



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Wednesday, Fourth 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. Premila Kumar.
 - (b) The following Honourable Members gave apologies to the Hon. Speaker for absence from the sitting of Parliament –

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

Hon. Charan Singh, Hon. Alitia Bainivalu and Hon. Viliame Gavoka.
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, 3 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 welcomed the athletics team from Vanuabalavu Primary School.

The Hon. Speaker also welcomed the Australian Federal Parliamentary Delegation led by the President of the Senate, Senator Sue Lines.

Hon. Speaker delivered his ruling on a point of order raised by the Hon. Jone Usamate on Tuesday, 3 December 2024.

6. 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 Committee's Review Report of the Accident Compensation Commission Fiji 2022 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.

- (ii) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Viliame Naupoto tabled the Committee's Consolidated Review Report of the Ministry of Civil Service 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 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.

(b) Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Esrom Immanuel tabled the Committee's Review Report on the Audit Bill 2024 (Bill No. 17 of 2024).

The Hon. Speaker informed the Honourable Members that pursuant to Standing Order 121(1) and Standing Order 86, the Standing Committee has now tabled its report accordingly, and the Bill would now be set down for consideration by the Committee of the Whole Parliament on a future sitting day.

7. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

- (a) Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Inia Seruiratu and Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva subsequently responded.
- (b) 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. Alikei Bia subsequently responded.
- (c) 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. Viliame Naupoto subsequently responded.
- (d) The Minister for Employment, Productivity and Workplace Relations the Hon. Agni Singh delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Joseph Nand and Hon. Alipate Tuicolo subsequently responded.
- (e) The Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Ketan Lal and Hon. Ioane Naivalurua subsequently responded.
- (f) The Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Ketan Lal and Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu subsequently responded.

8. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

- 263/2024 Hon. Viam Pillay asked 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.
- 284/2024 Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva to ask the Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection – Can the Minister update Parliament on street dwellers, including children, that have been removed from the streets and reunited with their families.
- 285/2024 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu 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 outsourcing of passport services for our overseas diaspora in New Zealand and Australia.

- 286/2024 Hon. Viliame Naupoto 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 inform Parliament whether the Police investigates cases of reckless and dangerous driving posted on social media.
- 287/2024 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 new Co-operative Development Grant that was approved in this financial year.
- 288/2024 Hon. Rinesh Sharma asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament on the outcomes of the consultations and feasibility study that was conducted for the establishment of Fiji’s cannabis industry.
- 289/2024 Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection – Can the Minister update Parliament whether there are strategies in place to address the concerns of people living with disability with regards to accessing public transportation such as buses, boats and airplanes.
- 290/2024 Hon. Faiyaz Koya to ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament what specific measures is the Ministry implementing to prepare the tourism industry for the upcoming cyclone season and the impacts of climate change.
- 291/2024 Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the strategies adopted by the Municipal Councils to strengthen their revenue streams and institutional strengthening.
- 292/2024 Hon. Shalen Kumar asked the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises, Immigration and Fiji Police Force – With the rise in incidents of police brutality against suspects, can the Prime Minister inform Parliament what measures is the Fiji Police Force implementing to curb these acts.
- 293/2024 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua to ask the Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Ministry’s status of disaster preparedness considering we are into the hurricane season.

Written Question

294/2024 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament on the following –

- (a) total number of applications received for tourism projects by division for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 July 2024;
- (b) total number of applications approved for tourism projects by division for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 July 2024; and
- (c) number of applications rejected or shelved for tourism projects by division for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 July 2024.

Oral Question 284/2024 was withdrawn by the Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva. The Hon. Speaker informed that Oral Questions 290/2024 and 293/2024 would be deferred to Thursday. The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Leader of the Government informed that the response to Written Question 294/2024 would be tabled by the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister 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) BSP Fiji Bill 2024 (Bill No. 22 of 2024)

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (i) That the BSP Fiji 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, 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) Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission Bill 2024 (Bill No. 19 Of 2024)

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 that pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Monday, 2 December 2024, that the Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission Bill 2024 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes Cast –

Yes	–	33
No	–	15

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to establish the Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission, enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Thursday, 5 December 2024 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 10.14 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

4th December, 2024.