



# PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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## MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Monday, Seventh Day of February, 2022

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. Josaia Bainimarama and the Hon. Adi Litia Qionibaravi.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OR AFFIRMATION

(a) Jone Atonio Rabici Seniloli took the Oath of Office for Members of Parliament and the Oath of Allegiance; and

(b) Howard Robin Thomas Politini took the Affirmation of Office for Members of Parliament and the Affirmation of Allegiance.

The Honourable Members delivered their maiden speeches.

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, 3 December 2021 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 welcomed all Honourable Members to the sitting of Parliament and all those watching the live broadcast and the live-streaming of the proceedings.

Hon. Speaker delivered his ruling on the recent press releases by the National Federation Party.

7. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

The following reports were tabled and referred accordingly to the appropriate Standing Committees –

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

- (i) Office of the Prime Minister and Department of Immigration – 2018-2019 Annual Report.

(b) Standing Committee on Public Accounts

- (i) Office of the Auditor-General – 2021 Annual Report.

(c) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

- (i) Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Environment – 2015 Annual Report;
- (ii) Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Environment – 2016 Annual Report;
- (iii) Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Environment – 2016-2017 Annual Report;
- (iv) Ministry of Local Government and Housing – 2017-2018 Annual Report;
- (v) Labasa Town Council – Annual Report 2005;
- (vi) Labasa Town Council – Annual Report 2013;
- (vii) Labasa Town Council – Annual Report 2017;
- (viii) Sigatoka Town Council – Annual Report 2019;
- (ix) Levuka Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2011; and
- (x) National Fire Authority – Annual Report 2015.

8. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that there were no committee reports for tabling.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that there were no Ministerial Statements.

9. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

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

10. 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 of the Performance Audit on the Access for Persons with Disabilities to Public Offices and Public Transport' which was tabled on 16 August 2021.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

11. 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 'Review of Fiji Development Bank 2019 Annual Report' which was tabled on 17 August 2021.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

12. 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.

13. MOTION BY THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources the Hon. Jale Sigarara moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Consolidated Annual Reports for the Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources August 2016 – July 2017 and August 2017 – July 2018' which was tabled on 17 August 2021.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

14. MOTION BY THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources the Hon. Jale Sigarara moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Ministry of Fisheries Annual Report 2017–2018' which was tabled on 17 August 2021.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

15. QUESTIONS

1/2022 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua to ask the Minister for Fisheries – Can the Minister update Parliament on the state of the beche-de-mer fishery and whether diving for beche-de-mer will be allowed to resume.

2/2022 Hon. Sanjay Kirpal to ask the Minister for Defence, National Security and Policing, Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management – Can the Minister update Parliament on the relief efforts by the Fijian Government and the RFMF in Tonga.

- 3/2022 Hon. Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu to ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service, Communications, Housing and Community Development – Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of implementation of the \$200 million in loans for COVID-19 recovery guarantee scheme to micro, small and medium, and large enterprises.
- 4/2022 Hon. Dr Salik Govind asked the Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister inform Parliament what transpired on Saturday the 15th of January, 2022 during the Tongan volcanic eruption, in terms of providing warnings to the public in Fiji.
- 5/2022 Hon. Jese Saukuru asked the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the Ministry’s plans to build a cold storage facility for farmers in the Sigatoka Valley.
- 6/2022 Hon. Alipate Nagata asked the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister update Parliament on the progress of the Ministry of Waterways’ river desilting and dredging works.
- 7/2022 Hon. Peceli Vosanibola asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service, Communications, Housing and Community Development – Can the Minister update Parliament on the reasons for exempting the Energy Fiji Limited (EFL) from being audited by the Office of the Auditor-General.
- 8/2022 Hon. Selai Adimaitoga asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister update Parliament on the COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

### Written Questions

- 9/2022 Hon. Anare Jale asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service, Communications, Housing and Community Development – Can the Minister update Parliament on the total assistance provided by development partners in response to the COVID-19 pandemic since 2020, in particular the following details itemised by year, donor and purpose –
- (a) aid-in-kind; and  
(b) grants.
- 10/2022 Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau asked the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister update Parliament on the rehabilitation measures to assist farmers in the Central Division whose

crops were either damaged or destroyed by floods since 2018, in particular –

- (a) the total number of affected farmers who have been assisted by the Ministry annually since 2018; and
- (b) broad categories of crops and value of assistance for each broad category of assistance to farmers annually since 2018.

Oral Question 1/2022 was withdrawn by the Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua. The Hon. Speaker allowed the Hon. Veena Bhatnagar to ask Oral Question 2/2022 and Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau to ask Oral Question 3/2022. The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The responses to the Written Questions would be tabled at a later sitting date as permitted under Standing Order 45(3).

## 16. ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Tuesday, 8 February 2022 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 8.12 p.m.

**Speaker of Parliament**

**Secretary-General to Parliament**

7<sup>th</sup> February, 2022.