

## **JDP School of Law Holds First Bema of the Year**

The Justice Devendra Pathik School of Law held its first Bema event of the with the Keynote speaker, Professor George Edwards on Friday, April 5, 2019.

Professor Edwards highlighted on the importance of the '*right to appropriate food*' as a state obligation pursuant to the international (UN) conventions, especially the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) that Fiji ratified in 2018.

Assisted by celebrity award winning Chef Robert Oliver, Professor Edwards told a packed Lecture Theatre at Samabula Campus, with VBC to Saweni Campus, that it was the state's legal responsibility to provide its citizens not only with adequate food, but also appropriate food that would alleviate the epidemic levels of NCDs faced by Fiji and other Pacific island countries.

Contributing to the discussion was Fiji Higher Education Commission's Dr. Nikhat Shameem who said that the legal obligation should be included in Fijian schools' educational curriculum because bad habits regarding inappropriate foods were set early in childhood and were hard to eradicate as people reached adulthood.

Robert Oliver added that the medium of television was also very important to ensure that both adults and children received the right message about the types of food that should be available to alleviate diseases currently facing the Pacific Island communities. He said that the Pacific was a natural home for healthy, fresh food but people had been hoodwinked into thinking imported food was better than local food.

Another contributor, Mr. Kini Keteca, Senior Lecturer at the JDP School of Law, made a strong point that young people should be taught to garden and plant food from a very young age as part of their educational curriculum in order to appreciate the fresh and healthy foods that could easily be grown in Fiji.

The JDP School of Law would be holding more Bema sessions in the near future.