

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S WEEKLY MESSAGE

14 September, 2026



Ni Sa Bula Vinaka FNU Vuvale,

I hope you are all well as we begin another week of teaching, learning and engagement across our University.

I returned from Australia yesterday after a very productive week in Perth, Western Australia, where I attended the 51st meeting of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) Policy Advisory Council – PAC51.

It is a privilege to serve on this Council bringing a Pacific perspective to important discussions on agricultural research and development. The Council brings together expertise from across the Indo-Pacific to provide advice on the agricultural challenges and development priorities of our countries, and on how research partnerships can contribute practical solutions.

For me, it is important that the realities, knowledge and aspirations of our Pacific communities are part of these conversations, particularly as our region continues to confront challenges around food security, climate change, sustainable agriculture, fisheries, forestry and the livelihoods of our people.

PAC51 brought together representatives from government, industry, research institutions, universities and Indigenous communities, providing an important platform to discuss emerging issues and priorities that will help inform ACIAR's future strategic direction.

Our engagements took us beyond the meeting room and into universities, farms, research institutions and communities. We engaged with Noongar Elders through a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony at Herdsman Lake, met with ACIAR Commissioners, and visited Anameka Farms in Tammin to hear directly from farming and agribusiness stakeholders.

We also engaged with senior leaders and researchers from Curtin University, Murdoch University and The University of Western Australia, as well as

representatives from InterGrain and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It was particularly encouraging to meet John Allwright Fellows currently studying in Western Australia and to hear about their experiences and aspirations.

I returned home encouraged by these discussions and even more convinced of the importance of partnerships that translate research and knowledge into meaningful outcomes for our people. There are also important lessons and opportunities from these engagements that we can bring back to the Fiji National University as we strengthen our research, innovation and international partnerships.

While I was away, it was pleasing to see important work continuing across our University.

On Friday, I was pleased to see another important achievement for our University, with 58 graduates from Cohort 1/25 of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces Trade Training School Engineer Regiment completing their training, including nine women.

Following an intensive year of practical training, the graduates successfully earned their Fiji National Trade Test Certification Class III in Carpenter General and Block Layer. Delivered in partnership with our National Training and Productivity Centre, this programme reflects FNU's commitment to practical, industry-focused education and to equipping our servicemen and women with skills that will continue to serve them throughout their lives.

I congratulate all 58 graduates on this achievement and acknowledge the RFMF and our NTPC team for their continued partnership.

On Saturday, our University also continued its commitment to creating a more inclusive learning environment through the Disability Awareness Workshop hosted by the Office of the Registrar and the Disability Centre at our Nasinu Campus.

I thank our guests and facilitators from the Fiji Disabled Peoples Federation, United Blind Persons of Fiji, Fiji Mobility Alliance and the Fiji Association of the Deaf for sharing their knowledge and experiences with our University community.

As a national university, we must continue to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to learn, participate and succeed. Inclusion is not simply about providing access; it is about ensuring that every member of our FNU Vuvale feels respected, valued and supported.

As we begin another week at FNU, we have another busy programme ahead.

Our College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry will participate in the National Agriculture Show at Subrail Park in Labasa from tomorrow until Thursday. This is an important opportunity for FNU to showcase the knowledge, innovation and expertise of our staff and students while strengthening our engagement with communities and Fiji's agriculture sector.

On Thursday, we will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics. This partnership will create practical opportunities for our final-year students from the College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies through the Ministry's Attachment Programme.

We will also host the Fiji University Sports Association Games this week. To all our students representing FNU, I wish you well. May the best team win.

Let us continue to be a University that learns, serves, innovates and transforms lives through education.

I wish all our staff and students a productive and blessed teaching and learning week.

Vinaka vakalevu and Be Blessed!!

Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba

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