



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Tuesday, Twenty-sixth Day of May, 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 were present except for the Hon. Rosy Akbar and Hon. Mosese Bulitavu.

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 Monday, 25 May 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 to the sitting and all those watching the live broadcast and the live streaming of the proceedings.

The Hon. Speaker delivered his rulings on the following petitions –

- (a) Petition by the Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka, Leader of the Opposition on the inquiry into voter card renewal requirements and the use of married names;

- (b) Petition by the Hon. Lynda Tabuya for Parliament to inquire into domestic violence in Fiji; and
- (c) Petition by the Hon. Lynda Tabuya for Parliament to investigate Grace Road Church.

6. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that there were no papers for presentation.

7. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(a) Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Alexander O'Connor tabled the Committee's Review Report on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The Hon. Speaker informed that pursuant to Standing Order 121(1)(b) and Standing Order 130(4)(a), the Standing Committee had reported back.

(b) 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 Report on the Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission Annual Report 2016.

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.

(c) Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Alexander O'Connor tabled the Committee's Review Report on the International Labour Organisation Violence and Harassment Convention 2019.

The Hon. Speaker informed that pursuant to Standing Order 121(1)(b) and Standing Order 130(4)(a), the Standing Committee had reported back.

(d) Standing Committee on Economic Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Vijay Nath tabled the Committee's Review Report for the Ministry of Sugar Industry 2012 to 2016 Annual Reports.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic 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.

(e) Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Alvick Maharaj tabled the Committee's Report of the Auditor-General on the Performance Audit of Preparedness for Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals.

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.

(f) Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Alexander O'Connor tabled the Committee's Review Report on the International Labour Organisation Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention 1981.

The Hon. Speaker informed that pursuant to Standing Order 121(1)(b) and Standing Order 130(4)(a), the Standing Committee had reported back.

(g) Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Alvick Maharaj tabled the Committee's report on the review made to the Audit Reports on Municipal Councils for 2014 to 2017.

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

- (1) Minister for Defence, National Security and Policing, Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management the Hon. Inia Seruiratu delivered a Ministerial Statement. Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka and Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua responded respectively.
- (2) Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment the Hon. Dr Mahendra Reddy delivered a Ministerial Statement. Hon. Inosi Kuridrani and Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua responded respectively.

9. MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (a) That the Legal Practitioners (Amendment) Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (b) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (c) That the Bill must not be referred to a Standing Committee or other Committee of Parliament; and
- (d) That the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Thursday (28 May 2020), but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Hon. Speaker called for the vote by acclamation.

Motion agreed to.

10. MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (a) That the Cybercrime Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (b) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (c) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (d) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill in the next sitting of Parliament; and
- (e) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament in the next sitting of Parliament, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Hon. Speaker called for the vote by acclamation.

Motion agreed to.

11. MOTION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources the Hon. Sanjay Kirpal moved that Parliament debates the '2013-2014 Consolidated Annual Review of the Water Authority of Fiji' which was tabled on 4 April 2019.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

12. MOTION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Viam Pillay moved that Parliament debates the 'Report on Annual Review of the Fiji Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee, 2017' which was tabled on 1 April 2019."

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

13. MOTION IN THE NAME OF THE HON. PROF. BIMAN PRASAD

The Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad moved that Parliament forms a Special Committee under Standing Order 129 to conduct a holistic inquiry into all aspects of health and medical care service and delivery at our public hospitals and centres and the Committee shall comprise the following –

- (a) Hon. Dr Salik Govind (Chairperson);
- (b) Hon. Alexander O'Connor;
- (c) Hon. Jale Sigarara;

- (d) Hon. Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu; and
- (e) Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Hon. Speaker called for the vote by acclamation.

Motion defeated.

14. 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 23(1) be suspended to allow the House to sit beyond 4.30 p.m. to complete the remaining items listed on the Order Paper.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

The motion by the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau had lapsed.

15. QUESTIONS

65/2020 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua to ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – As per the recommendation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its Report (19/57) released in February 2019, can the Minister inform Parliament whether Government has any plan to replenish the funds already withdrawn by 180,000 Fiji National Provident Fund members post tropical cyclone Winston in 2016.

66/2020 Hon. Rohit Sharma to ask the Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament how many licenses have been issued to products and businesses under the Fijian Made Buy Fiji Campaign since 2018.

- 67/2020 Hon. Anare Jale to ask the Prime Minister and Minister for iTaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry and Foreign Affairs – Can the Prime Minister inform Parliament if there is any reconsideration for the Provincial Council to appoint respective Chairpersons.
- 68/2020 Hon. Veena Bhatnagar to ask the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Community Development – Can the Minister update Parliament on the current rate arrears for all Municipal Councils.
- 69/2020 Hon. Ro Teimumu Kepa to ask the Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the effectiveness of the Radio, TV programmes and Supplementary Resources provided by the Ministry in keeping students engaged during the closure of schools due to COVID-19.
- 70/2020 Hon. Selai Adimaitoga to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister update Parliament on the home gardening initiative.
- 71/2020 Hon. Niko Nawaikula to ask the Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister inform Parliament as to the action taken by the Ministry to ease traffic congestion in the Suva-Nausori corridor.
- 72/2020 Hon. Viam Pillay to ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister inform Parliament as to what is the financial and operational future of Fiji Airways, due to this COVID-19 pandemic.

Written Questions

- 73/2020 Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau to ask the Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Rewa Vutia Road including expected milestone and timelines.
- 74/2020 Hon. Simione Rasova to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister update Parliament on the proposed drainage programme for the fiscal year 2019/2020 in the maritime areas.
- 75/2020 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 2018 to date.

Responses to Oral Questions 65/2020; 66/2020; 68/2020 and 72/2020 were given by the respective Ministers.

Oral Question 70/2020 was withdrawn by Hon. Selai Adimaitoga. Oral Questions 67/2020; 69/2020; 71/2020; 73/2020; 74/2020; and 75/2020 had lapsed.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Before adjourning the House, the Hon. Speaker made an announcement with respect to the suspension of the Social Democratic Liberal Party (SODELPA).

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

Parliament adjourned at 7.18 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

26th May, 2020.