



The University of Fiji

UNIPULSE

NEWSLETTER

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GRADUATION 2016

This April, 323 students graduated in different disciplines from The University of Fiji.

The Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir welcomed everyone to the auspicious congratulatory event and congratulated the graduands.

His message to the audience is as follows;

"With feelings of ecstasy, I warmly extend congratulations to you graduands and diplomats. I have to say, nevertheless, that to receive an award of a certificate, a diploma, or a degree from The University of Fiji demonstrates your unwavering diligence and resilience during your academic sojourn here. But an added flavour to your hard-earned credential is that it cements not only your link with the University of Fiji, but also provides you a place within the global network of the 1654 University of Fiji's Alumni. Today is a historic day for you, a day for celebration, a day to savor. Today is your day! Congratulations!

Let me now say something about the Class of 2016: a total of 323 graduands and diplomats, comprising 167 females (51.70%) and 156 males (48.30%). Since 2005 and not including the Class of 2016, The University of Fiji has to its credit 1654 graduates and diplomats, comprising 875 females (52.90%) and 779 males (47.10%). Undoubtedly, you have given your best to graduate with a university degree, diploma, or certificate, an arduous academic process filled with considerable sacrifice and conscientiousness, and while it may have been tough to be a University of Fiji student, it may have been even tougher to be a family member or close friend of you as a University of Fiji student. For these reasons, Graduating Class of 2016, I want you as well as the The University of Fiji community to express thanks and appreciation to all your dear ones who have aided you to make this hugely successful day become a reality for you. And your professors, instructors, and mentors also deserve these loving exhortations!

The global economy is constantly changing where knowledge has now displaced physical capital as the source of wealth. We are witnessing an unprecedented advancement of knowledge in conjunction with rapid globalization, diversity, innovative teaching pedagogies using digitalization. And so we are at a point where we are thrusting knowledge at the top of the pyramid, and giving birth to the knowledge society.

The pursuit of the knowledge society demonstrates the growing significance of tertiary education, where its quality is vital to national competitiveness and nation building. But Fiji's nation building requires sustainable development that only tertiary education can provide.

So the The University of Fiji must now begin to see knowledge-based development today as the primary engine of social and economic growth in relation to Fiji's national development plan.

The founders initiated an excellent idea 10 years ago when they created The University of Fiji as a symbol of hope, of knowledge, and of service for the people of Fiji, including the underprivileged. Consumed with great passion, the founders created a vision for this University, a vision endowed with the rich cultural legacy of the past, the prominence of unity in diversity in the present, and the sustainability of that diversification for the tomorrows to come, a vision that must now become the birthright and agenda for each child in Fiji.

But we must remember that The University of Fiji was birthed at a time of great expectations among the founders who believed in the institution's capacity to mould the destiny of its people. The founders' passion for the progressive growth of this institution took its basis from the egalitarian concept of higher education, where no child will suffer exclusion from tertiary education because of inability to pay. The University of Fiji is here in year 2016, having just celebrated its 10th birthday. The changes are even greater today than in the early years of the University's life, and today compared to the past, we face greater financial and academic challenges.

On the financial front, as a small university, we always have to be mindful of functioning with stable funding to meet increased recurrent and capital expenditures. And so in this context, The University of Fiji is more than appreciative to receive the Government of Fiji's subvention through the advisement and recommendation of the Minister for Education, Heritage, Culture & the Arts Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy. Dr. Reddy and the Government of Fiji remain a source of strength and inspiration for The University of Fiji's financial growth. But The University of Fiji needs urgent help to roll out its capital program, where the search for substantial capital funding remains an enduring exercise.

The quality of teaching is a key priority for The University of Fiji. In fact, we believe that the quality assurance system is critical to enhance the student experience and improve the reputation of The University of Fiji, where "meeting the needs of students" is central to the quality assurance process at the University. We have now established the Quality Assurance Department at the The University of Fiji, and we are collaborating closely with the Fiji Higher Education Commission's advisement to improve the quality of tertiary education.

The university creates knowledge, and this the university does through research. People with first-rate talent are critical for research at the highest level, especially as the pursuit of a knowledge society has become the in-things globally.

The University of Fiji is South Pacific's global university. This University vigorously pursues its commitment to global academic excellence and wider access at the lowest cost.

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Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir delivering his speech

We make every effort to achieve excellence in education, operating in multiple ways with the best investment in education in new technology to improve learning and teaching to better prepare our students to address the 21st century challenges.

In these respects, The University of Fiji has now re-engineered its focus on inter professional education, inter and intra-university collaboration, applying the interdisciplinary approach with disciplinary depth, and nurturing community, educational, and industry engagement, where all these fronts function to create a knowledge society and a new sustainable University of Fiji.

This new and sustainable University of Fiji will emerge through creating knowledge-based development, producing work-ready graduates, using an interdisciplinary framework, applying new teaching strategies, teaching about learning how to learn, developing a polymath university, and constructing a connected curriculum. I believe that, through your digital footprints, you as work-ready graduates would leave numerous skills-application trails; a demonstrable testimony to your contribution to Fiji's evolving knowledge society. The University of Fiji feels honored and privileged to have nurtured you from your status as a student to your status now as a graduate. Go change the world for the better! My best wishes to you!"

Staff Professional Development Workshops

There has been a series of workshops organized by the Department of Education this semester to assist the academic staff in learning pedagogical approaches that enhance student learning.



Mr. Avneel Kumar sharing his experiences as a student

The first of the professional development workshops focused developing explicit course descriptors with appropriate learning outcomes. A course descriptor documents the frame as well as the contents of the course, including learning outcomes and assessment. The descriptor is a concise description of the intended outcomes of a programme and the means by which these outcomes are achieved, demonstrated and assessed. The participants enjoyed this workshop as it was a learning experience for most of them. A Discussion Forum on 'Understanding Students is the Key to Be a Good Professor' was also conducted on 16th June, 2016.

The participants interacted and shared their views on a research article that identified key attributes of good professors from the point of view of students to teaching quality, student attrition and student completion rates that can be strengthened at the University.

In addition to these, we were very fortunate to have Professor Ramesh Sharma, a Visiting Professor who was the Former Director, Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia and Indira Gandhi National Open University in India, who conducted 2 sessions of E-Learning Training on the following; Google Tools for Education, Learning Management Systems and Online Platforms, Open Educational Resources, Social Media and Peer to Peer Platforms, Online Meeting and Conference Applications, Audio and Video Creating Platforms, Assessment in Online Course, Mobile Learning, Developing Android based Mobile Apps for online course and using social media for online courses. This will give a boost to our University going ahead in the direction of mobile learning. The workshops conducted will assist in improving teaching quality and delivery of E-learning courses that will take the University to another level of education that enhances student learning. Similar workshops will be conducted in future by staff members from other faculties to enhance student engagement and the teaching learning process.

320+ Students Graduate from UoF



2016 April Graduates

MORE than 320 students graduated from The University of Fiji's Saweni Campus on April 22 joining a rich pool of alumni's who have made a name for themselves in local and international career markets.

The ceremony officiated by former Fiji President and University Chancellor Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, witnessed 323 students from about 43 programmes receive their awards in front of loved ones and invited guests.

Ratu Epeli said the ceremony was a significant one because the country had just survived a strong cyclone that caused many deaths as well as wreaked havoc, disruption and misery to the lives of many in Fiji. He said these trying experiences have not dampened the spirit to quickly reassess, regroup and rebuild people's lives and homes.

"I thank you all and our people for standing together and for finding ways and means of rebuilding from the rubbles left behind by Winston, the fieriest cyclone experienced in the Pacific. I note with much comfort that the university escaped with minimal damage estimated to be around \$85,000. "The required repair works are being attended to in a gradual process."

He said the university was flexible, innovative, affordable and contemporary, allowing students room to pay their fees over a period of time rather than upfront.

"This approach is particularly helpful to students from socially disadvantaged groups, which allows them access to tertiary education at an affordable cost and easy timeframes to pay their fees".

"This is also a very innovative social responsibility that The University of Fiji has applied to ensure that tertiary education remained accessible to the poor and the disadvantaged. This approach is particularly helpful to students from socially disadvantaged groups, which allows them access to tertiary education at an affordable cost and easy timeframes to pay their fees".

"This is also a very innovative social responsibility that The University of Fiji has applied to ensure that tertiary education remained accessible to the poor and the disadvantaged".

"And I thank the founders for taking such a bold step knowing fully well that the process may lead to temporary financial stress at times." he concluded

Science Student Scoops Vice-Chancellor's Most Outstanding Award



Kelera with her awards

KELERA Alyssa Uruwale Railoa's story of success on the academic stage is nothing short of inspiring, especially after she was able to overcome a rare autoimmune disease called Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) to become The University of Fiji's Vice-Chancellor prize winner at the institutions recent graduation.

Ms Railoa also received medals for Biology, Chemistry and topped her class in the overall School of Science and Technology programme.

The 24-year-old said that her one and half year hiatus from the academic field did not stop her from wanting to achieve her dreams.

"Originally I wanted to become a pilot but after I got diagnosed, I thought of taking something in the science or medical field so I decided to enrol in the Bachelor of Science programme at UoF majoring in Biology and Chemistry."

She said despite her illness, her education has provided a major boost for her and her family.

"I'm grateful to all the people who have supported me throughout my education".

"I thank my family and my lecturers for allowing me to pursue my dreams despite the setbacks."

The Vulalei, Tailevu lass added that her career could only grow from this point onwards.

"I have been asked to work for the university".

"They will be setting up a new centre for renewable energy here at UoF and they have asked me to be part of the centre".

"I am currently pursuing a post graduate diploma in Climate Change and it sort of blends in well with what they are doing."

School of Law: Without Morality There is no law

Visiting Professor Ajit Swaran Singh's 2016 Visit

"Without MORALITY there is NO LAW"

(Lord Justice Alfred T. Denning, Former Master of Rolls - 1989 - 1999)

The School of Law's Visiting Professor Justice Ajit Swaran Singh has been with the Law School ever since its inception. Justice Singh has made tremendous contributions to the Law School and the University in terms of teaching, mentoring and donations of law books to the University Library. He brings with him vast experiences from practising as a Solicitor and Barrister, lecturing at various universities, author to many publications, community services and a Judge of the Auckland Court.

Every year, Justice Singh sacrifices his time with family and friends to visit the University to deliver lectures at the School's two campuses. In some of his visits, apart from the Law lectures, Justice Singh conducts Public Lectures on some very interesting topics like, "Battered Woman Syndrome" and "Family Violence".

Visiting Professor Singh's visit this year was a bit earlier in the year than the previous years. His visit this year was solely to attend their High School reunion in Savusavu with his former class mates from Labasa Secondary School now known as Labasa College. Even with all the excitement of meeting with his friends after decades, Justice Singh decided to spend two days to conduct lectures in both campuses. On the 30th of March, Justice Singh was hosted by the Saweni Campus Staff at around 2pm.

Two of our students, Reena Nair and Pratima Devi with others prepared a delicious lunch for Justice Singh and the School of Law Staff.

Visiting Professor Justice Singh conducted a two hour lecture at Saweni Campus on Wednesday the 30th of March and another two hour lecture in Samabula Campus on the 31st of March.

The topic is: **LAWYERS ETHICS AND ADVOCACY SKILLS**. Justice Singh emphasised the importance of diligence, courtesy and respect within the profession. He enlightened the students with real life experiences and situations of duty and loyalty.

He told the students that a lawyer's main duty is to protect and uphold the rule of law. According to Justice Singh, a very important part of practice as a lawyer is preparation.

Lawyers must thoroughly know their case and do in-depth research into the law to produce justice. A lawyer must show respect at all times to both members of the Bench and the Bar. The students enjoyed the lecture as it gave them insight on what the practice in the profession is about.

The visiting Professor met with the Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir in his office after the lecture at Saweni. The meeting was very constructive as the Professor Prem Misir thanked the visiting Professor for his contribution and encouraged him to continue his service to the University whenever he pleases. The Vice-Chancellor also extended the invitation to the visiting Professor to be the Guest Lecturer in the Sir Moti Tikaram Memorial Lecture. The Visiting Professor accepted Professor Prem Misir's request and the dates of this important Public Lecture will be announced shortly.



From Left: Mr. Marika Degei (Interim Dean - SOL), Professor Prem Misir (Vice Chancellor), Justice Ajit Swaran Singh (Visiting Professor)

As the then Interim Dean and Head of the School of Law, Mr Marika Degei sincerely thanked visiting Professor Justice Ajit Swaran Singh for his tireless contributions which boosted the morale of the students as well as the school. He also thanked the Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir for his tremendous support, the School of Law Staff, the IT and Facilities Staff and the Law Students who contributed to the success of this 2016 visit, he concluded with the authority from Chief Justice Tinda in *Lanphier v. Phipos* (1838) 173 ER 581 at p. 581

"Every person who enters into a learned profession undertakes to bring to the exercise of it a reasonable degree of care and skill."

World Environment Day (WED)

World Environment Day is set aside for people to think about their environment and take actions to make a positive difference. Some people take their environment for granted which is why it is important to take time out to talk about environmental issues and become agent of change.

It is celebrated as a way to raise awareness about things that affect the world and the environment.

The University of Fiji (UoF) feels this is important as it provides a chance to show what we can do as individual and groups to protect our environment.

The following events were organised by Department of Science to mark this important day:

- ~ Presentation of endangered species in Fiji by UoF Biodiversity and Conservation students;
- ~ Clean-up campaign of UoF and the neighbouring community area and
- ~ Tavola tree planting activity supported by FRIENDS FIJI – Tavola trees are planted to reduce soil erosion.

As per United Nations; **EVERY ACTION COUNTS**

Through decades of WED celebrations, millions of people from all over the world and from all sectors of society have taken part in environmental action. By bundling their energy, WED has the power to generate hugely positive impacts on the planet.

THE PEOPLE'S DAY

Above all, WED serves as the 'people's day' for doing something to take care of the Earth or become an agent of change. That 'something' can be focused locally, nationally or globally; it can be a solo action or involve a crowd – everyone is free to choose.

As a tertiary institute, The University of Fiji wishes to take the lead to advocate and create awareness on environmental issues and conservation. We are also very proud of our students as they have a huge potential to be young environmental ambassadors.

We celebrated World Water Day in March and after the successful and invigorating World Environment Day event the Science Department will work towards;

Oct 4 World Animal Day
Oct 16 World Food Day



Science students planting Tavola trees



Science students help in clean up campaign

UoF Invests in e-learning Programmes

With an increasing demand for e-learning programmes and courses, The University of Fiji (UoF) invested in the specialty of Professor Ramesh Sharma who came from India to assist in developing e-learning programmes and courses.



Professor Ramesh Sharma training the staff

The development cost of rapid e-learning is often less than 50% of that of traditional bespoke e-learning development and like any e-learning, the delivery costs are significantly lower than classroom delivery costs. Speed is one of the major advantages that rapid e-learning delivers. Most rapid e-learning can be developed and delivered in a fraction of time that bespoke e-learning or classroom based e-learning can be developed and deployed. E-learning also minimizes the use of paper and students can access the programme from anywhere in the world.

Professor Sharma worked closely with UoF staff for a month, assisting them to master the concept of e-learning. He gave various lectures and conducted hands on training so that UoF staff could become better e-learning facilitators.

His one month term at the University expired on 1 July. The Office of the Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of the UoF community, expressed enormous gratitude to Professor Ramesh Sharma for his splendid work during the month focusing on initiating e-learning programmes at The University of Fiji. It, indeed, was a privilege and an honor for the UoF to host this renowned scholar of international repute.

The departing Professor Sharma said he was grateful to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir who invited him, and the UoF family for the warm welcome and the excellent support. The faculty has been very receptive and positive in embracing new learning technologies to take The University of Fiji to a next level and offer great learning experiences and support to the students. He wished the University well in its future endeavors.

The UoF expects Professor Sharma to return to oversee the consolidation of the e-learning courses and programmes.

The University wishes Professor Sharma a safe journey home!

Celebrating 137th Anniversary of the Start of Girit in Fiji



Clicks of the Girit Day celebration

The University held a Girit Day celebration on the 27th May this year. 14th of May 2016 marked the 137th Anniversary of the start of the Girit in Fiji.

The Registrar of The University of Fiji, Ambassador Kamlesh Arya was the chief guest at this event. He talked about the Girit journey and what all it entailed. He stressed on the importance of celebrating this significant day.

"The Girit day brings the reawakening amongst the present generation of Fijian of Indian origin," he said. "The present generation should appreciate their forefathers' struggles, resilience, contribution toward Fiji's development and economy, and sacrifices." Ambassador Arya added.

"1916 marked the end of the Girit era and today we also celebrate 100th anniversary of the cessation of Indentured Labour system which was brought to end through a motion in the Legislative Council at Delhi on 20 March 1916 by the Honourable Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya. The Girit in Fiji came to an end on 1 January 1920," Ambassador Arya told his audience.

"The session must have brought jubilation amongst the giritiyas and their progeny, the matter of freedom, equality, identity, political rights remain curtailed until Fiji's independence and hostile post independence resulting in coups, devastation of personal properties, evictions from leased lands and massive migration to name a few," he said.

Future will be determined by what we make of our present and by appreciating the existence of global diaspora created by this distasteful scheme of forced labour spread over 15 nations that we can connect with.

We now have a common identity, a constitution that guarantees personal, political and religious rights.

"As a community, we need to generate greater cohesion in thoughts and deeds that would help maintain our indentured identity and enhance our socio-political endeavours as a Fijian in a plural society," Ambassador Arya concluded.

Academic-Industry Collaboration

The University of Fiji (UoF) organized an Academic-Industry Collaboration dinner at Tanoa International Hotel on 3 June, 2016. Fully sponsored by donors from corporate sector, this event turned out to be a huge success as 35 guests from different industries turned up.

The idea of Academic-Industry collaboration is for both to recognize the expectations of each party, the resources of each and the partnership options available. Different methods of engaging can be used with our industrial partners to move efficiently and effectively towards meeting the goals. These methods include: training of staff, programmes development at the university, supporting scholarships and gifts, facility upgrades and future prospects for development, writing joint proposals, inviting industry to research reviews, visits between industries and the university, recruiting students, and consulting.

So far the university has received commitment of approximately \$850K in cash and in kind. The Vice-Chancellor and the UoF family are grateful for the assistance received. The University will work closed with the industries to see their needs and demand for desirable workforce and will aim to prepare work-ready graduates from the University to join these industries.

The second Academic-Industry collaboration event is scheduled at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Suva on 19 August.



The guest and staffs of UoF networking at the event

Vice-Chancellor's Social Engagements



The Vice-Chancellor as the Chief Guest at a book launching event at Fiji National University (FNU) - one book by Professor Bissundyal and another by Professor Subramanie



The Vice-Chancellor presenting on Research Methodology at the UPSM & Monash University, Staff Development Workshop



The Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir's welcoming remarks at the Ratu Sukuna Memorial Lecture on June 17, 2016



The Vice-Chancellor Professor Prem Misir as a Chief Guest speaking at the Indian Arrival Saweni Girmit Mela 2016



Leader of the National Federation Party and Shadow Minister for Finance, Planning and Statistics in the Opposition Dr. Biman Prasad meeting with Vice-Chancellor.



The Vice-Chancellor's Public Lectures: Chairman of the Institute for Danube and Central Europe Dr. Erhard Busek (front extreme right) spoke about European integration and the European Union at the UoF May 16.

Monash University Collaboration

The Umanand Prasad School of Medicine (UPSM) welcomed the first team of medical lecturers from Monash University in the second week of June. Dr. Michelle Lazarus, Dr. Sarah Klink and Dr. Madeleine Marsland organized lectures, practicals and UPSM staff development workshop for a week. They also helped UPSM in developing a new medical curriculum.



Exchange students from Monash University

They helped Year 1, 2 and Year 3 MBBS students in developing new skills and fun learning of anatomy and basic science. During their visit, they donated 49 stethoscopes, second hand books and two mannequins to the anatomy lab. They also announced that they would be awarding FJD5000 for student research aiming to develop their research skills. The money is to be divided into five portions where FJD1000 will go towards each group from Year 1 to Year 5. The first group, Year 5 MBBS students, Haider Ali Malik and his team have already received the fund and they have started their field research work.

The whole week's workshop was a great learning experience. There were intensive of exchange of ideas and soon a MoU will be signed between the UoF and Monash University. This is an ongoing exercise for UPSM now and the school is looking forward to more visits from other faculties from Monash University in near future.

This collaboration between the Universities opened up a student exchange programme whereby two MBBS students from Year 4 (Keshni Lata and Shoma Priya Dutt) will be visiting The Monash University for a study tour from 26th August-7th September 2016. The whole trip is being sponsored by Monash University. Selection of the students were made by them and it was based on their GPAs and other skills. The student exchange programme will be an yearly event, starting this year.

Professor Paul McMenamin is next on the list to visit UoF in the month of August to provide practical demonstrations (potentially with high-quality 3D-printed models from the Centre for Human Anatomy Education). He will conduct lectures and will be donating two 3D Artificial Cadavers to UPSM that will be used for dissection by MBBS students.

Global Higher Education Forum (GHEF)

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir participated in the Global Higher Education Forum earlier this year in Malaysia,

He met several key people at the forum and had discussions in tertiary education and funding models in the South Pacific. The University of Fiji is expected to be a member of that research committee under funding model.

He met the following distinguished persons, amongst others:

1. Professor Dato Omar Osman of the Universiti Sains Malaysia,
2. Dr. Morshida Sirat of the Sains Universiti who also is the director of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Facility (CTEF),
3. Professor Madhulika Kaushik, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the Wawasan Open University,
4. Professor Rozhan Idrus from the Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia who is the Director of the Global Open Access Learning (GOAL) Centre.

The Abstract of Professor Misir's presentation is as follows:

Higher Education and Sustainable Development through Knowledge-Based Development

The global economy is constantly changing where knowledge has now displaced physical capital as the source of wealth.

Thrusting knowledge at the top of the pyramid implies the growing significance of higher education, where its quality is vital to national competitiveness. But sustaining an internationally acceptable quality of higher education in resource-constrained countries present formidable challenges.

Since the 1980s, such countries have afforded a low priority to higher education, resulting in chronic underfunding, under-qualified faculty, negative motivation, poor rewards, poor teaching quality, and underdeveloped curricula. And so, in many resource-constrained countries, the potential to promote national development is only marginally achieved.

What I set out to pursue in this paper is to :

- (1) demonstrate the significance of knowledge-based development (KBD) to address these challenges, in order to produce quality higher education for nation building; and
- (2) to highlight the reforms necessary for The University of Fiji (UoF) to create KBD.

We need a revolution in higher education at a time when higher education is more important, and more troubled than in the past. Higher education is the key to Fiji and the South Pacific in the 21st century, where the UoF becomes a greater powerhouse as the catalyst for economic and social development, the steward of public health, the incubator of social policy, and the laboratory of discovery.



Professor Prem Misir with the Vice-Chancellor of the Universiti Sains Malaysia Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman at the closing of the Global Higher Education Forum 2016 at the St Giles Wembley in Penang, Malaysia on April 7, 2016

Something new is happening in development in some resource-constrained countries. New ideas or intellectual capital (knowledge) are now becoming the keys to prosperity and wealth of nations. Knowledge in the form of knowledge-based economies (KBE) became a development metaphor in 1996 through the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Many countries embraced KBE through their vision, mission, strategies, concepts, and initiatives. But there are downsides to KBE, as what happens to KBE when substantial investments in education and innovation fail to produce sustainable economic growth and wealth creation.

Sustainable development requires knowledge produced from three value domains and which must be treated equally and should not be applied in a zero sum power sense.

These three domains are economic capital (KBE), social capital, and natural capital, together producing KBD. KBE covers only the economic, so by itself, KBE is necessary but not sufficient for sustainable development. So the UoF must begin to see KBD today as the primary engine of social and economic growth in relation to Fiji's national development plan.

And in order for the UoF to persist, it has to remain relevant to key internal and external stakeholders. How? A new and sustainable UoF can persist through creating KBD, producing work-ready graduates, using an interdisciplinary framework, applying new teaching strategies, learning how to learn, developing a polymath university, and constructing a connected curriculum.

Professor Misir presented his paper to the staff and the students of The University of Fiji after his return from the forum.

Bachelor of Nursing In-Service Programme

Another breakthrough from the Umanand Prasad School of Medicine is that now it is offering the first Bachelor of Nursing In-Service programme for Fiji. The soft launch of the programme was done on 14 June, 2016. The interested in-service nurses came for registration and orientation after an hour's formal launch session in the morning.

This programme is targeted for all interested Diploma in Nursing graduates who aspire to bridge to a bachelor's degree level. This will be a remarkable milestone for nursing education in Fiji.

This is a replication of 2014 when we also launched the first Master of Nursing programme. The University of Fiji's Masters in Nursing programme is filling in the gaps that exist within nursing programmes offered by other institutions.

Launched in 2014, the programme has proven to be a success as more working professional nurses enrol in the various programmes offered at the university. UoF Interim Head of Nursing, Associate Professor Dr Litiana Kuridrani said this was the first ever Masters and Bachelor of Nursing In-Service programme for nurses in the country.

"In the practical work, we are not offering anything clinical because the Diploma programme offers that condensed clinical component," she said.

"The programme addresses the gaps like nursing and the law. We take advantage of our law school here and they help us in teaching ethics and the legal issues for the nurses. We also saw that the three and half years nursing diploma curriculum had only 20 hours oncology and palliative care. In Fiji, we are starting to experience a lot of these (cancer) cases now so we are addressing that gap in this programme."

She added the nurses also undergo evidence based practices.

"In that component we have a field placement where they go out and actually conduct research work of their own. So far we have nine thesis students who should graduate in December."

"They are the first batch that we enrolled in 2014. We have graduated 22 students in post graduate certificates. There were 17 nurses in the last graduation in April this year."

She said one of the stand-out graduates in the April graduation was Susana Raradoka Sivo, who outshone all of the other graduates by being the first nurse to become a lawyer.

"This is another chapter for nurses in the country," said Dr Kuridrani.



Bachelor of Nursing in-service programme students

She said she was elated with nurses seeking to venture into other specialist professions and encourages those who wish to start with the Bachelor of Nursing Post Registration programme to get enrolled.

The delivery of the programme at Saweni Campus will commence at a later date. Other teaching venues are subject to student enrolment. Interested in-services nurses can enrol now at either Suva or Saweni campuses or they can enrol online through this link; <http://enrollment.unifijicst.net:8086/>

Eco-Tourism Course

The tourism industry is getting more and more concerned about safe guarding the Fijian environment and in carrying out their functions in an eco friendly manner. The University of Fiji understands this plight and has developed a course in "Ecotourism" which will be offered from Semester 2, 2016. The course can be taken by students enrolled in BCom-Degree and Diploma programmes while any other interested students can enrol for this course under unclassified studies. This course is aimed at commerce students who have little to no knowledge about sustainably managing the Fijian environment. This arises because commerce students are taught how to manage and market our environment through tourism, in a profitability mindset. As a result, we mostly overlook the issues of sustainability in the management of the tourism industry.

Therefore, the aim of The University of Fiji is to incorporate this into our School of Business and Economics programmes so that we produce graduates who are not only equipped with the management knowledge but with sustainable management knowledge and practices with regards to our Tourism industry among others. The course, together with "Introduction to Tourism Management" will provide substantial knowledge on environmental friendly aspect of tourism industry. New and existing interested students are invited to use this opportunity.

University of Fiji awarded full registration from the FHEC



The University of Fiji Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir in his office.

The University of Fiji is fully registered as a tertiary institution by the Government of Fiji.

The University of Fiji's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir said the registration would open doors for the university, both nationally and internationally. "The university started on a small scale in 2005 and in 2011 it received provisional registration from the Fiji Higher Education Commission," he said.

The provisional registration by definition is not a full registration, as there were still several conditions to fulfill to become a fully-fledged university.

On April 25, 2016, The Fiji Higher Education Commission met and granted full registration status to The University in Fiji as a local University. The University remains a private institution. But it could also be described as a public-private partnership with the Government of Fiji.

The Vice-Chancellor Professor, Prem Misir indicated that this new status will also give the University psychological eligibility for interrelationships with the Government of Fiji and other Government agencies, and greater leverage to seek cooperation from the governmental side of things. In addition, the full registration status provides the University with a platform to penetrate international funding.

He also noted that the international community will be more willing to provide funding now that there is full registration status.

Meanwhile the university is hoping to get more assistance from the government. The government has allocated more than \$2million for the university in this year's budget. Professor Misir said the university will work closely with the government and contribute towards creating a knowledge-based society.

Careers Teachers' Workshop 2016



The organisers with the participants of the workshop

The 3rd Careers Teachers' Workshop was successfully organized on 21st May 2016. There was a very good turnout of the careers teachers from the Western Division. Altogether 48 teachers from 43 secondary schools attended the workshop.

While giving his welcome address, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Prem Misir stressed the important role played by the careers teachers and welcomed everyone to the workshop. The workshop was officially opened by the Permanent Secretary for Education, Mr. Iowane Ponipate Tiko. In his opening address, he highlighted the importance of guiding and advising students in making wise career choices. Choosing career paths wisely can help students set professional goals and develop strategies for getting where they want to be. Part of choosing an appropriate career path involves making an honest self-evaluation of talents, abilities and interests.

The programme was officially closed at 4pm by the Divisional Education Officer Western, Mr. Albert Wise who conveyed the Ministry's appreciation to the University for assisting them in training the Careers Teachers.

While elements of path may change over time due to choice or circumstance, having an overall professional objective with which to guide will help students make critical decisions with greater clarity. A career path is just that – a journey, rather than a single one-time decision. Every career path has milestones along the way.

Presentations were delivered by the staff of the Careers and Counselling section of the Ministry of Education, Fiji Higher Education Commission, Tertiary Education Loans Scheme and other corporate organizations. The Deans or the representatives gave presentations in the afternoon session highlighting the different programmes and courses offered by their Schools and why students should enrol in these programmes.

Diasporas of the Pacific Conference

The University of Fiji and Institute of Interdisciplinary Inquiry's first conjointly held International Conference titled: Diasporas of the Pacific: Multilateral, Intergenerational and Transnational Contexts. It was held from 22-25 April 2016 at the Anchorage Resort, Lautoka, Fiji.

This conference provided congenial opportunities where multi, inter and trans-disciplinary research was combined and shared in order to have an impact outside academia.

This not only meant combining different academic disciplines with the experiences of practitioners but also exploring the diversity of approaches to similar subjects across disciplines, geographical area and work experiences.

Twenty-eight academics from all over the globe participated and presented their researched papers on a myriad of insightful topics. An eBook online publication is due anytime this year which will include the papers that were presented at the conference.

Responding to the Zika Virus Crisis

The Umanand Prasad School of Medicine (UPSM) organised a symposium entitled "Responding to the Zika Virus Crisis: A Public Health Emergency" on 15 April at Saweni Campus.

The audience for the symposium included health personnel, doctors, nurses, medical students and the general public. About 300 participants attended this symposium. The main aim of organizing this symposium was to find research agenda and create public awareness. There is a thin line between creating panic and creating awareness.

We need to be active and aware of the potential viral threats and, be ready for more upcoming epidemics in future as there is some impact of global warming and climate change on removing the geographical barriers of this country.

The University of Fiji supports the government's initiative in controlling the mosquitoes/vectors by maintaining hygiene and avoiding stagnation or collection of water in our backyards. This inspires us to be agents of change in our world and challenges us to be stewards of the vitality and sustainability of the health educational mission and finally to reach out to the general public to make Fiji a better place to live in.



During the opening ceremony, Manpreet's book launch was received well, as this was her first book, an anthology of poems titled: Echoes of my Footprints. Ms. Atelini Bai, Lecturer in The Department of Education shed light on the book, Manpreet's journey into writing her first book followed by readings of selected poems from the book.

The four-day conference ended on a high note with Ms Naiker thanking everyone for their contribution in making this Conference a huge success in terms of participant turn-out, thought-provoking discussions and inspiring connections made.

RANDOM SHOTS



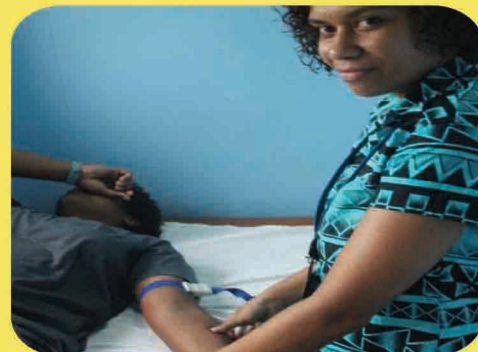
UPSM Sports Day

2016 Fiji Golf Open

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The UoF was one of the sponsors at the 2016 Fiji Golf Open which was held at Denarau Golf and Racket Club in June.



UPSM Blood drive in May this year