



FIJI NATIONAL  
UNIVERSITY

# Vice-Chancellor's Message

# RATU SUKUNA DAY

## Ni Sa Bula Vinaka!

**Good values are timeless and visionary leaders give us good values.**

Today, 31 May, holds a very significant place in the hearts of all Fijians as we remember and honour the life of Fiji's known visionary leader, statesman, scholar and soldier, and a person who was born to lead and serve his country – Ratu Sir Josefa Lalabalavu Vanayaliyali Sukuna.

Today, it brings all of us immense joy that we get to celebrate as Fijians, knowing that one of our greatest and most respected leaders, cared for the wellbeing of his people, and that is the reason we continue to show love towards others today.

There are many profound and great leaders all over the world but today, we pay tribute to and remember the life of Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna.

It has been 66 years since his passing but the legacy that Ratu Sukuna left behind, can never be removed from the minds of all Fijians as it played a significant impact and role and continues to do so in the lives of all Fijians.

It is empathy that Ratu Sukuna was really known for and his visionary leadership, in having a planned vision for his people and the people he served, additionally, this includes many other lessons he left behind.

Despite being a high-ranking chief, an honoured statesman, and a decorated soldier, he tirelessly journeyed across Fiji, visiting every Fijian or i-Taukei village. With passion and conviction, he persuaded our traditional landowners, our forefathers, of the urgent need for an institution to safeguard their land from exploitation.

This relentless effort culminated in the creation of the Native Land Trust Board now known as the i-Taukei Land Trust Board, the revered guardian of all native land in Fiji.

Good leadership ensures that people follow in a collective direction that aligns everyone to a positive pathway.

Fiji is known for its multiethnic history, which I believe was considered highly important by Ratu Sukuna, in his tireless effort to include all types of races under our Noble Banner Blue making us all feel as one.

In 1936, during the Bose Levu Vakaturaga, Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna, who was known for not mincing his words stated the following in the i-Taukei language:

*"We cannot in these days adopt an attitude that will conflict with the welfare of those who like ourselves wish only to live peacefully and increase the wealth of the Colony (Fiji). We are doing our part here and so are they. We wish to live; they do the same. You should realise that money causes a close inter-relation of interests. If other communities are poor, we too remain poor; if they prosper, we will also prosper."*

Visionary leaders sit among us daily and the duties of any university like the Fiji National University is to ensure that when visionary leaders like Ratu Sukuna have passed on, that their legacy lives on and be instilled in all students, staff, and academics.

Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna's story is a beautiful one to tell and to pass down to our younger generation.

We must continue to uphold his legacy and show care, kindness, empathy, and love to all Fijians, just as Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna did!

He wanted the best for Fiji and so do we! Unity of spirit and the courage to forge a future that serves all of "us" is his legacy!

As we follow his principles – let us do so with kindness, care, love and respect for each other and all life.



*Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba*

**Vice-Chancellor**

**Fiji National University**

