



The University of Fiji

UNIPULSE

NEWSLETTER

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International Symposium on Climate Change Adaptation in the South Pacific Region



Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir with the delegates at the symposium.

The University of Fiji in collaboration with the Research and Transfer Centre "Applications of Life Sciences" of the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (Germany) and the International Climate Change Information Programme (ICCIP) organized a Symposium on Climate Change Adaptation in the Pacific Region at Tanoa Waterfront Hotel in Lautoka from July 26-28, 2016.

The symposium focused on fostering resilience and the regional capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate change. It was successful in bringing together people from all walks of life who exchanged information, shared ideas, thoughts and experiences gained from the implementation of several climate change adaptation projects. The symposium was a truly interdisciplinary event, mobilizing scholars, practitioners and members of governmental agencies, undertaking research and/or executing climate change projects in the Pacific region.

In his opening speech the Vice-Chancellor of The University of Fiji, Professor Prem Misir emphasized on the need for more sustainable policies on household energy, electricity generation, agriculture and nutrition, transport and the built environment, as a means of reducing the impacts of climate change.

Staff Workshop Retreat



Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy as the keynote speaker at the UoF staff workshop

The University staff came together on July 23 for a staff workshop retreat themed "Exploring Critical Challenges Students Face".

The Honourable Dr. Mahendra Reddy Minister for Education, National Heritage, and Arts and Culture was the keynote speaker at the workshop.

Round table discussions focused on challenges like

- Culture of inclusion and retention.
- Culture of student engagement.
- New teaching methods.
- Independent study structure
- Coping with the volume and speed of the workload.
- Comprehending and interpreting different types of assessments.
- Understanding the grade system.
- Reviewing contact hours with instructors.
- Reflecting on teaching quality.
- Improving our student support services.
- Infusing student issues at monthly School (Faculty) Board meetings.
- Improving student-teacher relationships.
- Teaching and supporting low socio-economic students.
- Creating a thoughtful classroom structure.
- Considering social and emotional safety.
- Achieving quality student admission.

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Up Coming Events Open Day



Dr. Jiko Luveni
as the keynote Speaker during
Open Day
on **September 9, 2016**
at the
UoF Hall, Saweni Campus

Sir Moti Tikaram Memorial Lecture



Judge Ajit Singh of New Zealand
will deliver the lecture at 5 p.m.
on
September 30, 2016
at the
UoF Hall, Saweni Campus

After School Enrichment Programme

The UoF Alumni is organizing After School Enrichment Programme at the University of Fiji from 6 September to 3 November 2016. The After School Enrichment Programme is an after school free tutoring programme for Year 12 and 13 students who live in our community. The programme is designed to assist the students achieve academic standards with given time, support and instruction that focuses on their academic needs and also help parents who cannot afford fees for private tuitions for their children.

Tutors will work with students individually or in small groups and offer tutoring as well as friendship, encouragement, and guidance. The After School Enrichment Programme focuses the efforts of teachers on the academic needs of students and harnesses the energies of tutors and learning assistance staff to reinforce the teachers' efforts. The relationship that develops between tutors, teachers and students provides the kind of guidance, support and inspiration necessary for their future success. One caring person can make a difference in a young person's life.

This After School Enrichment Programme provides free tutoring sessions for students who need one-on-one help with their homework, assignments and the national exams.

Uof receives 3rd award for the best paper

Ms. Priyatma Singh from School of Science and Technology presented a paper on "Customary Land and Climate Change Induced Relocation – A Case Study of Vunidogolua Village, Vanua Levu, Fiji" during the symposium.

The paper was written together with Ms. Dhrishna Charan (Department of Science) and Ms. Manpreet Kaur (Department of Language, Literature and Communication) and was awarded the third prize for the best paper. According to Ms. Priyatma Singh, "getting the award meant recognition by some great scholars such as Prof. Walter Leal and a great motivation for the team to work even harder".

The trio is grateful to The University of Fiji research grants committee and the Dean of School of Science and Technology, Professor Shawkat Ali.

The young researchers duly acknowledge the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir for fostering a culture of interdisciplinary research collaboration at The University of Fiji and their achievement is a fruit of the V-C's farsightedness. The researchers are elated with the outcome and recognition given to them considering the fact that their paper was weighed against many renowned intellectuals from abroad and here in the Pacific.



The University of Fiji Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir (right), with the winners of the Research Symposium award, Ms Dhrishna Charan, Ms Priyatma Singh and Ms Manpreet Kaur

Registration of Programmes with Fiji Higher Education Commission



Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir

On July 26th, The University of Fiji (UoF) received Full Registration on the programmes offered by the Fiji Higher Education Commission.

These are significant developments at the UoF, commencing with the Decree, then the awarding of Provisional University Registration, followed by consummation of the Registration as a University this year, and now the FHEC's full registration for 86 programmes.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Misir commented that this is not an end product, as the accreditation process is still to come.

"The University of Fiji is now entering the threshold of a state of institutional readiness for accreditation which will target, inter alia, 'Quality' and 'governance' issues in programme documentation and, generally, higher education," he said

There are some programmes which are yet to receive full registration and the University is working tirelessly towards getting the registration at their earliest.

Development History:

- June 21st, 2011 the University Decree (Vol 12 No.60) was Gazetted by the Government of Fiji. On August 1st, 2011 the University received full recognition (RC0040) as a University by the Fiji Higher Education Commission.

- November 13th, 2014, the University received Provisional Registration (RG0033) by the Fiji Higher Education Commission.

- April 25th, 2016, the University received Full Registration (RG0048) by the Fiji Higher Education Commission.

- July 26th, 2016, the University received Full Registration on the programmes we offer by the Fiji Higher Education Commission.

The achievement of this milestone will give assurance to students, parents as well as the community about the quality delivery of the programmes at the University.

Celebrating Creativity



Staff weaving at Creative Circle

The Department of Language, Literature and Communications at the University of Fiji prides itself once again this year hosting Creative Circle on the theme: Celebrating Creativity, on August 12th, 2016. Enchanted scores of people in attendance marvelled various forms of creativity and this is a testimony of the success of the programme. This indisputably provided a meaningful display of creativity to our students at Saweni Campus.

We have significantly contributed in our UniFiji Creative Circle through a variety of scholarly and creative writing and creativity: ranging from poetry recital, creative art, drama and singing, to name a few. UniFiji Creative Circle is an umbrella which presents our talented, multi-skilled and exceptional gifted students and colleagues to showcase their myriad skills and interests.

The programme unfolded with a lucid and thoughtful deliberation by the Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir.

He highlighted that creativity is something that cannot be measured and at times creativity comes into existence by chance. As teachers, academics and researchers, creativity is crucial for our jobs.

"It is not about bringing ideas down from heaven to earth, but exploring creative ideas of our own. These creations assist us to understand more clearly some aspect of reality in this present world and/or give us guidance as to how to correct negative aspects of the present reality. For example, the Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy's complex fictional characters helped people better understand the various social "types" produced in tsarist Russia" he said.

Professor Prem Misir's enlightening speech on creativity allowed the audience to view the art of creativity from various dimensions. The programme also heard a brief talk by the coordinator of Creative Circle, Ms. Kamala Naiker, highlighting the reasons behind organising these events. She stressed on the need for higher education providers like The University of Fiji to embrace a variety of ingenious flair of our students and staff. She emphasised that UniFiji Creative Circle provides opportunities for art and cultural expressions of our society and she vouched that this time the Artistic Creativity by students will be a surprise and relished by one and all. The audience marvelled creativity at its best and enjoyed every minute of this enlivening and vitalizing work of talented artists, writers and designers.

The Department of Language, Literature and Communication is joining dots for a bigger scope and blanket coverage for the cultures of Fiji, appreciating local creativity.

Establishment of the Rabindranath Tagore Centre

The University of Fiji is proud to launch the Rabindranath Tagore Centre (RTC) after a recent approval from The Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR). In this endeavor, the ICCR approved purchase of two computers with a printer and a scanner for the RTC that will be housed at UniFiji Library. Further undertaking entails procuring books that will be sent to the Indian High Commission, Fiji, for subsequent dispatch to the UoF.

Rabindranath Tagore was a prolific, intellectual, dynamic writer whose writings are one way of reshaping literature and music. Born in Bengal, educated at home, then directed to England for formative schooling, he did not fully complete what he intended to do. However, in his adult days, he managed his family estates, which brought him closer to humanity, thus, increasing his passion for social reforms. He also initiated a preliminary school at Shantiniketan to explore his Upanishadic ideals of education.

Rabindranath Tagore's 1946 poem: "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high. Where knowledge is free. Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls...." - These beautiful couplets spur a writer within each one of us and set a platform for inscription, for thoughts to be penned. Further, Tagore was engaged in the Indian Nationalist Movement in his own noble way, being a devoted friend of Gandhi, the political father of modern India. In 1915, Tagore was titled by the ruling British Government, but he withdrew from this recognition as a protest against British policies in India.

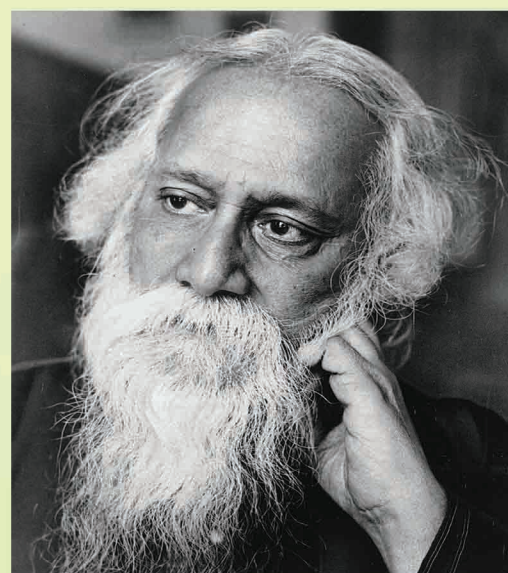
Initially, Tagore wrote in Bengal, which he translated in English, thus gaining recognition in the West. This led to him being invited as guest speakers across the continents and also on many friendship tours. He became the voice of India's spiritual heritage for the world and a great living institution for India, especially Bengal.

Albeit Tagore was flourishing in all literary genres, he primarily was a poet. In 1913, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature "because of his profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse, by which, with consummate skill, he has made his poetic thought, expressed in his own English words, a part of the literature of the West".

However, he denied the award. Author of Gitanjali and due to its "profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse", he was Asia's first Nobel Prize winner.

In translation his poetry was viewed as spiritual and mercurial; however, his "elegant prose and magical poetry" remain largely unknown outside Bengal, sometimes referred to as "the Bard of Bengal".

The University of Fiji, now in its 12th Year, seeks to accomplish another objective by stimulating student interest of humanistic perspectives in understanding works of literature, including, the works of Tagore, which are mostly inspired by his unique creative spirit.



"If you cry because the sun has gone out of your life, your tears will prevent you from seeing the stars." — Rabindranath Tagore

Academic-Industry Engagement

There is a need to develop an Academic-Industry consortium to advance academic engagement with the industry, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir. He made this comment during the Academic-Industry Collaboration function in Suva earlier last month.

Prof Misir said the university did not know enough about the consequences of academic engagement with the industry. "However, a better understanding of the consequences of this relationship may indicate whether there is a causal link between engagement and research because we need to know the impact of our research on society," Professor Misir said.

The Fiji Times publisher, Hank Arts who also attended welcomed the idea by Professor Misir and said the industry needed educated and talented people. "It was a very good idea to have the business community together to explain the working and progress of the university. I personally learned a lot more and obtained a better insight of the challenges you face," Mr Arts said.

"There is no reason this can't be extended to other disciplines in our business. There are also training opportunities, with our more senior and experienced staff being able to assist the university in the schooling of graduates."

This was the second meet with the industry people. The event was well attended from different sectors. The first Academic- Industry consortium was in Nadi in June this year.

Evidence Based-Learning for UPSM

In the recent meet with the medical staff from Monash University, The Umanand Prasad School of Medicine (UPSM) benefited by receiving one computer with UPTODATE software worth 9700AUD.

This UPTODATE system contains resources used in evidence-based clinical resource. It includes a collection of medical and patient information, access to Lexi-comp drug monographs and drug-to-drug, drug-to-herb and herb-to-herb interactions information, and a number of medical calculators.

UPTODATE is written by over 5,700 physician authors, editors and peer reviewers. It is available both via the Internet and offline on personal computers or mobile devices, with free subscription for next 3 years, with one printer.

A new LEARN MODULE was also developed, where Professor Dragan from Monash University will teach UPSM students about Evidence-Based Medicine, a totally new course incorporated into UPSM medical curriculum starting from 2017.

A MoU will soon be signed between the two universities and more research and training will be given in the areas of Anatomy, Physiology and Forensic Pathology.

UPSM Students Receive International Clinical Placements

Two medical students from University of Fiji, Umanand Prasad School of Medicine (UPSM) have received clinical placements at various hospitals and medical centres in Australia.

The duo, Keshni Lata and Shoma Dutt, year five Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) students yesterday departed for their medical adventure after being selected by Friends 4 Fiji on a fully sponsored trip by Monash University. During their 10-day tour, the students are scheduled to attend a global health conference in Newcastle, have a clinical placement at Monash Medical Centre and The Alfred Hospital in Melbourne and also tour Melbourne and surrounding areas, with clinical placement in a rural hospital. One of the recipients, Ms Lata said she was happy to be selected as this was an opportunity for her to learn and experience medical practice in Australia.

"The opportunity is huge and both of us will learn about new medical equipment and as well as meet and treat different lots of population. It will be a broader experience and implementation of my knowledge," Ms Lata said.

She hoped to return with greater experience and something new. The recipients thanked the UPSM and Monash University for their interest in developing them on a larger platform.

The Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir said the initiative was one which allowed integration of knowledge at international standards which would help the students a lot.

Launch of Centre of Renewable Energy (CORE) and the Renewable Energy Management Masters Programme



The Vice-Chancellor of The University of Fiji, Deputy Head of EU delegations and Director of the Fiji Higher Education Commission, The University of Fiji Council Member, the delegates from Hamburg University, Germany; Fiji National University, The University of South Pacific, SPC, FEA, FSC, Department of Energy, other industry people and possible students

The School of Science and Technology of the University of Fiji launched its first Centre of Renewable Energy (CORE) & Renewable Energy Management (REM) Masters Programme at the Tanoa Waterfront Hotel in Lautoka on Monday July 25, 2016. This project was initiated through The Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) and funded by the EU as part of the ACP-EU Co-operation Programme in Higher Education (EDULINK II). The Title of the project was Renewable Energy in Pacific Islands: Developing Skills and Capacity (EPIC) Project.

The University of Fiji with its project partners University of Alicante and University of Papua New Guinea have been collaborating on the EPIC project since October 2013. The project which comes to completion in October this year was born to react to the current challenges and immediate needs to Renewable Energy development in the Pacific. The Centre of Renewable Energy (CORE) will facilitate collaboration at national and regional levels with the key objective of strengthening research capacity and harnessing it in the service of planning sustainable development in the area of renewable energy. The REM programme is first of its kind in Fiji and aims to serve as a foundation to equip emerging scientists, as well as academic staff with current knowledge on renewable energy, which is in high demand but lacking within our region.

The stakeholders present at the launch were formally welcomed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Fiji, Professor Prem Misir during his welcome speech at the inaugural event. The launch was attended by over 30 recognized industry representatives, academics, NGO's, government ministries, Renewable Energy stakeholders, parents and potential REM students.

The chief guest of this event was the deputy head of EU delegations to the Pacific, Mr. Johnny-Engell Hansen who was very keen on the initiative taken by the University of Fiji in partnership with the regional University of Papua New Guinea and the International affiliation with the University of Alicante in Spain.

The Director of the Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC), Mrs. Salote Rabuka welcomed the initiative taken by the University and stressed on the importance of renewable Energy on the sustainable development of our country.

The REM programme commences in semester 1 of 2017, and the University of Fiji is excited in the initiative towards building resilience together with its Center for Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development for a better Fiji.

UoF Introduces Student App

Communication technology makes everything about being a student easier, from being in the right place at the right time, submitting assignments, getting easier access to lecture notes and tutorial, viewing results, and keeping in par with the upcoming events at the University.

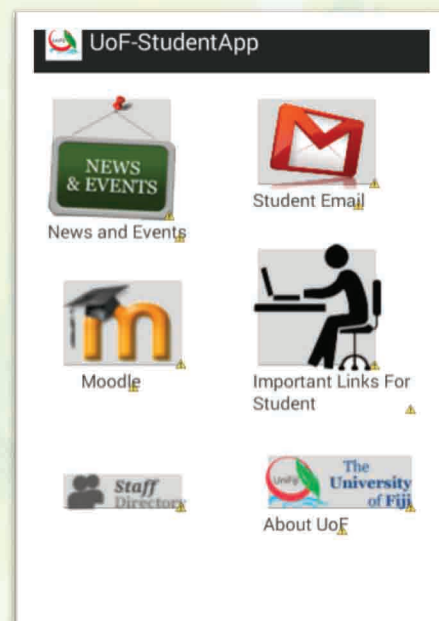
Keeping these benefits in mind, and with an aim to provide a better service to the current and prospective students, the IT department at the University of Fiji developed a UoF Student App that the students can have access to on their smart phones from anywhere. Apps play an increasingly important role in the recruitment and engagement of students.

The UoF Student App will allow students to access their desired resources such as:

- News & Events
- Student Email
- Moodle

The students can also browse the important links such as:

- Library Services
- IT Services
- Forms
- Student Results
- TimeTable



The Department is now working on another app which will be revealed at a later date.

RANDOM SHOTS



Speakers at the Sai Medical Conference held at The University of Fiji



The Vice-Chancellor Professor Misir (right) with Brigadier Aziz Mohammed from RFMF (left) and Professor Shaista Shameem, UoF (middle) at the Academic-Industry Collaboration



The Vice-Chancellor Professor Misir (middle) with Mr Mothilala DE Silva, CEO for Telecom (left) and Professor Shawkat Ali, UoF (right) at the Academic-Industry Collaboration