

**Monday August 12, 2013**

## **Book evokes multifarious layers of meanings**

A collection of poems written over three decades was finally published in a book titled *Ocean of Shadows* by Fiji National University academic Bhagwanji Kantilal Bhindi.

Mr Bhindi, a lecturer with FNU's School of Communication, Language & Literature, said it was always a dream to publish his work.

"It's been a great journey for my family and I and I'm so happy that everyone has come together to join me on this great day," said Mr Bhindi.

The book was launched by Dr Mohit Prasad, Associate Dean, Research & Graduate Affairs, Faculty of Arts, Law and Education, University of the South Pacific.

Dr Prasad congratulated Mr Prasad for his commitment to, and passion for literature.

"I know Mr Bhindi from my teaching days and he's a very humble and kind person. Thank you for this wonderful book and to his family as well who have supported him all the way."

He said he hoped the book would inspire other people to publish their work especially those from the *I-taukei* community.

More than two hundred people attended the event, held at the main hall Nasinu Campus, FNU.

The poems in *Ocean of Shadows* have been described as a reflection of a myriad of life experiences ranging from love, compassion, peace, human and individual nature to violence, justice, relationships, spirituality and individual and universal values.

### **About the Author**

Bhagwanji Bhindi attained a BA (Hons.) degree in English Language and Literature at Fergusson College, University of Poona, now known as Pune.

He also has a Master of Arts degree in English Language and Literature from the main campus of the University of Pune. He continued studies in education, administration and leadership at the University of the South Pacific.

In 1975, Bhagwanji joined Labasa College as a teacher of English Language & Literature. He climbed the rungs of the ladder becoming Head of the Languages Department and then, Acting Assistant Principal at Labasa College.

In 1986, he was promoted to Vice Principal of Labasa Sangam (SKM) College and three years later, became Principal of the same school. In 1994, he was appointed Principal of Mahatma Gandhi Memorial High School where he served for thirteen years and retired at the end of 2007.

Bhagwanji's love and passion for teaching-learning is remarkable. Fiji's Ministry of Education has awarded him the following: Certificate of Distinction to Teaching Profession (1993), Certificate of Teachers Quality Award for Excellent and Outstanding Performance (2002) and Teacher Service Excellence Award Certificate (2005).

He was the Ministry's nominee for the Civil Service Excellence Awards (2005).

Bhagwanji has contributed articles in various journals. He loves creative writing and believes that learning is a life-long journey.

Review: Teweiariki Tearo, a poet, artist and former academic of the University of the South Pacific, describes Bhindi's poems as "written eloquently, fuelled by a deep understanding of philosophies both ancient and contemporary. His verses help cast light on and meaning to our lived experiences and give concrete form to otherwise thin forms of existence. For me personally, they have energized my engagement with the world."

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