



PARLIAMENT NEWSLETTER

2015 Parliament Bi-Annual Newsletter. Issue No. 2

"FIJI RE-JOINS IPU"

The IPU is the international organisation of Parliament (Article 1 of the Statutes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union) It was established in 1889. The Union is the focal point for world-wide parliamentary dialogue and works for peace and co-operation among peoples and for the firm establishment of representative democracy.

Fiji is now officially a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) after a lapse of eight years. This follows the official announcement of the Governing Council of the IPU that it has accepted Fiji's application for reaffiliation to become the 167th member.

"Fiji is indeed honoured to be re-affiliated to such a robust and renowned institution as the IPU and expresses its sincere appreciation to the Governing Council for responding positively to our request," Fiji Parliament Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni said.

Upon being granted this recognition, the Fiji Parliament now has access to technical and advisory assistance offered by the IPU to Parliaments affiliated to it.

The readmission of Fiji has been welcomed by the organization as a significant step forward in ongoing efforts to cement democracy in the country and in IPU's engagement with parliaments from Pacific Ocean Island nations.



Fijian Parliament Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni delivering her acceptance speech.

"We are delighted to have Fiji back in the IPU fold.

It will not only allow Fijians to have a voice in international decision-making through their elected representatives, but it also underlines IPU's commitment

to supporting parliaments in the Pacific region to be more effective in fulfilling their democratic mandate," says IPU President Saber Chowdhury.

Outgoing President Opens Parliament Session



His Excellency the President, Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, delivers his Most Gracious speech when he opens Parliament for the last time as President, in September, 2015.

The new session of Parliament was opened on Monday, 14th September 2015 by His Excellency the President Ratu Epeli Nailatikau. In his last address to the Members of Parliament, the President reminded them to lead by example as the people have placed their trust in them to represent their interests.

"While you have a responsibility to your political goal, you have a greater responsibility to the nation as a whole. We need to take a united approach to the development of our nation and to ensure that the best interests of the nation are at the forefront of public

actions and decisions," the President said.

"I will leave office in November confident that great days lie ahead for every Fijian if we continue on the current path of governance, national philosophy and economic growth," the President said.

The opening session began with a Guard of Honour that was displayed by members of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces. Invited guests included members of the Diplomatic Corp, Civil Society, Permanent Secretaries and the disciplined forces.

"A Resilient Parliament responsive to the needs of the people and driven by the ideal of a better quality of life for all Fijians"

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'MEET THE SPEAKER' & 'PARLIAMENT BUS' PROGRAMMES REACHES OUT TO COMMUNITIES



Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni with staff and students of Lekutu Secondary School.

The Civic Education and Media Unit continued with its outreach activities in the second half of 2015, beginning at villages and schools in the Bua province. The main objective of the Parliament Bus programme is to bring Parliament closer to the people by informing communities and students about the role of Parliament and how they can be involved in the democratic process. Schools and communities covered in the Bua/Savusavu areas were:

Bua

Immaculate Conception College Bua College : Nagadoa village

'Meet the Speaker' programme Lekutu Secondary School Naikavaki College, Bua Lomanikoro.



Savusavu

Vivili village, Napuka Secondary, Vatuvonu SDA College, Savusavu Secondary School, Vaturova Secondary School, Savudrodoro village, Savusavu Town.

Meet the Speaker programme was also conducted in the **Ba/Tavua** districts.



Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni with Natalecake villagers.



Kadavu and Yasawa

Villagers and students of Kadavu and Yasawa had a chance to hear first-hand information about the roles of parliament from the "Parliament Bus" outreach team that visited them towards the end of 2015.

This was the first time ever for such a team from Parliament to reach out to the islands, and the response from the people were overwhelming as they better understood their responsibilities and how they can be involved in our democratic process.



Areas covered in Kadavu were: Richmond High School, Vunisea Secondary School, Tavuki District School and Nabukelevu-i-Ra District School in Daviqaile. In Yasawa, the team visited:

NAMARA

1. Namara Village
2. Namara Primary School
3. Yamata Village
4. Yalobi Village
5. Ratu Naivalu Primary School
6. Natawa Village
7. Wayalevu Village
8. Nalauwaki Village

NAVITI

1. Ratu Apenisa Memorial School
2. Soso Village
3. Marou Village
4. Yasawa Secondary/Naviti District Schools

NACULA

1. Ratu Meli Primary School
2. Nacula Village
3. Ratu Namasi Memorial School
4. Nabukeru Village



MPs RETREAT - NATADOLA

Members of Parliament attended a retreat that was conducted with the support of the UNDP Fiji Parliament Support Project Team at the Intercontinental Fiji Golf Resort & Spa from 24-25 November 2015.

Topics covered included:

(i) Information sharing on UNDP supported environmental projects (led by the UNDP Climate Change Team with most of the resource people from relevant Government Ministries/Departments);

(ii) Understanding the research and library facilities available and tips and techniques to improve research (led by Chris Cliff and Asha Kumar); and

(iii) Utilizing social media as a Member of Parliament (session was facilitated by Mr. Ben Shine, who is an experienced media and



MPs retreat at the Inter-continental Resort.

communication specialist who has previously worked as senior press secretary to the NSW Premier and worked with MPs on utilizing

social media to inform citizens of their work as parliamentarians).

Budget Awareness for MPs

Prior to the 2016 National Budget address on 6th November 2015, Members of Parliament had a one-day National Budget awareness conducted by the Minister of Finance, Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum. The session was mainly to inform MPs of the process of putting the National Budget together and also to help expedite the debate in Parliament.



New MP Sworn In

New Member of Parliament Honourable Alexander David O'Connor was sworn-in on Monday, 6th July 2015 to replace Hon. Pio Tikoduadua. An engineer by profession, Hon. O'Connor pledged to serve the nation with diligence, honesty and transparency.

PICTORIAL



Secretary-General to Parliament, Mrs. Viniana Namosimalua and Deputy Secretary-General to Parliament, Mrs. Jeanette Emberson counting the votes for the appointment of the President of the Republic of Fiji, in full view of MPs Hon. Alifereti Nabalivou and Hon. Salote Radrodro.



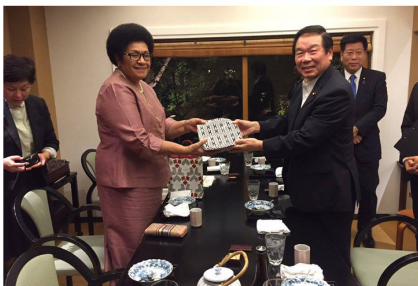
Secretary-General for IPU, Mr. Martin Chungong, Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni and Deputy Speaker, Hon. Ruveni Nadalo at the IPU meeting in Geneva.



Chairman Public Accounts Committee, Hon. Dr. Biman Prasad and Deputy Chair, Hon. Semi Koroi-avesau at the 6th Global Conference of Parliamentarians Against Corruption, Indonesia.



Parliament delegation on their way to Toronto City Hall as partly visible in the background.



Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni exchanging gifts with the Hon. Mr. Nukaga MP, Chair of Japan-Fiji Parliamentary Friendship League.



Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni with the Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee, People's Republic of China.



Vice Chairman of the Standard Committee of Guangdong Province, headed by Hon. Mr. Xiao Zhiheng with Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni.

PICTORIAL



Panelists during the International Day of Democracy hosted in Parliament. (L-R) British High Commissioner to Fiji, H.E. Mr. Roderick Drummond, Head of the EU Delegation for the Pacific, H.E. Mr. Andrew Jacobs, Speaker, Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni, United Nations Resident Coordinator & UNDP Representative - Fiji, Ms. Osnat Lubrani, Programme Director, Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Ms. Tara Chetty, Chief Executive Officer, Citizen Constitutional Forum Mr. Sara Bulutani Mataitawakilai, Coordinator of the Leadership, Governance and Human Rights Program, USP Ms. Natasha Khan.



Hon. Tupou Draunidalo, Leader of National Federation Party Hon. Dr. Biman Prasad, Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Kamlesh Sharma, Leader of Opposition, Hon. Ro Teimumu Kepa and the Opposition Whip Hon. Ratu Isoa Tikoca.



Budget awareness workshop for MPs.



Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit from the Australian Federal Parliament with the Australian High Commissioner to Fiji and one of the First Secretaries.



Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Ro Teimumu Kepa with a Women's Group from Savusavu during the group's visit to Parliament.



Members of Parliament undergo health check after a Parliament sitting.



Members of Parliament undergo health check after a Parliament sitting.

STANDING COMMITTEES OF PARLIAMENT

COMMITTEE MEETING 2014 - 2015

STANDING COMMITTEE	NO. OF MEETINGS	ISSUES BEFORE THE COMMITTEE	REPORTS TABLED IN PARLIAMENT
Justice, Law & Human Rights Committee	77	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Companies Bill (Public Submission) -Employment Relations Bill (Public Submission) * Coat of Arms Bill (Public Submission) * National Protection Bill (Public Submission) * Income Tax Bill (Public Submission) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Companies Bill (Bill No. 3/2015) * Employment Relations Promulgation (Amendment) Bill(Bill no. 10/2015) * Coat of Arms Bill (Bill No . 5/2015) * National Flag Protection Bill (Bill No.6/2015) * Income Tax Bill (Bill No.22/2015)
Foreign Affairs Committee	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International treaties *(UNCAT & The Montreal Convention) *(The IMO Convention) * Ministry of Defence Annual Report 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * UNCAT – United Convention Against Torture and other cruel, in-human or degrading treatment or punishment * Convention on the Unification of certain rules for international carriage by air (The Montreal) * Ratification of IMO Convention (International Maritime Organization)
Economic Affairs	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Petition – Introduction of Service Fees to the Tourism Industry * Petition to TLTB to Review of distribution Land lease 	
Natural Resources	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Rezoning of Shirley Park * Petition by the landowners regarding the Vaturu Dam * Petition by the landowners of Nawailevu Bua of the mining of Bauxite * MSAF Annual Report - 2013 * Ministry of Agriculture - Annual Report 2008-2009, 2011-2012 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Petition not to rezone Shirley Park
Social Affairs	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Petition on Nadroga/Navosa Technical College * Petition on Acquisition of Land - Tokatoka Nakabasi, Navisabasaba Village, Nadroga * Petition on the Rotuma Bill and Rotuma Lands Bill of 2015 * Ministry of iTaukei Affairs - Annual Report 2014 * Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation - Annual Report 2013 * Fiji Higher Education Commission – Annual Report 2013 * The University of the South Pacific – 2013 Annual Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Petition on Nadroga Navosa Provincial High School to be transformed to a Technical College
Public Accounts	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Auditor-General's Reports 2010 - 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on the Auditor-General's Reports 2007 - 2009
Total	205		

Acts 2015

A total of 25 Acts were enacted from June – December 2015.

Act No. 8 of 2015	An Act to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act (Cap. 94).	Act No. 19 of 2015	An Act to amend the Stamp Duties Act (Cap. 205).
Act No. 9 of 2015	An Act to amend the Media Industry Development Decree 2010.	Act No. 20 of 2015	An Act to impose an Environmental Levy on prescribed service turnover and for related matters.
Act No. 10 of 2015	An Act to amend the Sugar Industry Act (Cap. 206).	Act No. 21 of 2015	An Act to amend the Airport Departure Tax Act 1986.
Act No. 11 of 2015	An Act to amend the Sugar Cane Growers Fund Act (Cap. 207).	Act No. 22 of 2015	An Act to amend the Value Added Tax Decree 1991.
Act No. 12 of 2015	An Act to amend the Tax Administration Decree 2009.	Act No. 23 of 2015	An Act to amend the Customs Act 1986.
Act No. 13 of 2015	An Act to amend the Employment Relations Promulgation 2007.	Act No. 24 of 2015	An Act to amend the Customs Tariff Act 1986.
Act No. 14 of 2015	An Act to make provision for the National Flag of the Republic of Fiji and to provide for its use and protection.	Act No. 25 of 2015	An Act to amend the Excise Act 1986.
Act No. 15 of 2015	An Act to declare the Coat of Arms of the Republic of Fiji and to make provision for its use.	Act No. 26 of 2015	An Act to amend the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority Act 1998.
Act No. 16 of 2015	An Act to appropriate a sum of three billion, ninety million, eight hundred forty thousand, and three hundred twenty dollars for the ordinary services of Government for the year ending 31 December 2016.	Act No. 27 of 2015	An Act to amend the Medicinal Products Decree 2011.
Act No. 17 of 2015	An Act to amend the Service Turnover Tax Decree 2012.	Act No. 28 of 2015	An Act to amend the Pharmacy Profession Decree 2011.
Act No. 18 of 2015	An Act to amend the Tax Administration Decree 2009.	Act No. 29 of 2015	An Act to amend the National Fire Service Act 1994.
		Act No. 30 of 2015	An Act to amend the Ship Registration Decree 2013.
		Act No. 31 of 2015	An Act to amend the Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Decree 2014.
		Act No. 32 of 2015	An Act to revise, simplify and consolidate the laws relating to Income Tax.

NEW EQUIPMENT TO BOOST PARLIAMENT MEDIA COVERAGE



Manager Hansard Broadcasting Unit Mr. Mark Harris from the Parliament of Victoria with Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni signing the handing over documents.

The Parliament of Victoria handed over audio-visual equipment worth \$28,000.00 to the Fiji Parliament, as part of its twin collaboration under the Pacific Parliament Partnership agreement.

Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni, upon receiving the equipment, said it was a timely boost for Parliament and one which would elevate its presentation to another level in terms of technology development.

The Victorian Parliament Broadcasting Manager, Mr. Mark Harris trained four local officers on the operation of the devices. Hon. Dr. Luveni thanked Mr. Harris for his time and the knowledge he has imparted which will add value to the Parliament staff.

CHINA DONATES OFFICE EQUIPMENT



In September, Parliament was also fortunate to receive donations of desktop PCs, PC monitors, laptops, scanners and a projector from the People's Republic of China. The equipment were handed over by the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Zhang Ping to the Speaker, Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni. In thanking H.E. Ping, the Speaker said that the donation contributes largely to the Parliament's overarching vision, 'A resilient Parliament responsive to the needs of the people and driven by the ideal of a better quality of life for all Fijians'.

TEACHERS UNDERGO PARLIAMENT TRAINING



Participants and facilitators with Speaker of Parliament Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni.

Teachers from around Viti Levu attended a two days' workshop which was coordinated by the Fijian Parliament with the support of the United Nations Development Program. The workshop, which was opened by the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni, was aimed at enhancing the knowledge of teachers on the roles of parliament which they teach in the education curriculum.

In doing so, the Fiji Parliament wishes to work in partnership with the Education Ministry to develop and inculcate topics relating to parliament in the school syllabi. Secretary-General to Parliament Mrs. Vinihana Namosimalua closed the workshop with presentation of certificates, to all participants.

STUDENT PARLIAMENT



Participants and facilitators with Speaker of Parliament Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni.

YOUTH PARLIAMENT



Participants and facilitators with Speaker of Parliament Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni.

SPORTS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

The Department of Legislature took part in the Fiji Day celebrations that was held at Bidesi Park on October 9th, 2015. Staff members came in their 'kalavata' and led the march procession from Vatuwaqa Primary School down to the Park. The Department scooped the prizes for the Best Organised Team and Best Banner that depicted the theme of the day, 'Togetherness in Harmony for a Prosperous Fiji'.



2015 STAFF AWARDS NIGHT

"You Count, Together We Can Make a Difference" was the theme of the Awards Night that was held on Friday, December 11th, 2015.

Officiated by the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni, the event recognised employees who have gone the extra mile to make a difference to the ordinary people they serve.

"We are talking about employees who have spent long hours away from the comfort of their homes to bring much needed services to our diverse range of internal and external stakeholders."

"All your contribution and the support from your families count in the success of the Department. I personally feel that the theme centers around the word "Attitude". Having the right attitude towards work will of course make a lot of difference in how we do things," Hon. Dr. Luveni said.



Speaker Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni officiating at the Staff Awards Night.

DATES FOR PARLIAMENT SITTINGS

FEBRUARY

8 9 10 11 12

JUNE

13 14 15 16 17

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER

APRIL

25 26 27 28 29

AUGUST

15 16 17 18 19

TO BE DETERMINED

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