



Fiji

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Taking the University to RA

Fiji National University opened a centre for the people of Rakiraki in the Kalawati Building, Vaileka, on Tuesday.

The Centre will do its best to serve the needs of Rakiraki district, the Minister for Education Filipe Bole said at the opening ceremony.

“The opening of the centre is in accordance with the plan the Council has for the development of FNU in Fiji,” he said.

“As we develop our own country, we need people who are trained according to the development plan of our country.”

“We know our country; we know what we want and that is why we have amalgamated six of our tertiary institutions into this University,” Mr Bole said.

In a traditional ceremony the Ra Provincial Council thanked the Fiji National University for the development.

The Provincial Council presented a sevusevu to the Fiji National University to express their gratitude to the University for the choosing to open the first university centre in the province.

Vice Chancellor, Dr Ganesh Chand said the move was in line with the University’s vision to bring education closer to the people.

He said despite the big buildings and flashy cars in Suva, a vast majority of people in Fiji were

deprived of access to University education.

Dr Chand said it became very difficult for parents to send their children to educational institutions that were based in Suva.

“Fiji was blessed with tertiary institutions for over a 130 years. We have had a lot of tertiary institutions but all of them were either based in Suva, or like Fiji Institute of Technology, had only one campus out of Suva,” he said.

The Rakiraki centre currently offers short courses in information technology and Diploma in Front Line Management.

The University plans to offer award programmes such as Diploma and Certificate level courses in Business, Occupational Health and Safety and much more.

Dr Chand said the aim had been not just to make higher education available, but to make it accessible and possible for all.

He said FNU, being Fiji’s own national university from the very beginning of its existence, had determined to take tertiary education out to the people who wanted it in ways that they could afford.

FNU will open a centre in Sigatoka next week and in Savusavu, Kadavu and Bua at a later stage.

JOB VACANCY

FOR CURRENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES PLEASE VISIT PAGE 4

Older is Beautiful and Well Manicured



FIJI National University's beauty therapy students stepped away from their books and out of their lecture rooms to do community work at Pearce Home for the elderly in Suva last week.

The students experienced the satisfaction of being able to engage with the older people of the community.

And the old people thoroughly enjoyed the therapy, manicures and pedicures the students were able to give them.

Six residents of the Home in Butt Street were treated.

Student Sangeeta Maharaj said this was a mission to help people and show appreciation to the older community.

"This is a good opportunity to meet

senior citizens and put a smile on their face. I feel grateful that I have been chosen for this project," she said.

She said community service was important because "I believe that people have a responsibility to provide support for one another.

"We look forward to doing more of these projects in future," she said.

Pearce Home matron Ruci Kava acknowledged the efforts of the students and said they always looked forward to contributions from the community.

Fiji National University believes that involvement in community service is essential for students.

Lecturer Vasiti Baledrokadroka said

service allowed students to learn first-hand about people, culture, and the society around them.

"It allows them to apply all of the knowledge and skills that they learn in the classroom to real life; service helps them connect to their surroundings," she said.

She said they would be doing further community activities in the future as part of the practical segment of the students' courses.

"We want to reach out to different groups of people," she said.

The students will visit the Gospel Blind School on Tuesday 26 July from 3-5pm and the Home of Compassion on Thursday 28th from 2-5pm.

Helping secure a food future

FNU's College of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries took part in the highly popular week long Fiji Agriculture Show in Suva last week.

The show ran from 19 to 23 July and was aimed at creating awareness of the importance of the non-sugar agriculture sector and acknowledgement of the contribution of farmers to the economy.

Importantly, the show provided a career exhibition for students and a convenient one stop shop for anyone interested in seeking advice on any agriculture related matter.

The CAFF display put the most recent developments in farming and animal

production on show for potential students and the public.

Other exhibitors showcased all the fish, timber, crops and livestock cultivated or bred in Fiji and involved key stakeholders in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors

The theme of the show "A Food Secure Fiji - Our Future" was linked to food security in Fiji and the Pacific.

The agriculture ministry said there should have been earlier work done to sustain the agriculture sector and by finding replacements or supplementary products instead of imports.

Agriculture permanent secretary,

Colonel Mason Smith said the aim was to work together to revive this sector to the point it once was.

"Not only sugar, we are also looking at other produce in the agriculture sector such as potatoes, rice and copra," Mr Smith said.

Using nature to solve problems

Nature was the inspiration for some methods used to solve real world problems that are the research area of Rohitash Chandra, a doctoral candidate in computer science at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Mr Chandra was previously a Lecturer in the Computer Science Department, College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies. He is currently on leave in Fiji and gave a seminar organised by CBHTS on Nasinu Campus on Friday 22 July to talk about some of his recent research. His interests include Neural Computation, Evolutionary Computation, Recurrent Neural Networks, Kinematics of Parallel Manipulators and Chaotic Time Series Prediction. He told the seminar audience that cooperative coevolution decomposes a problem into subcomponents and solves them independently in order to gradually solve the whole problem. He presented an adaptive cooperative coevolution problem decomposition framework for training recurrent neural networks on chaotic time series problems that was an improvement on several other computational intelligence methods. Mr Chandra's recent work has appeared in journals such as Neurocomputing, Applied Mathematics and Computation, and Journal of Environmental Informatics. He will be presenting two of his research papers at the International Joint Conference in Neural Networks (IJCNN) in the United States next month. His research papers can be found at: <http://ecs.victoria.ac.nz/Main/GradRohitashChandra>



EDUCATION and SPORTS to keep a balance

EDUCATION and sports go hand in hand and it was important to always keep a balance between the two, the Acting Head of the School of Education, Alifereti Cawanibuka, urged secondary school students last week.

He said for many secondary students, sports played a major part in their high school career, but they should not neglect their studies.

“We cannot afford to concentrate on one and forget about the other,” he said.

Mr Cawanibuka made the comments while addressing students of his former high school, Ratu Kadavulevu School, during their tour of Lautoka campus.

He reminded them of how important it was to meet the minimum requirement qualifications when applying to any tertiary institution

“Some of you may be joining us in the new year, some to the three schools that come under the College of Humanities and Education,” he said.

“When you enroll in the institution, remember you are coming here to study.

“Remember to study hard at high school and excel in your final year exams if you are looking towards joining a tertiary institution.

While in greeting students from Sila Central Secondary school on a tour of the

Lautoka campus, Lecturer Dr Dona Ruru reminded them about the importance of choosing the right career paths.

He said it was important for students in form six and seven to have already made a choice of career sorted out.

“Remember the subject combinations you have taken in high school also play a part in deciding your career,” Dr Ruru said.

“You cannot be taking economics and accounting and want to become a pilot or an aircraft engineer. Your careers teachers are also there to assist you and guide you.”

Both schools stopped to visit Lautoka Campus as part of their round Viti Levu tour.

CAFF at animal nutrition conference

FIJI National University's College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry represented Fiji at a recent regional conference held in Australia.

The conference, on Recent Advances in Animal Nutrition, is an event at which experts from the scientific community and leaders in industry have gathered for the past 34 years to discuss issues of importance in animal nutrition.

FNU Lecturer Dr Babatunde presented two papers at the conference and said it would open the way for CAFF to collaborate on research projects with animal scientists.

Speakers were encouraged to speculate on future trends and to explore new ideas, particularly across species and disciplines.

The conference is unique in Australia because it supports interaction between commercial and research sectors working in animal nutrition and by promoting discussion and debate on recent advances.

Dr Babatunde said she gave two short communications.

“They were on evaluating and assessing nutritional value of alternatives and unconventional feed resources for poultry and livestock industries,” she said.

The topics were on nutritional evaluation of rumen epithelial scrapings as a protein concentrate and kolanut shell as a feed ingredient for cockerels. This study examined the best replacement level of kola nut shell meal for maize in a diet for cockerels, using 80 chicks over a 12 week period.

Dr Babatunde said the conference was important because it shared new ideas allowed her to interact with animal nutrition commercial and research sectors.



What is it that brought you here ?

FLOUR Mills of Fiji Group Chief Executive Officer, Ram Bajekal asked participants in Fiji's longest running Management Development Programme conducted by the National Training and Productivity Centre: “What is it that we are looking at in time to come? Reflect on what it is that has brought you here.”

He posed the question in an opening address to 36 future executive leaders who attended the first module at the Nabua Centre in Suva. Mr Bajekal urged the participants to embark on a challenging journey of improving investment, work-life balance, productivity and impact on their organisations.

“You need to figure out how effective this training is and apply it to your work area. If you are able to distinguish the current management related knowledge imparted in this workshop then it will help you in performing better to what it is that you are presently doing in your own work area.

“Look at it purely from your own selfishness, that is, if participating in this workshop will result in personal gain then that is not a bad thing, as it is deemed to rub off on the organisation that you are working for because you will be required to apply current knowledge in situations to improve overall productivity and drive a workforce with improved morale and sense of pride.

The sessions, led by the programme consultant, Dr Jagdishwar Singh, were thought-provoking and pragmatic, with group discussions, cooperative case studies and action learning components built into each module.

A defining feature of the programme has been the practical emphasis to equip Fiji managers to handle leadership and management responsibilities. The process is aimed at ensuring a supply of effective future leaders.

Dr Singh has almost three decades of experience in designing and delivering management programmes in the Asia-Pacific region for a diverse cross section of managerial audiences and has been instrumental in further development of this programme.



PLANS for Fiji National University 2011 Open Day are under way, with the first meeting of the organising committee held under the leadership of Registrar Jone Dakuvula last week.

The Open day activities will be held on the Pasifika, Samabula and NTPC Narere campuses in Suva, on Nadi and Ba in the West, and on Labasa Campus in the North.

All Colleges, schools and departments are expected to participate and have been asked to come up with innovative ideas to interest prospective students



and to promote the presence of the University in the community.

Over the next few weeks, the committee will be allocating budgets for the various sections and arranging for booths, shelters, displays, informational materials and posters.

Banners and billboards announcing the Open Day are to be erected on the entrances to campuses and posters displayed as widely as possible.

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for 28 July.

TEACHER TRAINEES FACE CLASSROOM

AROUND 400 teachers in training have been posted to primary and secondary schools around the country.

Head of Practicum for primary education Anoop Kumar said for the Diploma in Primary second year students had begun their practical teaching in mid May.

He said these students totaling around 239 were based in schools around Viti Levu, Vanua Levu and Taveuni.

“The diploma in primary students second years would return in the third trimester in September,” he said.

Meanwhile the Diploma in Secondary first and second years have also been sent out for teaching practice to schools around the main islands including Levuka.

The Diploma in Secondary students first years have also gone out on their practical for 14 weeks while the second year students in DSE were out on five weeks.

Use what the West has

The Western Division is full of resources – so use them, Divisional Education Officer Western Lorima Voravora told students last week.

He said the west was full of resources compared to other Fiji divisions and it was important to use what was available.

“The western division is also quite developed compared to other divisions.”

Mr Voravora said students should make full use of these advantages and of the opportunities of institutions that had campuses and centres set up in the west.

“There is always room for improvement. The idea is to instill in all of us to go one step up and always try to improve,” he said.

“Today we have freedom of thought and education,” Mr Voravora said.

He was speaking at the opening of the Ba Sanatan College open day activities in Sarava, Ba.

He said the institutions, including FNU, that had their booths set up for the open day were for students to explore their opportunities further for their human and individual development.

The Open Day was an occasion that gave students an extra window to see what others who had gone before them had done.

“It is always good to look back and reflect where you have gone and where you are heading to,” he said.

“Remember the west has industries such as sugar, timber and tourism, and the gold mine is in the west.”

“This is the division that is most productive in terms of contribution to the economy, as a result of that I think it is very appropriate that we have this gathering here and also to further develop resources.

EVENTS

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY SYMPOSIUM

6-8 OCTOBER, 2011

GET HEALTHY! STAY WELL!

Human Resources is here to help you. HR has arranged another staff seminar as part of its health and wellness programme.

Day: Friday || Date: July 29 || Presenter: Dr B P Ram || Time: 12-1pm || Venue: Lecture Theatre, Narere Campus.

HR division has advised that the lecture is important for staff to attend. For more information please call HR on telephone 3393091.

For job vacancies and career opportunities at Fiji National University, go to www.career.fnu.ac.fj

New posts are logged each week for academic and non-academic vacancies, so check regularly for the opportunity that could lead you to a new life.

Some of the positions currently available online:

- Tutor/Assistant Lecturer in Economics (Labasa Campus)
- Laboratory Demonstrator (Nautical Science/Seamanship Programme) – (Re-advertised)
- Part-Time ESL Tutor (International Languages & Business Communications)
- Chief / Principal Librarian
- Manager ICT Operations
- Programmer
- Network Server Administrator (2 Positions)
- Network Technician
- Farm Superintendent
- Telecom & Cable Technician
- Customer Service Officer (International Languages & Business Communications)
- Technical Assistant – Labasa Campus
- Clinical Assistant
- Curriculum Development Consultant (Post Grad Tuberculosis) – (Re-advertised)
- Lecturer in Aircraft Maintenance (Mechanical)
- Principal Grants Officer - Claims (2 Positions)
- Grant Assessment Officer (6 Positions – 4 in Suva and 2 in West)
- Draftsman
- Human Resources Officer/ Assistant
- Generic Lab Technician (Lautoka Campus)

Vacancies