



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Wednesday, Nineteenth Day of February,
2020

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

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

3. MEMBERS PRESENT

All Honourable Members from the Government were present.

All Honourable Members from the Opposition were not present.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Inia Seruiratu, moved that the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Tuesday, 18 February 2020, as previously circulated be taken as read and be confirmed.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Hon. Speaker welcomed all Honourable Members and members of the public seated in the gallery and those watching the live broadcast of the proceedings on television and the internet.

6. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, tabled the following reports –

1. Fourth Quarter Appropriation Statement for the period ‘1st May 2019 to 31st July 2019’; and
2. First Quarter Appropriation Statement for the period ‘1st August 2019 to 31st October 2019’.

The Hon. Speaker referred the reports to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts for its deliberation.

7. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

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

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Alvick Maharaj tabled the Committee’s Review Report on the Office of the President Annual Report 2016–2017.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report is initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

(b) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Viam Pillay tabled the Committee’s Report on the Annual Review of the Public Rental Board for the year ended 31 December 2017.

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

(c) Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Alvick Maharaj tabled the Committee’s Report on its Review of the Auditor-General of the Republic of Fiji – Provincial Councils Volume 1 for the period 2000–2007.

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

8. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

- (i) Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources the Hon. Ashneel Sudhakar delivered a Ministerial Statement. There were no responses from the Opposition as they were all not present in Parliament.
- (ii) Minister for Employment, Productivity, Industrial Relations, Youth and Sports the Hon. Parveen Bala delivered a Ministerial Statement. There were no responses from the Opposition as they were all not present in Parliament.

9. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

The Hon. Speaker informed that there were no Bills for consideration.

10. MOTION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Vijay Nath moved that Parliament debates the Fiji Development Bank 2017 Annual Report which was tabled on 1 April 2019.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

11. MOTION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE, LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Alvick Maharaj moved that Parliament debates the Review Report on the Independent Legal Services Commission Annual Report 2016 which was tabled on 3 April 2019.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

12. QUESTIONS

- 23/2020 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua to ask the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament how long it took to get the air-conditioning units in the operating theatres at CWM Hospital fully repaired.
- 24/2020 Hon. Vijendra Prakash to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister provide an update on what the Ministry is doing to protect our waterways using nature based solutions.
- 25/2020 Hon. Aseri Radrodro to ask the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Disaster Management and Meteorological Services – Can the Minister provide an update on the implementation of the MOU signed between the Land Transport Authority (LTA) and Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (FRCS) in January 2020.
- 26/2020 Hon. Jale Sigarara to ask the Minister for Industry, Trade, Tourism, Local Government, Housing and Community Development – Can the Minister update Parliament on the reforms that have come about within the Housing Authority and what initiatives are there to improve the housing affordability to different income households.
- 27/2020 Hon. Mikaele Leawere to ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of the budgeted grants for the University of the South Pacific, Fiji National University and the University of Fiji.
- 28/2020 Hon. Alvick Maharaj to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the effectiveness of the ban on paraquat and imidacloprid insecticides and whether this has been successful and what alternatives have been made available to farmers.
- 29/2020 Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka to ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister update Parliament on the repayment of the Global Bond of US\$200m which is due in October 2020.
- 30/2020 Hon. Alexander O'Connor to ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister update Parliament on the performance of the two new Fiji Airways A350, and whether the aircrafts are delivering value to our National Airline and Fiji Tourism.

Written Questions

- 31/2020 Hon. Aseri Radrodro to ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister provide to Parliament the list of beneficiaries of goods and services granted remission or refund of duty under section 10(d) of the Customs Tariff Act from 2014 to date.
- 32/2020 Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad to ask the Prime Minister and Minister for iTaukei Affairs and Sugar Industry – Can the Prime Minister inform Parliament of the following –
- (a) the number of non-sugar agriculture leases expiring each year from 2007 to 2019;
 - (b) the number of sugarcane leases expiring each year from 2007 to 2019; and
 - (c) the number of both non-sugar agriculture and sugarcane leases renewed for each from 2007 to 2019.
- 33/2020 Hon. Salote Radrodro to ask the Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts – Can the Minister provide details (by Division, Institutions) on recipients of Toppers and TELS that have graduated and how many such graduates are in employment since TSLB was established.
- 34/2020 Hon. Ratu Suliano Matanitobua to ask the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Disaster Management and Meteorological Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament of the following –
- (a) details of all road works carried out in the Central Division in 2018/2019 fiscal year;
 - (b) total value of all road works carried out in the Central Division in 2018/2019 fiscal year;
 - (c) details of all road works suspended for the Central Division in 2018/2019 fiscal year;
 - (d) details of all road works being planned for the Central Division for the year 2019/2020 fiscal year; and
 - (e) details of any road works along the Queens Road national highway in the Central Division being planned for the year 2019/2020 fiscal year.

Responses to Oral Questions 24/2020, 26/2020, 28/2020 and 30/2020 were given by the respective Ministers.

Oral Questions 23/2020, 25/2020, 27/2020 and 29/2020, and Written Questions 31/2020, 32/2020, 33/2020 and 34/2020 had lapsed pursuant to Standing Order 45(6).

13. SUSPENSION MOTION BY THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Inia Seruiratu, moved under Standing Order 6 that so much of Standing Orders 34 and 46 were suspended so as to allow the Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications to move the following motions –

- (a) A motion pursuant to section 145(1) of the Constitution and Standing Order 131; and
- (b) Two motions pursuant to section 51 of the Constitution and Standing Order 130(4).

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

14. MOTION PURSUANT TO SECTION 145(1) OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI AND STANDING ORDER 131

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, moved a motion for the purposes of section 145(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji and pursuant to Standing Order 131, that Parliament approves that –

- (A) the Government guarantee the Fiji Development Bank (**'FDB'**) borrowings through the issuance of short and long-term bonds, promissory notes, term deposits, other short term borrowings and the Reserve Bank of Fiji – Import Substitution Export Finance Facility for the 12-month period from 1 March 2020 to 28 February 2021;
- (B) the Government guarantee the sum of \$160 million for the guarantee period; and
- (C) FDB pay a guarantee fee of 0.075% to be applied on the cumulative utilised guarantee credit.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

15. MOTIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 51 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI AND STANDING ORDER 130

- (a) The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, for the purposes of section 51 of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji and pursuant to Standing Order 130, moved that Parliament approves that Fiji ratifies the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (b) The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications for the purposes of section 51 of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji and pursuant to Standing Order 130, moved that Parliament approves that Fiji accedes to the 2011 Asia-Pacific Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

Hon. Speaker adjourned Parliament until 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, 20 February 2020.

Parliament adjourned at 4.23 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

19th February, 2020.