



# PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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## MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Thursday, Twenty-eighth 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 the Government and NFP Honourable Members were 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 Wednesday, 27 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.

6. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

The following reports were tabled in Parliament and referred by the Hon. Speaker to the relevant Standing Committees for their deliberation –

- (a) Standing Committee on Economic Affairs
  - (i) Energy Fiji Limited 2019 Annual Report.
- (b) Standing Committee on Natural Resources
  - (i) Ministry of Agriculture 2014 and 2015 Annual Reports.

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 Report on the Fiji Corrections Service Annual Report for the period 01 August 2016 to 31 July 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 Public Accounts

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Alvick Maharaj tabled the Committee's Review Report on the Performance Audit Report of the Office of the Auditor-General on the Effectiveness of the Institutional Framework for Preventing Corruption.

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

- (a) The Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources the Hon. Jone Usamate delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Pio Tikoduadua subsequently responded.
- (b) The Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts the Hon. Rosy Akbar delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua subsequently responded.

- (c) The Minister for Employment, Productivity, Industrial Relations, Youth and Sports the Hon. Parveen Bala delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad subsequently responded.
- (d) The Minister for Local Government, Housing and Community Development the Hon. Premila Kumar delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad subsequently responded.

9. LEGAL PRACTITIONERS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2020

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolution of Parliament passed on Tuesday, 26 May 2020 that the Legal Practitioners (Amendment) Bill 2020 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Hon. Speaker called for the vote by acclamation.

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Legal Practitioners Act 2009 (Bill No. 10 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

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 Employment Relations (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 today (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.

11. EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2020

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolution of Parliament passed earlier in the day, 28 May 2020, that the Employment Relations (Amendment) Bill 2020 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Hon. Speaker called for the vote by acclamation.

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Employment Relations Act 2007 (Bill No. 12 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

12. REFERRAL OF TREATIES PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 130

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence review the following –

- (a) Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks 1981 (Madrid Agreement);
- (b) Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement (Madrid Protocol), (together known as the Madrid System); and
- (c) Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

Motion seconded.

The Hon. Speaker confirmed that he was provided with copies of the treaties and written analysis as required by Standing Order 130(2) and pursuant to Standing Order 130(3), he referred the tabled treaties and their analysis, to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence. The Committee may table a report to Parliament no later than 30 days.

13. REFERRAL OF TREATY PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 130

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence review the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

Motion seconded.

The Hon. Speaker confirmed that he was provided with copies of the treaty and written analysis as required by Standing Order 130(2) and pursuant to Standing Order 130(3), he referred the tabled treaty and its analysis, to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence. The Committee may table a report to Parliament no later than 30 days.

14. MOTIONS FOR THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 51 OF THE FIJIAN CONSTITUTION AND STANDING ORDER 130

- (a) The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved that Parliament approve that Fiji ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (b) The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved that Parliament approve that Fiji ratify the International Labour Organization Violence and Harassment Convention 2019.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (c) The. Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved that Parliament approve that Fiji ratify the International Labour Organization Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention 1981.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

15. 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.

16. 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 Consolidated Review Report on the Office of the President Annual Reports from 2011 to 2013 which was tabled on 3 April 2019.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

17. 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 Reserve Bank of Fiji August 2017 to July 2018 Annual Report which was tabled on 4 April 2019.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

18. QUESTIONS

81/2020 Hon. Alvick Maharaj to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister highlight how is the Ministry expanding on the Livestock sector in Fiji, and what can be expected to be achieved in the next 12-18 months.

82/2020 Hon. Joseph Nand to ask the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Community Development – Can the Minister explain what measures has the Ministry put in place to process building application and the timelines during COVID-19.

83/2020 Hon. Selai Adimaitoga to ask the Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister explain to Parliament how will the Ministry through its groundwater and borehole development contribute to addressing water problems faced in the country.

84/2020 Hon. Alexander O'Connor to ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister update Parliament on the COVID-19 Tracing App.

Responses to the Oral Questions were given by the respective Ministers.

19. ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members and adjourned Parliament until Friday, 29 May 2020 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 6.06 p.m.

**Speaker of Parliament**

**Secretary-General to Parliament**

28<sup>th</sup> May, 2020.