



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Monday, Thirtieth day of September,
2024

1. The House met at 9.30 a.m. pursuant to adjournment.
2. Hon. Speaker took the Chair and read the Prayer.
3. ATTENDANCE
 - (a) All Honourable Members were present except for the Hon. Pio Tikoduadua and Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna.
 - (b) The following Honourable Member gave apologies to the Hon. Speaker for absence from the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu.
 - (c) The following Honourable Members obtained approval from the Hon. Speaker for their intermittent absence(s) during the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Jese Saukuru, Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad, Lynda Tabuya and Hon. Charan Singh.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau moved that the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Friday, 6 September 2024 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Hon. Speaker welcomed all Honourable Members to the sitting, those seated in the gallery and those watching the live proceedings on television and the internet.

The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that he had approved the request from the Standing Committee on Social Affairs to refer the Savusavu Town Council Annual Report for 2011 and 2012 to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence. This was to allow for efficiency through the even distribution of workload.

The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that he had received legal advice that by operation of section 11(1) of the Parliamentary Remunerations Act 2014, the new Determination made by Parliament on 24 May 2024 and which was published in the Gazette on 30 May 2024, had superseded the 2020 Determination. As a result, the 2020 Determination had been effectively revoked, and the 2024 Determination has established the current salaries at 100% effective from 1 August 2024.

6. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that the following paper was for information only and would not be referred to any Standing Committee –

- (a) Reserve Bank of Fiji – Quarterly Review June 2024.

7. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that there were no Committee reports for presentation.

8. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

- (a) The Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Semi Koroilavesau and Hon. Viliame Naupoto subsequently responded.
- (b) The Minister for Education the Hon. Aseri Radrodro delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Hem Chand and Hon. Viliame Naupoto subsequently responded.
- (c) The Minister for iTaukei Affairs and Culture, Heritage and Arts the Hon. Ifereimi Vasu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Joseph Nand and Hon. Viliame Naupoto subsequently responded.

9. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

- 215/2024 Hon. Penioni Ravunawa to ask the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Youth with a Mission (YWAM) New Zealand and the Ministry.
- 216/2024 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu to ask the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises and Veteran Affairs – Can the Prime Minister update Parliament on Fiji’s acceptance of the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology, 2017.
- 217/2024 Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on the plans to address flooding in Rakiraki Town.
- 218/2024 Hon. Kalaveti Ravu asked the Minister for Employment, Productivity and Workplace Relations – Can the Minister update Parliament on the working conditions of foreign workers in Fiji.
- 219/2024 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament how the Ministry monitors and controls fundraising in schools.
- 220/2024 Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the Northern Development Programme and its impact on stimulating economic activities in Vanua Levu.
- 221/2024 Hon. Semi Koroilavesau asked the Minister for Fisheries and Forestry – Can the Minister inform Parliament if the initiative to replant trees on riverbanks to reduce soil erosion and use mangroves aimed at contributing to coral reef rehabilitation, is still being pursued.
- 222/2024 Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Minister for Youth and Sports – Can the Minister update Parliament if there are pathways in place for students who wish to pursue rugby as a career after having participated in the Fiji Secondary School Rugby Deans Competition.
- 223/2024 Hon. Viam Pillay asked the Minister for Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry – Can the Minister update Parliament on the progress of maintaining and repairing the railway network system that was damaged and is no longer in use.

224/2024 Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna asked the Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management – With the revival of the Rural Outer Island Programme, how will the Ministry implement this programme to ensure maximum return on this investment.

Written Questions

225/2024 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Deputy Prime Minister –

- (a) provide an update on the current status and progress of Fiji's 5G readiness;
- (b) key initiatives being undertaken to facilitate this transition; and
- (c) timelines for rollout.

226/2024 Hon. Sashi Kiran to ask the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –

- (a) when can Fiji expect the confirmation of tests for the 552 new HIV cases recorded from January to June of this year;
- (b) when will the necessary testing kits be expected to arrive in Fiji; and
- (c) what measures are being implemented to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals who have started the anti-retroviral therapy based on these initial test results.

227/2024 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister provide detailed information on the Tertiary Scholarship and Loan Services (TSLS) for the years 2023 to 2024, specifically –

- (a) a year-wise breakdown of the number of students and the TSLS funds disbursed as loans and scholarships to each Higher Education Institute;
- (b) a year-wise breakdown of the number of students at each Higher Education Institute who did not complete their studies during this period and the total amount of TSLS funds disbursed that could not be effectively utilised due to student withdrawals or failures; and
- (c) the steps the Ministry has taken to address the issue of students not completing their studies under the TSLS programme, and the strategies in place to improve retention and completion rates.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Speaker approved the request from the Government Whip for Oral Question 215/2024 to be asked on Thursday. The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that Oral Question 216/2024 had been withdrawn by the Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu.

The responses to Written Questions 225/2024 and 227/2024 were tabled by the respective Minister. The Hon. Leader of the Government informed that the Hon. Minister for Health and Medical Services would table the response to Written Question 226/2024 in accordance with Standing Order 45(3).

10. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that there were no Bills for consideration.

11. SUSPENSION MOTION BY THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau moved pursuant to Standing Order 6 that so much of Standing Order 23(1) be suspended so as to allow the House to sit beyond 4.30 p.m. to complete the remaining items listed on the Order Paper.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

12. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

- (a) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report of Nadi Town Council Annual Report for the Year 2016' which was tabled on 4 September 2024.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (b) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report of Rakiraki Town Council Annual Report for the Year 2019' which was tabled on 4 September 2024.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (c) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Consolidated Review Report of the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji 2021 and 2022 Annual Reports' which was tabled on 3 September 2024.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (d) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report of the Fiji Airports 2021 Annual Report' which was tabled on 3 September 2024.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Tuesday, 1 October 2024 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 7.04 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

30th September, 2024.