



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Tuesday, First Day of September, 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. Joseph Nand.

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, 31 August 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 Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that there were no papers for presentation.

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 Office of the Prime Minister 2017-2018 Annual Report.

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 Economic Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Vijay Nath tabled the Committee's Consolidated Review Report of the Sugar Research Institute of Fiji 2008 – 2015 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.

(c) 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 undertaken by the Office of the Auditor-General on the –

1. Management of Workers Compensation Trust Fund;
2. Audit of Social Welfare Schemes; and
3. Audit of Fiji Procurement Office and the Construction Implementation Unit.

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.

(d) 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 Adoption Bill 2018 (Bill No. 32 of 2018).

The Hon. Speaker advised the Honourable Members that pursuant to Standing Orders 86 and 121(1), the Standing Committee has now reported back and the Adoption Bill 2018 (Bill No. 32 of 2018) would be set down for consideration by the Committee of the Whole Parliament, on a future sitting day.

8. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources the Hon. Jone Usamate delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Aseri Radrodro and the Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua responded respectively.

9. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

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

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

The Hon. Speaker advised Honourable Members that the Motion by the Hon. Viam Pillay was withdrawn.

11. MOTION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Alvick Maharaj moved that Parliament debates the Review Report on the COP 23 Presidency Trust Fund-First Semi Annual Report for the period of May 2017 – October 2017 which was tabled on 13 May 2019.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

12. MOTION IN THE NAME OF THE HON. RO FILIPE TUISAWAU

The Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau moved that Parliament resolves to establish a special committee under Standing Order 129 to inquire into the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. The members of the Special Committee shall comprise the following –

- (a) Hon. Viam Pillay (Chairperson);
- (b) Hon. Dr Salik Govind (Deputy Chairperson);
- (c) Hon. Alipate Nagata;
- (d) Hon. Salote Radrodro; and
- (e) Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Hon. Speaker called for the vote by acclamation.

Motion defeated.

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 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.

14. QUESTIONS

104/2020 Hon. Pio Tikoduadua asked the Minister for Defence, National Security and Policing, Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management – Can the Minister clarify whether there will be any special assistance during these COVID-19 times, to look after the ‘Fiji Peacekeeping and Action Trustees Association’ veterans.

105/2020 Hon. Joseph Nand asked the Minister for Fisheries – Can the Minister update Parliament on some priority issues that were discussed at the 17th Annual Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Committee Ministers meeting.

106/2020 Hon. Ro Teimumu Kepa asked the Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts – Can the Minister update Parliament on the \$20m Bus Fare Assistance provided in the 2019-2020 Budget.

107/2020 Hon. Alipate Nagata asked the Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the Ministry’s plans on house- wiring for grid extensions for this financial year.

108/2020 Hon. Niko Nawaikula asked the Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament as to the

action taken by the Ministry to ease traffic congestion in the Suva-Nausori corridor.

- 109/2020 Hon. Vijay Nath asked the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Ministry's plans to provide low cost irrigation facility for Agriculture development and expansion.
- 110/2020 Hon. Peceli Vosanibola asked the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Community Development – Can the Minister update Parliament on the type of housing assistance provided to those affected by TC Harold.
- 111/2020 Hon. Selai Adimaitoga asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister provide an update to Parliament on the repayment relief provided so far by the Financial Institutions.

Written Questions

- 112/2020 Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau asked 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.
- 113/2020 Hon. Simione Rasova asked 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.
- 114/2020 Hon. Jese Saukuru asked the Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister identify the land parcels that the Ministry will revert to TLTB that are currently under Land Schedule 'A' and 'B' in the current financial year.
- 115/2020 Hon. Aseri Radrodro asked 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 the Oral and Supplementary Questions were given by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Speaker allowed the Hon. Vijendra Prakash to ask Oral Question 105/2020. The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that Oral Question 110/2020 would be deferred to a later sitting date.

Responses to the Written Questions would be tabled at a later sitting date by the respective Ministers, as permitted under Standing Order 45(3).

15. ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members and adjourned Parliament until Wednesday, 2 September 2020 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 6.42 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

1st September, 2020.