



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Monday, Twenty-seventh day of April, 2026

1. The House met at 9.30 a.m. pursuant to adjournment.

2. Hon. Speaker took the Chair and read the Prayer.

3. TRIBUTE TO THE FORMER PRESIDENT AND SPEAKER

The Hon. Speaker paid tribute to the former Speaker of Parliament and former President of the Republic of Fiji the late His Excellency Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, and invited all Honourable Members to observe a moment of silence in his honour.

4. ATTENDANCE

(a) The Hon. Esrom Immanuel, Hon. Viam Pillay and Hon. Sanjay Kirpal conveyed their apologies to the Hon. Speaker for being unable to attend the sitting of Parliament.

(b) The following Honourable Members obtained approval from the Hon. Speaker for intermittent absence during the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Joseph Nand, Hon. Lynda Tabuya, Hon. Sakiasi Ditoka, Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka and Hon. Ioane Naivalurua.

5. 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, 13 March 2026 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

6. 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 welcomed the first group of PL 100 students from the University of the South Pacific.

Clarification on Independent Members and Political Party Roles

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that the Office of the Speaker received correspondence from the Hon. Jone Usamate seeking clarification on the effect of the Political Parties (Registration, Conduct, Funding and Disclosures) Act 2013 ('Act') in relation to Independent Members of Parliament assuming positions as office holders in recently registered political parties.

Hon. Speaker further informed the Honourable Members that having considered the Constitution and relevant provisions of the Act, it had been clarified that there were no provisions prohibiting Independent Members from assuming such positions whilst remaining Independent Members in Parliament. Independent Members, as representatives not affiliated to any existing political party, are entitled to exercise their political freedoms, including participating in discussions and initiatives surrounding the formation of new political parties.

Furthermore, the Standing Orders of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji do not provide any explicit restrictions in that regard. In the absence of any parliamentary rule, constitutional or legal limitation, Independent Members could proceed with their political engagements, provided they continued to adhere to the principles of parliamentary decorum and ethical conduct expected of all Members.

He further stated that the Office of the Speaker would continue to recognise such Members as Independent Members of Parliament, and not as Members of the newly or recently registered political parties, for the remainder of this parliamentary term.

7. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

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

(a) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

- (i) Consumer Council of Fiji Annual Report 2020-2021;
- (ii) Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport Annual Report 2019-2020;
- (iii) Ministry of Infrastructure and Meteorological Services Annual Report 2020-2021;
- (iv) Ministry of Public Works, and Meteorological Services Annual Report 2021-2022;
- (v) Ministry of Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport Annual Report 2022-2023;

- (vi) Ministry of Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport Annual Report 2023-2024;
- (vii) Fiji Public Trustee Corporation Pte Ltd Annual Report 2021
- (viii) Fiji Public Trustee Corporation Pte Ltd Annual Report 2022; and
- (ix) Fiji Public Trustee Corporation Pte Ltd Annual Report 2023.

(b) Standing Committee on Economic Affairs

- (i) Fiji Development Bank Annual Report 2025;
- (ii) Investment Fiji Annual Report 2022-2023;
- (iii) Investment Fiji Annual Report 2023-2024;
- (iv) Ministry of Sugar Industry Annual Report 2021-2022;
- (v) Sugarcane Growers Fund Annual Report 2024; and
- (vi) Sugar Industry Tribunal Annual Report 2021.

(c) Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

- (i) Fiji Police Force Annual Report 2021-2022.

The Hon Speaker informed all Honourable Members to note that the following reports were for information only and would not be referred to any Standing Committee –

- (i) First Quarter Appropriation Statement Actual Expenditure from 1 August 2025 to 31 October 2025;
- (ii) Mid-Year Fiscal Statement Actual Expenditure 1 August 2025 to 31 January 2026;
- (iii) Third Quarter Appropriation Statement Actual Expenditure from 1 February 2025 to 30 April 2025; and
- (iv) Fourth Quarter Appropriation Statement Actual Expenditure from 1 May 2025 to 31 July 2025.

8. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

- (a) The Minister for Information, and Environment and Climate Change the Hon. Lynda Tabuya delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Premila Kumar responded.
- (b) The Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Semi Koroilavesau responded.
- (c) The Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection the Hon. Sashi Kiran delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Virendra Lal responded.

9. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

- 1/2026 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister update Parliament on steps the Ministry is taking to ensure that students in rural and maritime areas have equal access to Special Education services.
- 2/2026 Hon. Inosi Kuridrani asked the Prime Minister, and Minister for Civil Service and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics – Can the Prime Minister update Parliament on the formulation of Fiji’s third Voluntary National Review Report on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 3/2026 Hon. Premila Kumar to ask the Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development – In light of rising global fuel prices driven by ongoing tensions in the Middle East, can the Minister inform Parliament whether the Government will consider reducing the fuel tax levy.
- 4/2026 Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna asked the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways, and Sugar Industry – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Grant Agreement between the Government of Fiji and the Asian Development Bank on enhancing climate resilience of coastal communities project.
- 5/2026 Hon. Virendra Lal asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament on what enforcement mechanisms does the Land Transport Authority have in place to address the issue of motor vehicles parked in, or obstructing bicycle lanes at the Queen Elizabeth Drive.
- 6/2026 Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure to ask the Minister for Information, Environment and Climate Change – Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of the proposed Waste-to-Energy project at Vuda Point.
- 7/2026 Hon. Inia Seruiratu asked the Minister for Defence and Veteran Affairs – Can the Minister update Parliament on the implementation of Fiji’s National Security Strategy (NSS).
- 8/2026 Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu asked the Minister for Defence and Veteran Affairs – Can the Minister inform Parliament the New Grant Assistance under the Japan-Fiji Official Security Assistance (OSA) on enhancing disaster response capabilities.
- 9/2026 Hon. Vijay Nath asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament on what is the current level of Non-Revenue Water (NRW), and how much has it reduced over the last three years.

10/2026 Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva asked the Minister for Rural and Maritime Development, and National Disaster Risk Management – Can the Minister update Parliament on the co-ordination and activation of the Fiji Cluster System.

Written Questions

11/2026 Hon. Vijay Nath asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament of the total infrastructure budget allocated over the past three years, what percentage of projects were delivered on time and within budget.

12/2026 Hon. Inia Seruiratu asked the Minister for Public Enterprises, and Multi-Ethnic Affairs, Culture, Heritage and Arts – Can the Minister update Parliament on the following –

- (a) what are the milling figures of rice production in the last 5 years;
- (b) what plans and incentives are there in place to improve rice production and minimise imports; and
- (c) what percentage of rice are milled at Fiji Rice and other private millers.

13/2026 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –

- (a) what is the total unpaid overtime owed to health workers, and how long has this liability been accumulating to date; and
- (b) how many emergency patients were referred to private facilities since 2023;
- (c) what is the total cost of these referrals.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. Oral Question 3/2026 would be asked later in the week and Oral Question 6/2026 had dropped as it had been addressed through the Ministerial Statement.

The responses to Written Questions 11/2026, 12/2026 and 13/2026 were tabled by the respective Ministers.

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 on the 2022 Fiji Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee Annual Report' which was tabled on 27 November 2025.

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 on the 2019 Tavua Town Council Annual Report' which was tabled on 27 November 2025.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (c) The Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report on the 2018 Labasa Town Council Annual Report' which was tabled on 27 November 2025.

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, 28 April 2026 at 9 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 4.43 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

27th April, 2026.