

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

DAILY HANSARD

THURSDAY, 31ST OCTOBER, 2024

[CORRECTED COPY]

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THURSDAY, 31ST OCTOBER, 2024

The Parliament met at 11.08 a.m. pursuant to notice.

DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair and read the Prayer.

PRESENT

Hon. Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises and Veteran Affairs

Hon. Graham Everett Leung, Attorney-General

Hon. Prof. Biman Chand Prasad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics

Hon. Manoa Seru Nakausabaria Kamikamica, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives and Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications

Hon. Viliame Rogoibulu Gavoka, Deputy Prime Minister and, Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation

Hon. Ro Filipe Qaraniqio Tuisawau, Minister for Public Works and Meteorological Services and Transport

Hon. Dr. Ratu Atonio Rabici Lalabalavu, Minister for Health and Medical Services

Hon. Charan Jeath Singh, Minister for Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry

Hon. Filimoni Wainiqolo Rasokisoki Vosarogo, Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources

Hon. Siromi Dokonivalu Turaga, Minister for Justice

Hon. Lynda Diseru Tabuya, Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection

Hon. Pio Tikoduadua, Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration

Hon. Aseri Masivou Radrodro, Minister for Education

Hon. Sakiasi Raisevu Ditoka, Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management

Hon. Ifereimi Vasu, Minister for iTaukei Affairs and Culture, Heritage and Arts

Hon. Jese Saukuru, Minister for Youth and Sports

Hon. Maciu Katamotu Nalumisa, Minister for Housing and Local Government

Hon. Agni Deo Singh, Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations

Hon. Vatimi Tidara Tuinasakea Kaunitawake Rayalu, Minister for Agriculture and Waterways

Hon. Alitia Vakatai Bavou Cirikiyasawa Bainivalu, Minister for Fisheries and Forestry

Hon. Lenora Salusalu Qereqeretabua, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs

Hon. Esrom Yosef Immanuel, Assistant Minister for Finance

Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna, Assistant Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister

Hon. Isikeli Tuiwailevu, Assistant Minister for iTaukei Affairs

Hon. Iliesa Sovui Vanawalu, Assistant Minister for Education

Hon. Ratu Rakuita Solesole Sauramaeva Vakalalabure, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration

Hon. Sashi Kiran, Assistant Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation

Hon. Jovesa Rokuta Vocea, Assistant Minister for Rural, Maritime Development and Disaster Management

Hon. Tomasi Niuvotu Tunabuna, Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Waterways

Hon. Kalaveti Vodo Ravu

Hon. Inia Batikoto Seruiratu

Hon. Jone Usamate

Hon. Faiyaz Siddiq Koya

Hon. Premila Devi Kumar

Hon. Viliame Naupoto

Hon. Ioane Naivalurua
Hon. Mosese Drecala Bulitavu
Hon. Hem Chand
Hon. Parveen Kumar Bala
Hon. Penioni Koliniwai Ravunawa
Hon. Sachida Nand
Hon. Semi Tuleca Koroilavesau
Hon. Aliko Bia
Hon. Sanjay Salend Kirpal
Hon. Vijay Nath
Hon. Ratu Josaia Bulavakarua Niudamu
Hon. Ketan Kirit Lal
Hon. Naisa Tatau Tuinaceva
Hon. Viam Pillay
Hon. Shalen Kumar
Hon. Alipate Nagata Tuicolo
Hon. Virendra Lal
Hon. Rinesh Ritesh Sharma
Hon. Taito Rokomatu Matasawalevu
Hon. Joseph Nitya Nand

Absent

Hon. Sanjay Salend Kirpal

MINUTES

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT.- Madam Deputy Speaker, I move:

That the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Thursday, 3rd October, 2024, as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

HON. A.V.B.C. BAINIVALU.- Madam Deputy Speaker, I second the motion,

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE SPEAKER

Welcome

I welcome all honourable Members to today' Special Sitting and those who are watching proceedings on television and on the internet. Thank you for your continued interest in the workings of your Parliament.

Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs -
Ministry of Civil Service 2019-2020 Annual Report

For the information of all honourable Members, please, kindly take note that the Office of the Speaker has duly approved the request from the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights to refer the 2019-2020 Ministry of Civil Service Annual Report to the Standing Committee

on Foreign Affairs and Defence.

Photo Session

Honourable Members, after the proceedings today, you are all requested to join us all for a family photo at the main entrance of Parliament.

**NOMINATIONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI**

DEPUTY SPEAKER.- I now call upon the honourable Prime Minister for his nomination.

HON. S.L. RABUKA.- Madam Deputy Speaker, pursuant to Section 84 of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji:

I hereby nominate Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu to be appointed as the President of the Republic of Fiji.

DEPUTY SPEAKER.- I now call upon the honourable Leader of the Opposition for his nomination.

HON. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Deputy Speaker, pursuant to Section 84 of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji:

I hereby nominate Ratu Meli Natalatu Tora Tavaiqia to be appointed as President of the Republic of Fiji.

DEPUTY SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, there being more than one nomination, please, take note that Parliament shall now proceed to the roll call vote.

Pursuant to Standing Order 136(4), the Secretary-General will ask each honourable Member separately on how the Member wishes to vote. Each Member, upon being called, will give his or her vote, stating the name of the person for whom the Member wishes to vote.

Honourable Members, pursuant to Standing Order 136(5), and after tallying the results, the Secretary-General will read out the results of the vote. Please, take further note that the roll call vote will be undertaken in alphabetical order of surnames.

Secretary-General, please, proceed with the roll call vote.

Government Nominee – Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu

- 1) Bainivalu, Honourable Alitia Vakatai Bavou Cirikiyasawa
- 2) Bia, Honourable Alik
- 3) Bulitavu, Honourable Mosese Drecala
- 4) Ditoka, Honourable Sakiasi Raisevu
- 5) Gavoka, Honourable Viliame Rogoibulu
- 6) Immanuel, Honourable Esrom Yosef
- 7) Kamikamica, Honourable Manoa Seru Nakausabaria
- 8) Kiran, Honourable Sashi
- 9) Lalabalavu, Honourable Dr. Ratu Atonio Rabici
- 10) Naivalurua, Honourable Ioane

- 11) Nalumisa, Honourable Maciu Katamotu
- 12) Naupoto, Honourable Viliame
- 13) Niudamu, Honourable Ratu Josaia Bulavakarua
- 14) Prasad, Honourable Prof. Biman Chand
- 15) Radrodro, Honourable Aseri Masivou
- 16) Ravu, Honourable Kalaveti Vodo
- 17) Ravunawa, Honourable Penioni Koliniwai
- 18) Rayalu, Honourable Vatimi Tidara Tuinasakea Kaunitawake
- 19) Matasawalevu, Honourable Taito Rokomatu
- 20) Saukuru, Honourable Jese
- 21) Singh, Honourable Agni Deo
- 22) Singh, Honourable Charan Jeath
- 23) Tabuya, Honourable Lynda Diseru
- 24) Tikoduadua, Honourable Pio
- 25) Tubuna, Honourable Sakiusa
- 26) Tuicolo, Honourable Alipate Nagata
- 27) Tuinaceva, Honourable Naisa Tatau
- 28) Tuisawau, Honourable Ro Filipe Qaraniqio
- 29) Tuiwailevu, Honourable Ratu Isikeli
- 30) Tunabuna, Honourable Tomasi Niuvotu
- 31) Turaga, Honourable Siromi Dokonivalu
- 32) Vakalalabure, Honourable Ratu Rakuila Solesole Sauramaeva
- 33) Vanawalu, Honourable Iliesa Sovui
- 34) Vasu, Honourable Ifereimi
- 35) Vocea, Honourable Jovesa Rokuta
- 36) Vosarogo, Honourable Filimoni Wainiqolo Rasokisoki

Opposition Nominee - Ratu Meli Natalatu Tora Tavaiqia

- 1) Bala, Honourable Parveen Kumar
- 2) Chand, Honourable Hem
- 3) Koroilavesau, Honourable Semi Tuleca
- 4) Koya, Honourable Faiyaz Siddiq
- 5) Kumar, Honourable Premila Devi
- 6) Kumar, Honourable Salen
- 7) Lal, Honourable Ketan Kirit
- 8) Lal, Honourable Virendra
- 9) Maharaj, Honourable Alvick Avhikrit
- 10) Nand, Honourable Joseph Nitya
- 11) Nand, Honourable Sachida
- 12) Nath, Honourable Vijay
- 13) Pillay, Honourable Viam
- 14) Sharma, Honourable Rinesh Ritesh
- 15) Usamate, Honourable Jone

SECRETARY-GENERAL.- Votes cast:

- | | | |
|---|---|----|
| 1) Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu | - | 37 |
| 2) Ratu Meli Natalatu Tora Tavaiqia | - | 16 |

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI**

DEPUTY SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, the results of the roll call votes are as follows:

- 1) Nominee of the Prime Minister, Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu - 37 votes;
- 2) Nominee of the Leader of the Opposition, Ratu Meli Natalatu Tora Tavaiqia - 16 votes.

Honourable Members, pursuant to Section 84(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji and Standing Order 136 (6), I now declare Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu, having received the votes of more than half of all the Members present, appointed as the President of the Republic of Fiji.

(Acclamation)

Honourable Members, at this juncture, I wish to convey, on behalf of Parliament, our warmest congratulations to the Turaga Bale Na Tui Cakau, Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu, on his appointment as the President-elect of the Republic of Fiji. I am confident that he will continue the good work of his predecessors, and I wish him the very best in his tenure as custodian of the Office of the President.

I also take this opportunity to thank you all, honourable Members, for your participation in this important Constitutional process.

ADJOURNMENT

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT.- Madam Deputy Speaker, I move:

That Parliament adjourns until Monday, 2nd December, 2024 at 9.30 a.m.

HON. A.V.B.C. BAINIVALU.- Madam Deputy Speaker, I second the motion.

DEPUTY SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

DEPUTY SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, that concludes the end of the Special Sitting and I thank you all for your participation this morning.

Honourable Members, Ratu Naiqama Tawakecolati Lalabalavu is President-Elect and does not assume the Constitutional role until he takes office on the day he swears the Oath for President. That being the case, the Speaker will remain in office until 11th November, 2024. The Office of the Speaker will be deemed to fall vacant on 12th November, 2024, and pursuant to Standing Order 17, the vacancy will be filled on Monday, 2nd December, 2024.

Honourable Members, I now declare Parliament adjourned until Monday, 2nd December, 2024 at 9.30 a.m., and may I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very safe and happy Diwali. *Vinaka vakalevu.*

The Parliament adjourned at 11.28 a.m.