



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Thursday, Twenty-sixth Day of March,
2020

1. The House met at 7.30 p.m. pursuant to adjournment.

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

3. MEMBERS PRESENT

All Members were present except for the Hon. Lynda Tabuya, Hon. Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu, Hon. Mikaele Leawere, Hon. Aseri Radrodro and Hon. Jese Saukuru.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OR AFFIRMATION

Faiyaz Siddiq Koya took the Oath of Office for Members of Parliament and the Oath of Allegiance.

The Hon. Speaker advised all Honourable Members that Hon. Faiyaz Koya would deliver his maiden speech at the next available sitting.

A point of order was raised by the Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka. The Hon. Speaker ruled accordingly.

5. 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 Friday, 21 February 2020 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

6. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Hon. Speaker warmly welcomed all Honourable Members to the special sitting of Parliament for the delivery of the 2019–2020 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2020 by the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum.

Hon. Speaker welcomed all those watching the live broadcast of the proceedings from the Committee Rooms and their homes.

Hon. Speaker advised the Honourable Members that he had invoked his powers under Standing Order 20 so as to ensure that Parliament adheres to the advisory issued by the Hon. Prime Minister and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.

He advised that the significant event draws public and media attention and essentially the procedure is vital for Parliament to fulfil its constitutional obligation. The Hon. Speaker further stated that the approval of finance and appropriations whether it be an annual budget or a supplementary budget as with the case at hand, is a fundamental role of any legislature.

7. 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 Order 68(1), Standing Orders 102, 104 to 108 and Standing Orders 23(1) and 34 are suspended so as to allow the COVID-19 Response Budget process to take place.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Points of order were raised and ruled accordingly by Hon. Speaker.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

8. CONSEQUENTIAL BILLS

Pursuant to Standing Order 51, the Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved that –

- (a) the following COVID-19 Response Bills (**'Bills'**) be considered by Parliament without delay —
- (i) COVID-19 Response Bill 2020;
 - (ii) Tax Administration (COVID-19 Response) (Amendment) Bill 2020;
 - (iii) Income Tax (COVID-19 Response) (Amendment) Bill 2020;
 - (iv) Value Added Tax (COVID-19 Response) (Amendment) Bill 2020;
 - (v) Stamp Duties (COVID-19 Response) (Amendment) Bill 2020;
 - (vi) Customs (COVID-19 Response) (Amendment) Bill 2020;
 - (vii) Customs Tariff (COVID-19 Response) (Amendment) Bill 2020;
 - (viii) Fiji National Provident Fund (COVID-19 Response) (Amendment) Bill 2020; and
 - (ix) Public Health (COVID-19 Response) (Amendment) Bill 2020;
- (b) the Bills must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (c) the Bills must not be referred to a standing committee or other committee of Parliament;
- (d) the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy begin the debate tonight Thursday 26 March 2020 by delivering the COVID-19 Response Budget Address;
- (e) the Leader of the Opposition be given a right of response to the Bills tomorrow Friday 27 March 2020;
- (f) the debate on the Bills proceed after the response by the Leader of the Opposition and be limited to 3 hours with a right of reply given to him; and
- (g) all the Bills be voted upon tomorrow, Friday 27 March 2020.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

9. COVID-19 RESPONSE BUDGET ADDRESS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum delivered the COVID-19 Response Budget Address.

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that pursuant to the resolution of Parliament passed tonight, the Hon. Minister for Economy has delivered the COVID-19 Response Budget Address. He further informed that the Parliament

would continue with the response from the Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka, on Friday 27 March 2020.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker thanked the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum for delivering the COVID-19 Response Budget.

Hon. Speaker reiterated the call to join the fight against the coronavirus by washing hands with soap and water, practising physical and social distancing and adhering to all directives given by the authorities.

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members and adjourned Parliament until Friday, 27 March 2020 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 10.42 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

26th March, 2020.