

**THURSDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2014**

The House resumed at 10.40 a.m. pursuant to adjournment.

MADAM SPEAKER took the Chair and read the Prayer.

**PRESENT**

All Members were present, except the honourable Prime Minister and Minister for *iTaukei* Affairs and the honourable Dr. B. Prasad.

**MINUTES**

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT.- Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2014, as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR**

Acknowledgment of Visitors

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, at the outset, I welcome all our visitors who are in the gallery, in particular, our visitors from Vanuatu Ransari College; teachers and friends, who are here with us this morning. A very warm welcome to you all. I hope you will enjoy your visit to Parliament today.

Adjournment Motion - Matters for Urgent Consideration

I would like to advise Parliament that this morning, the Secretary-General received from the honourable Draunidalo, a written summary of an adjournment motion to discuss matters for urgent consideration under Standing Order 36. As required by the Standing Order, I have considered the matter. I will not allow the matter to proceed under Standing Order 36, as the matter raised is more appropriately dealt with under Standing Order 134 – Raising Matters of Privilege.

Adjournment motions to discuss matters for urgent consideration should not involve a matter that can be dealt with under another standing order. I am, therefore, requesting the honourable Draunidalo to discuss this matter further with me in my Chamber.

Rules for Supplementary Questions

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind honourable Members about the rules for supplementary questions. While we have all been learning the procedures for question time, I think it is appropriate that we take a moment to re-group. I remind honourable Members that they should wait

until the Minister has finished his/her answer, before they rise to ask a supplementary question. I will not call on Members to ask supplementary questions until the Minister has finished answering the previous question.

Ruling – Circulation of Documents Prior to Parliamentary Sitting

It has been brought to my attention that Members have been circulating documents in the Chamber before the sitting commences. I ask Members to seek approval from me or the Secretary General, before placing anything on the desk for all Members in the Chamber.

Urgent Oral Question

Finally, I have accepted an urgent oral question under Standing Order 43 from the honourable Ratu Tagivetaua to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. This question was delivered to the Secretary-General under the timelines required by Standing Order 43. As required by the Standing Order, I am satisfied that the question is of an urgent character and relates to a matter of public importance. Thank you very much for your patience.

**URGENT ORAL QUESTION**

Strategies for Water Disruption – Waimanu & Savura Water Treatment Plants  
(Question No. 02/14)

HON. RATU V.M. TAGIVETAUA asked the Government, upon notice:

Could the honourable Minister for Infrastructure and Transport explain what strategies he has in place, to address the water disruptions between the Waimanu and Savura Water Treatment Plants, which is affecting more than 112,000 customers in the greater Suva area?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the urgent question raised by honourable Ratu Tagivetaua.

Madam Speaker, on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2014, there was a major landslide up in the hills of Colo-i-Suva which washed away two major trunks that transport water from the Waimanu Pumping Station and Catchment Area Head Works 3 which supplies water to Tamavua Treatment Plant. This particular Plant provides services to 22,497 metered customers, which is approximately 112,485 customers throughout Suva. So, the affected areas that we are talking about here today, Madam Speaker, includes the areas of Tamavua, Cunningham, Samabula, Lami, Delainavesi, and the areas beyond.

Madam Speaker, the collapse of the two major trunk lines wiped away 60 per cent of the total water supply to those areas. Given that this was an unplanned disruption, securing water cuts suffice

in the short period of time, continue to be a challenge. It was definitely a challenge at that time. As the demands increased and the water supply continue to diminish, the daily impact from the disruptions in Suva widened, and more and more households became affected.

Following Sunday morning's meeting of defining the extent of the damage, a media conference was convened at 3.00 p.m. that afternoon and a detailed media release was produced. Full coverage was provided by the mainstream media, and included one-to-one interviews by the officials concerned. Advisories to the radio stations on water cuts in general locations were sent out on Sunday and on Monday, a full-page advertisement was developed with detailed locations, including street locations, and is running daily with adjustments.

Madam Speaker, the schedule also included further advertisements in the two *Dailies* with extended information as developments happened, including alerting the public to stay away from swimming, fishing and other recreational activities. The Authority had broadcasted in all three vernaculars six times daily since Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2014.

In addition, we have produced further media releases, as well as visits to the Savura site where our camera men filmed the work for television and newspaper viewing, and one would have seen that yesterday. Madam Speaker, we understand the importance of keeping those affected and the general population informed and that is why the media awareness programme will continue until we fix this issue.

Since the main trunk collapsed, the Water Authority of Fiji distribution requirements has grown from an initial 67,000 to 112,000 customers, with the numbers changing daily, making the scheduling of delivery difficult to determine and water cuts which commence from 5 a.m. to midnight daily. Because of the level of demand on the WAF delivery trucks, the Authority has now opened up its filling point to the public located at Jerusalem Road in Nabua, behind Asco Motors at its recited plant.

Madam Speaker, the rehabilitation and repair works are estimated to be completed shortly, with full restoration of supply to other affected areas no later than Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2014. We also have a hotline, which is 3346777, or Vodafone and Ink users - 5777 which they could call and will be assisted and 3343262 on fax for those people who need water urgently.

We have trucks that are circulated to all these areas, given the changing situation of the demand on the ground, so if there are people who need water and have missed the trucks as they have come by, those are the contact addresses that I have given. Obviously, I have noted those other places where they could go to for water, if there is a special need and people are using that. I want to assure Parliament, as well as the nation, particularly the affected areas that we are doing our best to resolve this matter as soon as possible and hopefully, before the deadline that I have already given earlier.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- A point of order, Madam Speaker. - Standing Order 36. I thank you, Madam, for your Communication from the Chair this morning. I am just seeking clarification on that. Is it your decision, Madam Speaker, based on Standing Order 36(2)(a), that the matter raised in my communication to you on the issue of clarifying the correspondence between World Rugby and the Government on the issue of the Sevens, that that matter does not fall within Standing Order 36(2)(a)?

I am just seeking a clarification whether in your opinion, one that is a matter that is not of recent occurrence and does not involve administrative or a ministerial responsibility of the Government, which requires immediate attention. I am asking for clarification whether your Communication this morning falls under that, or whether you are saying that it is governed by Standing Order 134 which

relates to privilege and on that note, I wish to point out that the communication to you from us, although it invokes Standing Order 36, set out almost in the way required by Standing Order 134. But we are just seeking clarification from you, Madam Speaker, and we will accept your ruling and take that further.

MADAM SPEAKER.- I will deal with that shortly. However, we are still on the Urgent Oral Question, and I am just wondering whether the response is adequate.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- I thank the honourable Minister for his reassurance regarding the programme in place and confirmation that water would be restored by Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2014. However, in the meantime, I wish to question the honourable Minister in regards to the safety of the water that has been distributed to the consumers, especially the many vulnerable aspects of carting water. Could the Government confirm the source of where the water is from, and whether water stored in those tanks which are placed alongside the roads are safe?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable Member for his supplementary question. I want to assure Parliament that the Water Authority of Fiji only distributes treated water. The issue at stake here is the broken pipe that conveys the water to the treatment plant in Tamavua. Obviously, that is where the water is treated and we are only getting 40 per cent of the capacity that we would normally get.

That capacity we are now distributing, be it through trucks, is sourced from treated water sources within the reticulation system of the Water Authority of Fiji. However, I want to thank the honourable Member for raising the issue about how can we be more cautious of the quality of water, particularly these days, be that it comes from the Water Authority reticulation system and is treated, it is always advisable that when not sure that we should boil our drinking water, and I am sure that is an advice that we all know.

Madam Speaker, we are definitely asking our people to take these steps. We have absolutely no control about the containers that the public bring to cart their water (I am talking about buckets, that really is their prerogative on what they use) just to make sure that it is clean. If it is cart from a 44 gallon drum, that is safe for them to use. People should boil their drinking water. As far as the Water Authority of Fiji is concerned, we only distribute portable water that is treated from within our system.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, a supplementary question. What I see here is national emergency. In the Western Division, when there was flooding, we deployed just about everyone who was available to come and clean up their town, fix the water and all that. I do not think I see that here, Madam Speaker. The emergency affects a great number of people, but more to the point, Madam Speaker, it is a recurring problem. Can I ask the Government, if it is a capacity problem, how much capacity do we need to satisfy the whole of Suva? If it is a distribution problem, how much more needs to be done, or rather look at it in a holistic way, as opposed to the solution that I see today, Madam Speaker. I say this, because we have allocated \$250 million for Water Authority, and \$653 million to the Roads. If Suva has this recurring problem, do you want to realign that budget and makes sure that Suva has the capacity, so that the distribution of water is available in a manner that is consistent throughout the year?

HON. LT. COL.P. TIKODUADUA.- Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable Member for his statement, it is more of a statement than a question, I believe. However, I noticed that the honourable Member is making references to Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) and Water Authority (WAF) budget that

was passed. However, had the honourable Member been here, he would have been able to question that matter in terms of where that money would be going.

Obviously, Madam Speaker, given the statement that has been made, I had alluded in my statement last week that we are dealing here with legacy issues. That is the reason for the commitment, and obviously I noted yesterday, they are mainly areas within the system that have no redundancy. We want to deal with it, Madam Speaker, for the assurance of honourable Gavoka, and that is our commitment because it is there. We can only do something with it with core resources and the effort, and that is what we are doing in the Budget that we passed. So, I want to assure the honourable Member, this is a national issue, we recognise it, and we want to do something about it so that it does not continue to recur. Obviously, our capacity now does not allow for us to have contingencies when matters like this arise, be it in Suva, or anywhere else in Fiji.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Speaker, just a supplementary question to the honourable Minister in regards to the principal question. I think the measure that is in place, currently they are deploying water trucks around the Delainavesi/Lami areas. Since Sunday, I am a resident at that particular place, water came to our residence at 3.00 a.m., today for the very first time. I would like to ask the honourable Minister, what schedule does the Authority have with their carting trucks that are distributing water so that people are fairly treated? I suspect that there would be some dealings happening where truck drivers are favouring certain areas in Lami and Delainavesi. Can the honourable Minister assure this august Parliament that these drivers and contractors are monitored so that the people are treated fairly, and assured that they will get water without having preference over the others?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable Bulitavu for his question. At the outset, Madam Speaker, I want to assure this august Parliament and the honourable Member, particularly for the concerns in the area where he lives in Delainavesi, that the Water Authority of Fiji and of course the Government does not make any distinctions about where one has priority over the other. The important thing is that, where water is required, within all of the resources that is available to us and the capacity to bring this water as timely as possible. Obviously, that is controlled by the Water Authority of Fiji. They have a schedule that essentially allows them to have dedicated resources to particular areas. I know that there is a dedicated capacity for the areas of Delainavesi, and Lami as well. Now, if there is reason to believe, Madam Speaker, obviously someone always tries to find an opportunity to make one extra *saqamoli*. So, if there is any reason that would suggest that (and people are doing that), obviously it has been known that people do that, can reports be filed, and obviously we would like to have some evidence so that when we have these people, we can nip them in the bud to stop them from exploiting further the hardships that are currently being found.

Madam Speaker, I want to take the opportunity also to reassure again that Help Lines are given, if people could use that. If water is not coming, please call these Help Lines. My number is also available, it is 9905 303. If Water Authority is not picking up, please call me, I will make sure water comes to you, and if similar things happen where people believe that there are some cases of people that have been exploiting these situations, please do tell us also. Obviously, we would like some evidence so that we can do the right thing with those who are not following the law.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you. Given the urgency of this issue, of national importance, I will allow another supplementary question. You have the floor, honourable Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Speaker, just before I ask my supplementary question, let me just highlight the honourable Minister that we that live up Tacirua Heights, Khalsa Road, Tacirua,

Tamavua informal settlements, the truck did not come until almost 12 o'clock last night. Bearing that in mind, Madam Speaker, may I ask the honourable Minister, we have two big reservoirs, one placed at the corner of Khalsa Road going down to Kinoya, right beside the Police Post, and the other is placed just before Colo-i-Suva. My question therefore is, if they are in there, then why are we without water?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable Salote Radrodro for that. When I answered the substantive question, I noted that the areas that are affected have their water coming from the Tamavua pump, which pumps the water to those tanks that are in Tacirua, and because the water is not coming in the volume that we need, that is why the tanks do not have the water that they should have, as under usual circumstances, they should have. However, as I have assured this august Parliament earlier on, Madam Speaker, we are working very hard, and I take this opportunity again to thank my team at Water Authority for working 24/7, 24 hours a day to try and get these services back on track for the benefit of our people. Obviously, we want to bring water in no time back to the people.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Speaker, a supplementary question to the honourable Minister. I raised this supplementary question yesterday but was ruled out on a point of order.

On a similar incident on water disruption, can the honourable Minister also assure this Parliament that a schedule of trucks carting water be put out so that the people can be ready and wait for the day and time that these trucks come in with the water?

Madam Speaker, as we go through the affected areas, we see children and the elderlies waiting for water trucks to come into their areas, and they would like to have a precise timing of when the trucks that are carting water will be coming to their areas. The honourable Minister should also be mindful that we have the old people, young mothers, the disadvantaged amongst us, and sometimes the places identified for them to go and get their water from may not be accessible and so they rely on the goodwill of their neighbours. Can the honourable Minister assure this Parliament that the schedule of water carting be put out, to make the community aware when to wait for the trucks that are carting water?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable Radrodro for his supplementary question. Madam Speaker, as I alluded to in my earlier answers, we have dedicated resources to look after these areas. Obviously, because needs change, given where water is available or not in particular areas, there will be shifts at some point in time of where resources are dedicated. We are mindful of the need, as stated in terms of the children and also the aged. We have trucks that are going around in areas that look after people. We would love to put out something where the truck is going to be passing by, say in front of a house at such precise time, but I definitely cannot have that.

Also, as I alluded to earlier, there is a Help Line that people can call, if water is not coming. Madam Speaker, six times a day we make these Releases as the needs change, and also the telephone numbers are given. If people are in immediate need of water, they should call this number, but I want to assure this Parliament that, yes, we have trucks that are going in the streets and that is the best we can do for now. It is not going to be too long, but if that still does not work, I want to reassure the honourable Member that you can call me anytime, if there is anything on my mobile number 9905303.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you very much. I think we have got enough information, and also for the viewers, they have the information given to them very clearly this morning.

I thank the honourable Roko Tupou Draunidalo for the point of order raised. Yes, it is a case of recent occurrence that involves the administration of ministerial responsibility of Government. As I had mentioned, I would like to discuss this with you in my Chamber.

### CONSIDERATION OF CONSEQUENTIAL BILLS

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 51(1), I move:

That the following Bills be considered by Parliament without delay. They are:

- (a) A Bill for an Act to amend the Service Turnover Tax Decree 2012 (Bill No. 14 of 2014);
- (b) A Bill for an Act to amend the Tax Administration Decree 2009 (Bill No. 15 of 2014);
- (c) A Bill for an Act to amend the Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Decree 2014 (Bill No. 16 of 2014);
- (d) A Bill for an Act to amend the Income Tax Act (Cap. 201) (Bill No. 17 of 2014);
- (e) A Bill for an Act to amend the Fringe Benefit Tax Decree 2012 (Bill No. 18 of 2014);
- (f) A Bill for an Act to amend the Excise Act 1986 (Bill No. 19 of 2014);
- (g) A Bill for an Act to amend the Customs Act 1986 (Bill No. 20 of 2014);
- (h) A Bill for an Act to amend the Customs Tariff Act 1986 (Bill No. 21 of 2014);
- (i) A Bill for an Act to amend the Value Added Tax Decree 1991 (Bill No. 22 of 2014);
- (j) A Bill for an Act to amend the Capital Gains Tax Decree 2012 (Bill No.23 of 2014);
- (k) A Bill for an Act to amend the Stamp Duties Act (Cap.205) (Bill No. 24 of 2014);
- (l) A Bill for an Act to amend the Fiji National Provident Fund Decree 2012 (Bill No. 25 of 2014);
- (m) A Bill for an Act to amend the Maritime Transport Decree 2013 (Bill No. 26 of 2014);
- (n) A Bill for an Act to amend the Ship Registration Decree 2013 (Bill No. 27 of 2014);  
and
- (o) A Bill for an Act to amend the Land Sales Act (Cap. 137) (Bill No. 28 of 2014).

Madam Speaker, furthermore, pursuant to Standing Order 51(2), I move that the Bills pass through only one stage at the single sitting of Parliament; that the Bills be passed by Parliament today; that the Bills must not be referred to a Standing Committee, that is a Committee of Parliament; and that all the Bills be debated upon by Parliament but an overall five minutes time limit be given to each side of Parliament for debating all the Bills, with the right of reply given to me as the Member moving this motion.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Madam. Speaker, I second the motion.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- With your permission, Madam Speaker, may I raise a point of order. I am standing, as well as in relation to Standing Order 51, and I believe it is proper that, Madam Speaker, you make a ruling on my clarification before you go into the motion that is being moved by the honourable and learned Attorney-General, otherwise this becomes redundant. However, Madam Speaker, if you look at Standing Order 51 it says "A motion requesting that Parliament consider a Bill without delay may be moved without notice." And that it outlines how we are going to attend to that.

Madam Speaker, the point that we wish to raise from this side here is in relation to firstly, notice. These Bills were tabled before us this morning, and we believe it is certainly appropriate that time should be given for this side to scrutinise that. By way of convention, this comes at a time that you tabled the Appropriation Bill and the very reason for that is vital because we should not get away from the need of our role as legislators. We need time to scrutinise these Bills very properly.

You cannot just come in this morning ...

(Chorus of interjections)

... and that is another sign of incompetence from the other side.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- That is the first point.

The second point is that, these Bills here are not complete. As legislators, we need to scrutinise each and every Bill, and we need time to do that.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- That is why we're here.

It is because essentially, what we have here are additional. Before, we had 12 or 13 Bills, now there are 15. So where do these additional Bills come from? Not only that, there are also additional clauses. So whatever time we have to scrutinise all these clauses are now no longer there. Madam Speaker, there is a need for us to look at the other ones too. There is a need for us, as legislators, to properly scrutinise this and the discretion is upon you, Madam Speaker, to decide whether or not it should come. The proper way to do it is by way of a motion. Of course, you can do so by standing up without notice, but in view of the need for us to scrutinise all these Bills, as legislators, we need to look at this and scrutinise. Consequential Bills do not have any relation at all to the Budget, for example, the Land Sales Act; what does the restriction on the sale of land for residential purpose have to do with the Appropriation Bill? It does not increase or decrease it, so we need time to have a look at those.

Madam Speaker, my request is that, this is not the time. The other side of the Chamber should go back, do their proper homework and come to this Chamber with a written motion under Standing Order 51.

MADAM SPEAKER. – Thank you, we have three matters that have been raised by the honourable Member and I would like to ask the honourable Minister of Finance to respond.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM. – Madam Speaker, the amnesia and the hypocrisy from the other side is mind boggling. I do not about incompetence, but the honourable Member knows that the Bills that were presented were withdrawn under Standing Order 90, and he can withdraw that. That was done, fact number one.

Fact number two, Madam Speaker, is that, Standing Order 51 does not say consequential Bills. Standing Order 51 says, “A Bill”. It does not have to be related to the Appropriation Bill, it says “A Bill,” which means any Bill, without delay...

(Chorus of interjections)

...very simple English, Madam Speaker, that is what it means “without notice, without delay”, that is what it means because the Standing Orders envisage instances when the Parliament will be required to pass a Bill without delay. As you know, Madam Speaker, when we had initially discussed this (and you gave in a ruling), majority of the Bills that are being presented here today have a direct correlation to the Appropriation Bill.



Notwithstanding that, Madam Speaker, the fact is that the Bills, I know, for the honourable Members on the other side, it is very difficult sometimes to read the one page amendment Bill, but most of the Bills you will see, are in fact, one or two pages only. Yes, there are a couple of Bills that have explanatory notes to it, which they can read and know that a consequential or required because there are regulations to be put in place.

Madam Speaker I think, it is quite rich for the other side to come now and talk about why they need to scrutinise Bills...

(Laughter)

...when they themselves walked out on the Appropriations Bill, Madam Speaker.

(Chorus of interjections)

The most important Bill before this Chamber, before any Parliament, Madam Speaker, is always the Appropriation Bill and I think Standing Order 51 is quite clear.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA. – A point of order, Madam Speaker. I made a point of order and for that, all that I need is a ruling from you, rather than an answer from the other side, so that is uncalled for.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM SPEAKER. – My ruling is this that, the decision made is going to be made by leave of Parliament and I would like to encourage more debate on this issue. I will leave it to Parliament to make the decision. The floor is still open for debate.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM. – Madam Speaker, a point of clarification; what are we debating now?

MADAM SPEAKER. – We debate now and we will vote on the motion.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR. – Madam Speaker, I rise to show my support to the amendments, as proposed by the honourable and learned Attorney-General and I thank you, for allowing me this opportunity. Madam Speaker, I support the amendments as presented in its entirety, as proposed by the honourable and learned Attorney-General. It is an encouraging move by the Government which will benefit all Fijians. Given the time constraints, I will focus on one proposed amendment, which is the Land Sales Act and I will do my presentation on the Land Sales Act.

Most of the fears in respect of the Land Sales Act that has been highlighted in the media today is unfounded. Madam Speaker, for instance, the amendment that is proposed by the honourable and learned Attorney-General on the Land Sales Act, the main focus is that foreigners will be restricted to some extent from purchasing property in Fiji. Those amendments do not affect the land outside towns and municipal boundaries. It is affecting the land which is within towns and municipal boundaries. For instance, land within the Lami and Nausori corridors which fall within town boundaries.

Madam Speaker, as it was highlighted in the media today, there are certain fears that foreigners will not be able to bequeath, or will their land to their own children and grandchildren. That fear is also unfounded because the amendment has proposed that it will not affect or bequeath a foreigner

from bequeathing his/her property; whether it is within town boundary or outside town boundary, to their children or grandchildren or any family member as they propose.

The amendment also, Madam Speaker, does not affect tourism development such as Denarau, Momi Bay, Maui Bay, Naisoso and others, which are specifically designed and developed for sale to foreigners with the prices of which, are of course, beyond the reach of some of the Fijians.

The amendments, Madam Speaker, as set out in the proposed Bills, suggest that the principle behind it is to protect the land from sale which are within, as I have stated, the town boundaries. Of course, the foreigners can purchase land which are outside town boundaries, subject to other provisions of the Land Sales Act in which they should not be....

HON. N. NAWAIKULA. – A point of order, Madam Speaker, under Standing Order 51. We need clarification on whether what we are debating on is under Standing Order 51, or are we going into the substantive because the honourable and learned Member is now touching on the substantive, which sounds like debating. I think we should restrain ourselves for the question of whether or not, we should go under Standing Order 51.

MADAM SPEAKER. – You are quite right there, honourable Member. Right now, we are really debating on the motion under Standing Order 51 and this will be voted on. You are debating on content, so I will go back to the motion under Standing Order 51 and I invite a debate on that because this will be put to vote.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM. – Madam Speaker, also under Standing Orders 91, it also addresses this old issue, it says and I quote:

“A Bill may proceed more quickly than permitted by Standing Orders 83 to 88 if – the Member in charge of the Bill requests, by motion under Standing Order 51, that Parliament approve consideration of the Bill without delay; and

(a) a majority of all Members vote in support of the request.”

So, Madam Speaker, given that Standing Order 51 is co-linked with Standing Order 91, if I could request that Parliament, in order to be able to debate the Bills that are before Parliament, with your clarification and your guidance that we put the motion to the vote.

MADAM SPEAKER. – Yes, we will ultimately put the motion to the vote but I invite any more comments on the motion under Standing Order 51.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI. – Madam Speaker, my contribution to whether we should proceed under Standing Order 51, or come by way of motion in the proper way to introduce a Bill. Just on that basis, Madam Speaker, we are the legislators for the nation. We, on this side, are not to be used just for the purpose of having the Bills passed. Once the Bills have been passed into law, they are there to be followed. It would be ridiculous after we had passed a Bill and it comes into law, it is brought back because we, through some oversight, had not scrutinised the Bills properly.

That is the reason, Madam Speaker, I stand here to voice this concern, because under Standing Order 51, if a Bill is approved by both sides and we also agree that it should pass through that process because it is urgent and need to go through that. But at the same time, there are always contentious issues in every law, and that is why we are here to look at the law properly. The law, once passed over

here reflects the standard that we uphold in this august Chamber. It will reflect all of us, not only on the Government side but also on this side....

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER. – Hear, hear!

HON. S. D. KARAVAKI. –...and the whole of Fiji will understand that those laws are credible because it comes from those people who have scrutinised the Bills properly and then it comes into law. My point, Madam Speaker, that we should not expedite this in this process without looking at it properly. It is not only for us, but for the nation, for all the people. That is all, Madam Speaker.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, I just want to enlighten the other side about the link between the consequential Bills and the Appropriation Bill.

Madam Speaker, the Appropriation Bill is delivered against the backdrop of the Budget Address which provides the overall policy framework of the Government. We cannot detach the Appropriation Bill from the Budget Address which provides the policy framework of the Government. Therefore, when the debate was taking place about the Budget and the Budget Address, all those issues that we are now tabulating in the form of consequential Bills were discussed.

At that point in time, sometime the Members were there listening to the debate, the presentation of the Budget Address and all of them were given opportunities of 20 minutes each to contribute to the Budget Address, as well as the Appropriation Bill. They did it, some of them were absent at some point in time when we were responding as well. Madam Speaker, at that particular point in time when we were wanting to discuss the details of every Head, they decided to vacate their seats. Now, we want to bring in the consequential Bills, which is related to the Appropriation Bill and the Budget Address which has been discussed for more than a week, they are now saying, they want more time. Madam Speaker, I suggest that we proceed.

HON. ROKO T. T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Speaker, I support my colleagues on this side of the Chamber to ask for more time for consideration of the Bills that we have been given this morning, because pot shots were taken at us. Let me remind the other side, through you, that it was their mistake. “Mistakes”, plural, Madam Speaker, not singular, mistakes, mistakes and one of those mistakes referred to the constitutionality of the process that went on here, and I know that it is very hard for the other side to get used to this democratic process.

(Laughter)

However, one of the things that happen in a democracy, in fact, it is pivotal that there is disagreement and in walking out of Parliament, we were showing the other side our disagreement with the process that had occurred.

Yes, Madam Speaker, you have made your ruling, with all due respect, we can disagree in this Chamber because that is what we were elected for, otherwise, people would not have voted for us and we should not waste our time sitting here. If, Madam Speaker, we continue with our debate, we should just stay at home, I could be in Nadroga reading many books and listening to wonderful classical music, but I am here. There has to be a purpose for being here, I do not just come here to dress up in clothes I do not want to wear and waste my time here, Madam Speaker.

These Bills actually contain things which are complex. I may not understand some of the details, as well as the honourable and learned Attorney General understands them. That is alright because he has had more time with them and he is the mover of the Bill, Madam Speaker. And had they got it

right the first time when it was all brought here, we would have had sufficient time and they can now stand up and say, “we have had too much time and we have been sleeping on the job or not doing what we were supposed to do”, but they withdrew it and brought it this morning, Madam Speaker. And all we are asking for, is for a little bit more time to consider the Bills.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Point of order.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- I withdraw my point of order.

(Laughter)

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you, before I give the floor to the honourable Minister for his right of reply, the floor is still open for debate right now.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, let me repeat that for the last two weeks, we have been addressing the Appropriation Bill. Every Member was given 20 minutes to read the Budget Address of the Minister of Finance, understand the policy framework, understand the Appropriations Bill, see the link between the Appropriation Bill and the Budget Address and the policy framework. For example, Madam Speaker, the honourable Member said some Bills do not affect the Appropriation Bill. Madam Speaker, do they not want a two per cent increase for the employers’ contribution to the members in this country? That is from the Appropriation Bill, as well as the Budget Address.

Madam Speaker, we had two weeks to look at what the implication the Budget Address has on the existing laws of this country. We have two weeks for them to examine the Appropriation Bill and see what appropriate legislations will be affected and for them to then come to the Appropriations Bill debate and question Head by Head that they are not happy with this amount; raise it, or decrease it.

Madam Speaker, the people of this country voted them for them to be here to scrutinise the Bills. The people of this country voted for them to occupy the seats here and scrutinise the Bill that we put in here. Madam Speaker, the single most financial document of this country is the Budget and they refuse to stand here to scrutinise the Budget.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- There were so many mistakes.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, can I ask the honourable Member on the other side, if we look at the history of Parliament in this country, consequential Bills are always brought in because the moment you pass the Appropriation Bill and say “yes”, how can they say that we have a problem with the consequential Bills? Secondly, can I ask them, Madam Speaker, is this a new thing? Thirdly, were there no corrigendum before; go and read the *Hansard*, Madam Speaker.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM SPEAKER.- Order! Order!

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, they had two weeks to question the policy framework and the Appropriation Bill and see the implication on all these consequential Bills and legislations. They did not do it, Madam Speaker, now let us vote for it.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Hear! Hear!

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you. Before I put it to a vote, I ask the honourable Minister for his right to reply.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, thank you, there is a lot of waffle in this Chamber at the moment, in particular from the other side. Let me, for the record, Madam Speaker, for the past three days, you may have seen me carrying two or four *Hansard* Reports from the period 2006, and before that. Unfortunately, I did not bring them today. For example, in one of the Reports, when the honourable Ratu Lalabalavu was also in the *Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua* (SDL) Government....

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- It was under a different Constitution.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It has got nothing to do with the Constitution, Madam Speaker, it was the Appropriation Bill. I cannot remember the page of the *Hansard* Report but I can show it to them after this. The then Minister of Finance, the honourable Ratu Jone Kubuabola changed the figures on the trot, as the Appropriation Bill was read. The Estimates were read Head by Head and he changed the figures on the trot and far more substantial than what we had today.

We, for efficiency sake, said that a corrigendum is the way to go. I doubt if some of the honourable Members on the other side actually know what a corrigendum is. The corrigendum (let me enlighten them), it is Lesson number Five for this week is when you have errors that are found out, then you read it together when the entire document is read.

So it was for efficiency sake, Madam Speaker, and for the record, those typographical errors and technical glitches that did exist were to do with the summary that was presented for the first time in the history of any budget in Fiji. It was to inform the ordinary Fijians and explain to them in simple words how the actual Heads, Programmes and Activities functions and objectives are. So, Madam Speaker, here is an Opposition that is caught because they actually walked out for the very simple reason and now they are trying to claw back.

Madam Speaker, we have the motion before the floor and we humbly request that this motion be put to the vote.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, an issue that we can address right now is a time to scrutinise the Bills. So, we will give you more time at tea break to scrutinise the bills.

Question put.

Votes cast:			
Ayes	-		32
Noes	-		15
Not Voted	-		2
Abstain	-		1

Motion agreed to.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, the Parliament is adjourned and we will resume at 2.30 p.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 11.45 a.m.

The Parliament resumed at 2.55 p.m.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Again, I welcome honourable Members back to this afternoon session and also our guests in the public gallery.

As agreed to in the motion this morning by vote, according to Standing Order 51, the Government has five minutes in total to speak on the Bills and the Opposition will also have five minutes in total to speak on the Bills. Then the honourable Minister of Finance will give his right of reply. So, I will now ask any honourable Member from the Opposition to speak on the motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, just a point of clarification. The motion has already been approved by Parliament, so now it is five minutes debate as per the motion that was presented on all the Bills.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Yes.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, on a point of clarification, is that five minutes only, or it will be five minutes each for each Member until the Speaker has heard enough? I submit the second option because otherwise, it will be just two speakers speaking.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister, can you just clarify the motion that you had tabled this morning?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, just for all the honourable Members' clarification, when I did present these Bills under Standing Order 51(1) and then under Standing Order 51(2), I moved and I will read it again:

“Which Parliament had then agreed to subsequently, that the Bills passed through only one stage of a single sitting of Parliament, the Bills be passed by Parliament today, the Bills be not referred to a Standing Committee or other Committee of Parliament and that all the Bills be debated upon Parliament but that a 5-minute time limit be given to each side of this House for debating all the Bills.”

So the five minutes is given for debating all the Bills from each side with a right of reply given to me as the Member moving this motion. That is the motion that was put before Parliament and that was what was agreed to by Parliament.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Speaker, the issues of the Bill is 15 altogether and the people are watching us. We need to deliberate this in detail, so that we can clarify our position. You reckon that 15 Bills be discussed in five minutes - what a joke?

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The motion has already been passed. We are not here to debate the motion, we are here to hear submissions or debate from each side of the Chamber five minutes on all the Bills.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, that is understood but my understanding is that, one Member will stand for five minutes. That can go on until you Madam Speaker says it is enough as opposed to a Member, one from Opposition and the Minister to speak on that. That is our understanding, Madam Speaker.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, my understanding is that, the Members who had asked for time would have gone back and strategised, so I assume they may have appointed one Member to speak on their behalf, on all the Bills if they wish. However, that is for them to arrange. They need to share that five minutes amongst themselves. That is the motion, Madam Speaker, which has been agreed to. So, they may speak for 1.5 minutes each, it is up to them or one Member may speak on all the Bills for five minutes altogether, Madam Speaker.

(Laughter)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- What for?

MADAM SPEAKER.- I guess there is not much I can do because this was the motion that was tabled this morning, that the Opposition will be given five minutes and Government be given five minutes. That was put to the vote and it was in the affirmative.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Speaker, just for purposes of clarity, I do agree that the honourable Minister of Finance did move the motion to a five minutes debate on either side, but I believe the understanding was that, each Bill will get five minutes each from either side. So five minutes on all the Bills, I do not know how we can manage to do that. The whole purpose of adjourning for five hours to deliberate on these Bills and then condense them to five minutes, with all due respect, Madam Speaker, makes it a mockery of the procedures.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Member, we do understand the point that you are coming from, so at this time, I can only request the honourable Minister of Finance if he is able to agree, to amend his motion so that five minutes is given for each Bill, from the Opposition and also from Government, before his right of reply.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, unfortunately, the motion has already been passed and the conditions of the motion were, as I have said earlier on, is five minutes time limit for all the Bills to be debated on, and that is what we will stick to, Madam Speaker.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Speaker, five minutes for all the Bills is not very clear. I am sure the understanding was that it was five minutes for each Bill. Even then, we objected, Madam Speaker, because it was too short and lack of time given to consideration. As I have said, Madam Speaker, if that is how this Government wishes to treat the Opposition, that we are here for nothing, I do not know why you complained when we walked out of the Chambers because really, that is what they wanted to treat us, as a rubberstamp, for us not to be heard, just sit here and make up this side of the Parliament.

Madam Speaker, there was no clarity as to five minutes on all the Bills, otherwise we would have mounted more arguments against why it should be that. It is a very reasonable request that five minutes be given for each Bill which, in itself, is already a fast-tracked matter which we did not agree to.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, I just want to clarify something; during the Budget debate last week, there was a reason why 20 minutes was given to each honourable Member, that you debate about the Budget, the policies and allocations. Instead of doing that, Madam Speaker, ...

HON. GOVT. MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- This is consequential Bill!

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- Don't waste our time!

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- ... and talking about the policies...

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- We're not talking about policies!

HON. GOVT. MEMBER.- Listen!

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- ... and allocations, instead of talking about the implications on the relevant legislation, they gave us sermons.

HON. GOVT. MEMBER.- Hear, hear!

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- They talked about their villages.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- So what?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- They talked about the Bible. Madam Speaker, we were discussing about the single most important document that has implication on the entire population, instead they chose to walk out.

Madam Speaker, that time that they are asking now, they were given 20 minutes each to speak about those ...

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We do not need a lecture from the honourable Member on this motion.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. GOVT. MEMBER.- What is your point of order?

HON. P. SINGH.- He is going on about something which is not relevant at this point in time. What is relevant at this point in time is that there is a motion and we are seeking clarification.

*(Madam Speaker rose from her Chair and was upstanding)*

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you for the opportunity to have a stretch.

*(Laughter)*

I think for this time, if you can give us five minutes to deliberate on this issue and then we will continue.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.08 p.m.



The Parliament resumed at 3.20 p.m.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, this is my stand on the issue. The motion, under Standing Order 5,1 has been voted on and it stands. The motion specifies that five minutes each in total be given to the Government and Opposition, with the Minister being given the right of reply. Unfortunately, my hands are tight on this issue as Parliament has voted on the motion. Therefore, I now call on the Government to speak for five minutes.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Madam Speaker, I thank you for allowing me to continue from where I left off in the morning, because when I was presenting, there was a lot of interjections from the Opposition. It forced me to wonder whether they were voted in by the Fijians or foreigners as soon as I touched on foreign land ownership.

Madam Speaker, the Land Sales Act that is proposed to be amended, in essence as I had explained earlier, it does restrict certain foreigners from buying or leasing State and Freehold land. The Opposition should be mindful that this, in fact, gives an added value to *iTaukei* land, and they should be happy with that.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- It doesn't re-enact overnight!

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- But it is an amendment that we are proposing to the Act. If they listen to us, as the honourable Minister has given Lesson number Five, I will give them Lesson number Six. Please, learn to listen and you will have a chance to reply.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- You're talking about something you don't understand!

MADAM SPEAKER.- Order! Honourable Member, you may continue.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- The amendment that we are proposing is what I will speak on. They have their five minutes in total to respond after this.

There are a lot of land that are owned by foreigners and are left vacant. What this amendment proposes to do, in fact, it says that, "within 24 months of coming into effect of this Act, there must be building on that land of substantial value of \$250,000 or more". What that intends to do, Madam Speaker, is to have development all over the country, especially on these lands which this Act intends to cover.

HON. RATU I. KUBUABOLA.- Tell them, tell them!

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- How can you do it in 24 months? How can it be possible?

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Yes, 24 months is a long time to build.

Madam Speaker, there are many parcels of land that have been bought by foreigners and are left lying idle. What is happening now is that, those vacant land have being sold over and over again and it depreciates the value or price. We do not know how much of that money was actually paid within the country and how much is paid outside to circumvent, to bypass the Exchange Control Act and Stamp Duty Act.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- From Savusavu, it's all over!

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- By making this amendment, we are in fact helping the country.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA. – I rise on a point of order. I request the honourable Member to address his utterances to the Chair.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- When I am interjecting, I am interjecting directly. By convention, I do not have to address the Chair to intervene.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Please if you want to attack, attack me.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, by convention also, the interjection does not have to be so oppressive not to hear the speaker.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- I will continue, despite the interjections which were totally out of order.

Madam Speaker, as I have already stated and the Opposition probably missed that part, so I will repeat it. No matter how much they sensationalise it, the proposed amendment does not affect the *iTaukei* land. It does not affect land that is outside the town boundaries. It does not affect the land, honourable Member as you mentioned, Savusavu, it does not affect specific tourism development. It is there in the Act and they were given a chance to read this amendment during tea and lunch break. I do not think they read anything.

(Laughter)

Madam Speaker, I repeat the principle behind this amendment is to see Fiji developed and....

HON. GOVT. MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.... as soon as I mentioned that foreigners will be restricted, there is a lot of interjections and noise from the other side. May I ask them again; did the Fijians vote for you or the foreigners?

(Laughter)

I have one minute left.

MADAM SPEAKER.- We are stretching your five minutes but you have one minute left.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. The prices of residential property in the Lami-Nausori corridor has risen exponentially and everyone here who has attempted to buy property would know that I had mentioned that in my Budget address earlier.

This amendment to the Act is designed to curb that, so it makes it easier for the Fijians who have voted for you Members to acquire property. No, we are not restricting foreigners from buying land outside town boundaries and within the tourism industry as they have said - Momi, Naisoso and Denarau. That is still intact. They can buy those million dollar property but the poor Fijians of this country also need to invest, buy homes for themselves.

HON. GOVT MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- This amendment Act, Madam Speaker, proposes to do just that, and I support all the amendments that the Government proposes.

MADAM SPEAKER.- I know we are at a time when we are feeling sleepy but you have really woke us up.

(Laughter)

I will now give five minutes to the members of the Opposition.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on behalf of the Opposition.

(Laughter)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- But let me just say at the beginning that we are in a state of shock that something so very important for this country has only been given five minutes.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- Hear, hear.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, these Bills would just make it more difficult for our people. Bill No. 14, you will levy service charges to coffee shops, cafes and nite clubs her – more out of the pockets for our people. All these Bills are more indirect taxes and at the end of the day our people who are already under a huge burden for courtesy of FijiFirst, who would find it more harder for this country.

On Bill No. 16 - scholarships, we demand that the people who are going to come into this are those who are qualified educators, people who know about education and not just anyone from outside, to come and sit in this committee.

Madam Speaker, the fringe benefit here is the same story - making it more difficult for our people.

Madam Speaker, Bill No. 19 is commendable in some way, but again, the extra costs for our people. There are better ways of doing this then just putting on indirect taxes and taxing our people. One day, there is going to be a revolt in this country out of the huge taxation that our people are facing every day.

Madam Speaker, on the Customs Act, tax is going to go up by 32 per cent; how does this gel with the free education that we are talk about in this country? The rationality is outstanding in the way this Government puts together all these Bills. I am forced, given the time which restricts us to only comment on a few, but again we are all hindsight people through these Bills.

Bill No. 25, again as a cost of doing business, we would like this two per cent to be spent on medical insurance as a contribution. These are things we need to put in place before we pass these kind of Bills. The consultation in these Bills has been virtually nil. These are issues, Madam Speaker.

Let me remind my colleague over there, we had two weeks, they gave us a journey of two weeks based on falsehood. So, certainly, forget about those two weeks and all this stuff that we have been talking about, Madam Speaker.

(Laughter)

Madam Speaker, Bill No. 27, the ship registration is not going to be registered with the Fiji Military Forces but to the Navy. That is against the Constitution. Let us put it back to the Fiji Military Forces and not to the Fiji Navy.

Madam Speaker, on the land issue. Freehold in this country is always sacred. All over the world, my life has been in the global community; travelling, tourism and all that. To change this, only 10 per cent of the land in Fiji, to touch something that is so sacred is an indication of this Government which I brand as the most fearless government in the history of Fiji; fearless and touching things that are sacred....

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Tell the nephew!

(Laughter)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA....fearless in raising taxes and in the way they spend the taxes. There is a fine line between fearless and fraudlessness, Madam Speaker.

(Laughter)

Madam Speaker, let us keep the freehold land as they are as integral to a place in the community. Do not touch it, do not fix it, if nothing is wrong with it. It keeps our integrity as a people in this part of the world. We are part of the global village, we are not an island adrift, we are not on our own and we need to link up to the community.

Madam Speaker, these Bills have to be all rejected in their current forms.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker. I think it is important to remind this Chamber that this is unconstitutional, the Bills have to be dealt with individually. Standing Orders 83 to 97 on Bills; how a Bill should proceed. A Bill must be read for the first time, second time for the debate and it should go until we finish it. I just want to raise our concern, in terms of what is constitutional in this august Chamber.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, just again drawing the attention of the honourable Member because he has a tendency of reading things in isolation. Standing Order 91 is quite categorically keep clear, which says that, and I quote:

“A Bill may proceed more quickly than permitted by Standing Orders 83 to 88 if –

- (a) the member in charge of the Bill requests, by motion under Standing order 51, that parliament approve consideration of the Bill without delay; and....”

Obviously, the consideration of the Bill can be extended to other Bills. All the Bills that are read, Standing Order 51 is applied to them. This is again a frivolous, vexatious interjection by the honourable Member and I suggest that now, Madam Speaker, given that we have this that we proceed to the next stage of passing this Bill.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Speaker, on this point of order, and we say this only so that you set a good precedent for the future, even if we do the wrong thing now, and after the next General Elections we may change seats, I am sure they would not want us to do this.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Speaker, if you set a good precedent now, you will bar us when we get there from doing exactly the same thing.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- The Constitution talks about “a” Bill like the Standing Orders, it does not talk about cumulative bills or all bills taken together and that is what the Standing Order says. Even Standing Order (51) says “a Bill” and “the Bill”. Can we just seek clarification on your earlier ruling that the motion had allowed for this cumulative dealing of Bills? Does that mean that the vote was amending that section of the Constitution? If so, can we go through the usual channel of three-quarter majority in the House, and outside? That is how we amend the Constitution, Madam Speaker. I am drawing it to your attention. Again, as I say, it is not just for our benefit, once we change sides, they would not want us to do the same thing. You would have set a good precedence for this Parliament. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- *Vinaka!*

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you for that point of order. As I had mentioned, the motion under Standing Order (51) for this particular situation has been voted and it stands. I thank all honourable Members for the five minutes on each side of the Chamber that had been given, and utilised well.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I will be extremely brief. There are a number anomalies, of course, in the way that the Opposition has interpreted these Bills. Let me just give you a few examples - the Land Sales Act where we require people to build homes within a period of time, exactly the same in Australia. They have similar provisions in Australia. It is not something peculiar to Fiji, *per se*. The reality is, Madam Speaker, that these people are not being deprived of the ownership of their land, as the honourable Sudhakar had spoken at length about it. But the fact is that it does not in any way change ownership of land, it is actually 5 per cent of Fiji’s freehold land.

Fringe Benefit Tax, Madam Speaker, for example. It says that religious organisations are now exempt. How can it be oppressive to the ordinary people, when we are now saying that religious organisations will be exempt?

Madam Speaker, a number of these Bills that are before us have already been alluded to, or discussed in the Budget debates that we had. For example, there are certain anomalies regarding Service Turnover Tax (STT) and there is a minimum threshold that one needs to meet to be able to have the STT applied to you - a turnover of \$1.5 million. Obviously, Singh’s Curry House or Talei’s Takeaway is not going to be having Service Turnover Tax. I suggest that people need to read about this.

Similarly, Madam Speaker, in terms of the increase in the duty, these are not in any way affecting any basic good items. These are things like perfumes, watches and binoculars. These are the areas in which revenue is going to increase because of the increase of 32 per cent.

FNPF - is it not a wonderful thing that we now have people having the ability to be able to save more money, because the employers, not them, but the employers will contribute two per cent. We do not hear employers objecting about it because they understand that this will lead to savings. This will mean that we will have a healthier economy because there will be more Fijians savings in FNPF.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It increases the basic capital within the country.

Madam Speaker, in respect of the other matters pertaining to the Value Added Tax (VAT), for example, the amendment is to clarify the issues where there were various anomalies. So, that talks about, for example, when one goes to a chemist and sometimes the doctor will write a prescription in which he or she says, "Repeat" So what used to happen is, when one takes a prescription to the pharmacist, one is VAT exempted from that medicine. Now, sometimes when people used to take the repeat, they used to still charge VAT, so this basically will set that area free in the sense, even for "Repeats" now, there is no Value Added Tax (VAT). How does that in anyway affect an ordinary person, Madam Speaker?

Similarly, Madam Speaker, a number of the changes that have been made regarding, for example, excise in terms of the increase, we are protecting local manufacturing in Fiji. It has been done over a period of time, and we have seen now the positioning of Fiji as a manufacturing hub. We are sending noodles, Madam Speaker, from Ba to Port Moresby because they see us as a manufacturing hub and because our people are a lot better to be able to engage in manufacturing. Our hygiene capacity, et cetera, is way above other countries. So, here we have the capacity and that is precisely what we are doing.

Capital Gains (Amendment) Decree, we are now saying that we will be exempted from Capital Gains Tax if, for love or affection, you give your property to your daughter or to your son or a grandfather giving it to his grandchild or between spouses.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- *O cei, o Momo?*

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- In laws, we have not done yet!

(Laughter)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, perhaps, in the next three or four years when the economy will do even greater, we can probably think about that.

(Laughter)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, the fact is that the other side of the Chamber have tried to portray a very negative image. The law speak for themselves, and Madam Speaker, I have now much pleasure in recommending that we now vote on accepting these Bills, to become Acts of Parliament. *Vinaka*.

Question put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	-	30
Noes	-	3
Not Voted	-	15
Abstain	-	2

Motion agreed to.

Bills reported without amendment, read a third time and passed. (Act No. of 2014)

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, Parliament is now adjourned until 9.30 tomorrow morning.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.48 p.m.