

MONDAY, 8TH DECEMBER, 2014

The Parliament resumed at 2.50 p.m. pursuant to adjournment.

MADAM SPEAKER took the Chair and read the Prayer.

PRESENT

All honourable Members were present, except the honourable Prime Minister and Minister for *iTaukei* Affairs and Sugar; and the honourable Ratu Viliame Tagivetaua.

MINUTES

HON. LEADER OF GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT. – Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the Minutes of sittings of Parliament held on Thursday, 3rd December and Friday, 4th December, 2014 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Speaker, I wish to point out a correction under Item 3 on “Members Present” on the Minutes of Friday, 5th December, 2014. The last name in the last line should read “Ratu Viliame Tagivetaua” and not ‘Ratu Kiniviliame Tagivetaua’.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you very much honourable Member, we will take note of that and amend the Minutes accordingly.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

URGENT MOTION

Withdrawal of Appropriation Bill and Budget Estimates

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order under Standing Order 46 (1) and I seek your leave to raise an urgent motion that does not require the usual notice. The urgent motion is that, this august Parliament agrees that the honourable Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister of Finance, Public Enterprises, Public Service and Communications withdraws the tabled Appropriation Bill and Estimates, including the narration before us, so that the Estimates, together with the Appropriation figures under various Heads are corrected and the Appropriation Bill be tabled again at a later date, with the corrected Estimates, including the accompanying narration.

Madam Speaker, this is the urgent motion, and I seek your leave under Standing Order 46 (1) on this urgent motion.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you very much honourable Ratu Tikoca for the point of order. We will certainly bring that up again later, when we will discuss the Appropriation Bill.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

MADAM SPEAKER.- I welcome honourable Members to our sitting this morning and I apologise for the delay in the start of today's sitting. Also, I would like to welcome our guests in the public gallery today.

Before we get on to the oral questions, I would like to advise honourable Members that there is an error in the Oral Questions in today's *Order Paper*, that only the first four questions will be listed as agreed to by the Business Committee.

QUESTIONS & REPLIES

Rehabilitation Programmes – Bauxite Mining Site (Question No. 22/2014)

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA asked the Government, upon notice:

Would the honourable Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources explain what rehabilitation programmes are in place for the Bauxite Mining Site in Nawailevu in Bua?

HON. M. VUNIWAQA (Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the question asked by the honourable Member and thank him for his question.

The rehabilitation programme for the Nawailevu Mine is set out in an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA), which was approved by the Department of Environment in 2010. A fundamental objective of that Report is productive capacity, meaning, the capacity of the mined out area to be able to nurture and grow pine (pine was planted there prior to mining). In that regard, the company is currently undergoing a rehabilitation programme already.

They are planting legumes, water melon and vegetables on the mined out site, and they have been harvesting that to-date. They also have a nursery which houses 35,000 pine seedlings. This is based on the Fiji Pine Limited's recommendation that the mined out area would need 30,000 pine plants. To that effect, the company is currently nurturing these pine seedlings (35,000 of them) in the nursery. Government holds a \$1 million bond to make sure that the company carries out this rehabilitation programme in accordance with the EIA Report.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, one of the problems that the native people is seeing is the volume of soil being taken away from Bua. Can the honourable Minister please explain to Parliament, what measures are being made to replace all those volume of soil that has been taken out?

HON. M. VUNIWAQA.- The reason why soil has been removed from the first mine is because the content of bauxite in that particular soil is very high. You may have noted in the media now (in relation to the second mine which they have already got a lease for), that the company will actually beautify the soil here in Fiji at the site. That is because the bauxite content for that mine is much lower and it does not make sense for the company to be carrying that soil and paying cartage for it to China.

I know that in the media, it is making it sound like there is a conspiracy to carry soil out of Fiji, and that is the intent. But the fact is scientifically and also if the honourable Member could go on to *Google* and check out how bauxite is mined, this is how it happens. The content of bauxite is very high in the particular mine that is happening now. And that is the reason why people are seeing it as soil, but to my eye as well, it is soil, but the bauxite content in that soil is very high.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- A supplementary question, Madam Speaker. Given the comments made by the honourable Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources that the amount or volume of soil that has been taken and given the issue of royalty, that has been the highlight of the FijiFirst Manifesto in the last Elections and it is also part of the Constitution, can the Minister explain as to what stage this issue of royalty is being addressed, or is the Ministry at it right now, Madam Speaker?

HON. M. VUNIWAQA.- Is the honourable Member asking for figures, Ma'am?

HON. RATU. N. T. LALABALAVU.- To make myself clear again, Madam Speaker, the issue of royalty payment. Given the comments made that the shipload of soil has been taken and they are now working on plans of rehabilitation; what about the issue of royalty payments? That is in the Constitution and is part of the FijiFirst's Manifesto.

HON. F.S KOYA. - I rise on a point of order. The question relates to rehabilitation and the rehabilitation programme, and not with respect to royalty, as the honourable Member has stated. It is a separate question, Madam. The initial question relates to the rehabilitation programme and not to the royalties.

HON. RATU. N.T. LALABALABU.- Madam Speaker, my question is on the issue of rehabilitation, the taking away of shiploads of soil and now the issue of rehabilitation has come into play, and the Madam Minister has made comments on it.

Whilst we are talking about rehabilitation, what about the issue of royalty? At what stage are we, at this point in time, and when can landowners expect that as well as those soil has left our shores, Madam Speaker?

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you. My ruling on this honourable Member, is that, we will give you time later on to ask questions on royalty, but right now (as has been mentioned), we will just answer the question on rehabilitation. Please, bring that question up again at a later date.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- A supplementary question, Madam Speaker. I thank the honourable Minister for Lands for the explanation. The 30,000 or 40,000 pine trees that will be planted on the site, I understand the extraction of bauxite from the site is almost completed, so who owns these 40,000 pine trees; the Government, or the landowners?

HON. M. VUNIWAQA.- The lease that the company holds is a 20-year lease, from February 2011, so really, it depends on the maturity of the pine. If it is not near maturity, it would not make sense for the company to cut it, but until that lease expires what they are growing on the land is theirs.

Road Improvements in Kadavu
(Question No. 23/2014)

HON. RATU S. NANOVO asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the honourable Minister confirm if there are any plans for road improvements on the island of Kadavu in the 2015 Budget?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport).- Madam Speaker, I rise to answer the question and I thank the honourable Member Ratu Sela Nanovo for his

question. I would like to inform the Chamber this afternoon, Madam Speaker, that yes, we do have plans for Kadavu roads in 2015.

The roads in Kadavu are maintained by the Ministry of Rural Development, also in conjunction with our maintenance contractor, which is Fulton Hogan that looks after the Central Division. Last week, there was a team from Fiji Roads Authority that was in Kadavu to re-affirm the commitments that we have made on the island, and they also took with them a new backhoe and a tip truck, to help in building a capacity that will be localised in Kadavu, to allow the Ministry of Rural Development to take their work around the island. Occasionally, the team from Suva is going to come, and that is, to undertake repairs of significant work if it is heavy and that is when we will deploy the teams from Suva, but they will only do that when there is a need for that and when it arises.

Madam Speaker, also in Kadavu, we are stockpiling 10,000 cubic metres of gravel that will aggregate, and this is going to take FRA to meet the needs of Kadavu between the next two to three years in terms of aggregate requirements.

In terms of the current rehabilitation work (and this is going to end at this stage during the first quarter of 2015, includes new pavements and the installation of four speed humps for Namuana Road, new pavement up to 7.5 kilometres for Tavuki Road, new pavements up to Richmond School, as part of the Kadavu maintenance grade and contract and the remaining seven kilometres of the Baidamudamu Road and also the Ravitaki Farm Road. This maintenance work is only going to be done following the completion of the work which is partly done at the moment by Maxi Plant Hire and that is the work that is being done on the island, sponsored by the Ministry of the Rural and Maritime Development.

Also there is work, Madam Speaker, on Namara Road. This is new pavement for the first 11 kilometres of this road. The further 3.2 kilometres will have water channels cleared and at present, there has been some work done by the Republic of Fiji Military Force (RFMF). There is also 600 metres length through the village at Namara, which will be done by the Kadavu Depot. Obviously, the new machines that have come are going to help in this area of work.

With regards, Madam Speaker, to the Nabukelevu-i-Ra Road, from the first kilometre to the 33rd kilometre, both are being done by the current contractor. From the 33 kilometres to the end for another 10 kilometres at 43, we will see some rural road upgrades, including three crossings needing significant repairs which we are looking into for the Rural Upgrading Programme for Kadavu in the first quarter of 2015.

I must also point out, Madam Speaker, that we have a significant risk in Kadavu. The risk presented by logging trucks and logging companies that are putting some unnecessary strain in a very, very fragile network. This is one area that we are trying to work at. I know that this is very critical to the life of the economy in Kadavu and we would like to encourage that, however I think there is some common balance that we can strike to allow for the roads to be used, but not to be extensionally damaged by those who are logging wood at the moment.

In terms of the Vunisea Jetty, Madam Speaker, yes, we are replacing that in 2015, and as soon as we pass this Budget, we will be able to start working on the Vunisea Jetty.

I would also like to point out that in 2015, we will see the completion of the last 10 kilometres of the Nabukelevu-i-Ra Road. This year, the work on this road extended as far as Kabariki Village, which is really raising the standard of the road for only four-wheel drive, to be able to be used by RSL trucks and vehicles, which I believe are up to about five tonnes.

In 2015, the Programme will extend the upgrade to the villages of Nasau, Daviqele, Baleira, and Nabukelevu, and this effectively provides improved access for the whole of the south coast on this part of Kadavu. Also, Madam Speaker, between the years 2015 to 2018, the construction of the Vunisei to Jioma new rural road, which currently has a pilot cut, we are going to do some more work on that. This road will extend the network from Vunisei, and will include the benefits of this road on to six villages up to RSL vehicles standards, and these villages include Dravuwalu, Yavitu, Soso, Jioma, Vukavu, and Niudua. At the moment, the Republic of Fiji Military Forces Engineers are doing work in this area, in conjunction with the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA), we will coordinate in a better effort, to ensure that the safe and reliable roads are provided not only on these roads that I have mentioned, but in the other networks within the island of Kadavu.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO. – A supplementary question, Madam Speaker. It is truly interesting and pleasing to note the programme that you have put forward for Kadavu next year, honourable Minister. I just want to enquire, what sort of Budget are you looking at, and whether all these roads will be all-weather roads, after the work has been completed?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA. – Madam Speaker, I beg your indulgence to get exactly the figures that will be standing in Kadavu. But, I think significantly, I have related to the effects of the road that the people will enjoy, and I think that is important.

We are looking at \$20 million for extra rural roads this year, and in that category, Kadavu will also benefit. However, for the benefit of the honourable Member, and with your permission, Madam Speaker, I shall be able to provide those data and statistics for the honourable Member at a later point in time.

Benefits of Free Education for Fijians
(Question No. 24/2014)

HON. B. LAL asked the Government, upon notice:

Would the honourable Minister, please explain the benefits of free education for Fijians?

HON. DR. M. REDDY (Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts). - Madam Speaker, I want to thank the honourable Member for asking this question. Madam Speaker, free education basically means the Government's quest to free up, or remove any obstacle that will result in the parents not being able to send the child to primary, secondary or university education.

Madam Speaker, the Government identified, based on feedbacks from parents and students, the two key obstacles for bus-fare, low income households, and tuition fees in primary and secondary education. With respect to that Madam Speaker, the Government allocated a massive amount of money towards paying up education for access to primary and secondary schools for Fiji.

In 2014, Madam Speaker, the allocation for primary education was raised from \$7.6 million to \$33.9 million, and for secondary education, the allocation was raised from \$11.4 million to \$31.7 million. This resulted in an increase in student numbers entering into primary and secondary schools for 2014, relative to 2013 by 1,869 students, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, as I have alluded to in my earlier speech, in response to the Budget, this has resulted in curbing the problems of students being turned back from schools because of the inability to

pay tuition fees, and I quoted a case of Assemblies of God School, where 200 students were turned back in 2007.

Madam Speaker, in respect to tertiary education, the Government also ensured that no parents would deny their child to access to tertiary education because they were not able to pay for tertiary institution fees. In respect to that, in 2013, a total of \$41.2 million was allocated to cater for the *iTaukei* scholarship, the PSC Scholarship, the Multi-Ethnic Scholarship, and this resulted in 5,434 students enrolled in tertiary institutions.

Madam Speaker, in 2014, the Government's Free-Education Programme, a total of \$83.5 million was allocated, an increase from \$41.2 million. This resulted in a total of 12,943 students undertaking tertiary studies at various institutions. This is an increase from 2013 by 7,509 students undertaking tertiary studies at various tertiary institutions including the University of the South Pacific (USP), Fiji National University (FNU), and Sangam School of Nursing, et cetera.

Madam Speaker, the Government also allocated \$20 million towards the bus fare voucher to assist children coming out from low income households so that they do not drop off, just because they are not able to pay the bus fare and go to school.

Madam Speaker, so basically the Free Education Programme by the Government identified what were the impediments or obstacles for students to access primary, secondary and tertiary education. To extend that further, Madam Speaker, this year, the Government allocated grants which will ensure that students do not pay for tuition to attend early childhood education.

Madam Speaker, that kind of acknowledges Government's recognition of the importance of Early Childhood Education or Pre-School, the importance of not only providing them with training, but also allowing teachers to identify they have certain disabilities that could be identified at that stage, and worked on so that these students are not disadvantaged later on, relative to their other peers in the classrooms.

Madam Speaker, again the benefit of Free Education policy of the Government is to ensure that no parent, immaterial of what kind of households they originate from, are denied of sending their child to primary, secondary or university just because of the socio-economic conditions of the parents' households.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA. – A supplementary question, Madam Speaker. In some cases, some students are telling their parents “You cannot force me to go to school because it is free.” What measure do you have to force those children to go to school? In some cases, students are telling their parents “I can stay home. I do not have to go to school because education is free.” So, what measure do you have to entice, or to force those children to go to school?

HON. DR. M. REDDY. – Madam Speaker, at the moment, we do not have the policy of compulsory education, but this is something that we would want to do at a later stage when we ensure that all the geographical spaces have access to primary and secondary education.

Madam Speaker, at the moment it is amelioration: you talk to the parents, do counselling, et cetera, so that they encourage their child to go to primary and secondary schools. At the moment, basically, it is education by amelioration.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Madam Speaker, a supplementary question. In terms of free education, where some schools would like to provide extra-curricular activities, in terms of scouting, girl guides,

St. John Ambulance and other service related activities. Also swimming, library and drama, which schools would like to provide under free education, how is the Ministry providing for these since some schools would like to provide extra but the Ministry has put certain rules and regulations saying that they are providing education, and these schools would like to provide this, but are not being able to.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, I believe what the honourable Leader of the Opposition is saying that they do not have funds to provide it. That is not correct. In the first instance, what we said to the schools was that, they can do all these which will enhance the overall learning environment of the students and also make them better citizens. What we said to the schools was that, if they have the funds, they could do all those things as well as take permission from the Ministry of Education because the school premises are under the purview of the Ministry of Education. It is through the Education Act that the private schools or owners of schools are allowed to keep their students there and therefore, it is our responsibility in respect to what happens to the child and his or her safety.

With respect to the financial ability of the school, we had said to the schools that prior to the free education grant, they work out how much money they used to get from Government, from the previous allocation, plus the amount of money that they raised through fundraising, plus the amount of money that they levied on the child, compare that with the amount of money they are getting and if it is still more than what they were getting in 2013, or years before would mean that they have excess.

The question is: what are they doing with that excess money? With respect to the other issues, as I said, no, we do not discourage schools from doing that, but for anything that they would want to do, they must take permission from the Ministry of Education.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Supplementary question, Madam Speaker. Will free education improve the quality of education?

HON. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, the issue of quality education depends on the quality of teachers, the curriculum itself and the infrastructure (library facilities, computer laboratories, the whole learning and teaching infrastructure). If one looks at the budget document, Madam Speaker, one will find allocations for all those. There is additional allocation for curriculum development, additional allocation for more teachers, to ensure that the teacher/student ratio increases, a massive allocation for new schools as well as maintenance for existing schools.

There is also allocation for IT facilities, allocation to one learning device per child - \$800,000, the number of allocations for the Ministry of Education, with respect to enhance the teaching and learning environment in the schools, as well as providing more schools so that students have easy accessibility.

MADAM SPEAKER.- As has been the practice, we will restrict supplementary questions to three, and we have had three supplementary questions so far on that particular issue.

Contracted Overseas Coaches
(Question No. 25/2014)

HON. S. VUNIVALU asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the honourable Minister for Youth and Sports, please inform Parliament why we are bringing in overseas coaches for rugby and soccer, and other sports for that matter?

HON. LT. COL. I. B. TUITUBOU (Minister for Youth and Sports).- Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable Vunivalu for the question.

Yes, bringing in overseas coaches is an initiative that started in 2014 and will continue in 2015. It is called the “Short Term Expert Grants”, which is reviewed annually by the Fiji Sports Commission. There has been concern that low performance in team sports in Fiji is attributed to the level of coaches and technical expertise that are available locally. So bringing in overseas coaches will lift the standard of sports here in Fiji, especially at international level. Having international coaches will also allow the transfer of skills and knowledge to the local coaches in the interim, and it will also raise the level of their coaching standards.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Supplementary question, Madam Speaker. The honourable Minister mentioned about international competition. At the Olympics, our Fiji Sevens team will likely perform very well there, what preparation is the Ministry doing to help our boys prepare for the Olympics?

Let me just take us back to the Rugby World Cup in 2011, where the Government gave funding to the Fiji Rugby Union from April, in preparation for the competition in September (only five months) where Fiji performed dismally. The time is now to inject funds into the preparation of our Sevens team. What is being done for our Sevens team, in preparation for the Olympics?

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- Madam Speaker, as I have mentioned, we call it the “Short Term Expert Grant” and right now, we have allocations in the 2015 budget. The Fiji Sports Commission is planning the preparation of our team to the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro and that is our target. This will depend on our rating at the IRB Sevens Series in 2015, where we are trying to be in the top 4 ratings, to enable us to qualify for the Olympics. However, the Fiji Sports Commission has a plan in place for the “Road to Rio.”

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, in the event Fiji qualifies, will the Ministry put some funds behind the Sevens rugby, in preparation for Rio de Janeiro?

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- Madam Speaker, yes the Ministry will supply.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- In terms of the overseas coaches who will be here for the short term, what plans does the honourable Minister have in place for the local coaches to improve and enhance their coaching skills?

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- Madam Speaker, at the moment the local coaches who have been identified are with the Fiji Sports Commission and are undergoing training and understudying the international coaches on whatever team sports we have. So we have a programme in place.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

Committee of Supply

MADAM SPEAKER.- Just before I give the floor, for the point of order that was raised earlier, just from me, on Thursday last week, we finished the second reading of the Appropriation Bill. Now, Parliament will form the Committee of Supply to consider each Head in the Budget Estimates and then the Schedules and Clauses of the Appropriation Bill.

For the Committee Stage, I will sit at the Table with the Secretary-General and Members should refer to me as “Madam Chair”. The Mace will also be placed in the bracket under the Table. The Secretary-General will announce each Head separately and Members may then stand to speak on that Head. You may speak more than once on each Head. Debate should be confined to the Head, Sub-head or Item referred to. Any debate must be relevant, concise and not repetitious. I kindly request Members, therefore, to keep their focus on the 2015 provisions. I sincerely request your co-operation for quality input in the deliberations, and I shall not hesitate to order a Member to cease speaking, if I feel that his or her contribution is breaching the Standing Order. You may also move amendments to the Estimates in that Head. If a Member does move an amendment, Parliament may debate it, and then we will have a vote on the amendment.

At the end of the debate on the Head, we will also vote on it. I remind honourable Members that if they wish to have an electronic vote, they must say they oppose the vote when I ask. I will now ask the honourable Ratu Tikoca to repeat his point of order.

URGENT MOTION

Withdrawal of Appropriation Bill and Budget Estimates

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order - Standing Order 46(1). I seek your leave to raise an urgent motion that does not require the usual notice. The urgent motion is that:

This august Chamber agrees that the Minister of Finance withdraws the tabled Appropriation Bill and Estimates, including the Narration before us, so that the Estimates including the Appropriation figures, under various Heads are corrected and the Appropriation Bill is tabled again at a later date, together with the corrected Estimates, including the accompanying Narration.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, before we move on to address the point of order, I would like to ask the honourable Ratu Tikoca whether in raising this point of order under Standing Order 46, he is asking that notice is dispensed with by leave of Parliament, to allow him to move a motion.

Honourable Members, Standing Order 46(2) states, and I quote:

“Notice is given by delivering to the Secretary-General, no less than two days before the day on which the member intends to move the motion ...”

In this case, Standing Order 46 will have to be suspended to allow a motion to be moved without notice, which honourable Ratu Tikoca has done this afternoon, then read a script beginning under Standing Order 6.

Under Standing Order 6, the powers given to me to decide whether to proceed to a vote to suspend the Standing Orders, as the matter was raised this morning at the Business Committee but remained unresolved, I believe the motion is necessary for the proper conduct of the business in Parliament. I will, therefore, allow vote on the motion to suspend Standing Order 46. May I remind you that under Standing Order 6(3) states and I quote:

“No amendment to a suspension motion may be moved and no debate is allowed on it.”

We will, therefore, move to vote on whether to allow the honourable Member to move his motion immediately without notice, as the motion had been already moved.

Is there are seconder to that?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, I understand that the motion is to ask for leave of Parliament to suspend the notice as required. That being the case, I beg to second the motion.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order – Standing Order 46(1). I seek your clarification on what has been communicated from your good self to us, honourable Members. Are you telling us that the point of order raised under Standing Order 46(1) is to be taken as something that is raised, as a motion to suspend the Standing Orders under Standing Order (6)? Is that your ruling?

MADAM SPEAKER.- Yes, that is the ruling.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Further on that, Madam Speaker, does that mean that under Standing Order 46(1), no Member can ask you to decide on leave, on an urgent motion, and an urgent motion brought this way must be considered under Standing Order 6?

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, begging your indulgence, if we could have a break for a few minutes, so that we can put this in order.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.37 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 3.45 p.m.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, I thank you for your patience.

Honourable Members, my ruling on the point of order is that, under Standing Order 46(1), it states, and I quote:

“... notice is dispensed with by leave of Parliament...”

Standing Order 3 defines “leave of Parliament” as ‘permission granted by means of a motion adopted by Parliament.’

Honourable Members, as the honourable Ratu Tikoca wishes to suspend Standing Order 46(2), I have the power to decide whether to accept the suspension motion and for Parliament to vote on it or not. We will, therefore, now vote on whether to allow the honourable Member to move his motion.

Question put.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	30
Not Voted	-	5

Motion lost.

MADAM SPEAKER.- We will now resume in accordance with the item in the Order Paper.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order under Standing Orders 102 and 107.

Madam Speaker, this point of order relates to the substantial errors that are now being discovered in the 2015 Budget Estimates and Supplement. Altogether, there are 16 Heads and Activities that will be affected. The errors are substantial that changes are necessary to be made in accordance with Standing Order 107. Some examples are seen in Head 11 – Judiciary - \$900,000 is wrongly stated and it should read “\$906,700”, and the list goes on.

You will know, Madam Speaker, that the issue of the errors or mistakes that are admitted were even supported by the Permanent Secretary for Finance in his letter, where he had initially advised on 4th December, 2014 to re-publish the entire Estimates with the amendments. Madam Speaker, the errors or mistakes are substantial, and they must be addressed under the procedures available under Standing Orders, not only to ensure that the issue of constitutionality of it, but more so we are abiding by the new Standing Orders that we have before us.

As the Standing Orders specifically for these kinds of amendments are in Standing Order 93(2) and not forgetting Standing Order 107 especially, as indicated by the Permanent Secretary for Finance on 4th December.

Madam Speaker, Standing Order 107 provides the process for making those amendments and it says and I quote: “Amendments to Bills must comply with the following rules-

(a) an amendment must be in writing;”

Attendance to the amendments in accordance with Standing Order 107 will also cure the errors that are current, which are in breach of Section 144(1) of the Constitution and Standing Order 99, when the Estimates was not tabled with the Budget.

Madam Speaker, not only myself but honourable Members on this side of the Parliament humbly requests you to decide that the Government, as advised by the Permanent Secretary of Finance’s letter of 4th December, 2014 by the reprints of the Estimates with the corrections, and tabling as amendments under Standing Order 107.

MADAM SPEAKER.- I thank the honourable Member for his point of order and for raising this matter with me earlier in the day, which has allowed me to carefully consider the issues involved.

On the issue of the circulation of the Estimates, I refer honourable Members to my ruling on Tuesday, 2nd December, 2014, where I stated that the Estimates were circulated to Members as soon as they were available.

The Opposition has also raised their concerns about the corrigendum to the Budget documents, circulated by the honourable Minister of Finance. I advised honourable Members that this corrigendum does not undermine the Parliament’s power to deal with the Appropriation Bill and the Estimates in any way.

The Budget documents that are now in the jurisdiction of Parliament are the Appropriation Bill and the Estimates. The Estimates are defined in Standing Order 99(2), as the details of the Appropriation amounts contained in the Bill. Any changes to those can only be made by Parliament.

As we consider the details of the Estimates and the Appropriation Bill in the Committee of Supply, any amendments to those must be moved in accordance with Standing Order 100. This applies to both Government and Opposition amendments. If amendments are required, there is no need to withdraw the Budget and amendments can be made by the Parliament under the Standing Orders.

The Estimates for the purposes of the consideration of Parliament do not include the narrative or any supplementary documents. Those sections are provided for the information of Members only. Therefore, corrections circulated by the Government in the form of a corrigendum are for the information of Members only. If the honourable Minister of Finance or indeed any other honourable Member wishes to amend the Estimates under the jurisdiction of Parliament, those amendments can only be made by Parliament during the Committee of Supply. All Members will have the opportunity to move and consider such amendments when we consider and vote on each Head of the Estimates in Committee of Supply.

I also advise Members that it is not in my power as Speaker to require a Minister to make a Ministerial Statement under Standing Order 40. Such statements for Ministers who wish to make a statement on a public matter of national importance.

Honourable Members, with that ruling, we will now move on to the Committee of Supply.

(Honourable Members of the Opposition walked out of the Chamber)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- That is why people did not vote for you!

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Madam Speaker, I rise with a sense of perhaps, sadness, for want of a better word, given that this will be my first point of order to make without the Opposition being present.

(Laughter)

But I am sure that they probably have their own reasons why they have taken the actions they have taken today, despite your ruling, Madam Speaker, on this matter.

I rise to make a point of order under Standing Order 6, to seek the leave of the Parliament, if that is necessary, to adjourn the proceedings of this Parliament, which is the Committee of Supply, until 9.30 tomorrow morning, whereby we can all come back afresh and commence with your direction, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, in light of the time that we have, I am withdrawing the point of order that I raised earlier and that Parliament should commence with the Committee of Supply immediately. Also by the same token, under Standing Order 6, and so much of Standing Orders 23 be suspended, so that we go through the Estimates until at least no less than Head 15 is taken care of tonight.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON THE 2015 APPROPRIATION BILL, 2014

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, since we have 31 Members, which is majority according to Standing Orders, we can vote and proceed with the Appropriation Bill.

In Committee:

Head 1:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, Head 1 speaks for itself, it is fairly straight forward. There have not been many changes but some capital works have been carried out in the upgrade of the grounds for his Excellency, in the Office of the President. It is a very fairly straight forward expenditure in Head 1.

Head 1 agreed to.

Head 2:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, as one will again see that in terms of the variance compared to last year's budget, the Office of the Prime Minister is receiving all in all about \$989,000, less than last year. However, there has been an increase in certain areas within that, for example, the Small Projects now receive \$7 million, and also of course, we have the transfer of the Poverty Monitoring Unit from the Office of the Prime Minister to the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation.

Head 2 agreed to.

Head 3:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the Office of the Attorney-General's budget compared to last year is receiving a \$1.5 million less. We have an increase in the budget where we have the Department of Civil Aviation falling within the Attorney-General's Chambers, where there

has been an increase in terms of subsidies provided to local carriers providing services to remote parts of Fiji. We also have the unprecedented allocation continuing from last year for Legal Aid Commission. Within this, we have the Fiji Intellectual Property Office and the Media Industry Development Authority that falls within the Chamber's ambit.

Head 3 agreed to.

Head 4:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the Ministry of Finance also encompasses the grant that is made to FIRCA, with an additional funding that includes \$5 million for its Capital Projects. Overall, the Ministry of Finance has an increase of about \$8 million that encapsulates the increase in allocations to FIRCA, and we also have some additional amounts that have been put in for the refurbishment of the Ministry of Finance that will be taken into account within this budget.

The Ministry of National Planning is now being subsumed with the Ministry of Finance, which is why there has been increase in their budget.

Head 4 agreed to.

Head 5:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- The Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs, Madam Chair, receives an additional amount, compared to 2014 of \$1.8 million. It also includes, for example, the increase in the payment to the *Mata ni Tikina* and *Turaga ni Koro* and the *iTaukei* Affairs Board, which has also received an additional amount of \$3 million.

I would also like to draw to the attention of the Committee of Supply that the corrigendum that has been given to you, Madam Chair, and all the other honourable Members of this Parliament be read in conjunction with the Heads when they are read, as supposed to separately going in. This is one of the reasons why we have put in the corrigendum so that the entire Estimates is read together with the corrigendum. If this could be noted too, Madam Chair, which makes it easier rather than us having to go line by line.

Head 5 agreed to.

Head 6:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, overall, under this Head - the Ministry of Immigration, National, Security and Defence has received a decrease compared to last year, of \$836,003.00. However, one will note that there has been an increase, as with all the other Ministries that cater for the increase in the FNPF payments for all staff across Government. There is an overall increase for Detention Centre operations, and also there is an increase in IBMS annual maintenance fees allocation.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in recommending this amount under Head 6, to this Committee.

Head 6 agreed to.

Head 7:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, there has been an increase of \$5.7 million, approximately overall under this Head. This of course includes, as was announced in the Budget Address, an increase in amount for the National Employment Centre (NEC). We have a new amount for Foreign Employment Service of over \$500,000.00, financial assistance to the Christmas Island Veterans of \$2.9 million, and of course, an increase in the vote by \$1 million for Workers Compensation, given the fact that we had announced that the workers compensation now needs to be at least doubled.

I have much pleasure in recommending that the amount as stated in the Estimates under Head 7.

Head 7 agreed to.

Head 8:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, under Head 8, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has received an increase of \$1.5 million. This, of course, includes the increase in allowances for our diplomats who are serving overseas, but their allowances are not fully reflective of the cost of living expenses in those countries.

It also, Madam Chair, for the first time allows in our history, for those female diplomats who work for us and have children below school going age, where we will be paying for crèche services.

Of course, this Head reflects the growing expansion of our foreign relations throughout the world and indeed our commitment to the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) Secretariat that we have set up here in Suva.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in recommending the amount stated in Head 8.

Head 8 agreed to.

Head 9:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the Office of the Auditor-General, which is in Head 9, in fact receives a slight increase of \$61,070 this year, when compared to last year.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in recommending the sum of \$4.08 million, as stated in the Estimates.

Head 9 agreed to.

Head 10:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the Fijian Elections Office, as you know, has played a pivotal role in the recent Elections that was held in September this year, in which of course, the FijiFirst Party won government, and this is why we have this side of Parliament.

Madam Chair, you will see a decrease in the allocation compared to this year rather rationally because of the fact that we would not be conducting Elections at least for the next three and a half years. Nonetheless, the Supervisor of Elections' office is now a full-time independent one but needs

to conduct its operations and also have capacity building. It would also, Madam Chair, conduct elections pertaining to trade unions in Fiji.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in recommending the Estimates that have been set out under Head 10 for the Fijian Elections Office.

Head 10 agreed to.

Head 11:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, under Head 11, the Judiciary receives an increased amount of \$4.4 million from 2014 to 2015. It is the sum that is set out there under the Estimates of \$40,382.8 million.

Madam Chair, this increase of course reflects the major construction work that will be carried out, for example, in the Lautoka High Court facilities, the increase in upgrading of other existing court complexes in Ba and in other rural towns and rural areas, and also it takes into account the increases in the Fiji Mediation Centre, island court sittings and of course, the Judicial Services Commission allocation.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in recommending the expenditure as set out in Head 11 in the Estimates.

Head 11 agreed to.

Head 12:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, Head No 12 – Parliament. Of course, Parliament is now in full force. There was an allocation of \$7 million for this year and it now has been increased to \$8.8 million. Madam Chair, of course, we also have, as you will see, a fairly reasonable amount with aid-in-kind that has been reflected in the Estimates and taken into account.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in recommending the amount of \$8.8 million, under Head 12 for Parliament.

Head 12 agreed to.

Head 13:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Under Head 13, this is a new provision, Madam Chair, where we have put together all the independent commissions, and as you can see, when compared to 2014 and 2015, they received about \$10.2 million. This includes the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission, the Accountability and Transparency Commission and the Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption (FICAC), as is commonly known. These are all independent organisations, Madam Chair, and are given line allocations under this particular Head.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in recommending the amount set out in the Estimates for Head No. 13.

Head 13 agreed to.

Head 14:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Under Head 14 of course is the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, which includes a slight increase, compared to the allocation made this year – of about \$189,000. Of course, it has an impact on various workings of the independent Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in recommending the Estimates, as set out for Head 14.

Head 14 agreed to.

Head 15:

HON.A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, Head 15, the Ministry of Justice receives a slight decrease in the allocation compared to 2014, of about \$110,000. The Ministry of Justice, as you know, also works with Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Registry. A number of new centres are being established in Savusavu, Nadi, Korovou, Rakiraki and Sigatoka, and these works will continue to provide services to all Fijians, even those who live in remote areas.

Madam Chair, I have pleasure recommending the Estimates under Head 15 of the Ministry of Justice.

Head 15 agreed to.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- That brings to an end the last of the Heads that were to be tabled today.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Point of order. Madam Chair, I would like to ask that we, the fact that we are in, we can continue until we finish these Heads today or maybe break for afternoon tea, if it is available.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You want to break for afternoon tea now, or we continue before we break?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- If you will make that ruling first, then we continue after afternoon tea, that will be fine.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I think we need a break. There have been a lot of unanimous things going on this Parliament. We will now break for tea and resume at 5.00 p.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 4.25 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 5.10 p.m.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, we will continue with the debate on the Appropriation Bill at Committee Stage.

In Committee

Head 16:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Head No. 16 – Ministry of Communications, has been given an increased allocation of \$7.7 million. The Ministry of Communication incorporates the Department of Communications, the Department of Information, and also ITC where all the Government ITC Programmes have been put together, under the Ministry of Communications.

I have much pleasure in recommending the additional amount as stated in the Estimates under Head 16.

Head 16 agreed to.

Head 17:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Under this Head, Madam Chair, the overall allocation to Public Service Commission, Head 17 had increased to a tune of about \$4.8 million, a total Aid-in-Kind has also increased to \$17.5 million. Madam Chair, the Public Service Commission plays a critical role in terms of delivery of public service, of course there is devolution of some of the powers of the Public Service Commission. The Permanent Secretaries and the Ministers will have more direct say in terms of merit-based appointment of staff.

I have much pleasure in recommending the allocated amount under Head 17 for the Public Service Commission.

Head 17 agreed to.

Head 18:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the overall allocation to the Ministry of Rural, Maritime Development and National Disaster Management has decreased by about \$7.6 million because of a number of re-allocation within the Ministry, and of course some of the one off expenditures that have taken place in terms of purchase of vessels that have been bought especially for the maritime areas.

Madam Chair, there has been a number of initiatives that have been recorded under this particular Head, where we carry out a number of projects in the rural areas, including the building of health centres, dredging of rivers, completion of health centres, and of course the allocation for the Committee on Better Utilisation of Land (CBUL) and the setting up of various government stations throughout Fiji.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in recommending the amount set out in the Estimates under Head 18.

Head 18 agreed to.

Head 19:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the Republic of Fiji Military Forces has received an increase of about \$9.3 million. Primarily, the increase has come from the fact that we will be completing the Black Rock Integrated Peacekeeping Centre (BRIPC), which provides of course the opportunity not just for our troops, but in fact the ability for those in the Police Force also to work together with the RFMF in terms of peacekeeping duties which Fiji is very well known for. This allocation will help complete this particular facility in Black Rock, Nadi.

I have much pleasure in recommending the amount set out in the Estimates under Head 19 for the Republic of Fiji Military Forces.

Head 19 agreed to.

Head 20:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, Head 20 - Fiji Police Force have also an increased sum, in terms of the allocation being made to them in 2015, a total sum as stated in the Estimates you have there.

The Fiji Police Force, under Head 20, is receiving a number of increases including the increase in allowances, plus various capital construction projects to expand, not just the provision of police posts and police stations, a number of quarters in respect of quarters that house a number of members of the Fiji Police Force, including a number of significant investment for forensic capability and capacity within the Fiji Police Force, and the establishment for example, of the Digital Imaging Laboratory and various other Criminal Records Information System (CRIS) which will provide a better tool for the Fiji Police Force to carry out their work in compliance with various international standards.

I have much pleasure in recommending the Expenditure as set out in Head 20 for the Fiji Police Force.

Head 20 agreed to.

Head 21:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, under Head 21 - the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts has seen of course, again another significant increase in the allocation made to it in 2015. Also, there is an additional allocation in respect of the total Aid-in-Kind. The Ministry of Education, as you know, Madam Chair, provides a pivotal role in terms of Government Strategy for creating a knowledge-based society, and indeed provide accessible and affordable education to all Fijians, irrespective of wherever they live in Fiji; whether it is in the maritime, rural areas, or in the urban towns, cities, or squatter areas.

A number of significant changes have been made, including free-milk for Class One students, the increase in the number of teacher positions that have been created at primary and secondary school level, our ability to now fund for kindergartens, one year before Primary School education that will commence in the second half of the year, and of course in terms of the Curriculum Development that is taking place, and expansion of, and in fact the refining of the Tertiary Education Loan Scheme and the Scholarship Scheme that falls within Head 21 of the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts.

Madam Chair, it should also be noted that the National Archives is also now moving to the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts.

Madam Chair, I have much pleasure in moving Head 21, as stipulated in the Estimates.

Head 21 Agreed to.

Head 22:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, again one of those social sector areas under this 2015 Budget that has received another significant increase in particular, the allocation by the Government itself, an increase of about \$47 million.

As stipulated in the Estimates, we have also a decrease in the total aid-in-kind. Nonetheless with the Government, an increase in the allocation to the Ministry of Health, which includes funding for a number of renovations to existing hospitals, indeed the setting up of new hospitals, for example in Ba. It also includes the recruitment of 114 doctors and 78 nurses and various other positions that have been created, for example in the allied workers that would also be hired under this particular Head.

Madam Chair, the Ministry of Health is a major focus for us, as you will see the various amendments have been included through the corrigendum. I have much pleasure in moving the Estimates as stipulated under Head 22 for the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.

Head 22 agreed to.

Head 23:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, Head 23, which is the Department of Housing receives an allocation that is slightly less than what it was. It would receive approximately \$27 million in 2015

This Department, as you will note, Madam Chair, includes first home ownership funding, where we are providing a sum of \$10 million which has already been quite successful and also in terms of funding for housing assistance to Fijians to rebuild their homes if it catches fire.

I have much please in moving Head 23 for the Department of Housing.

Head 23 agreed to.

Head 24:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, under Head 24, which is the Ministry for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation has an increase of approximately \$4.4 million, which is now being captured in the Estimates. Madam Chair, that also includes the fact that the Poverty and Monitoring Unit has moved from the Office of the Prime Minister to the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation.

I have much pleasure in moving the Estimates as stipulated as per the amendments in Head 24 which is the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation.

Head 24 agreed to.

Head 25:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the Ministry of Youth and Sports under Head 25 again receives an additional funding of approximately \$6.3 million. Of course, there has been an additional amount as far as the total aid-in-kind, compared to the period from 2014. This proves Government's commitment to the youths of our country, and of course our commitment to encouraging not just sports, but also our very talented much sports men and women to participate in the international stage.

I have much pleasure in moving Head 25 which is the Ministry of Youth and Sports as stated in the Estimates.

Head 25 agreed to.

Head 26:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, under Head 26, which is Higher Education Institutions, this includes the allocation by the Government to various high educational institutions which includes the University of the South Pacific, Fiji National University and the University of Fiji. Also, in addition are various other institutions which have been listed down in the narration which are Corpus Christi, Fulton College, Montfort Boys Town Savusavu, Montfort Boys Town Veisari, Sangam Institute of Technology and Vivekananda Technical College.

I have much pleasure in moving Head 26 which is the Higher Education Institutions as stipulated in the Estimates.

Head 26 agreed to.

Head 30:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, I rise to speak on Head 30 – Ministry of Agriculture. This Ministry plays a very key and pivotal role in respect of not just agriculture growth in our economy, but in terms of food security, the ability to export to the rest of the world. Also, it provides our Fijian people with food security. It has an increased allocation of approximately \$3 million. It plays a pivotal role in terms of the various aspects of providing, not just assistance and knowledge, but also technical know-how and this Head has captured a number of those initiatives as has been put in place by the Ministry to further our expansion in the agriculture sector.

I have much pleasure in moving the Estimates as set out in Head 30 – Ministry of Agriculture.

Head 30 agreed to.

Head 32:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, again Fiji being an island country, Fisheries plays a very critical role. One will see an increase in expenditure for Head 32 – Ministry of Fisheries and Forests.

I have much pleasure in moving Head 32 – Ministry of Fisheries and Forest, the Estimates be approved.

Head 32 agreed to.

Head 33:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, Head 33 – Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources receives a slight increase in terms of the Estimates. It plays a very critical role in terms of making land available, in terms of looking after the mineral resources in Fiji and indeed having an overall oversight of mining, capacity and those companies that are already in the mining area. It also plays a pivotal role in terms of Government's objective, to making more land available for productive use, in particular State land, as we have stated through our policy announcements.

I have much pleasure in recommending Head 33 – Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources the Estimates be approved.

Head 33 agreed to.

Head 34:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the Ministry of Industry and Trade and Tourism under Head 34 has a slight decrease in its expenditure of approximately \$6 million. This Ministry plays a very pivotal role. Of course, the tourism industry itself contributes about 33 per cent towards our GDP. In terms of industry and trade, there are a number of careful negotiations that are taking place as far as trade agreements are concerned, but also in terms of furthering our trade and not just within the region but of course beyond the region.

I have much please in recommending Head 34 – Ministry of Industry and Trade and Tourism as provided for in the Estimates.

Head 34 agreed to.

Head 35:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair and honourable Members, you will see that there has been a decrease in the allocation for the Ministry of Sugar. Nonetheless, the focus is on sugar. There have been some one-off expenditures, for example, the bridge for Kavanagasau which is included in this year's budget is no longer included, of course, for next year. However, the continuation and focus is on providing the ability of the Ministry of Sugar to assist cane farmers and indeed, working in conjunction with the Fiji Sugar Corporation (FSC) and together with various other agencies like the *iTaukei* Land Trust Board, to ensure that we continue with our sugar production and indeed, as has been announced, to diversify in various other areas for our sugarcane production as opposed to just simply sugar.

I have much pleasure in recommending the Ministry of Sugar – Head 35, as provided for in the Estimates.

Head 35 agreed to.

Head 36:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair and honourable Members, the Ministry of Public Enterprises essentially has maintained the same amount, although you will see a slight increase because

of the fact that the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji has now been moved to the Ministry of Public Enterprises, as such the increase.

In terms of the Ministry itself, it plays a pivotal role in terms of oversight of the various public enterprises that we have, and many of them, in the past couple of years, have very successfully increased their return on investments to the State, which is a shareholder. Of course, we are looking at divestment in some of those organisations.

I have much pleasure in recommending Head 36 – Ministry of Public Enterprises, as provided for in the Estimates.

Head 36 agreed to.

Head 37:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair and honourable Members, Head 37 – Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Environment has received an additional amount in respect of the allocation that was made to it in 2014, compared to what we will be getting in 2015. The Ministry, of course, plays a very pivotal role in terms of urban development in Fiji in looking after local governments. Of course, the environmental responsibilities that it has, has received overall an increased budget because of the various projects that will be carried out. For example, the re-development of Albert Park, the building of new markets, the facilitation of new markets that will be carried out in order to bring many of our urban facilities up to speed and, of course, providing assistance to the Ministry itself regarding environmental protection, working in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on climate change.

With that, I have much pleasure in recommending Head 37 – Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Environment.

Head 37 agreed to.

Head 40:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker and honourable Members, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport plays a very pivotal role. Of course, it covers a number of Departments, for example, the Meteorological Office, the trade as far as the Department of Works is concerned, the Hydrological Services Unit, the Maintenance, for example, the operation of public buildings and of course, the various construction services that it provides.

We, of course, will be carrying out a number of reviews with the Public Service Review in some of these areas but, of course, we have the Department of Energy that also falls within the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, where fairly substantial amounts of money have been allocated in terms of rural electrification. Of course, the Government Shipping Services, where Government is continuing to provide focus, to ensure that Fijians who live in the maritime areas do not get left out with the vast development projects that have been carried out by the Government, and indeed, the Government intends to carry out. It has increased an overall expenditure allocation in the Estimates.

I have much pleasure in recommending Head 40 – Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport as provided for in the Estimates.

Head 40 agreed to.

Head 41:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair and honourable Members, Head 41 – Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) is, of course, now being set out separately to ensure that we are completely aware of the vast amount of resources that have now been allocated or intended for allocation in 2015. You will see a total expenditure, an increase of about \$99 million to the WAF, to ensure that we provide this one-off expenditure to ensure that those people who are currently in the water reticulation system continue to get very good services as opposed to sporadic services and of course, increasing the network of the water reticulation service through the WAF.

I have now much pleasure in recommending the Estimates as provided for under Head 41 – Water Authority of Fiji.

Head 41 agreed to.

Head 43:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair and honourable Members, again, the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) has received also a substantial increase in terms of the allocation made to it. Again, to ensure that the Fijian people get a first class service as far as roads are concerned in Fiji. It does not, Madam Chair, only include roads *per se* but also includes jetties, bridges like Irish Crossings as many of us in urban areas do not get to see, but it is, of course, very very critical and pivotal for the survival of many in the rural areas and indeed, the island communities that we have.

Madam Chair, I would also like to put on record that this plays pivotal too on Head 43, of course, as provided in the Corrigendum, has an impact on Annexure 1 and we can discuss later on but the Estimates as they are set out are correct with the amendments, for example, in the change in the variance.

I have now much pleasure in recommending, Madam Chair, that Head 43 – Fiji Roads Authority Estimates be approved.

Head 43 agreed to.

Head 49:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair and honourable Members, peacekeeping under Head 49, of course, we are fully aware that Fijians are well known for their peacekeeping capacity and capability for the past decades. That is why we have this Head that captures the peacekeeping missions and the costs that are involved in that, and we of course, continue to increase our reputation now that we are in the Golan Heights, Syria, Iraq and Sinai.

I have much pleasure in recommending the amount as in Head 49 – Peacekeeping Missions as provided for in the Estimates.

Head 49 agreed to.

Head 50:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the Miscellaneous Services is set out in Head 50. It is self-explanatory, but it does provide for the number of miscellaneous expenditures that pools

the fund, that is available to the whole of government, and it also includes funding for activities that requires scrutiny and monitoring by the Ministry of Finance. I have much pleasure in recommending the Estimates as set out in Head 50 under Miscellaneous Services that includes a number of expenditures, including salary adjustments, the Civil Service Reform provision, and the Fiji Police Force allocation of \$28.6 million, which looks into providing the back pay regarding the Job Evaluation Exercise that was not provided for.

It also includes the various consultancies that have been set out for RFMF, LTA, Water Authority of Fiji, Department of Energy, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Public Enterprises, Ministry of Land and includes, for example, the overseas travel costs for Ministers. These are the traditional areas of expenditure that is normally put in Head 50, including support we give to various organisations, for example, public service broadcast television, public service broadcast radio, Fiji Exporters' Council, South Pacific Stock Exchange banking services in rural areas, rural postal services and ADB subscriptions.

I have much pleasure in recommending the amount set out in Head 50.

Head 50 agreed to.

Head 51:

HON. A. SAYED KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, Head 51, as stated is for pensions, gratuities and compassionate allowances. It is self-explanatory, as we know it looks after a number of those areas where specific provisions have been made as far as pensions, gratuities and compassionate allowances are concerned. We also have various charges on account of public debt, which is also included under Head 52, which have been detailed in the Estimates.

I have much pleasure in recommending the amounts set out in Head 51, Madam Chair.

Head 51 agreed to.

Head 52:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the charges on account of public debt have all been set out there, for example, we have the interest in the short term finance, RBF registration fees and of course the explanations have been put in the summary of it.

I have much pleasure in recommending the amount as set out in the charges and account of public debt.

Head 52 agreed to.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- That brings us to the end of the Estimates. We shall now move into considering the Schedules and Clauses of the Appropriation Bill, as required under Standing Order 101.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, if I could raise one particular point. Although it is not necessarily part of the Heads, if I could refer you again and as set out in the corrigendum on page 390 of the Estimates and page 391, like I said, it is not part of the Heads *per se*. Of course, it has been put in the Estimates, the corrigendum seeks to replace page 390 with annexure 1, as set out in corrigendum, it does not in any way affect the Appropriation Bill, nor any of the figures in the Head

and also likewise, we would like to replace page 391 under the heading “Lending Fund Account” with Annexure 2, as set out in the corrigendum, just for clarity sake, even though it is not in the Head *per se*.

MADAM CHAIR.- Thank you for the clarification, honourable Minister of Finance.

Standing Order 101 prevents any amendments being moved and made at this stage. Standing Order 101(3) also prevents any debate on this question.

Schedules 1 and 2, Clauses 1, 2 and 3, title and enacting clause agreed to.

The Parliament resumed:

Bill reported without amendments, read a third time and passed. (Act No. of 2014).

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, the Parliament has now passed the 2015 Budget.

I congratulate all honourable Members for their contributions to this very important process. The Parliament is now adjourned to 9.30 tomorrow morning. Could I ask the Business Committee to sit for a few minutes, to decide on the agenda for tomorrow?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, can the Business Committee sit at 9 o’clock tomorrow morning?

MADAM SPEAKER.- Alright, the Business Committee will meet tomorrow morning at 9 o’clock.

The Parliament adjourned at 5.50 p.m.