

## Vice-Chancellor Prem Misir New Year’s Message to the University Community



Youngest Hindi short course participant, Shivneet Singh, garlanding the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir.

I sincerely wish you a Happy New Year 2018 and fervently hope that you thoroughly enjoyed the recent festive season. I enthusiastically welcome all of you back at the commencement of this New Year 2018, which may very well turn out to be a huge year for The University of Fiji. We are in a dynamic situation in this New Year, as there is much to consolidate from the gains of Year 2017 and many new developments to add in the remaining months of Year 2018.

Let us, therefore, now review the advances from Year 2017, the year in which the University celebrated its 12th anniversary. We unveiled the University’s second **Strategic Plan 2017-2021: The Global Path to Academic Excellence and Building a Knowledge-based Society**, with eight strategic themes and an active focus on internationalization, interdisciplinarity, and academic-industry collaboration. The themes and the foci constitute resilient platforms for providing tertiary education and will certainly contribute to constructing a knowledge society in Fiji.

Last year, the University established a fully operational Suva Campus, offering fully the Schools’ and the lone Centre’s programs. And pertaining to addressing the shortage of medical doctors in Fiji, the University expanded the MBBS programme to the Suva Campus.

It may be worthy to note that since the medical school’s inception, the University now has a total of 145 medical graduates. And in the interest of diversifying our academic base and combat global warming in tertiary education, and with approval from the Committee for the Accreditation of University Qualifications (CAUQ) of the Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC), The University of Fiji is the sole university offering the Master’s degree in Renewable Management; this program commenced in 2017.

The University of Fiji became a member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) in Year 2017. The membership of the ACU carries with it a number of benefits which we will fully exploit in 2018. The University of Fiji will participate, among other things, in the following: (1) the benchmarking exercise for university management; (2) low cost journal scheme; (3) free access to electronic journals from the INASP; (4) building capacity for early-career academics.

The increased budget subvention of 32.17% last year facilitated the University to attract a fair number of quality academics, in order to advance learning,

teaching, and pursue research in Fiji’s national interest. It also was in Year 2017 that the University instituted a 3-year budget cycle, and in terms of the University’s developmental status, this move, indeed, constitutes progressive financial management.

Early last year, in the interest of promoting quality in tertiary education, the FHEC presented a new format to register Levels 7 through 10 programs on the Fiji Qualifications Framework (FQF). By December 2017, The University of Fiji submitted its 129 of 130 programs to FHEC for registration, thereby completing the FQF exercise.

This University fully attests to the institution of participatory democracy, i.e., staff participation in management. In this sense, the University is proud of its opportunity structures that promote staff participation in management through the institution of the Senior Policy Group (SPG); the Executive Advisory Group (EAG); Open days – where the V-C meets all staff on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.; Open Forums – where staff members participate in debates and offer presentations; Monthly tête-à-tête with each School/Centre; Staff meetings – once a Semester, or as on a needed basis.

In Year 2017, The University of Fiji spearheaded a monthly awareness campaign of Fiji’s Presidency of COP23 that took place in Bonn, Germany from November 6-11, 2017. The awareness campaign focused on measures to combat global warming and the human activity that is its precursor.

From the baseline of the University’s first graduation ceremony through Year 2017, the University has to its credit a total of 2,596 graduates, inclusive of 145 medical graduates.

We note with considerable pride the University’s sponsorship of the Centennial Commemoration of the Abolition of Indian Indentureship (CCAI), which included a global academic conference from March 22-24, 2017. The conference attracted 134 persons, and accommodated 121 presentations. Vice-Chancellor

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# The Vice-Chancellor's Press Conference



The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir, with the 2018 Handbook.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir, held a press conference on Friday, January 26, 2018.

The press conference marked the first conference of the year. In the press conf-

erence, significant topics of interest were discussed including:

## Handbook and Calendar

UniFiji launched the new Handbook and Calendar for 2018. The handbook and calendar, unlike many-a-times, was a result of extensive discussions involving the entire staff of the University. The University engaged in a series of University-wide consultation from August 12 - September 6, 2017, to review the University's overall regulations. The initiative was taken by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir. The University acknowledged The University of the South Pacific's (USP) regulations, which largely became the University's regulations in 2005, through USP's current Vice-Chancellor Professor Rajesh Chandra, who then was the Vice-Chancellor of this University. The constructive discussions identified areas of improvement in the current University's

regulations. The presence of 'regulations' custodians during the consultation provided the platform to strengthen these by reaching a consensus on various suggestions.

As noted by Professor Misir at the press conference the consultation for the handbook and construction of regulations shows the University's commitment towards quality education.

"We have produced our new Handbook and Calendar for 2018. It is reconstructed and a fully validated handbook in terms of some of the modern techniques that we have used for designing and also to show people how we are proceeding in our efforts to present quality tertiary education," stated the V-C.

He concluded by saying that the handbook was a result of the collective spirit of the staff vis-à-vis the 20 consultations held.

## Bachelor of Public Health and Primary Health Care Programme

The University of Fiji is now offering a unique programme in the named the Bachelor of Public Health and Primary Health Care. The programme is one of a kind in the Pacific as it combines the two major areas of wellness: Public Health and Primary Health that is tailor made for health needs of the region while encompassing global health.

The programme is reasonable in price and is open for students with a pass in Year 13 with 2 science subjects and a pass in English. Mature students with at least 1 year working experience in the field of medicine or health and also those with a GPA of 2.5 in Foundation studies can also apply.

The programme introduces the student to the Concept of Wellness, pre-empting Diseases Outbreaks, Mitigation of diseases and Disaster Management Preparedness. This opens the door for innovative research, process and interventions to counter problems or Health Crisis in the Pacific. It incorporates Public Health Concepts with Primary Health Care and looking at "Hospital as Ivory Temple of Disease" as documented in Parks Textbook of Community Medicine which prioritizes Wellness rather than treating diseases.

It probes into early intervention to counter NCD Crisis in the Pacific Neglected

Tropical Disease, Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases and Disaster Preparedness.

Marketing and Public Relations Officer, Ms. Shirley Prasad stated that programme is one of the priority areas of the Government of Fiji hence TSLB is offering scholarships for this programme. She urged students, with a Science background to apply for the programme.

## Fully Registered University

The V-C emphasized that the University of Fiji is a fully-registered University by the Government of Fiji through the Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC).

He further stated that UniFiji also has a low staff- student ratio which boosts student interactions with staff. Greater interaction with staff is one of the steps that UniFiji is taking to promote quality higher education.

## World Health Organization- WHO

For the purpose of upgrading or improving the patient care and health in Fiji and the Region, UniFiji is working in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO). The University will provide registered nurses with an opportunity to pursue a Bachelor of Nursing (Bridging) online, and Master of Nursing by thesis and Bachelor of Public Health to the public health workers from Semester 1, 2018.

The partnership between (Pacific Open

learning Health Net) POLHN and UniFiji will allow Pacific nurses to upgrade their skills, knowledge, and education without moving away from their homes. Following the collaboration, UniFiji has engaged a team of experts to redesign its face-to-face nursing and public health curricula in order deliver a high standard of interactive academic modules and assessments to POLHN's distance flexible learning students. The curriculum designed by UniFiji is geared towards upgrading the Pacific Human Resource for Health (HRH) and moving toward UHC. (POHLN, 2017)

Large number of applications has already been received for the programme and students are urged to apply for the programme.

## Commonwealth Youth Forum

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir, attended Commonwealth Youth Section Meeting and The Association of Commonwealth Universities on September 28, 2017, in London, United Kingdom. The meeting resulted in various outcomes for the University of Fiji.

While at the meeting with the Head of Programmes Commonwealth Youth Section (ESSD) Mr. Layne Robinson and Assistant Programmes Officer Mr. Sionlele Mario, Professor Prem Misir highlighted that there was an increase in the percentage of youth dropouts at higher education institutions, particularly at high schools



He further stated that there is an urgent need to focus on youth empowerment in Fiji with the intention to improve socio- economic status. In this regard, the ESSD will be hosting a Youth Forum at The University of Fiji, Saweni Campus, on February 20, 2018. The forum will focus on youth and student engagement. The forum will be attended by over 50 youth from the ESSD as well as local youth. The forum will coincide with the Commonwealth Minister's Meeting (CCEM), scheduled for February 21-23, 2017 and the Integrated Partners Forum between February 19-21, 2017 in Fiji.

## Year Review 2017



Staff and students at the University library.

The University of Fiji celebrated its 12th Birthday Anniversary on March 14, 2017. Speaking about the anniversary the Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir said that with new thrust to develop a knowledge society in Fiji, the overall strategic objectives of this University are to deliver the long-term resources to support and advance its pre-eminent position – nationally, regionally, and internationally – as an intellectual powerhouse of excellent learning, teaching, and research; and to enable it to offer added support to its five fundamental priorities of students, research, academics, partnerships, and people; priorities that will make the University progressively competitive in the tertiary education market.

Over the last year, the University initiated internal reviews for all its Schools and the Centre for i-Taukei Studies. All the reviews have been completed and the Schools and Centre for i-Taukei Studies have moved towards external accreditation.

UniFiji hosted two graduations in 2017 with the first one being in April and the last one in December. In April, 203 students graduated with various disciplines including Arts, Commerce, Law, Science and many more from the University of Fiji. While, December graduation saw 303 students graduating in various fields.

In its effort to make student experience

wholesome, the University is partnered with Post Fiji to allow students to pay tuition fees through any of the Post Fiji shops around Fiji. Students no longer need to visit the Campus finance department for fee payments.

The University in partnership with Vodafone Fiji launched the media SMS plan to improve communication channels with students. It allows for effective and effortless communication between students and the University.

The University's sponsorship of the Centennial Commemoration of the Abolition of Indian Indentureship (CCAI) entailed a global academic conference from March 22-24, 2017, further institutionalizing and recognizing the University as the South Pacific's Global University. The University received much-needed international publicity and recognition for hosting a professionally-organized conference by the international participants. The CCAI indicated that 134 people attended the conference. There were 121 presentations (116 papers, 5 plenary sessions); 10 participants presented vis-à-vis Skype and/or presented in absentia; with 26 students as paper presenters.

The University hosted the Knowledge-Based Development Conference (KBD-CU) on May 6, 2017 at Saweni Campus. This solution-based conference supported interdisciplinary research, providing participants and attendees with exposure

to information, ideas and knowledge that would promote and expand their knowledge base. The conference also addressed how the Fiji's corporate sector could interface with the academic sector to pursue collaborative research for national growth and development.

The University with the intent to promote sustainable development and protect the environment launched the Green Campus initiative to remove all plastics from the Campus and engage in tree-planting for a more eco-friendly environment.

The University of Fiji recognized the importance of Fiji's Presidency of COP23 and the impacts of climate change on the Small Island Developing States and as a result created awareness among students and staff on COP23. COP23, an initiative of the Vice-Chancellor and with activation from the School of Science and Technology, focused on enlightening students and the general public on climate change issues and on oceans on a monthly basis, until the meeting in Bonn, Germany in November 2017. Students and staff attended the sessions and were successful in transmitting the importance of COP23 information.

The Suva Campus is now a full-fledged Campus. The Umanand Prasad School of Medicine & Health Sciences (UPSM & HS), School of Humanities and Arts, School of Science and Technology, and the Centre for iTaukei Studies have begun conducting teaching sessions at the Suva Campus since Semester 1, 2017. Students who commence their education at the Suva Campus can also complete programs and graduate from the Suva Campus.

The Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir had envisioned the establishment the University of Fiji Volunteer Programme, earlier this year. Last year, the group was formed where 40 students signed in to do volunteer work at university events and community outreach programmes. The group comprises of students from different areas of studies as well as different year of study.

In line with the University's strategic plan, UniFiji Student Volunteer Programme has a vital role to play in ensuri-

ing that the University educates a student as a whole person; that it graduates students with a heightened sense of social consciousness who are able to serve as agents of and for social change and societal transformation; that its graduates are instilled with the attitude, spirit and values and human solidarity. There are significant physical rehabilitation and expansion of the Suva Campus, comprising of two new lecture theatres.

The University of Fiji hosted the 2017 Sir Moti Tikaram Memorial Lecture on Friday, September 29, at the Grand Pacific Hotel (GPH). The Keynote Speaker was

the 19th Governor General of New Zealand, Sir Anand Satyanand. Speaking at the Sir Moti Tikaram Memorial Lecture, Sir Satyanand stated that Sir Moti Tikaram was a Champion of Civil society and described the immense contributions that he had made to the improvement of civil society in Fiji. In his address, Sir Anand Satyanand also surveyed the current law on civil society organisations and made the point that Civil Society Law in Fiji needed reforming.

The University of Fiji’s School of Law (SoL) is undertaking an innovative new project to unify legal technical compe-

tence and experience with legal values to impart legal to its students. In this regard, SoL will now produce legal plays annually to encourage students to learn more than just technical skills, and also, at the same time, to become accomplished performers. The first SoL play Antigone was performed after the University of Fiji Law Review Launch on Thursday, September 28, 2017 at the Suva Playhouse. The play was directed by Matt Young, Acting Coach and Chairperson of the Fiji Arts Club in Suva.

# December Graduation



Graduating students at the December graduation ceremony.

Graduation is an important event in The University of Fiji’s calendar. We believe that graduation marks the end of one journey and the start of a new one. Graduation is a time for celebration; a time to look back at the seeds of one’s hard work and the time to look forward to the fruits of the hard work.

Graduation is hosted bi-yearly to cater for MBBS students and those who finish their final year in semester one an academic year.

December graduation saw 303, 184 females and 119 males, students graduating in various field including Commerce, Science, Medicine, Law, Science and much more.

The Chief Guest at the Ceremony was Honourable Laisenia Tuitubou, Minister for Youth and Sports. Other dignitaries also attended the graduation including the Chancellor, Brigadier-General (Rtd) Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, Pro-Chancellor,

Mr. Anil Tikaram, council members as well as parents of the graduating students.

In comparison, 2016 December graduation saw 214 students graduating from various disciplines and entered workforce in fields including teaching, law, medicine, IT and many more.

To date the University has produced 2596 graduates from which 145 doctors and over 50 students from the Nursing programme to fill the immense void in the medical fraternity in Fiji. It also produced over 100 students in the Law field, over 200 students in the Science, over 800 students in the area of Humanities and Arts, approximately 700 students in Accounting and Business field and 30 students have graduated in the iTaukei studies.



Professor PremMisir was the keynote speaker at this conference.

Let me just mention a few possibilities for Year 2018. *In order to provide a sense of direction, a major aim of Year 2018 is to pursue vigorously the curricular and pedagogic implementation of the concepts of interdisciplinarity, internationalization, and academic-industry collaboration consistent with the strategic themes of the Strategic Plan 2017-2021.* And given the success of the internal reviews of its programs, the University will progressively pursue their international accreditation. Indeed, the University also intends to boost its student recruitment and to deepen its accessibility through the affordability of its programs. Year 2018 will see, too, the Rabindranath Tagore Centre (RTC) becoming fully operational. And a significant target for this New Year is the establishment of the Gender Violence Research Unit. Through the auspices of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Government of Fiji, The University of Fiji will host the Commonwealth Youth Forum on February 20, 2018. Students from the universities in Fiji as well as Commonwealth universities will participate.

The UPSM&HS proposes to mount a new program, the **Bachelor’s Degree in Public Health & Primary Care**, (subject to the CAUQ and FHEC approval) which should be a bridging program toward the pursuit of several postgraduate programs in Public Health. In addition, the World Health Organization (WHO) in association with POHLN is collaborating currently with The University of Fiji to effect the online Bachelor of Nursing program.

Let me thank you for for your coperation and sustained work in enabling the progressive growth of The University of Fiji.



# New Journey for Graduates



Professor Prem Misir addressing the students.

The Vice- Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir, while speaking at the December graduation ceremony stated that the graduates had started a new journey into a work phase of life.

The V-C wished the students congratulated the students on their graduation and wished them for their new journey into the work life. He reiterated that students must remember what they were taught in their classes but also be able to relate them to the work environment.

He further highlighted that at UniFiji the focus has always been to produce quality work- ready graduates. The national employability measurement in Fiji puts tremendous emphasis on universities' ability to get graduates into employment that matches their degree discipline, rather than on their readiness for a career.

Therefore, this University focuses on the following to ensure that its graduates are ready for the open job market:

- (1) Joint curriculum design, such as for example, the joint working between the UPSM students and Ministry of Health where the employer could identify skills gaps that the University could help to fill.
- (2) Teaching and learning collaboration: including industry participation on course advisory.
- (3) Committees, scholarships, guest speakers, graduate recruitment, hosting cooperative education placements and applied student projects.
- (4)

Community and industry Collaboration: including joint participation in professional and industry associations, professional development, community and regional development initiatives, staff exchange, conferences and conventions.

(5) Employees being paid to study, with modules developed specifically for the funding employer, such as the banking and tourism industry which sees students study part-time for a tailored degree while working full-time for the corporation.

Professor Misir also stated that with the Strategic Plan 2017-2021: The Global Path to Academic Excellence and Building a Knowledge-Based Society in place, the University has started focusing on interdisciplinary approach, academic- industry collaboration, and internationalization for the delivery of tertiary education at the University and for the development of a knowledge society in Fiji.



## Mother Inspires Student



Mr. Shivneel Kumar with his MBBS degree and gold medal.

Shivneel Kumar, Best Student MBBS-Basic Sciences, said that his mother was his source of inspiration for his medical studies.

The 24-year old, said that after his father's death his Mum struggled a lot way to support his education.

"My mother has been with me through the hardships of my studies and I want to dedicate my Gold Medal to my mum. She has been my inspiration throughout my life. She is a superwoman for me," he stated.

He further commented that he wishes to give his mother all he possibly can and treat her like a queen that she is.

Mr. Kumar also stated that he also got his inspiration from the Vice- Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir.

"VC has been great inspiration to us to never give-up. Despite his stature as the V-C, he has always been humble and seeing him doing so much for the University while simultaneously writing and publishing articles and books, has inspired me to do better as a student and a member of the Fiji community," he explained.

Mr. Kumar is currently an Intern at the Colonial War Memorial (CWM) hospital and wishes to do further studies and specialize in pathology.

The 24-year old, was among the 36 other MBBS students to graduate on December 1, 2017.



Time Management Critical for Success - Singh



Sharlene Singh, with her husband, Nitin Kumar and parents, Nalin Singh (father) Kusum Singh (mother).

Graduating with a Masters Degree in Business Administration- General Management (MBA), Ms. Sharlene Singh, said that time management was crucial in her success.

“Being a part time student, working a full-time job while simultaneously running my three businesses was difficult but I was only able to do it because of time management. Time management is critical because as a student one needs to take out time for studying even if it means sacrificing a little family time,” she commented.

Further to her point, she commented that she was able to cope with her studies because she had tremendous support from her family, especially her husband, who was with her throughout all the struggles of studying.

Ms. Singh is currently employed in the Accounts Departments at The University of Fiji.

She further stated that her MBA was very helpful in successfully being able to start and manage her three businesses.

“MBA was important in my life because with this I now have three businesses (Rental, wine & dine and a boutique shop) and I am planning to venture into new business next year,” she mentioned.

Speaking about her experience at the University, she said that she was happy to have chosen to study at UniFiji because the lecturers very helpful and her studies were very helpful in her career.

“I will recommend studying at UniFiji because students are taught holistically and it helps not only in their careers but also manifests the idea of entrepreneurship,” she said.

Sharlene Singh was among the 303 students graduating on December 1, 2017.

le to you. You are young, you are empowered with knowledge and the training to think, I hope you are healthy, and you can take hands to address the SDGs as we work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030,” he advocated.

He also added that the country needs a mix of people who will help the economy grow; who will pay tax so the country can grow the safety net for those who are not as fortunate.

“We need to ensure that we continue to create an inclusive economy so that more women and persons with disabilities take up their rightful place, side by side with us all, pushing and pulling in the same direction. This is why education, both formal and informal, is as important to each individual Fijian and to us as a collective. Graduands, you as young people will play a major role in shaping our country and world and how we adapt to these challenges. Remember, your generation and ours can eradicate extreme poverty and prevent catastrophic climate change,” he mentioned.

December graduation saw 303, 184 females and 119 males, students graduating in various field including Commerce, Science, Medicine, Law, Science and much more.



Youth Empowerment is Essential: Tuitubou



Honourable Laisenia Tuitubou, Minister for Youth and Sports, addressing student.

While speaking at the graduation ceremony, Chief Guest, Honourable Laisenia

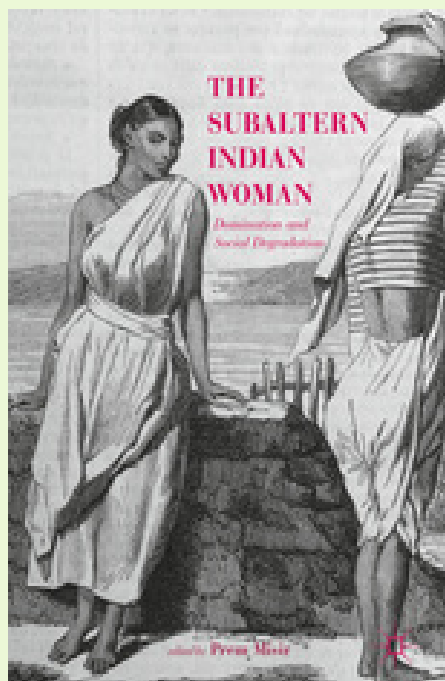
Tuitubou, Minister for Youth and Sports stated that Youth need to be empowered through education for a better Fiji.

“We need to empower our youth, through education, to become agents of change, to ensure environmental stability, advocate to mitigate climate change and its consequences,” he explained.

Further to his point, he congratulated the graduates and advised them to take full advantage of the provisions made available to them and recognize the potential they all had.

“It is my humble plea that you continue to train yourselves to think, to consider alternatives and new ways of doing things, to be empowered, to participate and voice your opinion in the many forums availab-

## The Subaltern Indian Women: Domination and Social Degradation



The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir, is the author of 10 books and a good number of journal articles and other publications also to his name.

His recent book Misir, P. (2018). *The Subaltern Indian Woman: Domination and Social Degradation*. New Delhi, India: Palgrave Macmillan is now published.

The book focuses on dominated indentured Indian women, who are constantly faced with race, gender, caste, and class oppression and inequality on various European-owned plantations.

Palgrave Macmillan, the publisher, in a flyer on the book, said that it also expands the feminist perspective on the race, gender and class paradigm to include class power as the determinant of social interactions.

“The book particularly presents Indian women’s fight against the system of indentured labour, while also acknowledging that people located in different structures (race, gender and class) are eventually influenced by their varied experiences and opportunities,” stated Palgrave Macmillan’s flyer on the book.

Professor Misir’s books gained worldwide acclaim and received various positive reviews from academics.

Dr. Rajni Kaushal Chand, Senior Lecturer at School of Language, Arts and Media of The University of the South Pacific, stated that the book is a timely addition

to the ‘girit literature’ as 100 years of the end of the Indenture system was celebrated earlier this year.

While Dr. Pramila Devi, Director of the Lautoka Campus at The University of the South Pacific said that “This book is a welcome addition to the literature on indentured Indian women, and their social being in Girit nations from 1834 to 1917 ... This is a must read for anyone interested in indenture, social and political transformation, colonial studies, and gender studies”

The book’s homepage is <http://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9789811051654>

The Amazon link is: [https://www.amazon.com/Subaltern-Indian-Woman-Domination-Degradation/dp/9811051658/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1511126550&sr=8-1&keywords=prem+misir%2C+the+subaltern+indian+woman](https://www.amazon.com/Subaltern-Indian-Woman-Domination-Degradation/dp/9811051658/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1511126550&sr=8-1&keywords=prem+misir%2C+the+subaltern+indian+woman)

### UniFiji Commences On- Spot Registration

The University of Fiji commenced with face-to-face and on the spot registrations in Nadi, Lautoka and Ba in form of road shows early January.

This meant that students did not need to come to the Saweni and Suva campuses to register for their courses; they were enrolled and all other processes including registration were done at the road shows.

Marketing and Public Relations Officer, Ms. Shirley Sangita Prasad, stated that roadshows are highly convenient method to register students who are not enrolled yet.

“The University of Fiji, taking its services to our most important stakeholder, our students is paramount. Thus, we try all the different aspects to reach out to the public at large. Being out in different towns and city enables us to meet parents as well and potential students,” she commented.

On- spot registration was a good way to broaden admissions base and reach out to more people. The aim of the roadshows was to attract students from all walks of life. Over 100 students were able to fully register from the roadshows while many others, who were still in Secondary School, took the advantage of getting to know the University for their future.

### UniFiji Hosts Staff Orientation



The Vice- Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir, addressing the staff on plagiarism during the staff orientation.

The University of Fiji held a staff orientation of Wednesday, January 24, 2018.

The staff orientation intended to present the culture and structure of the University, where the focus is on building a knowledge society in Fiji, vis-à-vis, interdisciplinary, internationalization and academic industry collaboration.

It highlighted the aspect of underscoring the rewards and opportunities that may gel with personal needs and professional development, develop student- staff partnerships as well as assist the assimilation of rights and responsibilities of staff.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir, stated that the year 2018 is the year when the University of Fiji can clearly show the world its tangible contributions to developing a knowledge- based society in Fiji.

“The global economy is so persistently in transformation that at this point in time, knowledge and not physical capital, is the basis of wealth for social and economic development. Today many countries are embracing the knowledge- based development because productivity and economic growth depend firmly on this new knowledge,” he further explained.

Students and staff are vital components of the University and there needs to be a good relationship between the two. The staff orientation was a step to better inform staff of the importance of their rights which comes with responsibilities and also to furnish a good spirit in staff before the commencement of 2018.

UniFiji hosts staff orientation on a yearly basis.



Module 1 of Hindi Short Course Comes to an End



The Vice-Chancellor, Professor, Prem Misir and Mr. Anup Kumar presenting the certificate of completion to the youngest participant of the Hindi Short Course.

The University of Fiji in conjunction with the High Commission of India is offering a free Short Course in Hindi Language and Literature at the Saweni Campus. The course comprises of three modules – basic, intermediate and advanced. The 4-week basic module commenced on November 13 and concluded on December 8, 2017 with the presentation of certificates.

The Basic module introduced the basics of Hindi Language and Literature, which guided in developing both oral and written standard Hindi. Introduction to Devanagari Script - Alphabets - consonants and vowels, basic grammar and

sentence structure and short stories by Rabindranath Tagore such as “Bhikharini”, “Sadhana”, “Kabuliwallah”, “Atithi” were other content highlights of Module 1.

Initiated by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir and coordinated by Director of Strategic Plans, Dr. Anshu Mala, the short course is free of cost for all participants and is very beneficial for the community.

“Hindi language is important for the continuation of culture though Fiji Hindi kept the culture going thus far. UniFiji’s Strategic Plan is highly focused on envi-

ronmental and social responsibilities hence the short course is considered a significant part of the community engagement,” commented the V-C.

UniFiji continues to place high emphasis not only on developing the University’s repute but also engaging the neighboring communities to bring skills and development to their door step. The Hindi short course is one such initiative whereby, the Saweni community is engaged in learning standard Hindi for the development of their careers.

While speaking at the presentation of certificates of the completion of basic module, Ms. Akashna Sharma, UniFiji student, said that she was grateful to be part of the University which supported the Hindi language. She stated that no other University offered a short course for free but UniFiji’s initiative to offer it free is commendable.

“The short course will fill the gap created by western influence and modernization and promote not only the Hindi language but the Hindu culture,” she stated.

Dr. Ajantha Perera, one of the participants of the short course, said that she learnt a lot from the course.

“I have no prior knowledge of the Hindi language but during the course of the short course, I not only learnt to speak and write basic Hindi, I learnt about the Hindu culture,” she said (in Hindi).

RANDOM SHOTS



UniFiji staff with the lead authors from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s (IPCC) Working Group II (WG II) at the final COP23 seminar session.



LLC students from the region, during the Creative Circle program.



UniFiji MBBS and Language, Literature and Communications (LLC) students.



Students borrowing books and gaining from the vast knowledge at the Library.



The Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir with the Hindi course participants.



Students involved in constructive discussions.