



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Monday, Second day of December, 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. Joseph Nand and Hon. Vijay Nath.
 - (b) The following Honourable Members gave apologies to the Hon. Speaker for absence from the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Graham Leung, Hon. Sakiasi Ditoka and Hon. Charan Singh.
 - (c) The following Honourable Member obtained approval from the Hon. Speaker for intermittent absence during the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka.
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 Tuesday, 12 November 2024 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

The 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. Hon. Speaker also congratulated the Fiji Airways Men's Sevens Rugby Team for winning the Dubai Sevens.

The Hon. Speaker also welcomed the Australian High Commissioner to Parliament.

6. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

The following reports were tabled and referred to the relevant Standing Committees –

(a) Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

- (i) Ministry of Civil Service – 2021–2022 Annual Report;
- (ii) Biosecurity Authority of Fiji – 2011–2013 Annual Report; and
- (iii) Fiji National Sports Commission – August 2022 to July 2023 Annual Report.

(b) Standing Committee on Public Accounts

- (i) Office of the Auditor-General – Annual Report 2022;
- (ii) Report of the Auditor-General of the Republic of Fiji – Audit Report on Public Enterprises and Other Entities; and
- (iii) Report of the Auditor-General of the Republic of Fiji – Audit Report on Municipal Councils.

(c) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

- (i) Tavua Town Council – Annual Report for the Year Ended 2019; and
- (ii) Labasa Town Council – 2018 Annual Report.

7. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

(a) The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications the Hon. Manoa Kamikamica delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Faiyaz Koya and Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva subsequently responded.

(b) The Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Semi Koroilavesau and Hon. Viliame Naupoto subsequently responded.

(c) The Minister for Education the Hon. Aseri Radrodro delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Hem Chand and Hon. Aliko Bia subsequently responded.

- (d) The Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection the Hon. Lynda Tabuya delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Virendra Lal and Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu subsequently responded.

8. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

- 259/2024 Hon. Penioni Ravunawa asked the Minister for Agriculture and Waterways – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the current evaluation of the erosion issue along the Rewa riverbanks specifically between the central Nausori Town boundary and Lakena Point.
- 260/2024 Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna asked the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises, Immigration and Fiji Police Force – Can the Prime Minister update Parliament on the status of Fiji's National Carbon Strategy Roadmap.
- 261/2024 Hon. Alipate Tuicolo asked the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises, Immigration and Fiji Police Force – Can the Prime Minister update Parliament on plans to reinstate the Rotuma, Rabi and Kioa Island Councils.
- 262/2024 Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the current status of the Vanua Levu Tourism Development Programme.
- 263/2024 Hon. Viam Pillay to ask the Minister for Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry – Can the Minister inform Parliament whether compensation will be provided to cane farmers for the unharvested cane due to the premature closure of the cane mills.
- 264/2024 Hon. Esrom Immanuel asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister update Parliament on some of the developments and plans related to Fiji's membership on the International Solar Alliance.
- 265/2024 Hon. Semi Koroilavesau asked the Minister for Defence and Veteran Affairs – With rising tensions in the Middle East, particularly Israel's recent attacks on Lebanon, what measures are being taken to ensure the safety of our troops serving in UNIFIL and other peacekeeping missions.

- 266/2024 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on the work undertaken by the Ministry on the Building Permit Application System and how it will contribute to order and efficiency of the building development process in Fiji.
- 267/2024 Hon. Sachida Nand asked the Minister for Agriculture and Waterways – Can the Minister update Parliament on the progress in converting Naduruloulou Research Station to solely focus on research and development of organic agriculture in Fiji.
- 268/2024 Hon. Kalaveti Ravu 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 how Telecom Fiji in partnership with New Zealand’s Kordia is progressing in boosting Fiji’s digital connectivity.

Written Questions

- 269/2024 Hon. Virendra Lal asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Deputy Prime Minister provide a list of the 240 sites identified to receive Starlink or any other similar satellite services and specify the areas they will cover to improve connectivity in remote and rural regions.
- 270/2024 Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament on how much revenue was generated by the Fiji Airways Aviation Academy since 2020.
- 271/2024 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following for each Municipal Council from January 2024 to date –
- (a) list of Councils currently run by an Executive Chair including the salary levels and the dates of appointment; and
 - (b) total expenditure (inclusive of allowance/salary, travel allowances, meals, and accommodation) for Special Administrators and Executive Chairs.
- 272/2024 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua asked the Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) total number of applications received in the period from 1 January 2023 to 31 July 2024 for license to extract low value minerals by division;
 - (b) total number of licenses issued in the period from 1 January 2023 to 31 July 2024 to extract low value minerals by division; and

- (c) total number of applications rejected or shelved in the period from 1 January 2023 to 31 July 2024 for license to extract low value minerals by division.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that Oral Question 263/2024 would be asked at a later sitting date.

The responses to Written Questions 269/2024 and 271/2024 were tabled by the respective Ministers. The responses to Written Questions 270/2024 and 272/2024 would be tabled at a later sitting date in accordance with Standing Order 45(3).

9. 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.

10. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

- (a) The Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises, Immigration and Fiji Police Force the Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (i) That the Presidential Pensions (Amendment) Bill 2024 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (ii) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (iii) That the Bill must not be referred to a standing committee or other committee of Parliament; and
- (iv) That the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Thursday, 5 December 2024, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(b) The Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises, Immigration and Fiji Police Force the Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51, and in particular clause (3) –

- (i) That the Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission Bill 2024 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (ii) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (iii) That the Bill must not be referred to a standing committee or other committee of Parliament; and
- (iv) That the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Wednesday, 4 December 2024, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes Cast –

| | | |
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| Yes | – | 34 |
| No | – | 14 |

Motion agreed to.

11. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

(a) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu moved that Parliament debates the ‘Consolidated Review Report of the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts Annual Reports for 2018–2019, 2019–2020 and 2020–2021’ which was tabled on 1 October 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 ‘Consolidated Review Report of the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation Annual Reports for 2019–2020 and 2020–2021’ which was tabled on 1 October 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 Ministry of Health and Medical Services 2016–2021 Annual Report' which was tabled on 2 October 2024.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (d) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Viliame Naupoto moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report of the Fiji Financial Intelligence Unit Annual Report 2023' which was tabled on 2 October 2024.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Tuesday, 3 December 2024 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 8.13 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

2nd December, 2024.