



# PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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## MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Tuesday, Third 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. Aliko Bia, Hon. Joseph Nand and Hon. Sanjay Kirpal.
  - (b) The following Honourable Members gave apologies to the Hon. Speaker for absence from the sitting of Parliament –  
  
Hon. Graham Leung and Hon. Filimoni Vosarogo.
  - (c) The following Honourable Members obtained approval from the Hon. Speaker for intermittent absence during the sitting of Parliament –  
  
Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka, Hon. Manoa Kamikamica, Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad, Hon. Viliame Gavoka, Hon. Lynda Tabuya.
  - (d) The Hon. Sakiasi Ditoka obtained approval from the Hon. Speaker for virtual attendance.

#### 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 Monday, 2 December 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. The Hon. Speaker also acknowledged the Hon. Sakiasi Ditoka who joined through virtual connection.

The Hon. Speaker also welcomed the President of the Fijian Association of Canada, Mr Sam Basra, and Mr Jeff Lal, the Association's Head of Commerce and Investment. The Hon. Speaker also welcomed the Youth Fellowship Group from the Wainimako Methodist Church Circuit.

6. MOTION BY THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau moved that Parliament adopts the sitting calendar for the year 2025.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

7. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(a) Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

- (i) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Viliame Naupoto tabled the Consolidated Review Report of the Legal Aid Commission 2018 to 2023 Annual Reports.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report would be initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

- (ii) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Viliame Naupoto tabled the annual review of the Office of the Attorney-General Annual Reports – 2006 to 2023.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report would be initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

- (iii) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Viliame Naupoto tabled the annual Review Report of the Reserve Bank of Fiji Insurance 2023 Annual Report.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report would be initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

(b) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu tabled the Consolidated Review Report of the Suva City Council 2016-2018 Annual Reports.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report would be initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

(c) Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights

- (i) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure tabled the Review Report of the Heritage Bill 2023 (Bill No. 25 of 2023).

The Hon. Speaker informed the Honourable Members that pursuant to the resolutions of Parliament on Friday, 15 September 2023 and Friday, 15 March 2024, and the communication from the Chair on 24 November 2023, the Standing Committee has now tabled its report accordingly, and the Bill would be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Thursday, 5 December 2024.

- (ii) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure tabled the Review Report of the Child Justice Bill 2024 (Bill No. 4 of 2024).

The Hon. Speaker informed the Honourable Members that pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Thursday, 23 May 2024, and the communication from the Chair on 5 August 2024, the Standing Committee has now tabled its report accordingly, and the Bill would be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Thursday, 5 December 2024.

- (iii) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure tabled the Review Report of the Child Care and Protection Bill 2024 (Bill No. 5 of 2024).

The Hon. Speaker informed the Honourable Members that pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Thursday, 23 May 2024 and the communication from the Chair on 5 August 2024, the Standing Committee has now tabled its report accordingly, and the Bill would be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Thursday, 5 December 2024.

## 8. 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. Penioni Ravunawa subsequently responded.
- (b) The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation the Hon. Viliame Gavoka delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Faiyaz Koya and Hon. Mosese Bulitavu subsequently responded.
- (c) The Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Semi Koroilavesau and Hon. Viliame Naupoto subsequently responded.
- (d) The Minister for Education the Hon. Aseri Radrodoro delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Jone Usamate and Hon. Alipate Tuicolo subsequently responded.

## 9. QUESTIONS

### **Oral Questions**

- 273/2024 Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva asked the Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the proactive measures or preventative strategy that is currently being used by the Ministry to discourage children from moving over to towns and cities and becoming homeless.
- 274/2024 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 status of the Integrated Human Resources Development Programme in its efforts to create employment and support livelihoods in the rural and peri-urban areas.
- 275/2024 Hon. Penioni Ravunawa asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister update Parliament on the salary differences between radiologist, sonographers and those performing doppler scans in the public health sector.
- 276/2024 Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of the work undertaken by the Ministry on the new town developments in Nabouwalu and Keiyasi.
- 277/2024 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Youth and Sports – Can the Minister inform Parliament whether the Boxing Commission of Fiji failed to ensure that boxers were insured for the bouts held at King Charles Park on 26 October.

- 278/2024 Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of the review of the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service Act 2014.
- 279/2024 Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the Ministry’s projection and expectations for Global Tourism as articulated by the World Travel and Tourism Council.
- 280/2024 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister update Parliament on why teachers who have upgraded their qualifications have not received their commensurate salaries.

### **Written Questions**

- 281/2024 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) yearly data on teacher absenteeism in schools from 2022 to 2024 including a breakdown by urban, peri-urban, rural and outer Islands as well as the total number of teachers in each category; and
  - (b) explain what measures the Ministry has implemented to address teacher absenteeism and ensure minimal disruption to student learning.
- 282/2024 Hon. Sashi Kiran asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) data available on the number of women who experience Postpartum Depression;
  - (b) are there specific statistics available regarding the demographics of these women (age and socioeconomic status); and
  - (c) what services or programmes are currently offered to support women dealing with Postpartum Depression.
- 283/2024 Hon. Ketan Lal asked the Minister for Justice – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the Stop Departure Order in particular –
- (a) the specific section of Fijian laws under which a Stop Departure Order may be issued; and
  - (b) the agency or agencies authorised to issue Stop Departure Orders.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The responses to Written Questions 281/2024, 282/2024 and 283/2024 were tabled by the respective Ministers.

10. 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.

11. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

The Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (a) That the Aquaculture Bill 2024 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (b) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (c) That the Bill must not be referred to a standing committee or other committee of Parliament; and
- (d) That the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Thursday, 5 December 2024, with the right of reply given to her as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes Cast –

Yes	–	34 (including the 1 vote through virtual attendance)
No	–	15

Motion agreed to.

12. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

- (a) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna moved that Parliament debates the ‘Consolidated Review Report of the Accident Compensation Commission Fiji 2019, 2020 and 2021 Annual Reports’ which was tabled on 3 October 2024.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (b) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report of the Sugar Cane Growers Fund 2021 Annual Report' which was tabled on 3 October 2024.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (c) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources the Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report of the Ministry of Waterways 2017–2018 Annual Report' which was tabled on 3 October 2024.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

### 13. ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. Deputy Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Wednesday, 4 December 2024 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 8.00 p.m.

**Speaker of Parliament**

**Secretary-General to Parliament**

3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2024.