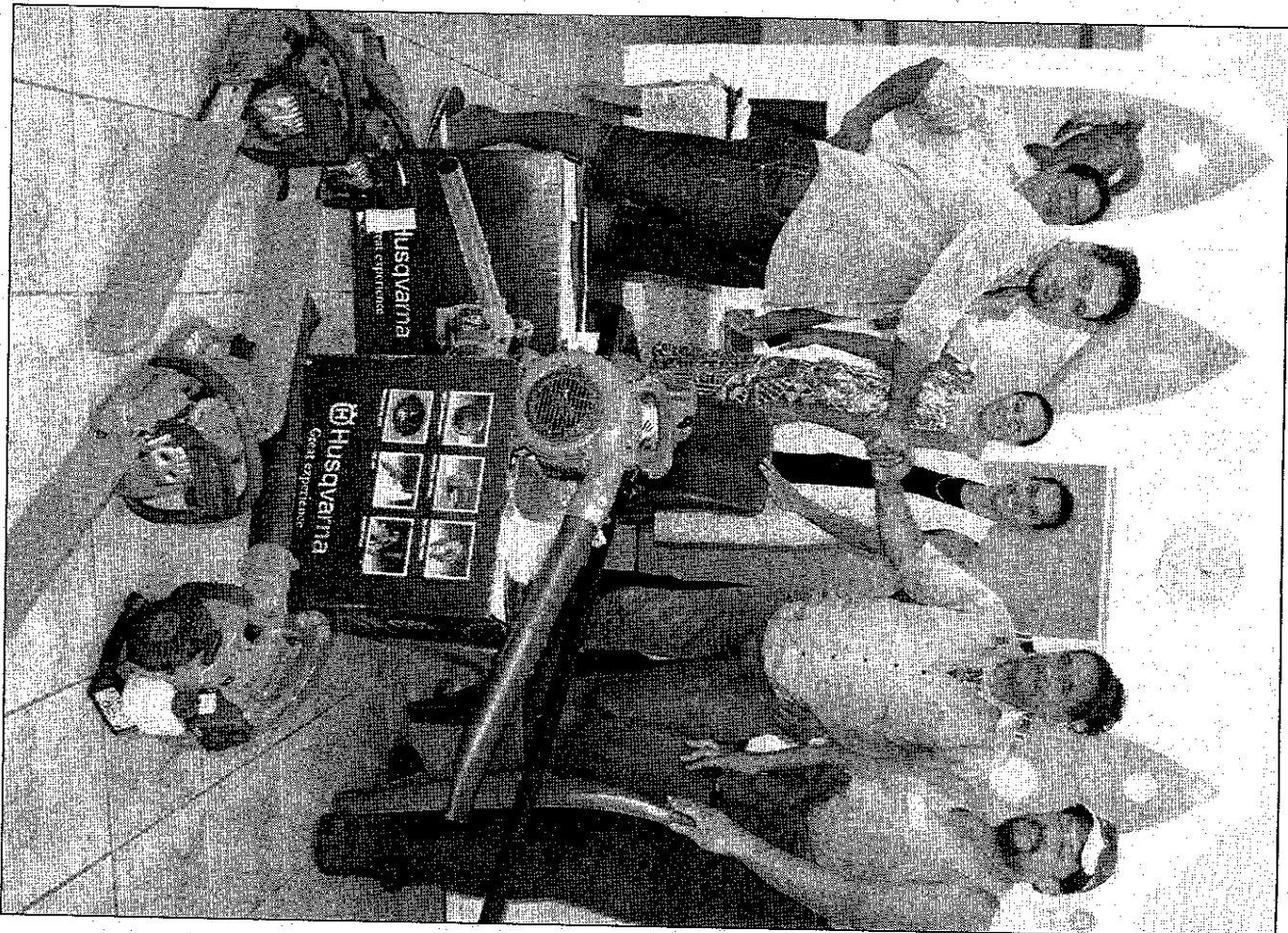
Results will be announced at the ANZAC Day dawn service on April 25 and in CI News.

"A prizegiving will be held at Ngatapa in early May, together with the prize giving for primary schools ANZAC essay competition," the media release said.

Members of the public are also invited to attend the event.

The speech competition is organised by the New Zealand High Commission in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Cook Islands Police Service and the Cook Islands Returned Services Association.

■ **Ariana Rasmussen**



Youth and sports minister Albert Nicholas hands over the outdoor power equipment to the Atupa Youth Group.