

# PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI



## PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

### DAILY HANSARD

**THURSDAY, 13TH JULY, 2017**

**[CORRECTED COPY]**



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**THURSDAY, 13TH JULY, 2017**

The Parliament met at 9.53 a.m., pursuant to adjournment.

HONOURABLE SPEAKER took the Chair and read the Prayer.

**PRESENT**

All Honourable Members were present, except the Honourable Ratu S.V. Nanovo.

**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, 12th July, 2017 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR**

Acknowledgement

I welcome all Honourable Members to today's sitting as we continue with the debate on the 2017-2018 Budget.

I welcome the students and teachers from Nakurukuruvakatini Primary School. Welcome to Parliament and I hope you will enjoy watching the debate today.

I also welcome our guests who are sitting on the other side of the gallery and also those watching proceedings on television and the internet and listening to the radio. Thank you for taking interest in your Parliament.

Delay – Daily Hansard

For the information of the Honourable Members, the *Daily Hansard* Report will be delayed due to the prolonged sitting last night. This will be distributed to Honourable Members as soon as the Secretariat finalises this report.

Birthday Wishes – Honourable Lt. Col. Rika

At this juncture, let me acknowledge and wish the Honourable Lt. Col. Netani Rika, a happy belated birthday, having celebrated his special day on Monday, 10th July, 2017. I know you kept it very quiet but we found it later on. Many happy returns of the day.

(Acclamation)

Before we begin, I would appreciate if all mobile phones can be turned off.

### **INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL ORGANISATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2017**

HON. SPEAKER.- For the information of the Honourable Members, the Honourable Attorney-General had given notice to the Business Committee that he would be moving additional Bills this week.

At this juncture, we will now move on to consideration of these additional Bills.

I now call upon the Honourable Attorney-General to move his motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 51, I move:

- a) that the International Financial Organisations (Amendment) Bill 2017 (Bill No. 36 of 2017) 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;
- d) the International Financial Organisations (Amendment) Bill 2017 be debated and voted upon by Parliament immediately after the vote on the motion for Parliament's approval of Fiji's acceptance of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank - Articles of Agreement in relation to the report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence which was tabled on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017; and
- e) that the time for the debate for the International Financial Organisations (Amendment) Bill 2017 be limited to ensure that the Bill is debated and voted upon during the same sitting day of Parliament as a sitting day of the vote on the motion for Parliament's approval of Fiji's acceptance of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank - Articles of Agreement under paragraph (d).

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- Now, I call upon the Honourable Attorney-General, Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications to speak on the motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, suffice to say that this particular relevant report on the AIIB was tabled by the Committee. The Committee has actually been through this and it will be presented tomorrow and we can then debate it at tomorrow's sitting.

HON. SPEAKER.- The Bill is now open for debate and I invite input from Honourable Members, if any.

Thank you Honourable Attorney-General. Would you like to make a concluding statement?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote. The question is, pursuant to Standing Order 51:

- a) that the International Financial Organisations (Amendment) Bill 2017 (Bill No. 36 of 2017) 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;
- d) that the International Financial Organisations (Amendment) Bill 2017 be debated and voted upon by Parliament immediately after the vote on the motion for Parliament's approval of Fiji's acceptance of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank - Articles of Agreement in relation to the Report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence which was tabled on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017; and
- e) that the time for the debate for the International Financial Organisations (Amendment) Bill 2017 be limited to ensure that the Bill is debated and voted upon during the same sitting day of Parliament as the sitting day of the vote on the motion for Parliament's approval of Fiji's acceptance of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank - Articles of Agreement under paragraph (d).

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

HON. SPEAKER.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	32
Noes	-	14
Not Voted	-	4

HON. SPEAKER.- There being 32 Ayes, 14 Noes, 4 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

**COMMERCE COMMISSION (BUDGET AMENDMENT) BILL 2017 AND  
REGULATION OF BUILDING PERMITS BILL 2017**

HON. SPEAKER.- I now call upon the Honourable Attorney-General to move his motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 51, I move:

- a) that the Commerce Commission (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017 (Bill No. 34 of 2017) and Regulation of Building Permits Bill 2017 (Bill No. 35 of 2017) 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;
- d) that the Commerce Commission (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017 and Regulation of Building Permits Bill 2017 must be debated and voted upon by Parliament immediately after the vote on the 2017-2018 Appropriation Bill 2017 with the Consequential Bills for the 2017-2018 Budget tabled on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and Accidents Compensation Bill 2017 tabled on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2017;
- e) that the time for the debate for the Consequential Bills including the Accident Compensation Bill 2017, Commerce Commission (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017 and Regulation of Building Permits Bill 2017 be limited to ensure that all such Bills are debated and voted upon during this sitting of Parliament. Thank you Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now call upon the Honourable Attorney-General, Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications to speak on his motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, suffice to say that these Bills are indeed the Consequential Bills that emanate from the Budget announcements that were made and have a direct correlation to the policy initiatives that have been announced under the Budget, and therefore for it to be compiled together with the Consequential Bills, which we will be debating after the Appropriation Bill has been voted upon. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- The Bill is now open for debate and I invite input from Honourable Members, if any.

Thank you. There being no input, the Honourable Attorney General would you like to make concluding statements?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Parliament will now vote and the question is, pursuant to Standing Order 51:

- a) that the Commerce Commission (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017 (Bill No. 34 of 2017) and Regulation of Building Permits Bill 2017 (Bill No. 35 of 2017) 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;



- d) that the Commerce Commission (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017 and Regulation of Building Permits Bill 2017 must be debated and voted upon by Parliament immediately after the vote on the 2017-2018 Appropriation Bill 2017 with the Consequential Bills for the 2017-2018 Budget tabled on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and Accidents Compensation Bill 2017 tabled on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2017;
- e) that the time for the debate for the Consequential Bills including the Accident Compensation Bill 2017, Commerce Commission (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017 and Regulation of Building Permits Bill 2017 be limited to ensure that all such Bills are debated and voted upon during this sitting of Parliament.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

HON. SPEAKER.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	32
Noes	-	14
Not Voted	-	4

HON. SPEAKER.- There being 32 Ayes, 14 Noes, 4 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

**RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON THE 2017-2018 APPROPRIATION BILL 2017**

HON. SPEAKER.- Parliament will now resolve into the Committee of Supply to resume the debate on the Heads in the Budget Estimates.

In Committee:

Head 32 - Ministry of Forests

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments and I invite comments, if any, on Programme 1 Activity 1 - General Administration.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will move on to Programme 1, Activity 2 - Economic Policy, Planning and Statistics.

Honourable Parmod Chand?

HON. P. CHAND.- Madam Chairperson, Activity 2 SEG 7 – Industry Consultation (\$40,000). I would like to have clarification on what sort of consultation will this be and is this amount sufficient.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister for Forests.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chairperson, they are the forestry stakeholders especially the saw millers, resource owners and Government.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bulitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Just on SEG 7 - Trade Shows (\$50,000). Can the Honourable Minister clarify what types of trade show are this and whether it is sufficient?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The Ministries of Forests and Fisheries along with the Ministry of Agriculture normally work together on trade shows.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On SEG 4, there is an increase in allocation in 2016-2017 and there is a Data Link Rental allocation of \$91,500. Can we get a clarification Honourable Minister on this Data Link Rental of \$91,500?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Additional funding for Vehicle Fuel and Oil, Stationery, Incidentals, Maintenance of Equipment, and Spare Parts and Maintenance.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

HON. A SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This essentially is to improve the connectivity between the different Forestry Offices in the Data Link, you know how we saw in one of the expenditures earlier on where we actually hired fibre optic cable and the data linkages, so we hired space for that. That is what it is for because we want more of these forest outposts and stations to be connected to each other.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO T.V. KEPHA.- Madam Chairperson, on SEG 7 - Trade Shows. If that is in connection with the Ministry of Agriculture Trade Show, does that mean you will have it four times a year?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Right, four times a year. Whenever there is an Agriculture Trade Show that also includes forestry and fisheries.

HON. RO T.V. KEPHA.- Okay, thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? There being no other comments ....

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chairperson, can I just add clarification to that as well because technically under the FAO Regulation when you talk about agriculture, it is not only about crops and livestock, it is also the Fisheries and the Forest sectors. So we are one under the FAO umbrella of the United Nations, it is all termed as "agriculture".

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? There being none, we will move onto Programme 2 Activity 1 - General Administration. I invite comments.

Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On SEG 7 - Sustainable Management of Vulnerable Forests – Rewa Delta Project (\$91,935), I want to move a motion to increase the allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Would you like to fill the form, please?

Any other comments? Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chairperson, can the Honourable Minister clarify SEG 6 - Fiji Pine Trust. There are two items there - Extension (\$560,124) and Forest Subsidy on Value Adding Machines (\$50,000). What are these for?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chairperson, it is a grant to Fiji Pine Trust to carry out its obligation. Fiji Pine Trust is a statutory trust for pine plantation development yet privately owned, especially for maritime owners and individuals outside Fiji Pine leased area. The funding is for \$560,124.

For Forest Subsidy, this is a development programme for woodcarvers.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? There being no other comments, we will move onto Programme 2, Activity 2.

Honourable Viliame Gavoka?

HON V.R. GAVOKA.- SEG 8, can the Honourable Minister elaborate a bit on that REDD+ provision of \$400,000?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This is an ongoing project. The main focus for 2017-2018 will be institutional strengthening including consultation, awareness, capacity building and training of stakeholders on the REDD+ components or guidelines for developing REDD+ projects in community- owned forests, continued development of the Emalu Pilot Site, reforestation, alternative livelihoods activities, supportive to the REDD+ Steering Committee, REDD+ Unit and the Divisional Working Group. The increase compared to 2016-2017 Budget is for the expansion of the REDD+ awareness and capacity building, engaging stakeholders and institutional strengthening.

HON V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I wish to move to increase that further. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Please fill the form. Any other comments?

Honourable Bulitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- On SEG 7 - Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, a World Bank contribution is there. Probably the Honourable Minister can enlighten us on what all is involved in this allocation; how is this used?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chairperson, as I already mentioned in my Budgetary speech it is an ongoing project for the REDD+ in the RDF programme whereby we engage communities for reforestation of the degraded areas.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bultavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chairperson, again, but does that include the pay-out to conservation leases and other formulas that comes with it?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? There being no other comments, we will move on to Programme 2, Activity 3 - Training and Education.

Honourable Parmod Chand?

HON. P. CHAND.- I would like to move a motion on SEG 5.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, please fill the form. Any other comments?

Honourable Leawere?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chairperson, just a bit of enlightenment on the Forest Warden Support, which is tagged at \$72,000 on SEG 5.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You are stating your motion? Any other comments?

Since there are no other comments, we will move on to Programme 2, Activity 4. I invite comments, if any. There being no comments, we will move on to Programme 2, Activity 5. Any comments? Honourable Bultavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Just on SEG 8 - Sandalwood Development Programme, whether that \$100,000 is sufficient, given it is just like last year?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chairperson, the \$100,000 allocation is sufficient to revitalise the sandalwood industry.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? Honourable Prem Singh?

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chairperson, could the Honourable Minister inform us on what is the contribution of the logging companies in revitalising the sandalwood project?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chairperson, I think the question is irrelevant.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you and I agree.

Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- It is not a budget question.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- SEG 7 - Renovation of the Wood Analysis Laboratory, is the laboratory working? Has it been in operation, the laboratory on SEG 7 on page 213?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- It is working.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other question? Honourable Leawere?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Just some clarification on SEG 8 - Upgrade of Office and Quarters. Are these quarters all over the country or just concentrating on Suva?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- All over the country.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I like this, very succinct. Any other question? Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, on SEG 5 - TITC – Training Expenses (\$230,000). I note that there has been a consistent allocation on TITC – Training Expenses. Can we get some clarification from the Honourable Minister?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- The training programme undertakes wood processing out to rural and maritime areas also. It is taken out to the maritime areas. As you know that we, for example, have been giving out portable sawmills in the outer islands too, so there needs to be some training for the people who are going to use it and how to utilise the timber.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments?

We will move on to Programme 2, Activity 6. Honourable Parmod Chand?

HON. P. CHAND.- Madam Chairperson, on SEG - 8, I will move a motion on this.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Please fill the form.

Any other comments?

We will move onto Programme 2, Activity 7. I invite comments, if any.

Honourable Semesa Karavaki?

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Honourable Chairperson. I just ask the Honourable Minister for clarification on SEG 9. The last item on SEG 9 is the Purchase of Harvesting Machines. Is this harvesting machine designated for one area?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- The harvesting machine will be utilised, especially in matured plantations in maritime areas like Lakeba and Kadavu. It is a new allocation.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- That allocation also again includes the training for machine operators.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Activity 7 is on Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (Harvesting and Logging). Could the Honourable Minister clarify SEG 4 - Spare Parts and Maintenance (\$94,000), what does that relate to?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- For motor vehicles and some of our machines.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments?

Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, on Purchase of Equipment - Lakeba Pine Scheme of \$300,000. This has been a consistent allocation from previous years. Is this a new exercise altogether as compared to previous years or is this an overflow from last year? What is this pine scheme?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This is to supply value adding machines to improve the quality of finished products and complement existing portable sawmills. Lakeba has three portable sawmills with a total capacity of 3,600 cubic metres.

The purchase of the six sider machines means that the villages in Lakeba will be able to add value to their products instead of just producing sawn timber and posts, so this is value adding. These include weatherboards, tongue and groove flooring, decking lining, half round and quarter round and furniture components.

Lakeba, as some of you would know has the largest pine scheme in Fiji in the maritime areas covering an area of about 1,573 hectares with approximately two million pine trees planted under the scheme which is about 300,000 cubic meters.

So, obviously we need to ensure that they get the maximum return out of it, just simply sawing timber is not good enough. We need to add value. Who knows they might become an exporter from Lau.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? Honourable Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu?

HON. RATU. N.T. LALABALAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Just a point of clarification on SEG 9 - Pine Woodlot Logging Package from the Honourable Minister here because just a while ago he said that Fiji Pine Trust is a stand-alone statutory body and these woodlots, does it cover private woodlots that are outside the Fiji Pine leases?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chairperson, this covers the unleased area from Fiji Pine.

HON. RATU. N.T. LALABALAVU.- Thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Just for the information of the Honourable Member, this \$342,000 actually will go towards Narocake in Cicia Pine Schemes by supplying logging and sawmill equipment to harvest matured pine planation for home construction. This assistance will also expand to other maritime islands, including Kadavu.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any further comments? Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, on SEG 7 - Monitoring and Surveillance of Logging (\$100,000), it has reduced from \$250,000 from 2016-2017. Does this involve expenses for people who will be doing the monitoring and surveillance? Is this allocation enough?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Some of the activities will be taken over by the forest wardens or from the various forest stations throughout Fiji. That is why it has decreased.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chairperson, just to the Honourable Minister for Economy on the woodlot logging, Narocake, Cicia and Kadavu did you say, Minister for Economy?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes. It expands to other areas but the two key ones earmarked for this \$342,000, this time around the two main areas are Narocake, Cicia, then of course it will expand to other areas too.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Ono-i-Lau?

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- *Sega, e sega ni wili o* Ono-i-Lau.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- And Kadavu?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, and Kadavu too. This time around the two main ones is Narocake, Cicia then of course it will expand to other areas too.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Ono-i-Lau?

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- *Sega, e sega ni wili o* Ono-i-Lau.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Other maritime areas too.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- And Kadavu?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, and Kadavu too.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You did not mention Ono-i-Lau.

Any other comments?

We will move onto Programme 2, Activity 8, I invite comments, if any.

We have a number of motions to deal with and the first motion is being proposed by the Honourable Dulakiverata and he wants to move that Head 32 be increased by \$200,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1 SEG 7 with respect to Sustainable Management of Vulnerable Forests - Rewa Delta Projects. Do we have a seconder?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- I second the motion, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. You may speak on your motion Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This is part of wetland management under COP23 activities. The NPA too, as had been alluded to by the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, Madam Chairperson, we have a lot of mangroves in the Rewa Delta which had been harvested by people who sell firewood without being properly monitored or policed, and you can see in every supermarket in town, there are mangrove firewood for sale. So this is depleting

the area and causing a lot of problems to the fishing right owners and people who live in the area. To police these activities properly, we need to increase this allocation, Madam Chairperson, which is why we are moving this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone else want to speak on the motion?

Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chairperson, in terms of this motion which I support, it is not only firewood that you see the *dogo* areas being depleted. It is also used for any new building especially in Suva. If it is high rise, you will see the scaffolding that they use there that is also from *dogo*, they use it also for furniture so it is very indiscriminate logging.

Also, just before Christmas all the *lovo* pits in the Suva and the surrounding areas, all that comes from the Rewa Delta. So I would support this because of our marine protected areas which under COP23 are something that we would want to really look after and monitor, so we need an increase in this particular SEG.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- Madam Chairperson, in support of the motion because it is talking in general about mangrove. Mangrove forests are extremely productive ecosystems and very important to the people of Rewa as well as other parts of Fiji. Not only that, Madam Chairperson, mangrove wood is also resistant to rot and insects and that is making it extremely valuable to those who live near these mangrove forests. The indigenous community, Madam Chairperson, rely very heavily on mangroves especially for those staying near coastal lines; it is a good material as well as fuel, which is why I am supporting this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Viliame Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chairperson, I support the motion and I agree totally with what my colleagues have expressed. Today, Madam Chairperson, it is tragic when the owners of *qoliqoli* who live near the mangrove areas see mangrove trees being harvested or cut. These takes years to grow and from where I am from, from the coral coast, there is a lot of planting of mangroves on the coast because they determine the quality of the sea around the resort areas because of the way they filter what comes from the land.

Also, Madam Chairperson, the protection of wet land is very much integral to COP23. So I think Fiji needs to strengthen its policing of the mangroves and I would support this very strongly to increase the allocation to strengthen the policing of this.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I agree that the amount that you have there is \$91,935 is clearly not enough. We need a lot more to properly manage our mangroves and I am asking the Honourable Minister, please hopefully by next year, this will extend to other areas because this is one of the biggest climate change adaptation measure; mangroves. It should not only be limited to Rewa, even now as my colleagues indicate that it is not enough because we see abuse here and there.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- So now you support COP23.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu.



HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I am in complete support of this motion especially when it has just been mentioned a while ago by the Honourable Minister. Yes, we support COP23.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Not that guy behind you.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- I said we. The vulnerable forest, now that we are talking COP23 because vulnerable forest is also known as wet lands and wet lands also covers not only forest or probably the definition of “forest” has extended to grass land as well because we have *kuta* in Fiji and it is quite abundant in these very wet lands. So this one here is specifically for Rewa and I hope the definition of vulnerable forest would also come under the wet land definition and then hopefully that should be able to cover the whole of Fiji where wet land is very important especially to women.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister for Agriculture.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chairperson, if I may contribute. When you look at the quality of the oceans, it is not only one item, one activity in isolation. Government has got this programme called “Ridge to Reef” so it starts from the hills. This is just an allocation specifically, it is a pilot project on *dogo*, given the importance of the Rewa Delta area but there are other programmes starting from the ridges uphill and you will see that consistently in all the programmes.

We have talked about REDD+, there are reforestation activities going on and then agriculture comes in with sustainable land management practises, good husbandry practises and soil management. This is just an allocation specifically for *dogo*, so let us not just look at this allocation in isolation, we have that Ridge to Reef concept and these are all contributing towards the need for us to sustain our oceans and the biodiversity involved in the environment. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chairperson, just to add further to it, with respect to the mangroves around the country, at the Ministry of Lands (I think I have said this on numerous occasions already and this is one of the reasons why it has taken a little bit of time to complete) there is a Mangrove Management Plan which will be turned into law.

Currently, with respect to all mangroves around the country where there is a foreshore lease that is being applied for and there is a mangrove, we do not issue the lease, we will not until we have completed the Mangrove Management Plan. There are a lot of factors that need to be taken into account, a lot of sensitive issues that have been raised but this House can be rest assured that Government is doing all it can with respect to protecting our mangroves, bearing in mind COP 23 and also people’s livelihoods.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Given that this motion and this budget line is specifically is for the management of the Rewa Delta projects, do we have, as has been mentioned other areas, the wetlands?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Could I just clarify from a financial perspective, Madam Chair. As you very correctly pointed out, Rewa Delta is very important in respect of it being a huge catchment area, and therefore, this specific allocation, unfortunately some of the Honourable Members seem to think that this \$91,000 is for the entire Fijian country.

It is only for Rewa. It is specifically to Rewa and if you look at the particular project, we have actually increased the funding by about another \$15,000 this year. We had some development

partners that worked with us, Government now is going to run with this.

We had some vehicles that have been given to us in respect of this and is used to. So, this is specifically for Rewa but if I could refer the Honourable Members to Programme 2, Activity 6 we have also introduced a new project here SEG 8, it says “Reforestation of Indigenous Species (\$250,000).”

*Dogo* obviously or mangrove is also an indigenous species. So there are many other species like *dakua*, et cetera that have been cut down, that has not been replanted so there is also focus on them. Many other indigenous hardwood species, but also *dogo* will be part of that too. So this programme will take care of that. And as you know that with the effort by our climate champion of course COP23 presidency and the Prime Minister leading the charge, we also got a lot of interest now coming from overseas in respect of partnering with us to pilot a number of these kinds of projects.

However, Parliament can be rest assured that this \$91,000 is not for the entire country, it is only for Rewa, but obviously some may say it is discriminatory, why only Rewa? Rewa obviously is very important in terms of it being a catchment area, but the re-afforestation of indigenous species captured under Programme 2, Activity 6 addresses the issue.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? Honourable Bilitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I support the motion to increase that allocation given that this is a very important issue in regards to even coastal line erosion; the need for replanting and taking adaptive climate change measures.

I think there have been teams from USP travelling around our coastal communities and also in the deltas giving out some aids, but probably this kind of assessment, Madam Chairperson, is probably done by USP. But the issue is, how they get access to this kind of funding, Madam Chairperson?

I hope that this will be increased given the vulnerability, people relying on sea walls and other measures but this a natural measure that will allow for them to adapt to the climate events that would come in years to come. So I support this particular motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Kiliraki?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I, particularly for this motion support the increase for the Rewa Delta Mangrove Development.

As far as addressing this budget, we must always take into consideration our commitment to COP 23 and especially SDGs. For this one, SDG 14, I will mention also SDG 3 for good health and wellbeing as well as life below water.

A mangrove has a very important part in the ecosystem in the biodiversity of life. The importance is in regards to climate change effects, has a filtration; it filters whatever comes from the ridge to the reef in terms of toxicity in the water system. That is always digested by the living organisms in the mangroves. Rewa is very important because it is an ecosystem and eco-biodiversity for the marine life in the total Tailevu area (you go to Kaba, the Honourable Prime Minister’s village and towards Bau).

So that is very important and for us to be seen to be doing something on COP23, we must be seen to be progressive in terms of addressing those issues and to show that, we must increase

allocations in regards to Rewa Delta. Thank you.

HON. MEMBER.- (Inaudible)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, I just need to highlight the reforestation of indigenous species is a new allocation. It has not been there before and no other government has done a specific allocation for reforestation of indigenous species specifically.

The other from a very practical perspective, I know of the Members when we highlighted, we are allocating a million dollars for you, our Hindu brothers and sisters, when they actually get cremated, we have allocated a \$1 million for that.

In that part of the budget speech, we also said that we are looking at gas furnaces for the cremation. Why are we doing this? They will tell you that a lot of the people buy *dogo* for the cremation. The cutting down of mangrove forests is not just done willy-nilly, there is actually a demand for it; people go and cut it and they obviously supply it.

So, if we are able to, for example, I understand that *dogo* is used more in the Eastern Side and Central Division for cremation as opposed to the Western Division, they use other timber, but if we are able to use gas furnaces, the demand for *dogo* for cremation will actually go down too.

So that is part and parcel of a holistic approach. You cannot simply just say, “Just allocate more money.” The whole idea is to address the demand for it also so we need to take a very holistic approach to it. And as I said, the reforestation of indigenous species very specifically, the gas furnaces will also help in particular in the Suva-Nausori corridor too.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other comments, we will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	4

There being 14 Ayes, 32 Noes and 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

We will now move on to the next motion and this is being tabled by the Honourable Bilitavu and he moves that Head 32 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 2, Activity 6, SEG 8 with respect to Reforestation of Degraded Forests.

Does anyone second the motion?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chairperson, I second the motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I think this is a very simple

motion in regards to the increase of that allocation for the reforestation of degraded forests.

I think given the pace of logging that we are going to now, I think it is important to do replanting and reforestation. If you go up Vanua Levu, to Dogotuki, even Vaturova, or if you go the Nayarable Road, there has been plenty logging and I think people are going into quick cash offered by logging companies which come with promises to build village halls and village housing. But again the issue here is their livelihood, on how to sustain and try to restock their forest and also the carbon stock of this forest which is important, given the global fight for climate change, Madam Chairperson.

That is why I think the allocation is quite small, I think this particular area has to be treated more seriously and forest owners need to be taught and engaged on how they should be protecting and replanting their forest at their individual locations that they are located in. Thank you, Madam Chairperson,

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on that motion? Honourable Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I fully support the motion to increase the funds allocated to SEG 8, especially when we are talking about reducing emissions here. In particular, if I may recall what the Honourable Minister of Forests had delivered in his Budget speech, that existing water catchment areas that had been regularised will not be covered under REDD+, but again there are catchment areas that have not been regularised as yet. I understand what the Honourable Minister for Economy had just said, that this had been done years ago but now since we have REDD+ and COP 23 Programme in front of us now, and in trying to reduce emissions because the plight of the indigenous forest owners come into play, Madam Chairperson, and they have foregone their right to standing timbers, royalties, et cetera, in view of the catchment. These are catchment areas that have not been regularised.

What happens in this case is here we are trying to reduce emission, the resource owners through their generosity have given their land for water catchment, they have lost their rights to standing trees and there is a need in order to look after that interest, perhaps in reducing emissions maybe the plight of the landowners in catchment areas that have not been regularised, could be taken into this particular SEG's budget allocation, and therefore I support this motion to increase SEG 8.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any comments from the Honourable Minister?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chairperson, firstly, can I make a contribution on degraded forests and the programme that Government is taking.

Government recognised in the last few years that now in Fiji there is a heavy reliance on plantations; pine and mahogany. Government is now revisiting the areas that had been previously logged over the years and we must be thankful to this Government for taking this initiative, Madam Chairperson, because for a long time, we have been logging in Fiji but unfortunately, there was no serious attempt made for us to go into reforestation, Madam Chairperson.

Secondly, if we go to forestry nurseries all over Fiji, if the Honourable Bulitavu can go up now to Korotari, there are heaps and heaps of trees in the nurseries that are available to the landowners. This is an initiative of Government. I want to put it across again to the other side, what is the responsibility of the resource owners? It is not only about economic benefits, Madam Chairperson. When we are looking at benefits from development and particularly for forest and extraction industries particularly, it is not only about economic benefits, it is about social benefits and environmental benefits as well.

We all need to be advocating these to our communities because we also have a responsibility. What I am trying to come to, Madam Chairperson, is that we have the money, the economic benefits from

logging but we are hardly reinvesting. That is our future, not only in terms of economic benefits for those that will come after us but it is about the social benefits because water sources, the biodiversity in the forest and most importantly, the environmental benefits as well. This is again an initiative by Government to revisit these areas that had been logged but I also wish to emphasise that we also have a responsibility, particularly the resource owners and we need to work in partnership.

Those seedlings in the RDF Programme is free to resource owners. Go to Korotari now, there are indigenous species and you can even go with the other species, you can get it from there but most of them are overgrown and left outside in the nursery because no one is interested. This allocation is sufficient, Madam Chairperson, let us make use of those that are already available from the nurseries.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chairperson, I agree with the Honourable Minister when he says that the involvement of landowners, resource owners in this project will come a long way. Deforestation is a direct result of logging.

Logging companies have not been fulfilling their obligations to this project. Once the licences are being issued, I believe there was a proviso in those days that they had to be part of the replanting programme. Most of these depleted forests where harvesting has been undertaken, they have just been left barren. The Honourable Minister says that there is enough seedlings out there in Korotari, they are overgrown but what this allocation is trying to say is to empower the resource owners. As I have always said, you need a bit of “hand-holding”. You just cannot provide seedlings and leave it there, so any licence issued, there should be a mutual contract between the resource owners, Government and the logging companies in respect of reforestation.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chairperson, I think the main focus on this motion is to have a more aggressive and input into reforestation because as the Honourable Minister for Agriculture had said, it has been long over there like the concessions in the indigenous species logging.

Given the fact that the climate change has re-focussed us to address this deforestation and degradation because when you look at farming, most of the farming now because about 14 or 16 percent is flat land, mostly agriculture and taken over by industrial development and the farming is focused on the hillside. We are getting mechanisation so developments in farming mechanisation, you have to retain your forest capacity to be able to mitigate, so the noble idea of this motion is probably to be aggressive in our replanting process.

As far as the mahogany plantations have been neglected in terms of replanting until lately, (one year last year or the other year) but the point is, replanting introduced trees also have a devastating effect on the ecosystem. Mahogany is known to destroy the river system, stream system; no more prawns, no more things that the people live on, no more *ota* along the streams, and so as pine. When the pine leaves fall on the ground, it kills all the ground vegetation and it requires only one slight match to burn all the pine trees.

So those are the effects of introducing species that are foreign to us. Like the tulip, tulip is very aggressive but we need indigenous species like *dakua*, *damanu*, *laubu* and *kauvula*. Those are the species that should be aggressively introduced into the system because they are there from the beginning to address climate change, ecosystems, et cetera.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chairperson, first I need to correct the Honourable Minister. He says that this is the only government that is doing reforestation and even then, you can talk a lot here but the results are not there. You read up any literature and they say they plan so much, they have not

reached there. In relation to past governments, you just look at mahogany. Mahogany, is a result of reforestation; Fiji Pine. So it is wrong to say that this is the only government that is doing that.

The other thing that he said was that, what is the responsibility of the resource owners? He should not ask that? What is the use of planting all these and leaving it in the village, what will they do to it? You should empower, train and teach them. It happens all the time so it is wrong for those points but in relation to this, it is important and vital that you increase this so that you can address this very important issue.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA. - Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - Thank you. Honourable Viliame Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA. - Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In terms of laying the blame on the resource owners, Madam Chairperson, I think it is very unfair. They are doing their part but the whole equation is largely economic. In Naboutini, Madam Chairperson, we went to visit them and they said that there has been no increase to the rates on which their products are acquired (forest) but they see 10 or 12 trucks a day coming in to harvest their trees.

Now when you do that, you are impacting on their lives economically. When they see that nothing is increasing in terms of rates and you expect them to be socially and environmentally friendly, you are asking for the impossible. So economics has to be a major part of this equation. Do not neglect that part. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - Thank you. Any other comments?

HON. A. SAYED- KHAIYUM. - Madam Chairperson, I do not think anyone in this Parliament would disagree that the planting of indigenous species is very important. No one in this Parliament would disagree that indigenous species or planting whether it is flora or fauna, whether it is in this case a particular tree is not good, of course it is good. Of course, as Honourable Kiliraki who likes to always demonstrate his knowledge of forest and other resource type aspects is again also admitted indirectly that it is only in the past few years that the reforestation of the mahogany forest has taken place. Let this Parliament know.

Mahogany plantations, Madam Chairperson, were actually brought in by the British. They planted in 1950s. Fiji Pine was started by the post independent Government, Ratu Mara's Government; everyone talked about the green gold then. Today he is condemning that. Let us get it right.

He is saying, "It kills growth", etcetera. The fact of the matter is that pine was introduced. The fact of the matter is, we have been benefiting it from economically. The fact of matter is that landowners who had pine plantations had been benefiting from it but moreso now. For the first time they actually got bonuses paid. The Honourable Prime Minister has gone out for the past 2 to 3 years.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, I am saying, or it is actually a fact. It is a fact; more than a million dollars. And guess what? They are going to get another million dollars. You do not like the facts. Guess what, they are going to get another million dollars very soon. That is a fact.

Madam Chairperson, again under George Speight and all these other funny people who ran Fiji Hardwood Corporation Limited, they did not make a single cent of profit.

HON. MEMBER.- \$23 million debt.

HON. A. SAYED- KHAIYUM.- \$23 million debt and, Madam Chairperson, the reforestation that did take place then, most of the mahogany seedlings that were planted actually died. Now the new methodologies have been introduced under the new CEO, they are actually doing more planting and the Act that he wants to get rid of, Honourable Singh you should know this, under the Mahogany Act anyone that gets a licence actually has to pay a reforestation fee. They have to pay a reforestation fee and that money goes directly to Fiji Hardwood Corporation that uses it for reforestation and they are not only planting mahogany now, they are also planting teak. They are also looking at planting indigenous species to. Get the facts right, this is a fact.

The other issue, of course, Madam Chairperson is, they should also know, the Honourable Minister did not say that he is blaming the *iTaukei* people or the landowners; he is not saying that at all. He is saying that these facilities are available and they can also grow and access that. This reforestation of degraded forest also includes capacity building mechanisms. So those who want to get into it, the Minister and his team needs to provide assistance.

There is a German gentleman, Madam Chairperson, who has already planted over \$14 million worth of timber in Fiji. He saw an incentive there, he saw an opportunity there, he has actually gone out and leased land, he has leased lands in Kadavu and various other places and he is planting trees. He says that in 40 or 50 years' time, windfall not just for him but for the country. But also in terms of our carbon emission, it has been reduced. The carbon footprint is being reduced. So a number of opportunities are there to, Madam Chairperson.

So whenever we talk about reforestation, we need to look at the attrition rate of it. We need to see whether the reforestation is successful or not. How do we get people to have the knowledge base to be able to ensure that those seedlings, it is not good just putting the seed in the ground and forgetting about it? The fact is, we must come back and see whether it has been actually overgrown or not, overtaken by other species or not.

The reality, Madam Chairperson, is this, that the reforestation of degraded forest, the allocation is half a million dollars. We all agree there needs to be reforestation, of course. The reality, of course is, as Honourable Singh said, there is a need for the economic utilization of these forests. Many countries have done it, but they have done it in a systematic and a good management practice. What we have seen previously, what Honourable Kiliraki will not tell you because what used to happen in Nukurua is that you have some people coming along paying people cash overnight, they take out a little bit of the forest overnight. Then someone else goes there, gives someone else some money, they take out a little bit of forest over here. They are not telling you that.

The licensing regime, in particular, in the Mahogany Act actually tries to curtail that. It has in fact curtailed it. We need to do a lot more. There is no doubt we need to do more. But the fact of the matter is, let us stick to the budget and the budget is the reforestation of degraded forests, there is half a million dollars allocated to it.

Fiji Pine is also replanting and so as the Fiji Hardwood Corporation Limited. So it is not just only this allocation. The Ministry of Forestry is planting. The Honourable Minister for Agriculture has also pointed out that there are seedlings available. There are many individuals, I know, who are actually planting their own sandalwood trees for the future and their children. In 15 years' time, they will be able to harvest that. So we are inculcating a culture of reforestation, the money allocated here is enough for these particular purposes because it combines with other areas of expenditure also. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - Thank you. Do we have any other comments?

I think the spin-off from this debate is the awareness of our own or yourself that you need to really increase awareness of the replanting, reforestation and those facilities are available; seedlings are available when we visit communities.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA. - Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This is a very good discussion. I think we all agree that this thing is important and I hope for once that we will vote for the motion. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - Parliament will now vote on this motion.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	13
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	5

There being 13 Ayes, 32 Noes, 5 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Honourable Members, I beg your indulgence, we are supposed to break for morning tea but because we started late, can we have morning tea late?

HON. MEMBERS.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will continue and we are now looking at another motion, and this is the motion from the Honourable Bulitavu.

He is moving that Head 32 be increased by \$100,000. It looks like \$100, you are missing out one zero. Is it 100 or 100,000?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU. - \$100,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - Thank you. In Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 7 with respect to trade shows. Does anyone second the motion?

Honourable Bulitavu, you may speak on your motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, I think we have just had a discussion in regards to reforestation and replanting. I think this is an area which probably after discussion we all agree that there has to be capacity building on how forest owners come to know that there are seeds within the nursery and how there are also the Government Officials to create awareness programmes with the forest owners and they come to villages, and also to help them on techniques of how to plant and do replanting, Madam Chairperson.

This particular trade show as already been alluded to by the Honourable Minister, there are only four and they do it with the Ministry of Agriculture under the FAO Agreement. Probably it is again time for the trade shows by the Ministry of Forestry. They have their own, so it is more specific,



it is more focused and probably on how to help landowners to develop the wood products and also enter into economic and commercial purposes.

That is, the need for more trade shows and also it informs the public not only the forest owners on what are the current programmes with the Ministry. It also gives them areas in the budget that are available to them. These are many weaknesses, Madam Chairperson, when you come to divisional and district levels where information is not available. You go to the Forestry Office in Labasa, go to any other Government Office in Labasa, say after the budget announcement, even the officials at the district level do not understand what is in the budget book and they cannot even guide people on how to apply for those assistance.

These are the initiatives where Government has to play even proactive role; come into the public arena and how they are able to market themselves and the programmes that is available within the Ministry and how the public can partner with Government in trying to benefit from the budget that is provided, and these trade shows, Madam Chairperson, will really help a lot. Given that there is only about \$50,000 allocated there, I think there has to be an increase to create greater awareness not only in the divisional centres around the four but also to go into provisional level and other district levels, so it is wider and probably more people are reached in these trade shows and outreach programmes. *Vinaka*.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other comments, we will now vote on this.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- I apologise, Madam Chairperson, I will just make one comment. Definitely, we agree with the Honourable Bulitavu and that is something that Government will seriously take into consideration more of this awareness particularly with the forestry extension and of course, Ministry for Rural Development will take responsibility for that. But I forgot to mention in my last contribution, Madam Chairperson, that there is also a programme call "Reforest Fiji" that is funded by the European Union and is with SPC, which is about \$9 million. That goes for all species but the focus is on indigenous species as well. But I would again plead because this is where the partnership comes in. Government is doing its part with financial, technical expertise.

The resource owners have their part but I would again plead with all the Honourable Members because this is about sustainable development and our future as well. We all need to take ownership. We cannot rush into big interventions because we are still in the infancy stage of this, but for us to convince Government that we need more allocation next year, then those that are already in the nurseries need to be taken. So this is where we all need to go and sell the idea but I think because this is in its infancy stage as most of these programmes, if it goes well this year then definitely Government will have to increase it as well, so we need to work in partnership. Of course, I forgot to mention that allocation that is with SPC, funded by the European Union called "Reforest Fiji".

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, how do you people access these funds from SPC?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chairperson, there is a committee that looks after it, PS Forests, PS Prime Minister's Office and most of the technical ministries and there are nurseries in the areas as well. The nearest nursery that I am aware of is just here in Deuba. The old Fanning's Sawmill, an old building up the hill, if you go there now, there are millions of seedlings. I was there 3 weeks ago on my way to Sigatoka to visit them.

HON. P. SINGH.- Awareness, awareness.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Madam Chairperson, on World Environment Day this year, this was in early June, our *Turaga-ni-Koro* together with the Ministry of Forestry, I think, they went out and collected those seedlings and we have planted over a thousand seedlings in all our villages including villages in Beqa and including the school children in the different schools and we hope to be able to do that again next year. So, I would encourage all of us to be able to do that instead of just looking after our mangroves, we also need to look after our land including those in Natena that should also be doing that, Madam Chairperson, and more particularly, we made sure that we planted lots of coconuts because of the *sasa* (brooms) that are here in Suva, our coconut trees look very shoddy, very poor so that is one thing that we decided to do as an initiative this year and we hope to be able to do it again, next year. Thank you, Madam Chairperson

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. So it is not only the Government that is responsible for the awareness creation, it is everyone including the Opposition Members.

We will now vote on this motion and the motion reads that Head 32 be increased by \$100,000 in Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 7 with respect to trade shows.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	13
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	5

There being 13 Ayes, 32 Noes, 5 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We move on to the next motion by the Honourable Viliame Gavoka who is moving Head 32 be increased by \$600,000 in Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8 with respect to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation.

Does any Member second the motion?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Gavoka, you may speak on your motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson, REDD+ is quite a project that has to be supported, it has to be admired for what it is trying to achieve in partnership with the resource owners throughout Fiji. I believe you have to raise the profile of this throughout the country and get people to understand its implications especially the resources owners. As you know, Madam Chairperson, this year I raised a question in Parliament regarding the people of Draubuta, the *vanua* of Emalu who had waited for quite some time to receive what was promised to them when they surrendered thousands and thousands of acres of their forest to come under REDD+.

To me, it indicated that the structure in place was not properly setup because they were referred from agencies to agencies until I brought the matter up here and I am grateful that the Honourable Minister was able to resolve it and payment has been made, but it should not take five

years. We were trying to engage them, we were trying to ask them to surrender their land on which they will not develop or develop only in parts. So, it behoves us to ensure that what the structure we have in place is responsive to their needs and especially if you promise something to them, so I would like to see this to be upgraded.

It is part of climate change, part of COP23 and not only in Draubuta, I also brought up the matter about Vaturu where 9,000 acres have been reserved to accommodate the dam to feed water in the Western Division. That is also heavily forested and they should also be rewarded for denying themselves the benefits of those trees. The carbon content of those can be determined commercially and they must be rewarded. So, the work has to take on a bigger sense of urgency to help our people become part of this and be rewarded for it.

Vast majority of our land is covered in trees, Madam Chairperson, it is given, I just feel that we need to strengthen our management of it. We are talking about being socially responsible and environmental responsible but we should also ensure they obtain the economic benefits of the forest.

Saying that, Madam Chairperson, I cannot help but notice that out of a budget of \$4.3 billion, we only set aside \$16 million for forest, which is 0.004 of the budget. So much wealth that can be properly harnessed, properly developed to determine the wealth of this country and we do not seem to be paying enough attention to it, no other resources to fully develop it. So, Madam Chairperson, I suggest here that we increase the allocation from \$400,000 to \$1 million for this particular aspect of this initiative.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to add to that?

HON. P. SINGH.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to support what my colleague Honourable Gavoka has just said. In supporting this, I would like to make one very important point which is the World Bank is very clear and its guidelines that free prior and informed consent for land owning unit is important in any of their projects and maybe we can assist the Minister in setting an allocation specifically for community consultations. To achieve this, community consultations are very important and this is why the increase is important. We know the Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs is also doing consultations.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Member. You are now talking about community consultation as another allocation, so please can you just focus on the allocation that we are focusing on.

HON. P. SINGH.- That is part of my contribution, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.-Yes, but you are saying another allocation so that makes it different from we have here.

HON. P. SINGH.- SEG 7 on REDD+ has an allocation of \$400,000 and the mover of the motion is asking for an increase of \$600,000. So, within that allocation, community consultations can be included.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Is that correct?

HON. MEMBER.- (Inaudible)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, that is it . Any other comments?

Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose this motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, we will vote on it.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	4

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 14 Ayes, 32 Noes, 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The last motion before tea is from the Honourable Parmod Chand to move that Head 32, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 5 - be increased by \$100,000 with respect to Forest Warden Support.

Does anyone second this motion?

HON. P. SINGH.- I second the motion, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Parmod Chand.

HON. P. CHAND.- Thank you Madam Chairperson. You do not need to laugh because when we move a motion ....

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Can you carry on with your speech, please?

HON. P. CHAND.- You do not tell me to speak, the Chairperson is there, you mind your own.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Excuse me. Your own colleague laughed, that is why everyone laughed.

HON. P. CHAND.- Madam Chairperson, I am moving a motion to increase Forest Warden Support from \$72,000 by another \$100,000. We have heard a lot about deforestation and all these but I will simply say this that when you go to the bushes, you go to the forest and I have been in many places throughout Vanua Levu.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Where? With who?

HON. P. CHAND.- Myself, I do not have to go with anyone. I am a person on my own. I do not depend on you like your Government. I am a person on my own. I do not depend on Government vehicles, I have my own. I am a man on my own.

Madam Chairperson, simply ....

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Let us bring this House to order, please.

HON. P. CHAND.- I do not take hand-outs. I am asking for increase in this because when you go to the forest, you will see the amount of logs that have already been harvested, not taken out and many have fallen into the creeks and blocking it. So, what is actually happening, the landowners are not only losing resource but at the same time they are losing a lot of royalty and the reason I am

moving this motion is, we need a concerted effort in monitoring all our forests throughout Fiji not only Vanua Levu.

All the forest needs to be protected because indigenous timber is very, very important to us. Just like after TC *Winston* we saw that we were running out of timber and we had to import from overseas. So, this will all be affecting our national economy. Therefore, Madam Chairperson, I ask the Government to consider increasing forest wardens to enable all the forests throughout Fiji to have forest rangers. They might need other support to better in this, I am not sure what all the support is, perhaps manpower, vehicles and various other means so that we can have a good protection over our indigenous forests.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. –Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak in support of this motion?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I support the motion by the mover of the motion in regards to increasing the allocation for forest wardens. I think it is very important because they are the ones who look after the forest, Madam Chairperson, especially to monitor illegal logging and all other activities. They are not properly equipped; they do not have vehicles, sometimes they do not even have safety wears. One of the problems that most forest wardens face especially in Vanua Levu is with the logging companies; the way that they have engaged with the landowners, especially on the amount of money that they offer it becomes difficult for them to at least stop illegal activities even when reporting matters to the Conservator of Forests.

I think they are also finding it difficult to do their duty because of bureaucracy and politics that is involved and sometimes in regards to the commercial interest of the Ministry of Forests in issuing licences and other concessions, especially when they are represented by a particular *mataqali* to be a forest warden. I think there needs to be more training on how wardens can actually influence landowning members on how to participate in trying to protect their forests, their resources and also the future generation. To have that, Madam Chairperson and also to empower them, I think there needs to be an increase in this allocation in regards to equipping them and also how they are able to influence the forest owners with whatever tools that should be available to them in exercising their duties as forest wardens.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. –Thank you. Honourable Nawaikula?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chairperson, I support the motion. Speaking as an indigenous owner, we feel that this Ministry has failed us very, very badly. There is no supervision of policing at all of this very important resource. In my village there are still in the forest logs that are even being stamped, lying there idle for so many years, not even a single litigation taken out against these logging companies. Very, very sad indeed. It has taken the Government 10 years to realise that the best resources are the villagers, just to train them. To train the wardens from the owners of this resource and this will empower them but you do not need to train them and do their work voluntarily, please no. Give them money and we need to give them this kind of money so that they can police their own resource and this budget is very small.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. –Thank you. Do you have any response before we vote? There being no response, Parliament will vote on this motion.

Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	4

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 14 Ayes, 32 Noes, 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Honourable Members, we will now break for tea. We will adjourn this sitting until 11.55 a.m. Thank you, Honourable Members.

The Parliament adjourned at 11.26 a.m.

The Parliament resumed at 12.00 p.m.

In Committee:

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Members. We will continue from where we left off and we have a motion from the Honourable Nawaikula to move that Head 32 be increased by \$900,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1 – SEG 6 with respect with to Fiji Pine Trust – Extension.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- Madam Chairperson, I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Nawaikula, you may speak on your motion.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This motion is asking for an increase in the allocation to the Fiji Pine Trust. As the Honourable Minister has said, Fiji Pine Trust belongs to the indigenous resource owners. So, the purpose of this motion is to empower them from the scraps that are left for them from what the Government has taken. The history of Fiji Pine Trust and Fiji Pine is a very sad history; it is a history of the exploitation of the pine landowners.

In the 1970s, Madam Chairperson, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara came up with a promise – “Green Gold” and the pine landowners rushed into it. They even gave their reserves which they should not for pine to be planted knowing that there would be a partnership in this, but as years went by, they realised that Fiji Pine is owned totally by the Government; they do not have any share at all in that. So they complained. When they complained, the Government at that time formed this Fiji Pine Trust which is collectively owned by the pine landowners supposedly as their partnership share into Fiji Pine. The sad thing about it is that it is 1 per cent so that the Government owns about 98 per cent of Fiji Pine and this Fiji Pine Trust represents only 1 per cent, so that is why I am saying, it is the scraps that are being left. This motion is asking that they be empowered even to reap what is left.

The Honourable Minister will confirm, if you look through the audited accounts of Fiji Pine, and mind you the last one was in 2002 so there is no performance. Please make sure that you come forward with your plan. It will say that there is a plan for this company to be shifted to their ownership but that has never happened, thus the purpose of this. It is to allow them and I note too, Madam Chairperson, that the Honourable Attorney-General said, “for the first time we are giving them money”; no, that is wrong.

I ask the Honourable Attorney-General to please go to Nadroga in the village of Bavu and talk to an old man, his name is Tai Malone and he will tell you, I put to him the same question, “but you are getting money from the Government”. He said, “No, that is a lie”. He said, “I went to Waiyavi and I was waiting there for the whole day, but the name of our landowner was not called. I said “why”? Because the Government only gave money to those who are renewing their leases, so it is a trick for the Government to ask us to renew. At the moment, the Government and NLTB are going to them with lollies and sweets asking them to renew their leases, so please let us all pray for them not to fall into that trap.

Coming back to that motion, Madam Chairperson, this is to allow them money to empower them to cut their own forests and hopefully if they are steadfast and do not renew it, they can plant their own on that and trade with Fiji Pine. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on the motion?

Honourable Minister?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chairperson, I think the Honourable Member has totally misled this House and all Fijians listening to him this morning.

The fund that has been allocated to the Fiji Pine Trust in this budget is specifically for the extension of pine landowners from the maritime as well as the interior of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu; nothing to do with the landowners.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- So we got nothing!

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Even the land is leased to Fiji Pine.

Landowners who lease the land to Fiji Pine are well looked after by Fiji Pine.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- And they are happy with the arrangement. The name mentioned by the Honourable Nawaikula, he was convicted.

(Laughter)

He was convicted whilst being a Fiji Pine Commission Clerk at Nabou Station.

(Laughter)

For him being a threat to this House is totally irrelevant and we should not be ....

(Laughter)

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Shame!

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Members, any other comments?

Honourable Viliame Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chairperson, the story with the Fiji Pine in the Nabou area is a very sad one. We have not seen the replanting programme that they have been boasting about for almost 10 years; replanting was negligible. They know what planting is, they have been through it, they saw nurseries, they saw roads being developed, et cetera. They have not seen anything on that scale happening to motivate them to renew their leases. The commitment from Government is not what they saw initially and there are a lot of disappointments in that area. As I have said before, Madam Chairperson, there was a time when we drove from the Western Division and we saw the Green Gold and we said "Wow, wow" but the pine is gone and has made no discernible difference to the quality of lives to the expectations of the people in that area.

Madam Chairperson, what my colleague is saying is very true. We need to relook at this increase whatever that we needed to bring into the mix of things and strengthen the participation of the owners so that they get economic rewards for their land.

Madam Chairperson, something that is also troubling is that leases that are due to expire, Fiji Pine would come in, relook at that land, renew it and give it to someone else. Like today in that area in the *vanua* of Nalolo, now they have taken that land and renewed the lease for the biomass



plantation to grow these things. A lot of this has to go through the proper channel and we must see economic return commensurate with what we expect today. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

Honourable Minister for Forests?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Speaker, again the Honourable Member continues to mislead the House. The truth is, most of the landowners have renewed their leases in Nabou Station because of the increase in rental. During Honourable Nawaikula's time, 50 cents an acre but during this Government, \$13 an acre.

(Laughter)

Stumpage during his time in NLTB was 3 percent, now it is 12 percent.

(Laughter)

Likewise on the lease, the landowners are voluntarily signing up to renew their leases.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- That is exploitation.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- That is not exploitation.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- That is not exploitation, that is empowering them.

(Laughter)

Madam Chairperson, the model for Fiji Pine is the greatest model for Fijian participation in business. Honourable Ratu Naiqama knows and understands the beauty of the structure. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on this motion.

Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	32
Not voted	-	4

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - There being 14 Ayes, 32 Noes and 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Honourable Members, before we go on to the next motion, we really need to put a time limit to this debate that we having, otherwise, we will going past midnight to finish all this. The whole of this morning we did only one Head and therefore, I would like to propose that we limit time given for their presentations. Those who are moving the motion are given three minutes, anyone that would

like to speak in support of the motion or not support to be given two minutes and the response by the Minister is three minutes. Are we in agreement?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I think we will put this to the vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	33
Noes	-	14
Not Voted	-	3

There being 33 Ayes, 14 Noes and 3 Not Voted, the proposal is agreed to.

Therefore, we are going on to the next motion and this is by the Honourable Nawaikula to move that Head 32 be increased by \$100,000 in Programme 2, Activity 7, SEG 4 with respect to Spare Parts and Maintenance. You have three minutes, Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chairperson, the purpose of this is to allow for further allocations so they can do their job and the reason for that is very practical. Last year, Madam Chairperson, I came out of the bus in my village and I looked back, the Forestry Officer was there also. So I asked him, "where is your vehicle?" He said that his vehicle is about 20 years old and he is looking after the area from Dawara right up to Saqani; with that very old vehicle that has just been sitting there. So I told him "look, if I had the authority, I would have taken your Minister's vehicle and give it to you because you need it. Your Minister does not need all those vehicles, you need it to look after your area".

(Hon. Member interjects)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- So this is the reason for that. They need more money so that they can be utilised with the proper tools and they can do their job properly, not the Honourable Minister.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak in support of the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no others, we will put this to vote? Do we have any opposition?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	32

There being 15 Ayes and 32 Noes, the motion is defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- On the next motion and again by the Honourable Nawaikula to move that Head 32 be increased by \$500 in Programme 2, Activity 5, SEG 8 with respect to

Sandalwood Development Programme.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Sandalwood Development Programme - this is another area where this ministry has failed the public and the resource landowners. Only today we know there is a big pack of seedlings that are out there somewhere but the public does not know, so there needs to be an awareness and training; you go to the villages.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Only you don't know.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- If what you are saying is effective, then if I go to all the villages you will see that all the reeds are being replaced by sandalwood but no. So, where are all these sandalwood seedlings? Tucked out somewhere in a forest or out in Deuba. What is it doing in Deuba? Please go to the radio and announce it, take it to each of the villages. You are not doing that.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- We have been doing it.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- And this is the purpose of this motion so that it will allow you ....

(Hon. Member interjects)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- We are teaching you now, we are teaching you how to do your work. We can give you more money, so you can go to all the villages and distribute all the seeds. You have not done that. Thank you.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on the motion?

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chairperson, I agree with this totally. What we hear today from the Honourable Minister of Agriculture that seedlings are in overgrown areas and in a state of neglect and no one takes them up. It really asks the question on what kind of distribution system they have to distribute these things to the villages. As an example, with the SDL Government, they came to our villages and gave us coconut seedlings and I planted some and if you come to my village you will see some coconuts. They brought it down to the village level. That is how it should be done. You do not park them somewhere and without awareness and without any programme to promote them, expect them to go and pick it up. It is being done by other people before; you take it down to the grassroots level. As we said many times, a lot of hand holding still needs to be done given our stage of development. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone want to speak in support of this?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, I will ask you to respond after any other comments. Honourable Kiliraki?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The contribution of sandalwood to the nation has been consistent from 2009 to 2013 with the export of over \$2 million. Until 2014, it came down to a quarter million. So I do not have any other statistics from the Ministry

of Forests until now, but as an indication it has really gone down so much that it needs more funding to be able to progress this commodity which has been for the last years hovering \$3 million. So I support the motion to increase the allocation. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Is there any other comment? We will have concluding comments from the Minister for Forests.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chairperson, in regards to the sandalwood revitalisation programme, I think this is the Government that has really worked hard to bring back the sandalwood industry in Fiji.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- We have initiated a lot of projects especially reaching out to the villages and islands to develop the sandalwood nurseries and also encourage villages to plant as an investment for future generation. Likewise, Reforestation Programme I was listening today to a lot of hot air from the Opposition.

(Laughter)

First time in history, this Government has enabled RDF Programme whereby the Ministry of Forests has reached out to most of the villages including his Province in Cakaudrove. Last month, I was in Vanuavou and Saqani whereby we worked together with all the communities, replanting the deforest area. So in Vanua Levu this year, they have surpassed the Plantation Development Target.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- They have established more than 170 hectares; that is fresh from the ground and not to come here to this House and make all sorts of allegations. For the information of the House and Fiji, this is the first ever; just the Ratu Mara era, now the Bainimarama going back and working with the communities and reforesting Fiji whereby we guarantee timber for our future generation as well as other forest products for the future. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on the motion, does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	4

There being 14 Ayes, 32 Noes and 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion by the Honourable Parmod Chand that Head 32 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 2, Activity 6, SEG 8 with respect to Reforestation of Degraded Forests. Thank you. Does anyone second the motion?

HON. P. SINGH.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Parmod Chand, you may speak on your motion.

HON. P. CHAND.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I move to increase \$500,000 on SEG 8 for the Reforestation of Degraded Forests. We have heard a lot on this and just as alluded earlier ago by the Honourable Minister of Forests - Plantation Development Target. It is very, very important, Madam Chairperson, that we must look at this programme with very great effort and not only that, we need to see that our degraded forests are reforested and replanted.

As I earlier alluded to that it is important for us to have funds so that the logging that has been done and has destroyed forests, I remember in 2003 when there was a big flood in Labasa. Later they found out that the logging that was done in Korotari and all those areas, there were roads made for trucks to carry timber. What had happened, all the creeks were clogged up with soil without any proper drainage and when it kept raining for weeks, I believe, all of a sudden the creeks broke its banks and the flood that came in was exorbitant, very bad, a lot of silt came in, the entire town was under water, homes were filled with about 6 to 8 inches of water, even the streets were all like that. There was a great damage done to businesses, farms and lives were also lost. So, Madam Chair, it is very very important for us to note that we really need to embark on this programme and looking at this funding of \$500,000, I do not believe that is enough.

As alluded to by the Honourable Minister for Agriculture that seeds are there, it is very important when you have something, people must know there is something there; there are seeds lying there. The seeds cannot just walk to the farms and be planted by themselves. Someone has to advertise that the seeds are there, someone has to give it to someone and then that can be done.

The Honourable Attorney-General mentioned very rightly that there are people who carry out the harvesting of logs here and a little bit there, give some money and go away, and that is why it is important to fund this programme very well so that all these things do not happen.

Indeed our indigenous forests need to be really protected very well because when forests get degraded, it brings about a lot of problems especially when there is no forest left, soil erosion takes place, river banks fill up and that is one of the reasons why our Labasa River is always clogged up.

Madam Chair, it is important to increase this \$500,000 to \$1 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak in support of the motion or non-support? Honourable Viliame Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I agree totally with my colleague Honourable Chand. It is tragic that when the Government has an initiative like this, the uptake from the public is not there. They say they bring in seedlings and the public is not interested, yet when they bring in that \$1,000, you see the huge crowd turn up into stadiums. So, they must re-examine the way they do things. Is it more worthwhile to come up with the \$1,000 or to do something more useful like seedlings and the like? I think this this is a very important lesson for Government to consider. There is longevity with the seedlings and the likes as opposed to the \$1,000 that they give around the country.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Is there any other input?

I will give the floor to the Honourable Minister to speak in response.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chair, for the information of the House and the general public, the RDF Programme was initiated by this Government specifically to address replantation programme. The allocation of \$500,000 includes the incentive scheme whereby we encourage the resource owners to plant and the seedling is free. We are also in partnership with the Saw Millers Association. So whoever harvests the logs, there is a condition when we issue licences for them to contribute in the replanting programme; that is the current practise on the ground.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will now vote on this motion, does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

<u>Votes cast:</u>		
Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	3

There being 15 Ayes, 32 Noes and 3 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Honourable Members I have two motions here and both of them are from the Opposition - SODELPA Party; one is moving to increase allocation to the Sandalwood Development Plan and the other one is moving to decrease. Obviously, there has been no negotiation between the two of the same party ...

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Throw them in the rubbish bin.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- ...and therefore I will not accommodate the two motions.

Thank you. I will now have another motion by the Honourable Kiliraki that Head 32 be increased by \$50,000 in Programme 2, Activity 8, SEG 8 with respect to Upgrade of Colo-i-Suva. Does anyone second the motion?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Kiliraki would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I acknowledge the increase this year of \$200,000. Increase of \$50,000 is to continue improving the Colo-i-Suva Forest Park for its popularity in terms of OHS. Most importantly on the roadside, as you come around the bend, you will be aware of pedestrians or patrons of the park getting off the bus on the the opposite side and those returning. They tend to flock that area which is very accident prone. So that \$50,000 is to help the Forestry Station provide OHS compliant for the patrons of the park. They continue to increase especially the local patrons, children and families who patronise Colo-i-Suva Park as well as most importantly the tourists who come when we have a liner in port. So that is the focus of this motion. As you come around the bend, you will see cars parking and it is prone to accidents if another one is coming from the opposite side as you come towards Suva. So that is the area that I am coming from.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Anyone else wants to speak on the motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Colo-i-Suva is a very popular

tourist attraction, and so as locals because this is the only place that is very near, very clean and is well organised especially for the children to go to. There is no other entertainment area in Suva. If they want to go to the beach they will have to go to Pacific Harbour or to Kiuva and this is one area that should be developed for these types of activities. The Forestry Department during our last visit they tried to improve the facilities in this place so they tried to increase the fees as the fees is very low and the Ministry of Finance is very slow in approving the request for the increase in fees. So that is why the income from there is not good, otherwise it could be a very good income earner. So I support the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on the motion?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, we are not here to talk about revenue increase from Colo-i-Suva. The \$200,000 as has been highlighted, the Honourable Dulakiverata has actually acknowledged that things have improved in Colo-i-Suva Park. The \$200,000 will be used to upgrade the various steps in the park (those of you who have been there during the day time), rust proof railings, scenic towers, CCTV cameras, toilet and changing room at the lower pool and street lights within the park itself.

Just by way of interest, Madam Chair, the number of patrons has increased annually and there were 15,733 visitors in 2013, 24,878 visitors in 2014, 25,724 in 2015 and 44, 000 visitors in 2016. So it has in fact more than doubled since 2013 and primarily because of the improvements that have taken place.

In terms of car parking, there are some people who illegally park. There is also, as you would know, if you look at the forestry offices, there is a huge ground area too; no one is actually stopped from parking there.

So, some people do park illegally, maybe on the side of the road, they are sort of doing their own thing, but this will greatly enhance and of course as rightly pointed out that it is a huge attraction both for Fijians and foreigners. But one of the things we have had discussions in the Budget consultations, we want more of such forest parks. It should not only be confined to Colo-i-Suva. So, we need, for example some in Vanua Levu and some in the Western Division also and you will see that coming up in the next few budgets of course – 2018, 2019 and 2020 when the FijiFirst Government will present those budgets.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Watch out for CCTV.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, we will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	31
Not Voted	-	4

There being 15 Ayes, 31 Noes and 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Parliament will now vote on Head 32 and the question is that the amount of Head 32 –

Ministry of Forests be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	32
Noes	-	15
Not Voted	-	3

There being 32 Ayes, 15 Noes and 3 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Head 32 – Ministry of Forests, agreed to.

Head 33 - Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments and we are now looking at Programme 1, Activity 1. Do you have any comments?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chairperson, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 1. Can the Honourable Minister explain why the reduction in Personal Emoluments from the last budget?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- What is the question again?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Why the reduction in Personal Emoluments from the last Budget?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The decrease is due to the transfer of salaries in FNPF for PSLMR to Ministry of Civil Service.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I cannot hear that, come again.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- The provision is for payment of salary under the General Administration.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments?

Thank you we will move on to Programme 2, Activity 1.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- SEG 3. Can the Honourable Minister explain why the increase in the Travel and Communications allocation when there is a decrease in the number of staff?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chairperson, I do not think there is ever a correlation with respect to how many staff you have and how much travel there is. There is more travel obviously because a lot of awareness that goes on, so there really is no direct correlation between staff numbers and travel. I cannot comprehend the kind of question that comes from.



HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes, thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I will move on to Programme 2, Activity 1. Do you have any comments?

HON. P. CHAND.- Yes, SEG 9 - Purchase of Drill Rigs. I just want clarifications on this. Is it the bits and drills for the truck or the whole unit?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chairperson, with respect to SEG 9 the project is to purchase two new drill rigs and a support truck, a compressor and accessories and the new machines are to replace the obsolete ones that have been with us for about 22 years and this is to improve on the ground what a development that we do. The new drill rig accessories will be used for easy accessibility to ground water and the multi rig could also be used on geo-tech assessments and ground water exploration drilling and geo-tech drilling and ground water evaluation so that is the reason for it, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO T.V. KEPHA.- Madam Chairperson, in terms of SEG 8 on Groundwater Assessment and Development - Small Islands (\$554,000). Does this also include islands in Lau that just depend on rain water, they do not have any other source of water like Vanuavatu, Vatoa and Fulaga? Does this include islands like that?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chairperson, we do not exclude any islands whether it be Lau or Taveuni. When it says small islands, it includes all islands. So, yes it is including Lau.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, I have already put a motion to increase this allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Fill the form, please.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, just on the Mineral Investigation, the amount has increased from last year to \$235,000 in SEG 8. Can we get a clarification on this allocation on Mineral Investigation from the Honourable Minister, please?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This is really to assess and evaluate the potential of the current known mineral prospects basically to attract foreign and local investors and companies to undertake exploration work. This particular project was initiated in 2008 and it is currently in its eighth year of operation. There is an increase from marketing as this will enable the Department to pursue investment opportunities be it local or abroad.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

We will move on to the next item Programme 2, Activity 2. Do you have any comments? Thank you.

Programme 3, Activity 1. Honourable Parmod Chand?

HON. P. CHAND.- SEG 4 - Reversion of Government Lands Schedule 'A' and 'B' (\$500,000), I need clarification on this.

HON. F.S KOYA.- Madam Chairperson, this provision is for the payment of premium fees and charges to secure *iTaukei* leases to State for assets on the reverted Schedule 'A' and 'B' lands.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

Thank you. We will move onto Programme 3, Activity 2. Any comments?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- SEG 8 - Periphery Boundary Survey – *iTaukei* Grant 2 (\$300,000).

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you want clarification on that?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- The question is with respect to the increase in budget is for the survey of Government property on *iTaukei* land and the project involves a survey of Government assets on *iTaukei* land, agreement to lease to ensure that these are registered as leases. We have targets, Madam Chairperson, 2017-2018 targets really are the Central/Eastern where we have five, the Western where we have four and Northern where we have four. I can tell you the exact places if you want to.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson - Programme 3, Activity 2, SEG 10. Can the Honourable Minister clarify the Land Use Master Plan?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chairperson, the objective of this is to collate all the data on land use and land utilisation in Fiji. It is actually entered onto a land use database and easily transformed graphically in map form and will be centralised in the Fijian Lands Information Office. We really have a target for 2017-2018. It is the maintenance of the web map and engagement of project officers for this particular field work.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- On SEG 9 – Purchase of Survey Equipment (\$180,000); Purchase of Stereo Satellite Imagery (\$600,000): they were in the last year's allocation and they are appearing again this year. Have these equipment been purchased?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- SEG 9 – Purchase of Survey Software.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- The objective obviously, Madam Chair, is to procure two types of software which will be distributed to the five surveying divisions, and technical staff are procuring the software themselves which are often not the original versions and obviously that is leading to loss of data. So there is a limit to the number of users and work outputs and they differ significantly, so that is what it is utilised for.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- On SEG 10 – Land Use Master Plan. How long has this been in progress and when will this be completed?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You want to increase or decrease?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- No, I want to know what is the progress on this so that we can decide.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, a question like that really need to be addressed at question time, this is budget questions, it is relative to the budget.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- All right.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I agree with you. Any other comments?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- On SEG 8 - Madam Chair, with regards to the Survey of Mahogany Plantations (\$512,486). Can there be an update or clarification on that one?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, the budget provided will allow the survey work to continue specifically in Nukurua, Naboutini and we do have other plantations that need to be surveyed, so it is just a continuation of the surveys.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, on SEG 8 – the Periphery Boundary Survey - *iTaukei* Grant, it says here that it is a grant, to who? It is a new expenditure, Madam Chair (\$300,000).

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, it is actually to commence the periphery survey for the boundary survey of Nadarivatu which contains an area of about 15,000 acres.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? None.

We will move onto Programme 3, Activity 3 on Valuation.

HON. P. CHAND.- SEG 4 – Renewal of Native Leases (\$750,000), I just want a clarification as to which leases and where?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, this particular funding is provided to cater for the renewal of expired native leases to State going back as far as 2003.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- (Inaudible)

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Madam Chair, SEG 4 – *iTaukei* Lands Leased to State. Is Suvavou included?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- You are asking whether Suvavou is included?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Yes.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, if I may just clarify this, I am trying to complete this in an efficient manner, if you ask me specific questions with respect to the specific area, they have opportunities to ask me during question time. But this fund is to cater for some 537 active *iTaukei* land leases to State. If he wants a complete breakdown, I am happy to provide it.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? Honourable Leawere?

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- No, it is the same, Madam Chair.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- On SEG 4 - the Municipal Council Rates for Crown Land, \$2 million has been allocated. Is this for all the towns and the proposed new towns that will become towns and cities next year?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, this fund is to cater for Town and City Rates for all State lands within the town and city boundaries in Fiji. If he is asking for what is going to happen in the future, obviously they will have provision but at the moment it is for all those State lands that are declared towns and cities within the town and city boundaries in Fiji. I think it is relative to Navua.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We will now move on to Programme 3, Activity 4 - any comments?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- SEG 7 – Madam Chair, can we have some clarification on the Regularisation of Informal Settlements which is tagged at about \$300,000?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, this is obviously something that the FijiFirst Government is very anxious to ensure that it is done; the regularisation of informal settlements. This provision really caters for the work carried out by the Ministry for that regularisation and includes survey works and issuance of approval notices, et cetera.

We do have targets. There are five in the North and West, four in the Central/Eastern and there are four in particular places that are involved so this caters for that.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- On SEG 7 – Monitoring of Sand and Gravel Extraction (\$110,000), what is this for?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, it says what it is. It is for the monitoring of sand and gravel extraction. We have found a lot of illegal operations being carried out around the countryside, so we do have a particular provision now which will carry out the monitoring. Project officers will carry out the monitoring and it is an ongoing expenditure.

HON. P. SINGH.- SEG 8 – Development of State Land at a cost of \$4.4 million; what are all the works that are involved?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Basically, this is for the development of unutilised State land which includes the construction of infrastructure and creation of subdivisions. We do have targets. Currently, we have one in Field 40 in the West and Vakamasisuasua in the North.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Madam Chair, SEG 9 – Purchase of Specialised Vehicles (\$240,000), what kind of vehicles are these?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Really this complements the gravel extraction and other activities that are carried out by people on the ground that need to get into places where we cannot. If I could give an example, if it is a gravel extraction place that requires us to cross rivers and get into places, there are smaller vehicles that need to get in and also surveyors need these modes of transportation. So they are used by the officers to monitor extraction and also additionally by surveyors who sometimes have to carry things on their back to get into particular places, so there are specialised equipment.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other comments, we will move onto Programme 3, Activity 5 - do you have any comments?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, on the Land Buy Back Administration, is it just to administer or paper work in terms of \$7,000 be allocated for that SEG?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, it is really just provision on a day to day basis that is carried out with respect to travelling for inspections, et cetera.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, on SEG 10 - Land Bank Investment. Can you just clarify this SEG, Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you Honourable Dulakiverata. Madam Chair, this provision caters for the completion of sub-divisions in Legalega and also the pursuing of the subdivision at Yako. At Legalega there will be 77 residential lots, and Yako, the commencement and development of 25 residential and subsistence lots.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? There being no other comments, we will move onto Programme 3, Activity 6. Any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 3, Activity 7.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 3, Activity 8. Honourable Parmod Chand.

HON. P. CHAND.- SEG 4 - Surveying Expenses (\$6,000) for the Northern Division. I need further clarification on this.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Which SEG?

HON. P. CHAND.- SEG 4 - Surveying Expenses (\$6,000). We are on Head 33, Programme 3, Activity 8.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- This is expenses relating to surveying such as plan fees, lodgement fees, et cetera.

HON. P. CHAND.- Surveying for?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Land, everywhere. It is not specific to a Division.

HON. P. CHAND.- But this is for the Divisional Lands Office, Northern.

I will move a motion on that, Madam Chair, for an increase.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, just to clarify to the Honourable Members in particular from the other side, SEG 4, if you see, is generally your day to day running expenses. So they need to understand that. So you see fuel and oil, spare parts, drainage rates and maintenance of office. So when it says for example Surveying Expenses, it relates to not the survey *per se* but the expenses related to surveying. So for example, when they go out to do a survey, there set an expenses related to that. So that is what SEG 4 is generally about.

SEG 1 is substantive appointments. SEG 2 are those people who are paid hourly. Then you have your travel subsistence at SEG 3 and SEG 4 is general expenses for the office itself. So do not think just because you got surveying, their expense at \$6,000, that that is the amount of money that we are spending just for the Northern Division. It is actually the expenses related to surveying.

HON. P. CHAND.- Is there any other in this that the surveying expenses are included?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- The whole office, for example, the Northern Division Office would of course be, for example, doing renewal. Sometimes when they do renewal, they may need to actually survey. So that is part and parcel of their day to day job. In the same way, for example,

you are running Parliament and there is a specific expense of catering. It does not mean that we do not do other things, we do other things but catering specifically has expenditure. So surveying, we are breaking down. If you see over the years, what we have tried to do is try and narrow down the expenses specifically what it is for. So the office does a number of things including surveying.

If you see for example, in SEG 5, you have Surveying Equipment and Protective Clothing. All of these things would also relate to surveying. And you have the staff being paid and these would include people who would be surveying too. So you have the surveyors, they go out, you have got their salary, then we have got the equipment, then we have got the expenses that would relate to maybe sometimes they need to go out to the northern part of Vanua Levu. There may be some surveying expenses related to that. It could be some allowances, they need to be paid overtime which comes from SEG 2. That is how it works.

HON. P. CHAND.- My major concern is this. In the Northern Division we do not have any more surveyors left and there is one Divisional Surveyor, I think, in the Crown Lands Office who does his own practice too. And what happens, there are a lot of people who have subdivision of leases, renewal of leases, as you have said and because when the land leases expire and when they are renewed, bigger parcels are given to people so they need to have registered leases. And what actually happens, people are unable to have professionals at Labasa because before iTLTB also used to do that, and they do not have their surveyors; they do not go out. It is very, very difficult in the Northern Division and that is the reason I wanted more allocation so that the Crown Lands Office, their surveyors, are able to do the work faster.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- So you see, by you increasing that will not give you a new surveyor, that is my point. By you increasing under SEG 4 - Surveying Expenses will not give you a surveyor. A surveyor's salary will come up from SEG 1. Overall, if you look at the Toppers Scholarship, why do you think we are so skewed towards the science based subjects? We give a lot of scholarships for people to become surveyors. Honourable Dulakiverata will tell you that there is a shortage of surveyors in Fiji; huge shortage because not many people want to become surveyors. So by you trying to increase surveying expenses in SEG 4 will not give you automatically a surveyor.

They want surveyors too. They are running short of surveyors. They also now need to outsource surveyors; that is what we have been saying. Wherever there is a shortage, we need to get surveyors. Honourable Dulakiverata has got a good future ahead of him when they start outsourcing, I mean, he is a valuer. We need to start doing valuations to outsourcing that. So it does not address the shortage of surveyors by you increasing SEG 4 - Surveying Expenses.

HON. P. CHAND.- All right. Thank you. Would you be able to do something about solving this problem for the Northern Division?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- The Honourable Minister has complained to us about that all the time. He wants to do that because we are getting complaints, not just in Vanua Levu but also in the Western Division too. So we all recognise that, that is the point we are trying to make.

HON. P. CHAND.- Thank you. We hope to see some changes because people there are really, you know, a lot of work is held back, a lot of economic progress is held back because it takes so long.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- The whole of Fiji is faced with that problem.

HON. P. CHAND.- When you go on the visit, Honourable Prime Minister, I think you should handle this matter well.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Have some decorum, he is the Prime Minister; do not do

that, please. You have been doing it continuously. Come on. Stop it!

HON. MEMBER.- (Inaudible)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- You are not the Prime Minister, please.

HON. MEMBER.- I am not.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, you are not. You are a man.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata, you have the floor.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Programme 3 Activity 2, in that respect, I had moved a motion for an increase in Personal Emoluments so that they can recruit more surveyors.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I will now go onto the motions.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Already there.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- And the first motion is by the Honourable Dulakiverata to move that Head 33 be increased by \$200,000 in Programme 3, Activity 2, SEG 1 with respect to Personal Emoluments. Do you have a seconder?

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. You may speak on your motion, Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This is what I have just informed you about – the lack of surveyors and that is why, Madam Chair, the need to increase emoluments on this Programme so that the Ministry can recruit more surveyors and then they would be able to undertake some of the programmes that are listed. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone else want to speak on this motion?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Just on the lack of surveyors in Fiji, it will be interesting to find out how this is linked into the scholarship system, because we cannot recruit. I think the problem really lies that there is, it is not picked up in the scholarship system whereby there is a strategic move to encourage students to take up this programme and train them. Otherwise, the lack of surveyors remains a problem. Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- We just informed you of that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair, I agree with the Honourable Attorney-General when he said that there is a lack of surveyors and there is a demand for them. What the Government is doing is through Toppers and TELS Scheme that we are trying to encourage more people to take up surveying. Surveyors are a very high-end product and normally, surveyors hold two types of residencies, either here or there. In the private sector, the pool of surveyors is very small. So I suggest that we work out a way to address, I know that some of our students are studying to become surveyors but to address

the gap between them and this is where something must be done.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments, Honourable Vadei?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This is the term they have been using - “strategic paralysis”.

(Laughter)

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Surveyors cannot be achieved overnight. So, they have been obsessed with this paralysis and we need to increase the budget, to recruit surveyors, to resolve the issues down the line. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Member, do you have a suggestion on where to recruit the surveyors? Fiji do not have surveyors, we do the recruiting from outside of Fiji.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- If they can go abroad to get doctors, why can they not get surveyors from the region, from Papua New Guinea, because they are registered also - most of them?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- They are stealing our people.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I speak in support of the motion. I think they are taking the considerations of former Lands Department surveyor of the need that is highlighted here and the listing of activities that are shown in SEGs 8, 9 and 10. There is quite a lot in terms of what is available on the ground, as recently been asked by the Honourable Member on the survey of mahogany plantation and the completion of it is partly based on the availability of surveyors. That is basically a need, to probably review the numbers or review the salaries, to ensure that we address the lack of surveyors and the need for it. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO. T.V. KEP.A.- In support of this motion, I think there should be an alignment as we have seen from the debate in the Committee of Supply. For example, during the careers expo, in seeing what is lacking, especially in the professional and technical fields, the scholarships and what the students are interested in. All that should be aligned, so that the need is addressed in terms of surveyors, professional, technical and all that, Madam Chair. So, I support that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? Honourable Parmod Chand?

HON. P. CHAND.- Madam Chair, I support the motion. As I said earlier, I also believe that surveying is a very difficult job and a task. It does not happen in the eight hours of the day and sometimes when surveyors go, they do not come back until late night. With the increase in emoluments, if their pay can increase, I think it would not be sufficient enough for them. That is why they do private jobs after hours and they do not work overtime. When I do my work, I go overtime but for a surveyor, when he works for government, he will not work perhaps for more than 8 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

(Honourable Members interject)



HON. P. CHAND.- I am supporting the motion, saying what should be done to improve this situation because we lack surveyors in Fiji. The Government acknowledges it and that is why we are supporting this motion and asking for an increase in the budget. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? Honourable Attorney-General?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This is the kind of preposterous comments that come from the other side - preposterous comments! The Honourable Member who has just spoke said; "Oh, they have not got a pay rise! All civil servants got a pay rise.

Madam Chair, also, as we announced in the Civil Service Reform, the people who are performing technical jobs in fact have been recognised for that and in particular, the shortage of skills. So, they have got a high increase than those people who are actually not that specialised. So, they have actually been given a pay rise. There is provision for overtime, but let me ask a fundamental question; you see they kind of block their heads out. The reality is, there have been a shortage of surveyors in Fiji, not just for now, but for decades, in particular, Madam Chair, when you have huge economic growth rates, there is more need for surveying of land, more need for them to be able to have those increases in those types of professional services.

Again, this is why the Toppers Scholarship has been secured towards those areas of profession, where we have a shortage of people. This is why, as announced in the Budget, for example, Madam Chair, that we now are allowing people or students who finish Year 12 that if they do specific engineering courses, they will get TELS. We changed that with the real shortage of engineers.

Now I have to tell a story. We had 250 students at Suva Grammar School in the consultation and a lot of them complained about the fact that we do not have enough professional counsellors in schools because unfortunately, most teachers doubled up as being counsellors. A few of these children complained about that. I said, "Yes, we agree with you. We actually have scholarships for that." Then I asked the 250 students, "How many of you want to study counselling?" Not one of them put their hands up because all of us as parents we also need to inculcate the idea in our children that they need to be able to pursue their careers in those areas. All of them want to become lawyers and that is why we do not give scholarships to lawyers. You can see the calibre of lawyers; we actually get frightened about it. So, we need to change the value of that, this is why.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Do not call for me to shut-up. Come on!

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other comments, Honourable Leawere?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, just very briefly in terms of the Careers Expo that we are talking about, this could be linked to that; identify then carry the work, and then go to the villages and parents and say, "This is what we were advocating in terms of this need to identify our people. As the Government of the day, they are responsible for this." Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I appreciate very much the contribution to this motion, it is very important. One of the issues, Madam Chair, is about the lack of surveyors, this is because of the retirement age been reduced to 55.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Most of the surveyors have gone into private practice, on top of that, the migration. The salaries of these technical people had been neglected over the years. People never really see the importance of some of these professions, we need them. If you go to New Zealand and Australia, in every office, you will see a surveyor or a valuer from Fiji working there, they had migrated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion and I think we had enough debate.

Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion:

<u>Votes cast:</u>		
Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	30
Not Voted	-	5

There being 15 Ayes, 30 Noes, 5 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is also from Honourable Dulakiverata that Head 33-3-3(1) – Personal Emoluments to be increased by \$100,000.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I second the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, that is basically for the same reason. We have lots of activities to be carried out but we do not have the professionals to undertake everything. So, if you increase the emoluments, we might have the opportunity to recruit more people, if not registered, then technicians whose can undertake the activities.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, I beg your indulgence, but I think you should not be dealing with emoluments again because they have had increases in salaries.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- No, they have different programmes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- And you want another increase?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Different programme, different emoluments.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I know it is a different programme but everyone across the Civil Service has had an increase in salary under Head 8 – Increase in salary. So, let us not talk about personal emoluments because we are just taking too much time on this one.

Thanks. We will go on to the next one, Honourable Dulakiverata, your next motion. Head 33-3-1 SEG 4 – Government Land Schedule 'A' and 'B' - decreased by \$500,000. Do we have a

seconder?

HON. P. SINGH.- I second the motion, Madam Chair.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I brought up this motion because it is still appearing on the budget because this House had already been informed by the former Minister for Lands, the Honourable Prime Minister, that this programme had been completed. So that is why I wanted this thing to be waived, to be removed from the budget. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone want to speak on the motion - in support or not support? Thank you. Honourable Minister, would you like to respond?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- No, Madam Speaker. I think that is sufficient.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will then vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, we will vote on the motion.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	31
Not Voted	-	4

There being 15 Ayes, 31 Ayes and 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is by Honourable Dulakiverata, to move that Head 33 be increased by \$196,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 8, with respect to ground water assessment and in development small islands. Thank you. Honourable Dulakiverata, you may speak on your motion.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Few other speakers have spoken on this issue on the importance of water in small islands. I think it is important that they too should have access to clean and safe drinking water. We should increase the allocation so they can drill more boreholes in these areas. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone want to speak in support or not support of the motion? Thank you. There being none. Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- On the motion, in terms of these islands that can rely only on rainwater, when there is no rain, they have great difficulty in terms of cooking, laundry and other things that they need water for. I would support the motion in terms of increasing.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Which islands are you referring to?

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Vanuavatu, Vatoa and Fulaga. Those are the three that I am referring to and also Ono.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, would you like to respond?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, for purpose of information to the House, the way it has been spelt out is that nothing is being undertaken with respect to small islands. Just in terms of statistics, the major activity includes six site assessments and investigations, seven borehole drillings and three reticulations at the moment. I think sufficient funding is there for all those different areas.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, I feel like I should say this. The Opposition actually thinks that by increasing the allocation, the work will actually get done. Here, we are discussing the shortage of technical people and Honourable Dulakiverata should know this. He was in the Department of Lands for decades.

The fact of the matter is that, you need to have the capacity to be able to do it by way of having the right technical people. Just by allocating the money does not mean it will happen. You need the people to actually implement it and get it done. We only get it from, apart from lawyers, there is no one else who wants to do other things. That is the point, that is what we are trying to do. See they do not understand and it is not good financial management. Thank God, they are on the other side.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion. .

<u>Votes cast:</u>		
Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	13
Not Voted	-	6

There being 14 Ayes, 13 Noes, 6 Not voted, the motion is defeated.

The next one is from Honourable Dulakiverata that Head 33 be increased by \$265,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 8, with respect to mineral investigation. Does anyone support the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata, you may speak on the motion. Honourable Bulitavu, I am sure is surely seconding this motion.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. It is important that we have the activities so that our graduates can work on this thing and not dependent on these people that come here and do their own investigations so as to retain these people in government. Now most of our graduates had left the department and joined other mining companies. There are a lot of activities that is supposed to be carried out by Government and we can have their own data which will help us make decisions on mining industry and the investment in the future. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak? Honourable Minister, would you like to respond?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. With respect to this, this has been undertaken for the last eight years and obviously now we have got to a stage where we have done enough investigations, but investigations are continuing with respect from landowners to be able to sufficiently cater for those who go off-shore for investment missions to say that we have these things available.

The budget that has been given to us is sufficient, Madam Speaker, and I wonder right at the outset. There was always an outcry that there was too much debt. I have not asked one thing that has been asked to be reduced, everything has been increased.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, just in respect, one of those very few rare

occasions I actually agree with Honourable Dulakiverata that we actually need to know what do we have underground. Previously, the way the Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources ran was that someone came along and he would say “I want an exploration licence for oil”. So they would do the coordinates and give him the exploration licence.

What we are doing, for example, at the moment, we have geothermal energy and people in Vanua Levu would be interested in this. Geothermal energy, we have actually got World Bank technical assistance to carry out the survey for us - the technical team at no cost to us, just to do the survey for us.

So, we know where all the potential geothermal areas are, then we can invite companies to come and actually carry out the exploitation of that. So, it is always good to know exactly what you have, then you are actually able to then sort of market it on that basis. That is what we are doing, particularly geothermal. We believe it is under exploited but we need to have that information ourselves and then we actually invite companies, as opposed to saying, “all right, you can take Savusavu and see what you find and then we will be compelled to give them a licence.”

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion

<u>Votes cast:</u>		
Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	31
Not Voted	-	5

There being 14 Ayes, 31 Noes and 5 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next one is from Honourable Bulitavu that Head 33 be increased by \$80,000 in Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 7, with respect to environmental monitoring and quarries. Does anyone support the motion? Thank you Honourable Dulakiverata. Honourable Bulitavu, you may speak on your motion?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think there is a need to increase this allocation in regards to environmental monitoring of mines and quarries. I think there have been issues in regards to the current mines. We have, where the landowners and also the surrounding communities around there have complained, but most of these complains, they come out in the media and it shows that there is no proper monitoring currently done. Unless and until this comes out, then only this particular ministry runs to attend to those complaints in regards to mining ran offs and all other non-compliance that happens. This is very important to the community, given that there has to be strict supervision on all the mining, all companies, on how they deal with the environment and there has to be other ways and means on how properly trained investigators are to be there to monitor and police those mining companies, to adhere with environmental standards, especially in dealing with communities. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on this motion? Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I support fully the motion and you know with some of these big operations, they do not need to have visits only when it is required. You need an officer to be there all the time to monitor the operations rather than reacting when the problem happens. So, I support fully the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input?

Do you want to respond, Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chairperson, the Honourable Bultavu what he may not realise, it is just not the MRD that actually does the monitoring, it is the Environment also that does it. Like I can say this much; the MRD is very efficient, they are doing their job, they are continuously monitoring all the mine sites that are around Naibulu-East, Dreketi, Macuata, obviously that has been monitored. With respect to Vatukoula there is no exceedance levels at all, it is monitored pretty much on a monthly basis. Also, with respect to Vatukoula, Naibulu and with respect to the villages, they have all been well informed and well and truly updated with respect to all the current activities and all the other ones that are around. There is a monitoring system that is adhered to, together with what the Department of Environment does, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion, does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being Opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

<u>Votes cast:</u>		
Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	31
Not Voted	-	5

There being 14 Ayes, 31 Noes and 5 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The next motion by the Honourable Bultavu that Head 33 be increased by \$100,000 in Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 5, with respect to Community Development and Fields Support in Extractive Industries Development. Does anyone second the motion? There being no seconder we will....

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Bultavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. At the outset, we had a workshop in regards to the Extractive Industry and we thank the Parliament for organising that. There are many issues that came out of that and one of them was the Community Development and also in providing field support.

I think there is a need to create more awareness in regards to engaging into the extractive industry and most of our communities do not understand because there are only lured by the dollar value and not weighing the effects on the environment.

Also, the fair return that has to come to them, but again, there is an obligation by the State, given that the minerals are owned by the State, I think there has to be an obligation that it is for community development, and I think there needs to be more that has to be benefitted by the communities in consenting even to their land to be extracted in regards to minerals.

With partnership with other extractive industry, I think those whose arguments need to also give their efforts in trying to improve and empower the community regarding too to benefit from the industry in regards to what that they could be self-generating with regards to income. Thank you very

much.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on the motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chairperson, I support the motion . This is very real, Madam Chairperson, you would recall that when we went to Nakavu, there were two extractive companies there that were extracting gravels and the roads within their working area was far much better than the road to the village. The condition of that village, and you look at the resources that the landowners contributed to this development, they made millions of dollars yet the villages are still living in the same condition that they were in. So there should be some sort of conditions to ensure that they have some social responsibility towards the landowners to them for their contribution to their businesses. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Is there any other input? Honourable Minister, would you like to respond?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- No, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote on this motion.

<u>Votes cast:</u>		
Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	29
Not Voted	-	7

There being 14 Ayes, 29 Noes and 7 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- With respect to the development of communities that was highlighted, is there any other assistance that can be provided or how can you address that issue because I think a lot of Parliamentarians here did visit that area and they all commented on the dilapidated state of those villages, right close to the gravel extraction industry, the houses were in very bad quality. What is the name of that *koro*?

HON. MEMBERS.- (Inaudible)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Is there any other way of helping them?

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- ... because the money was not given to them, the provincial council and the *tikina* and the village people should work together and fix their own roads.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Yes, can come through the Provincial Council so that there is some development in it.

Thank you. We will move on to the next motion by the Honourable Nawaikula that Head 33 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 7, with respect to Lease Arrears Taskforce. Does anyone second the motion?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chairperson, I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Nawaikula, can you speak on the motion , please?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This motion is asking for an increase in the Arrears Taskforce, so it is basically to help the Honourable Minister with the big

problem and I am surprised that this problem did not cost him his job. The arrears that we have is about \$26 million...

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Member, please do not personalise your ...

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I withdraw that and I am sorry.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- And you intend to get used to “withdrawing and I am sorry”, please just be more respectful.

HON. MEMBER.- (Inaudible)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Would you like to carry on?

HON. MEMBER.- (Inaudible)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Just be more respectful in the way you make your presentation.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chairperson, \$26 million is the figure that they already have in relation to the arrears in the Department of Lands.. There was this Taskforce that was established in 2008 that has not achieved anything. So, this is to help them in their work, to reduce the arrears, so it is basically that and I am hoping that the other side of the House will support because this will help.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Ratu Naiqama?

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Madam Chairperson, I fully support the motion to increase this so as to help the Honourable Minister in recovering this. Now we are heading cost to cost that we have never recovered because it is arrears. Arrears can be dissected into two:

- a) Rent owing because the rentals are the lease contracts. They allow for payments to be paid once in a six months period that is still rent away; and
- b) when it is not paid within one year, then that becomes arrears.

So that is why there is a need to bump up this SEG so as to help the Honourable Minister in really identifying what is arrears, what is the rent owing because the figure is so much.

This has been a long outstanding problem, Madam Chairperson, the rental arrears, both in the Lands Department and the iTaukei Trust Board because we are always not clear as to what is arrears and what is rent owing and on top of that, it is an added burden now to try and recover something that tenants should have been paying all along. So, I hope this is to help the Honourable Minister. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Can we have a response from the Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I appreciate the generous thoughts by Honourable Nawaikula and Honourable Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu, but giving the taskforce more money does not mean we will collect it faster than was taken. There is a provision to cater for all the activities involved in the collection within the amount that has been given, but may not be realised



this that if we did think that we have required more money to get this collection done, we would have asked for it but we did not, Madam Chairperson. We have asked for that much, we are sufficient and capable of doing that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion, does anyone oppose the motion?

There being opposition, Parliament will vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	31
Not Voted	-	4

There being 15 Ayes, 31 Noes and 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The last motion is from the Honourable Nawaikula to move that Programme 3, Activity 5 be left out of Head 33 in respect of Land Bank Investment.

Does anyone second this motion?

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Nawaikula, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Well, Madam Chairperson, this motion is asking not only for a decrease, but the total removal of this. It is in relation to the Land Bank and hopefully when it is done it will kill off the Land Bank.

The Land Bank, I sincerely believe its evil, it is an exercise that takes away the rights of the indigenous resource owners and in relation to their property Their rights mean that you give to them ownership like you do under Section 28, but also the full control in the management of their land. So, you own that, but I look after it every day which is what the Government is doing in relation to their land, for example.

It gives them ownership under Section 28 and takes away the control through the iTaukei Land Trust Board. It controls everything so that ownership is meaningless, as well as the Land Bank takes away again that control, even it was vested in iTLTB and they took it away again to a third party, which is totally wrong. Please, the advice from the Human Rights that you give to the indigenous owners the total rights, ownership, management and everything and your task is to come forward with the measures to balance those rights with the rights of others in the community. So, that is your task. It is wrong for you to be taking the control of their ownership and giving it to yourself.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- We want to give it to you so you can use it.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- No, you do not give to me, you give it to them, but your task is to balance that with the rights of the other communities. As politicians you do that; that is why you are there on that side of the House and this is wrong. So, that is the whole reason for this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No one.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- He is a loner there.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, would you like to?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Gavoka wants to say something.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chairperson, I support the withdrawal of this and total removal of the Land Bank. What I get from my people is that there is a great remorse that they gave their land to Land Bank. This is true and if you carry out a survey, the people are remorseful, they that gave the land to Land Bank. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Gavoka.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I want to borrow a phrase from Honourable Radrodro in his capacity as the spokesperson on economy. What other hogwash, what other hogwash coming from Honourable Nawaikula and the Member sitting next to him?

(Laughter)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This Land Bank Investment, as the name suggests, the land still belongs to the *iTaukei* landowners. I really wish, hope and pray that the people who own the land in Legalega and Yako are actually watching the session now because this money is specifically, for example \$700,000 is going towards helping the people of Yako to develop 25 top-end residential lots; and guess what, share also belongs to them; and guess what, when they sell these leases, a 100 percent of the premium and the lease moneys go to the landowners; and guess what, Government does not take a cent; and guess what, they still own the land. This is actually helping them develop their land.

So, people, for example, who will come and buy these leases from the landowners, who own this land in perpetuity, as guaranteed by the Fijian Constitution, then we will be leasing the land to the Ministry of Lands that the landowners have consented to leasing the land through them. In the same way, if they were to, for example, lease a land through iTLTB, it will still remain with them, but guess what, the iTLTB would take away a particular percentage for administrative cost. The Ministry of Land does, and guess what, the iTLTB is not going to help them develop, this, we are doing it through the Ministry of Lands.

Legalega - \$1.8 million for the development of a 77 residential lots. Honourable Nawaikula's analysis of the law is completely flawed. I mean, we know that we cannot expect much from him as far as legal analysis is concerned ...

(Laughter)

... but it is misleading, completely misleading. You see, they have this obsession, as soon as someone mentions Land Bank, they think "bad". This is Land Bank Investment, helping the landowners invest in their land so they can get the maximum return from it.

In the same way, the Honourable Prime Minister recently went to the ground breaking

ceremony for the four land sub-divisions: in Yadua, Saweni, Wairabetia and Vuda. There is going to be another one done soon in Tailevu, where we are again helping them to connect their land to utilities and they get a 100 percent of that Land Bank. That land stills belong to them, they get 100 percent all the money derived from that. What is wrong with this? I really hope the people of Legalega and Yako are watching this to know that this group of people who claim, who always fall into this ethnic stuff, to be representing *iTaukei* people are actually denying them their right to gain more money from it.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chairperson, can I please just add to what Honourable Attorney-General has also stated? Just this morning when talking about pine leases, we were talking about empowering our people and the economic benefits. One of the major differences that we have under the Land Bank Unit is that they are paid at market rate, Madam Chairperson. Likewise CBUL, we are subsidising the UCV rate to 10 percent, so these are the benefits that our people are taking.

Secondly, Madam Chairperson, one of the classical examples under the Land Bank as compared to the iTLTB system, in the Nawailevu mining case, the landowners were unhappy with their arrangement that was made between ITLTB and the mining company and then on the advice of two *iTaukei* lawyers, one was a former General Manager of iTLTB, they advised the landowners, "Let us take this to the Land Bank because we will get a better deal." So they ended up with the Land Bank, so when it comes to the economic benefits, Madam Chairperson, to the *iTaukei* landowners, "this is market rate and that is what we want, that is what our people deserve." Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on this motion.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, we will now vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	12
Noes	-	31
Not Voted	-	7

There being 12 Ayes, 31 Noes, 7 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote on Head 33.

The question is that, the amount in Head 33 - Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources be approved. Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	30
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Noes	-	14
Not Voted	-	6

There being 30 Ayes, 14 Noes and 6 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Head 33 - Ministry Of Lands and Mineral Resources, agreed to.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you Honourable Members, we will now break for lunch and lunch is being provided in the Big Committee Room. Honourable Members, Parliament is adjourned until 2.30 p.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 1.39 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 2.37 p.m.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, we will carry on from where we left off.

In Committee:

Head No. 34 – Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism

The floor is now open for comments, if any. We are looking at Programme 1, Activity 1 - any comments?

Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, there is the Aid-in-Kind that has been listed there - Financial Inclusion, Market Development in this new expenditure line of Aid-in-Kind. Can we just get an explanation from the line Minister on this Aid-in-Kind and what work does it involve?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, just some clarification. This Aid-in-Kind, we cannot increase, decrease or remove.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- No, Madam Chair, it is not a budget.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- It is in the book.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Just to have an idea of where it is going to be used and what is it for. I mean you cannot just have aid without knowing where it is going.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you want to increase or reduce? That is what all this debate is about; to increase, to decrease, or to remove, and you cannot do that on this Aid-in-Kind but you can bring it in if you are talking about a budget line, where you suspect that there could be some input from this other ....

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- I think what they are asking is a very simple clarification and the Honourable Minister would know. I mean, if there is aid-in-kind of certain million dollars, obviously the Honourable Minister would have an idea what is it for and where is it directed - just a clarification.

HON. V. NATH.- Under Standing Order 100(2), you cannot do that. It is only add, delete or remove, so the Standing Order is clear.

HON. P. SINGH.- This aid-in-kind in various SEGs, there are provisions and we just would like to know whether this aid-in-kind forms part of it?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Only if it has an impact or in fact on a margin line. Only if you think that this aid-in-kind would have an input to decide on, but when you discuss the same as it is now, I do not think it is of any use to discuss it. All right, tell me the reason why you want an increase; does it have an impact on what you want to say about SEGs?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Of course, Madam Chair, regarding SEG 1, SEG 2, SEG 3 and SEG 5, all of these, we wanted to clarify whether it will be undertaken by the Ministry staff or is it part of the Ministry's programme?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- All right, I will allow it then.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, if I may have some input on that. It is a budget, it is to do with finance, finance of Government, not what is being given to us in kind, whether it is DFAT or any other institution. If they have a specific question with respect to the activities, et cetera under that particular SEG, whether it is to do with financial inclusion or market development facility, the forum is questioned during question time, to ask specific questions.

All the Ministers can give you an answer as to what it is for, but I think the actual titles to these particular aid-in-kind issues, they spell out the activity itself and to answer his question, Madam Chair, I will do this for once, financial inclusion with respect to all those aid-in-kind by DFAT with respect to financial inclusion, which means those that are within the informal sector, market development facilities, facilities that Australian Government has with respect to different institutions that get funding with respect to activities, whether it is agriculture-based or tourism-based. And there is a provision also for supporting private sector development in Fiji. All of these things, the actual brief on all of these would be with DFAT. Its activities that they undertake with the ministry but we are not answering a budgetary question here, Madam Chair, it has no impact on increase, decrease or removal, it does not touch on it at all.

There is a specific question regarding these things, they need to probably address that question themselves; what does DFAT do in respect to that facility, I do not think it is appropriate.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. So with the background on those other external input, any comments on our budget? Honourable Alex O'Connor.

HON. A.D. O'CONNOR.- Thank you Madam Chair. May I just draw the Opposition's attention to the Supplementary – the Budget Supplement has briefs in there about aid-in-kind and other subject matters that they are referring to are also in the Supplement which as of now has been taking up a lot of time for the various Ministers to explain everything to them.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any comments on Programme 1, Activity 1? There being none, let us move onto Programme 2, Activity 1. Any comments on that? Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, on SEG 7, on Fiji China Trade Agreement Negotiation meeting (\$200,000) allocation. Remember last year, I think the Honourable Minister responded to Honourable Gavoka saying that the \$200,000 was also there as well and it was meant for a consultant, but now it is appearing again. Can we have some clarification?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, in 2015, Fiji and China signed an MOU to undertake a joint feasibility study with respect to a possible bilateral trade agreement. In this regard, officials Working Group, chaired by the Permanent Secretary for Industry, Trade and Tourism and the Director of Commerce have had regular meetings and these are held to discuss these particular economic relations. This is part and partial of the whole process. Before we get to whether we decide or not, whether we are going to have a trade agreement with China, that is what it is for - it is an ongoing thing.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Madam Chair on SEG 10 the last item on that - Young Entrepreneurship Scheme (\$2 million). If the Honourable Minister would just clarify what that allocation is for - is it for individuals or groups?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- The YE Scheme?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Yes, the \$2,000,000 Young Entrepreneurships Scheme

HON. F.S. KOYA.- This is the scheme that was announced last week in the Budget Address. This is the new scheme that will be undertaken by the Ministry, it is a new budget request. It is actually intended to provide immediate assistance in the form of grant to our young and burning entrepreneurs. Basically, those who are innovative and have bankable ideas and projects which financial institutions are not willing to support due to lack of collateral, that is one of the major issues and this will partly address the market failure, where financial institutions are reluctant basically to pride up, to provide start up finance for these young entrepreneurs.

Madam Chair, the grants will be up to about \$20,000 for successful young Fijian entrepreneurs between the ages of 18 to 30 and this is to develop and expand on their innovative businesses ideas. A total of about \$10,000 on the young entrepreneurs will actually be supported by this. There will be a programme untaken at a later stage, Madam Chair, where we will roll about completely, will go out to the institutions to inform everyone as to the availability in the forms that are required.

Again, this will be done in conjunction with the Ministry for Youth and Sports and all the other ministries that were involved. It is a next step up, as the Honourable Prime Minister rightly points out. It is a next step up from SMEs and this is for graduates who come out, not just university graduates, but also from other institutions and it is focussed on the young. We had some very phenomenal talent in this country and it needs to be properly dealt with.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, so we can...

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I am disappointed that a question was asked because this was clearly described in the Budget Estimates presentation and you had to ask again, and you are repeating exactly what was said then.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, so it can be for an individual or a group?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Yes, if there are two people who are involved in a way to set up an IT Company, there is no discrimination here, Madam Chair, the only thing is that there is an age limit between 18 and 30, it is really for the young entrepreneurs.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- (Inaudible)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

Any other comments? Honourable Biman Prasad?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Just a quick clarification from the Honourable Minister on SEG. 10 – Micro and Small Businesses Grant (\$6,440,000). Just a clarification on whether there is a set amount out of that pay grant or is it a general allocation, depending on the nature of the project itself?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Honourable Biman Prasad, I think we said it over and over again, this actual grant is limited to \$1000 so it does not go above \$1000. These are for the small and medium enterprises. It is a \$1000 grant and we do not give the money. It is actually given to the institution, whether it is a big equipment of up to \$1000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you? Any other question?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- None, we will move on to the next. Honourable Bultavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, on SEG. 10 Madam Speaker just to clarify. Honourable Minister we have a Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Central Coordinating Agency (\$2,828,120) - for what? Administration - to administer the grant?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- SEG. 10?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- SEG. 10 that Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Central Coordinating Agency.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- The Central Coordinating Agency, if you recall from previous statements that I made in Parliament, there is an SME Council that is set up, which is headed by the Honourable Prime Minister.

The Central Coordinating Agency is basically going to be set up to deal with all Small to Medium Enterprise issues which means not just formalising the informal sector, it also means incubation, registration and other sorts, it is a leg-up, right up to the stage whether they start up a business. So the Central Coordinating Agency takes care of all that, that is the institution that has been set up under the SME Council.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other comments?

We will now move on to the next which is the Programme 3 – Department of National Trade Measurement and Standard, Activity 1 – Trade Measurement/Trade Standard.

Any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Anare Vadei?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. In regards to SEG. 9 is that the new laboratory or the new one?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, in the 2016-2017 budget, an allocation of \$2.7 million was provided to better equip the Trade Measurement Laboratory. Now, with the new technology primary standards, the accuracy of gas metres installed in modern residential units and we also purchase links to decertify link measuring instruments and purchase of mess, compared to certified messes to replace the aging instruments in the laboratory, something which you had to be very



familiar with.

Madam Chair, the National Trade Measurement Laboratory maintains the primary and secondary standards for weighing and measuring instruments, and this include for mess time frequency volume length, to name a few, and all the standards in the laboratory are periodically certified by the National Measurement Institute, in having a laboratory accredited to international standards leverages the report generated from the laboratory in its entire vision to make the National Measurement Laboratory the regional laboratory that serves other Pacific Island Countries also.

For the 2017-2018 Financial year, the Ministry will undertake an assessment of the National Measurement Laboratory and the objective of this project is to identify the specific requirements, which will take us to ISO 17025 accreditation audit and develop a 3 to 5 year plan.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

We will move on to Programme 4 – Department of Co-operative Business, Activity 1 – General Administration, I invite comments if any.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 4 – Department of Co-operative Business, Activity 2 – Training

Honourable Anare Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, on Programme 4 – Department of Co-operative Business, Activity 1 – General Administration, SEG 1 there is reduction in salary for Co-operative Can you...

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU.- Are you mad?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which one is that?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Which one?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Programme 4 – Department of Co-operative Business, Activity 1 – General Administration, SEG. 1.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Oh no, no. We are going on to Activity 2 – Training.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- I was lifting my hand and you were listening to their “noes”. The mike was off so that was why.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The microphone was off. All right, for that reason, we will hear you out.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Programme 4 – Department of Co-operative Business, Activity 1 – General Administration, Madam Chair, the reduction is due to the salary of officers in the

administration section, accounts section and Principal Economic Planning officers posted to the correct programmes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Right, now Programme 4 – Department of Co-operative Business, Activity 2 – Training.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Programme 4 – Department of Co-operative Business, Activity 3 – Extension.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, the more noes, the more motion I am receiving tonight.

Programme 5 – Department of Tourism, Activity 1 – General Administration.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

HON. PROF. B.C PRASAD.- Yes, Madam Chair.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Yes, bring it.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Oh, Professor Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Programme 5 - Department of Tourism, Activity 1 - General Administration, SEG. 10, before I move a motion, I just need clarification from the Honourable Minister, has there been a study done on the economic benefit of the allocation so far? A serious economic study as to the benefits of spending \$9,000,000 on Fiji International Golf Tournament and whether that is available?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, once again, maybe the Honourable Biman Prasad would like to address that question to me at question time, if he really has a problem with the budgetary allocation?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Well, I move a motion then, Madam Speaker.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments on Programme 5 - Department of Tourism, Activity 1 - General Administration.

HON. MEMBERS.- Yes.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Yes, we will both speak on that, I have also served a notice that I would be speaking on that also.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Can you two negotiate, please?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- We will both speak on it.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You have got to negotiate. I have got others too here that are on the same allocation.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- We will take Professor Biman to do it and then I will back it up here. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- And then the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and Honourable Bulitavu; you can negotiate too on your motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Now on the hosting of *Super Rugby* Game, SEG 10, I am also serving notice that I will be speaking on that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- All right. We will now table Honourable Professor Biman Prasad's motion and that is to move that Head 34 be decreased by \$10 million in Programme 5, Activity 1, SEG 10, with respect to Fiji Golf Tournament. The Fiji International Golf Tournament decreased by \$10 million, I think this is wrong. You want to decrease by \$10 million but there is only \$9 million here.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Sorry, \$9 million, Madam Chairperson. It should be \$9 million, that is a simple error.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I think you can ask that during question time. So, be careful when you are filling the form. Anything that is flawed, there is one with no name, we have done that and we have really taken that out. This one, it is flawed. The motion, as it is, is wrong and I cannot accept it because there is no \$10 million here.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chairperson, that was a simple error, and I want to correct that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Too late, it should have been corrected before it came. Honourable Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Apologies, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We can take yours then.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- You will take my motion again, thanks.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- On the same, so, we will take his, it means the same thing. We will deal with the Honourable Gavoka's motion on the same - Fiji International Golf Tournament to be left out of Head 34 in respect of Programme 5, Activity 1, SEG 10, it should be removed totally. Do we have a seconder?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You can speak on your motion, Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you. Madam Chairperson, this golf tournament, as we have stressed over and over again, is something that Fiji cannot afford. It does not help tourism in the way it is being touted by the administration and there are other pressing needs for this country, as opposed to having some wealthy people to come to Fiji and play golf for four days.

From a tourism perspective, Madam Chairperson, if we look at all that has been allocated for tourism, that is, the operations, the marketing, this golf, the rugby and the support of Fiji Airways, it comes up to almost \$74 million. Give that money to the industry and to some professionals in tourism marketing, Fiji would this day be exceeding a million visitors.

I mean that is \$74 million, it is almost 4 percent of the revenue we get from tourism, which is \$1.8 billion. So, it is ill-conceived and I do not think the industry would agree to spend this money in this manner and I think it tells us that too often, the Government listens to promoters from overseas who comes up with some ideas that is presented to us in a slick, in a manner that like some of these promoters present things, and Government agrees.

I cannot imagine that the tourism industry in its entirety, the accommodation sector, the airline sector, the crews, inbound operators would agree to spending \$9 million over four days. It just boggles the mind that we continue to consider this as part of Fiji marketing and in terms of pressing needs. Right there in Natadola is a bridge that was once washed away years ago, is critical for sugar but is still unrepaired today.

So, Madam Chairperson, we made mistakes over and over again and we will serve notice now that when we take over, we will remove this golf tournament.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone else wants to speak on this motion? Honourable Professor Biman Prasad, you have two minutes.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, the Honourable Attorney-General is worried that I am back.

(Laughter)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Worried about your actions.

(Laughter)

HON. A.D. O'CONNOR.- Down with flu.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As I said, a very simple question was asked to the Honourable Minister whether there was any study and he chose not to answer that, but let me just support Honourable Gavoka.

I think the past golf tournaments have failed to provide any tangible direct benefits to the people of this country and a large majority of people who really do not care about golf tournament such as this are worried about the cost of living. We have been talking about allocations for kidney dialysis that was defeated yesterday. It is very simple. What we are proposing is taking away from the elites to play golf to allocations.

Budget, Madam Chairperson, is always about priorities. It is about the opportunity cost and if you allocate \$9 million for golf, you have to take that away from somewhere else. You have to cut it down so it is always a cost of allocating something here, as opposed to what is not allocated there.

I think right now our priority should not be golf. We should be allocating money where we need to, for example, as has been pointed out earlier that there are several areas where we wanted allocations and fees, it has not been done and this \$9 million allocation for golf is too much. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak? Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, I speak in support of the motion of the

removal of this allocation, especially over the last few years, there has been no accountability in terms of reporting back to this honourable House.

The way in which these funds have been disbursed or utilised over the two tournaments that have been held in the past, if Government has already allocated \$1 million for Qorvis for the marketing of Fiji, I think therefore, I speak in support of the motion to totally remove this \$9 million.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you Madam Chairperson, I fully support the motion. You remember, Madam Chairperson, in the last three years, we have been suggesting that we remove this allocation from the budget.

Madam Chair, golf tournaments; the world wants to see tournaments with top golfers because when it started, they said it will attract world viewers.

With the quality and the level of golf players that play in this tournament, the world do not want to see this tournament ...

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- ... because we do not have the best golfers in the world, and without any feedback on the economic benefits of this tournament. I fully support this motion, Madam Chair, that we should withdraw this assistance. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Niumataiwalu?

HON. M.A. NIUMATAIWALU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I do not support the motion before the House. I will just read out from "What's a Fact?" Wikipedia says:

"The Fiji International is a men's golf tournament in Fiji, co-sanctioned by the PGA Tour of Australasia and European Tour. The Fiji International was Fiji's first ever internationally broadcast golf tournament to a world-wide audience across more than 30 countries in over 400 million homes."

And, Honourable Chair, we have been talking about the tourism aspect in how we promote Fiji as a tourism destination. This is a smart move; this is an investment; and when you talk about over 400 million homes, you know the former Fiji Visitors Bureau CEO can attest to it because they have been trying to get the figures to come to Fiji to a billion, to more than a billion dollars to come to Fiji.

So this is another smart way that the FijiFirst, and these are facts, Madam Chair, these are facts that we have, so every year, it continues to increase.

Thank you and I am against the motion before the House.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, this is an example. We need to uphold the integrity of this House. So whatever facts, whatever information that is being tabled, has got to be facts and please, do not mislead Parliament by stating some of these statements without background information. Thank you. Any other comments on the same? Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, I keep going on about this over and over again but once and for all, let me give you some brief factual exercise on this and maybe they will learn this time.

First of all, I think there are only two people in Fiji who are anti-golf, or now three; that is Honourable Gavoka and Honourable Prasad, because none of us have ever heard anyone complaining about this particular exercise.

Madam Chair, the generic benefits from 2014 up to 2016, you have 200-plus volunteers who were engaged; 1,000 sponsors and guests; 55 local businesses engaged; \$1.5 million, plus direct spend with local suppliers; 80 local caddies engaged; 47,755 registered users in the PGA and the Fiji international websites; 367,621 pages viewed generated on official websites; 45,875 people engaged on *Facebook*, 327,600 impressions on *Twitter* and 7,358 viewers on *You Tube*.

Madam Chair, 1,837 articles covering the tournament, increase in advertisement size in space rate value to Fiji - FJ\$4,400,290; 1,233 hours of global coverage (35 percent, USA; 22 percent, Europe; 17 percent, Asia-Pacific; 11 percent Africa, Middle-East; and 9 percent Eastern Europe); 60 percent of players flying in via Fiji Airways, close to 500 international visitors directly involved with the tournament, and of course, the golf development programme that saw about 1500 clinics throughout and undertaken in schools. Madam Chair, we could not afford to even buy that much coverage, this is what we get out of it.

Madam Chair, I think it is about time that we have gone to a shut-down exercise with respect to golf. They really do not understand tourism. This is the kind of marketing that you would have to spend extreme amount of money on. You know that this year, there is a tri-sanctioning of the tournament. It is actually being sanctioned by PGA Australasian, European and the Asian tour and the increase is also going to be in media coverage to all of Europe, Asia and Australasia and you are talking about 400 million households, Madam Chair.

If you did the maths on that, the marketing on that is absolutely phenomenal. So it is not just about a golf tournament. It is also about us promoting and selling Fiji overseas as a destination, why can they not understand that? It is absolutely beyond me, Madam Chair.

The media value, all the videos international were televised for 4 days, times 8 hours per day, FJ\$24 million and in terms of the questions being raised about who were the top golfers? I am sure if they play golf, they would know who the top golfers are.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Just very quickly, Madam Chair, you see the unfortunate thing about the Opposition is, they are bereft of new ideas. They came to this Parliament with this thing – “Let us get rid of this golf tournament” and they just hung on to that idea.

Irrespective of the facts that Honourable Niumataiwalu presented, the Honourable Minister of Tourism also presented, these are all based on facts and they cannot see the same. “Oh, this is not happening, \$9 million, we can take it away from him and give it somewhere else,” It is not based on facts and the reality of course anyone knows is that, not that many people play golf in Fiji but we have also produced a person who has won the US Masters. We have now the Fiji National Provident Fund has brought back Vijay Singh and are doing upgrade of the golf course in Natadola, at a cost of \$6 million.

They are doing that because they know there is a huge return. They also forget there is land within the golf course, there is land around the golf course, which people are now buying and they actually are going to build. It is a huge economic benefit because of this, a huge multiplier effect and they obviously do not see that.

So much has been said, the reality is that it is a strategic move, unfortunately as Honourable

Minister for Agriculture pointed out, they actually do not have a strategy.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on the motion, does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	13
Noes	-	30
Not Voted	-	7

There being 13 Ayes, 30 Noes and 7 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is again from the Honourable Gavoka, to move that the hosting of the *Super Rugby* game be left out of Head 34 in respect of Programme 5, Activity 1, SEG 10. Does anyone second the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you Honourable Gavoka, please you can speak on your motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Chair. Again, this is \$3.5 million of taxpayers fund that could be better utilised because our boys need overseas exposure. We would rather the *Flying Fijians* playing the *Crusaders* or playing the *Chiefs* as opposed to the *Chiefs* and the *Crusaders* to come and display their skills here.

Our boys need that exposure. They need the cohesion to play together frequently against top sides to prepare them for 2019. You know we won in Rio, and we can also win the World Cup but if we do the right things as opposed to spending taxpayers money for the two teams to come and do their thing here. It is so very sad. The intensity with which we promoted the *Crusaders* and the *Chiefs* match here was far greater than what we did for Fiji-vs- Italy and Fiji -vs- Scotland. In actual fact, the difference was so vast, we just ignored our boys and put all the effort into the *Crusaders* and the *Chiefs* match and, Madam Chair, golf and all these, if they have been so successful, how come Australia today has not yet reached the half a million mark in visitor arrivals?

We set a target for 2012, they still cannot do it today. So you know, we can talk, Madam Chair, I can also put together a very slick presentation and give you numbers, and I am pretty good in doing that too, but the proof is in the pudding. Where is the number? Why is Australia still not even up to the numbers you want in 2012? Five years now, we still cannot make the numbers that we set for 2012.

Let me put it this way: \$14 million in 2006, we brought 549,000 visitors here; \$74 million given to this outfit, they still cannot make a million visitors. So, do the maths and then we will talk. Madam Chair, let us take this out; either give it to our boys to develop our rugby, or give it to tourism marketing, not over one match. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have anyone that wants to speak?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, if I may, once again, I think people are living in the past too much. If they were so forward-thinking, we would have had a million tourists when he was on board.

(Laughter)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- I love this idea of a million tourists. Madam Chair, we have brought in more into this economy with less amount of tourists up-to-date. We bring in \$1.6 billion into the economy with respect to the tourism industry, 28.8 percent of the GDP, where is tourism going wrong? It is not, Madam Chair.

With respect to rugby, you have to look at it holistically. Madam Speaker, on rugby, the *Super 15* Match has also added to us our niche market sports tourism avenue. We are now hosting more sports tourism events all around Fiji, across all different events. We actually have obviously the golf, rugby, all the Oceania games, stand-up paddle board, surfing, and a whole lot of sporting events that ride on the back of each other.

Every single time we host a sporting event, Madam Chair, we are getting more and more as a destination for sports tourism, which means more tourists coming in and spending a whole lot more money in Fiji. All you had to do was go and visit the game. Apart from that sports tourism event, the stadium was full. The Fijian people liked the fact that we have the first for 15 Games. It is not taken anywhere around the world too much. If we get chosen as the destination as a home game for the *Chiefs*, we should be proud of it and insofar as giving the money to the 15s, Madam Speaker, our Fijian rugby players are warriors. Sometimes, they do not need to be pampered to get to where they need to. They do not need to, they are warriors. Our Sevens team has done it. At the end of the day, where there is a need, Government always provides it.

Madam Speaker, I think I completely disagree with the motion that is before the House.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- For completeness sake, this is about allocation and tourism, if the Honourable Member is concerned about the money that is being allocated to the Fijian Rugby Union, he should have questioned this when we were on the Head for the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

If you see the Ministry of Youth and Sports, we are actually spending over \$15 million. A major chunk of that money actually goes to our rugby team through FRU (Fiji Rugby Union) a major chunk of that. We can give them a breakdown.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports has all of that. We are giving enormous amounts of money to FRU, actually unprecedented amounts of money, so we did that similarly with the Olympic campaign, we are also doing it now. This is about tourism, Madam Chair.

What this also tells the rest of the world, as we did when we hosted the Pacific Weightlifting Competition, the President of the Weightlifting Federation of the World came to Fiji and said, "Fiji has a potential, in about two to three years' time, they will host the World Weightlifting Competition."

When we have the senior teams coming to Fiji, guess what it means? It means Fiji has the potential to also become a leg in the sevens' series. That is what we are demonstrating to them. We have the capacity and facilities. This is why we are investing in the National Stadium and in other facilities around them, to show that we have the ability to host these international meets. Of course, it gives exposure to our people, that also means a huge return on the buck that we are spending.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone oppose the motion?



(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	12
Noes	:	13
Not Voted	:	8

There being 12 Ayes, 13 Noes, 8 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The next motion is from the Honourable Aseri Radrodro to move that Head 34 be increased by \$250,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 6 with respect to Film Fiji, does anyone second the motion?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Radrodro, you may speak on your motion.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, the reason for the increase in the allocation for Film Fiji is that, as we all know, it involves a thriving infant industry in terms of film. We have a lot of series being shot in the Yasawa Group and there is a lot of difficulties faced by resource owners there, in terms of wanting to inquire about the pricing, leasing or the rental models that have been paid to the landowners. They are still inquiring about it, in terms of the arrangement made by Film Fiji and the film companies.

What is happening is, Film Fiji is out of the picture because probably it is outside their arrangement. They need to engage staff to look after the inquiries that are coming out of the landowners' resource and especially currently, they are shooting in the Yasawas.

There is a lot of inquiries made from resource owners in Yasawa regarding the rental money that they receive, what model did the iTLTB use? They could not get answers and Film Fiji is always out of the picture because iTLTB is always in front to make this similar arrangement. So the purpose of the increase is to get Film Fiji to recruit more people who can be involved in liaising and negotiating with the respective resource owners, in terms of shooting of film series in Fiji.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have anyone else who would like to speak on the motion?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I am fully in support of that motion. Filming is a growing segment of the business community in Fiji and a lot of the shots are taken over the Mamanuca and the Yasawa Groups of islands and out of generosity in a typical *iTaukei* way they are ready to forego whatever rights they have, but then when they look at it and see what they have given away compared to what the film makers are making out of their shoots. It is very obvious that a lot of these things need to be looked into and it is very important that we establish what it is. If they forego the rights to their *qoliqoli*, beaches, whatever else, there must be value established that is fair, otherwise, Madam Chair, it is still the old, kind, gentle villager, who is being exploited. So, we need a proper structure into it so that we can realise the true benefit of what I know is a thriving segment of our industry.

HON. M.M.A. DEAN.- Madam Chair, I would like to just contribute to what Honourable

Gavoka said. The landowners, Madam Chair, are very knowledgeable now. I have a document here about a *qoliqoli* waiver, whereby the landowners realise the value of their *qoliqoli* areas and they are entering into smart negotiations with the developers. They know what they are doing; they are educated enough; they do understand the terms and the agreements, and for this reason, I do not support the motion before House. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister would you like to say something. Honourable Attorney-General?

HON. A. SAYED- KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, the reality is that, no one is forcing the landowners to give up any of their rights. This is not permanent alienation of any rights. For example, recently there was a series which overseas company wanted to shoot in Kadavu. They had identified a particular area, the landowners in that area wanted that particular amount. They also wanted access to some accommodation but it did not work out. So they went to another area, where they negotiated. In most the cases, for example the *Survivor Series*, now two sessions have been shot.

The food supply, the engagement of about 300 people in that area, local people have all been taken from the landowning units. They supply various other services. It does not mean they cannot go and fish there, they do not just fish when the movie is being shot in that space. The kind of picture that is being created is fictitious, it is absolutely fictitious. And these series sometimes, I mean, the *Survival* ones, you can say they have hired Mana Island for about 9 months in a year. Guess, who works in the hotel? Guess, who supplies the food? Guess, who supplies the boating services? Guess, who also get compensated for that particular period of time?

You see, Madam Chairperson, there is so much conjecture and there is this 'living in the past kind of syndrome.' They need to actually know what exactly is happening. The multiplier effect of movies being shot in Fiji, as calculated by the Reserve Bank of Fiji, the minimum is about 2.25 times, whatever money is spent. That is why we have 47 percent rebate.

People are also getting hired. They also forget to mention that as part of the rebate requirement, they have to use students from the Fiji National University - Audio Visual School in terms of technical expertise. We are building our own capacity.

So, the reality is that, these figures by Film Fiji have arrived after enormous levels of discussions. As they may recall that we had in fact increased the budget at one point in time, we believe the budget is enough. Film Fiji actually does go out and talk to the landowners. They do actually help facilitate, they do actually go to iTLTB. They one minute ago were saying that iTLTB is the "the best thing since slice bread". Madam Chairperson, iTLTB is the only one engaged in that, Lands Department is not involved in that, so all these checks and balances are in place. Thank you.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- I think it is sufficiently covered.

HON. A. SAYED- KHAIYUM.- You have spoken - finished.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We are asking for the right of reply now to the motion. You have already spoken, but one more from Honourable Koroilavesau.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Madam Chairperson, I just wanted to make a contribution because our company has been involved with filming in the Yasawas and in the Mamanucas. They had at a period of time closed Mana Island basically for filming. They took over the whole resort. They took over the whole airport and they pay for all the services and compensated for all the flights. We have two destinations where our ships normally go to, they took over the two

beaches, paid us compensation for us not to go to those destinations, just so that it gives the landowners the additional benefit out of it. So, the landowners are getting huge benefit out of filming that has been carried out.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister. Your right of reply.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chairperson, I think sufficient material has been offered and we are wasting time.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	13
Noes	-	30
Not Voted	-	7

There being 13 Ayes, 30 Noes and 7 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is by the Honourable Ratu Kiliraki and he is moving that Head 34 be decreased by \$100,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 4 with respect to Ministerial Trade Delegation. Am I right? Ministerial trade delegation, Head 32, Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 4. There is no SEG 4 in Activity 1, so this one is flawed. We will move on to the next motion.

The motion is by the Honourable Dulakiverata and he is moving that Head 34 be decreased by \$300,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 10, with respect to micro and small business grant. Does anyone second the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Please, speak on your motion Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The intention of the programme maybe good but we need to have a review of the programme to see what is the success rate of these things because talking from lay people, a lot of people were given this assistance and they never utilized it properly. So we need to review that. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak in support of the motion or non-support? Honourable Bilitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I think with all good intentions, the micro and small business grant, there needs to be some kind of review into the progress and what it has achieved. One of the biggest problems achieved by many is the waiting. When they are waiting to receive the cheques, and the current arrangement done by Government, I do not know why the Honourable Prime Minister has to come and handover these cheques, when the line Minister, the Minister is there – he can do it.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- These kinds of programmes, Madam Chairperson, I think really needs to be properly reviewed; whether it is going to serve the people, or it is just for political mileage for the Honourable Prime Minister.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- And these are things, Madam Chairperson I think, we were asking the Honourable Minister as to when he would be coming down to Vanua Levu. Then they came down to Savusavu and Labasa but again people were tired of waiting. And again there has to be proper monitoring of these small SMEs and also considering the new tax that would be coming in and what will be affecting them. Also their markets on how they are going to sell their products and generate more revenue and how they are going to develop into other ventures from what they have started up with. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to contribute to the motion?

There being none, may I ask the Honourable Minister to speak in response.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chairperson, I think that is absolute disrespect to our Honourable Prime Minister if he says something like that. First of all, they say they want him back in the country all the time, next they say they do not want him doing these things.

(Laughter)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- And I might I remind this honourable House and the rest of Fiji this is the Honourable Prime Minister's favourite programme. So of course, he is going to be present at every one that he can be, whether he makes the time to actually do these things.

Madam Chairperson, there is a continuous assessment of this particular programme, and with respect to the delay, I have said this before and I will say it again, we actually went through a rehabilitation exercise. We had a Category 5 cyclone, if you remember that came to this country and we had to rehabilitate those that we had given grants to, and that Madam Chairperson took a little bit of time. And trust me, the fact that they turned up here and say "Oh people are getting impatient and all of these things." Madam Chairperson, 99.9 percent of the people that we have spoken to are very patient. We are Fijians, we are very patient.

Madam Chairperson, this programme is paying good rewards and at the end of the day, I think there is one line that spells the success of this programme, "48,750 lives have been improved", Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	13
Noes	-	31

Not Voted - 6

There being 13 Ayes, 31 Noes, 6 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to move that Head 34 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 10 with respect to the Young Entrepreneurship Scheme. Does anyone second this motion?

HON. MEMBER.- Second.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leader of the Opposition, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Honourable Chairperson. Now in terms of this new allocation which I think is a good initiative, especially for the age group that it is addressing. We have a high percentage of unemployed young people not only in villages but also in settlements and in urban areas. And I believe that this is an initiative that could help them and I am just taking this as an example. Young boys who play rugby and I am looking at the Rewa Rugby team because we also have some boys there from Natena, who can also be assisted in this initiative, Madam Chairperson.

Now, in terms of organic farming, which we know can fill niche market, not only locally but also overseas, and it can help with exports. I am thinking of vegetables and organic farming, maybe some livestock, chicken and piggery and fish from Natena, and also crabs from Rewa.

We could all assist each other in that, Madam Chairperson. I think that this allocation is not enough in terms of the number of young people whose needs this is supposed to address in terms of young entrepreneurship. So I am going for the increase of \$500,000. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on the motion? Honourable Bilitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam. I support the motion. First, I think the Honourable Minister had said that those who will be qualified will be eligible to apply for \$20,000 and the process that will be involved, including Business Plans and setting up of their business; their fees, and it is for helping the young people. And I think there was no proper assessment on how we came up to \$2 million, given the population of youth that we have and that that needs to be matched.

How many will actually qualify if say, about 20 people will be applying for \$10,000? That will be limiting these funds at least to a certain area, probably in urban youths only. Those who will be specialising in, say computer apps. graduates. We need to look at all levels of young entrepreneurs, not only graduates with Degrees, but Diplomas, Certificates, those who come from Technical Colleges.

Those who are self-help who have resources. That has to be incorporated because you came up with a figure and that is why we will need to increase it, to take into consideration the various level of youths that we have, who want to start a business, but I think the amount is not sufficient as it is given the population of youth we have, we really need to increase, according to the motion. That will give more opportunities for more youths, especially from rural communities.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else wish to speak? Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chairperson, I want to support the motion. I prefer this Young Entrepreneurship Scheme than the SME because these are the young people that need to be helped

because as you see, a lot of young people they are qualified but unemployed. So, this type of assistance will be good for them, to come up with ideas to start their own business. At least, we will give them experience in the long-term. They fail, at least they have some experience. They do something else but helping very old people who are 60 or 70 years old to get an SME - that is a different cattle of fish altogether.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Excuse me, I am 70. I would have liked to be involved in this but I would welcome \$1000 to better my life if I needed it. I think we need to be very sensitive about taking age on this thing. Anyone else want to speak on this motion? There being no other, I now give the floor to the Honourable Minister to make concluding remarks.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have not even started the programme yet. I really do not know where they pluck a figure out of, they have added to this already. I really do not know. May I ask the Honourable Bulitavu, do you have the numbers, Sir? Please if you have, give it to me.

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Plucking figures out of thin air; this Government supports the youth and young. And this programme, as I had spelt out, Madam Chairperson, is for innovative and young and budding entrepreneurs; whether they want to do (and I take my hat off to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition) organic farming, that is the way to go.

And yes, if you identify a few people and eventually when we get everything in place, but right now I do not think it is a good idea to add on to something that we have not even started yet. This is an idea that has come out of this budget. So I disagree with the motion, Madam Chairperson.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- From a financial perspective and financial responsibility, this again demonstrates what the Opposition thinks that by throwing money or taking away money somehow or the other things will happen or not happen. You have got to have a capacity as the Honourable Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism has said, that we are starting this off. If you give \$20,000 and assuming everyone gets \$20,000, you have 200 applicants and you can have 400 if everyone got on average of \$10,000; we have got to make it work. The reality is that, for example, if you look at this microenterprise, the grant that we are giving, we started off with \$2 million initially. It has now gone up to \$6 million because we have actually learnt along the way and we are targeting it now more specifically, similarly with this. And you know, Honourable Dulakiverata, please do not be an ageist, because the fact is, there are women for example, who are making handicrafts and they are 60 years old. A \$1,000 does tremendous amount of momentum for their businesses. They are able to get the stock pile up of raw materials to increase income levels.

So, the idea is that we need to be able to assist people in different ways. This is a very good idea. We have got the private sector on board and in fact some private companies have already said to us: "We have got our own private trusts and we want to see if this works well. We actually want to contribute some of our trust fund monies towards this."

So, let us try and make this a success, get the right people in and then we can increase it next year or when we come back for the Budget again after the Elections maybe or after that, in 2019.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I think Parliament will now vote. Honourable Vunivalu.

HON. S.B VUNIVALU.- Honourable Chairperson, thank you. I think the Opposition are a bit confused because at times they want money and with this Small Micro Entrepreneurship scheme, they are again saying that they are not to be given money.

So, I am saying that they are a bit confused. The people are listening now all around Fiji. They will see us, especially the one who has been giving this money and we are monitoring the small businesses, and you people are saying that they are not to be given money. They will just see you, and I do not know, that is why they are supporting us. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on the motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	31
Not Voted	-	5

There being 14 Ayes, 31 Noes, 5 Not voted, the motion is defeated.

The last motion is by the Honourable Anare Vadei, to move a motion that Head 34 be increased by \$200,000 in Programme 4, Activity 1, SEG 1, with respect to Personal Emoluments. Does anyone second the motion? Thank you. Honourable Vadei, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My motion is in regards to a revision in the ministry to bring about a vibrant economy. So, for a vibrant economy, they need nurturing programmes where they have incubation, mentoring, twinning, training programmes and also to provide auditing to our rural and SMEs entrepreneurs to boost our economic activities in the rural and in formal sectors.

The reason why we need an increase in cooperative offices in those various areas is because of the expensive cost of auditing of their books by the accounting firms that can be used by secondary schools for the auditing of their books. So, the outreach programmes of these cooperative offices, they have....

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Why is it coming at this time? Is this ....

HON. A.T. VADEI.- For additional offices.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You are talking emoluments and he is talking capacity building.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Emoluments, that is why we have additional staffs.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Wages, not for SEG 1.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Justifying SEG 1.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- We do not do SEG 1.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- It is not Personal Emoluments.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Justifying the needs of that increase because they have been closing down the cooperative offices in various divisions, part of that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- So, you still have one-and-a-half minute.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Already finished, Madam Speaker.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak in support of your motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, would you like to make concluding remarks?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, one word. They are really suffering from “strategic paralysis”.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote on the motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	31
Not Voted	-	5

There being 14 Ayes, 31 Noes and 5 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Thank you. Parliament will now vote on Head No. 34. The question is that, the amount of Head No. 34, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, be approved. Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	31
Noes	-	15
Not Voted	-	4



There being 31 Ayes, 15 noes and 4 not Voted, the Motion is agreed to.

Head 34 - Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, agreed to.

Honourable Members, we will move on to the next item on the agenda.

Head 35 – Ministry of Sugar

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You had your hand up. Yes, what would you like to say?

HON. P. CHAND.- Madam Chairperson on SEG10.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I have not gone to that yet.

(Laughter)

HON. P. CHAND.- I thought you have said that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- All right. So, the floor is now open for any comments and we are now looking at Programme 1, Activity 1 - do we have any comments? The first on this from the Honourable Parmod Chand.

HON. P. CHAND.- I do not need the camera like him and I do not need that shade.

(Laughter)

Madam Chairperson, SEG 10, Sugarcane Farm Mechanisation - FSC (\$1000, 000), I need some clarification on this. What kind of farm mechanisation and what all will be included in this?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, as the Honourable Member would know that farm mechanisation can take in the form of harvesters, various other machinery that is currently not been used, for example for spread of fertiliser, the weedicide so it is an overall allocation for the acquisition of farm machineries that is relevant to the sugarcane industries.

Of course, that assessment will be done through the Ministry of Sugar and FSC with the individual farmers, also as you know, they have already set cooperatives. So, these cooperatives are also now eager to adopt much of the mechanisation that either has not been in the sugar industry or is very much manual labour, so, this is the allocation for that.

HON. P. CHAND.- You announced in the budget about 20 harvesters and about 300 trucks. Is that inclusive here somewhere else?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, that is coming through FSC.

HON. P. CHAND. –Thank you, I will a move a motion on this.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This is through the Ministry of Sugar.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Viliame Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- I would like to move a motion to increase the new farmers assistance allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any others? There being no other, we will move on to the next.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chairperson, if I can just have a clarification from the Honourable Minister on one of the tax?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which SEG?

HON. P. SINGH.- SEG 10, Farm Mechanisation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which allocation in SEG 10?

HON. P. SINGH.- That is for the farm mechanisation. I take it that the Honourable Minister's response to this farm mechanisation as acceptable. The Cane Producer Organisation, they do not qualify for grants of \$90,000 to be in machines. I believe this money comes from FDB, it is a Government grant to FDB then FDB through FDB loans, but they do not qualify.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I suppose we have set from Government initiatives that the cooperatives need to be set up. So, it is through the cooperatives and the average cost of a harvester is about \$300,000, so Government contributes about a third of that (\$19,200) and then the balance is facilitated by way of a loan through FDB, and we are doing this through cooperatives.

The Cane Producer Association was set up through the fair trade mechanism and the EU have set up. That is a separate issue. As you know, I think approximately over 20 cooperatives have been set up now, that have accessed these new cane harvesters and as announced also in the Budget that FSC has got his own programme from getting perhaps another 20 harvesters themselves.

I think what is really important is because I know there is a lot of interest and one of the things that we did announce in the Budget was that we have had the Commerce Commission in the past over month or more than that working with the respective stakeholders to look at the pricing per tonne of these cane harvesters because there are also, as you would know, some individuals who own cane harvesters themselves. Some of them are charging as high as \$33 a tonne, \$26 to \$28 a tonne.

The Commerce Commission has looked at it and given it is almost monopolistic position in certain areas, there is no other cane harvester. So, we have come up with a figure of close to \$18 a tonne. Now, that will exponentially reduce the cost of cane harvesting and the direct result of that will be the farmers, who will benefit directly because they will not have to pay for that.

So, you see, it is not always about throwing money, it is also about doing things in a smart way. So, we brought in the Commerce Commission, they have gone out and consulted everyone, looked at, for example, their loan repayments, looked at the cost of harvesting which ultimately as the Minister of Agriculture and the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister for Sugar will tell you, the ultimate need to do mechanisation, just to improve efficiency but also to bring down the cost base. So, we have situations where harvesters are being introduced but the cost base is increasing. So, it needs to be reined in and that is what is being done.

HON. P. SINGH.- The cost is reduced to \$17.50, as you alluded to in your Budget Address, but the Commerce Commission rate of \$17.50 will it also apply to cane producing associating machines?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It applies to everyone that is going to operate the cane

harvester; whether you are a private harvester, owner, or you hire your machine out, or whether it is to any association or to any cooperative?

HON. P.B. SINGH.- Thank you. That is the clarification.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The motion is from the Honourable Parmod Chand. Honourable Bulitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam. Just on SEG 10, that new farmer's assistance by FSC - \$2 million. Can the Honourable Minister detail as to what costs will be covered in this allocation?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- This allocation is being moved in a motion and I am sure there will be further discussions on it. I am sure the Honourable Minister takes note of your question.

Honourable Parmod Chand is moving that Head 35 be increased by \$3 million in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10, with respect to Sugarcane Farm Mechanisation, FSC - the \$1 million allocation. Does anyone second the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No?

HON. P. SINGH.- I second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Parmod Chand, you may speak on your motion.

HON. P. CHAND.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. First, I declare my interest because I am a cane farmer and I produce more than 2000 tonnes of cane a year.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. P. CHAND.- Otherwise the Minister for Agriculture might again say that I want the roads done because I run bus services.

Madam Chairperson, firstly, one of the important things for this increase is simply this; \$1 million will not go a long way because cost of harvesters is \$300,000 approximately somewhere there. Before, a few years ago, it was about \$400,000, but when lot of people started importing it, the price has gone down. Secondly, a truck, if you have an old truck, it will give you difficulty. You need new trucks. New trucks will cost you somewhere, depending on either you buy the Japanese or the Chinese trucks, somewhere between \$100,000 to \$140,000.

Thirdly, we need tillers, the planters, because one of the major problems is a lot of them have shortage of labour, especially in the Northern Division and Labasa Mill is one of the best mills in Fiji. We used to produce about 1.3 million tonnes of sugarcane per year. Lots of young people have moved out of Vanua Levu in search for greener pastures to Viti Levu.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Renewal of leases.

HON. P. CHAND.- Despite the renewal of leases because a lot of leases are being renewed but what has happened ....

Forget about the expired leases, we are talking about the leases that people have. In Seqaqa,

all the leases will expire in 2025. People have left big farms and the largest farm-holding is in Seqaqa, that was started in 1975 and 1976. Lots of young people just do not want to stay on the farms because:

1. sugarcane price is very low;
2. the sugar industry is in very bad hands; and
3. they do not have labourers to cultivate the land.

Elderly people are left. Mechanisation will mean even there is 40, 50, 60 year old people can drive tractors, they can drive trucks and farming can be done, it will make life very easy.

Madam Chairperson, I know that Government has got some harvesters and it was earlier alluded to. This particular application, when I saw sugarcane farming mechanisation, and I see in fit that we increase the value here, more money so that it will help our sugarcane farmers. The farmers, the sugarcane farmers of this country, need a lot of support, need a lot of help because:

1. the sugar subsidy is going to go away so the farmers need to be doing their work very well; and
2. with these machines, people can plant in twin rows. Twin rows will produce more cane per acre and the cost of these harvesters will reduce.

At the moment, I calculated it, a harvester will be...

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak in support of this motion? Honourable Professor Biman Prasad?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I think the motion is a reasonable one. I think Honourable Parmod Chand has laid down very clearly why an increase allocation for mechanisation will be useful. I think in the long-term, that is the way things will move and I think he is right when he points out, and as you know Seqaqa cane project when it started, it started with bigger farms than those in other areas and that area was seen as potentially an area where mechanisation could have been a very important contributor to the reduction in cost. Unfortunately, it did not happen, and so I think probably the time is right to look at increasing this specific allocation to ensure that areas where mechanisation can be undertaken quite quickly ought to be done immediately. That is why the motion is an appropriate one. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

HON. SPEAKER.- Does anyone else want to speak on this motion? Otherwise, I will ask the Honourable Minister to speak in reply.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Just very quickly as I highlighted that the \$1 million will be used for various types of machineries. As I also highlighted is that the FSC is itself going to buy harvesters. So, the harvesters will be made available. There is about another 20 harvesters. These are small farm machineries that the individual farmers do need. It could either be operated through cooperatives that has already been set up or individually farmers will get it.

So, there will be huge amount of money. Now Parliament should also be reminded of the fact that we have also approved a \$202 million loan facility guarantee for FSC and when presenting that guarantee, we have set a 3-year plan for FSC of what they will use that money for. A lot of it includes actually machineries also for farmers. So, this is Government's contribution towards that effort because they work together with the Ministry of Sugar. But FSC itself is actually providing a huge amount of allocation from the \$202 million for farm mechanisation.

The issue about trucks. The Honourable Member talked about trucks. This is not for buying trucks. This is to actually help with production. As it is also highlighted, FSC is actually going to buy ....

Does the Honourable Member want to listen to it?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Parmod Chand, are you listening? He is responding to what you raised.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- FSC, as highlighted is actually buying 300 trucks - 300 brand new trucks for cartage purposes. So that new mode of thinking is that FSC's philosophy under the new Board of Governors and the CEO is that we need to help the farmers to increase their yields and bring their cane to the mills because FSC wants the mill to run efficiently. That can only happen through the cane reaching the mills.

This \$1 million is in conjunction with the \$202 million allocation that FSC is going to use for farm mechanisation, so we believe it is enough. Of course, Madam Chairperson, if there is a need, FSC will fulfil that need and if there is a need next year, we will do more and it is a new allocation too.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on the motion. Anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will now vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	4

There being 14 Ayes, 32 Noes and 4 Not voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is from the Honourable Viliame Gavoka to move that Head 35 be increased by \$2 million in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10 with respect to New Farmers Assistance. Does anyone second the motion?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA. - I second the motion.

Thank you, Honourable Gavoka would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Chairperson. Last night, I spoke on this and I was told that with my suggestion, that we increase the allocation. Therefore, then clearing that, it will come under sugar, but I do not see it here. Basically, as I said last night, a lot of land now lies idle and we know why. Our people thought that they could do cane farming 20 years ago, but have failed, we admit to that but rather than take the latitude I saw last night.

It is your fault. We in SODELPA think that we should help the new farmers to take up the land, especially the landowners. Whilst at that, Madam Chairperson, let me say this on behalf of our party, SODELPA. Anyone there who is anxious about his lease, SODELPA will do everything possible to renew your lease. Let that be stated very clearly, let that be stated very clearly. Now, that

is two-pronged; those are the people who will need this but a lot ....

HON. MEMBER.- (Inaudible)

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Carry on Honourable Gavoka. Please, you are disrupting the speaker we would like to hear the speaker. Thank you.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- A lot of these idle land, like I said last night, Madam Chairperson, are right adjacent to the railway network system. There is about 780 kilometres of railway and it is one of the easiest way of growing cane when you have your land right next to the tramline, and I know the commitment from FSC to repair all these and make it work again.

A lot of this land are there. They are over-grown, we need to clear them and I know that from the previous Executive Chairperson of FSC, he did say “ there is a lot of potential with the *mataqalis*, the *mataqalis* want to get back into cane farming. Yes, they made a mistake, yes, they could not do it 20 years ago, it is time to reinvigorate the sugar industry by engaging with them now but we have to clear the land and a lot of them are showing a lot of interest in cane farming.”

We went to see the joint venture farm in Labasa, where one of the *iTaukei* is in joint venture with FSC. The quality of cane is still there, Madam Chairperson, similar to what I used to see in Nadroga about 40 years ago. So, we would like to see that come back but we have to clear the land and we need this kind of funding, this kind of exercise to clear the land and get a bigger number of people to embrace cane farming. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone else want to speak in support? Honourable Professor Biman Prasad?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I support the motion. I think the current allocation of \$2 million towards this programme to support the sugarcane farmers entering the industry is the right thinking and the way forward, but I think the amount is too small because what it entails is lease acquisition, land preparation and planting cost, I think for the first 10 hectares, which is roughly about four hectares of sugarcane.

Madam Chairperson, I think while there are issues about land leases and we all accept that there were issues in Vanua Levu and in other areas. It is very important that land leases for the existing cane farmers are renewed and the commitment given well in advance so that there is an indication of what they will expect.

But let me just say why it is important to allocate more for new sugarcane farmers because even those cane farmers who have leases, and in fact they are not just *iTaukei* land, they are crown leases, freehold land that people actually have in areas in Rakiraki and Tavua where they are not planting cane. I think it is very important that we give a signal that those who have moved out of the sugarcane farms, those who may want to go and might I add, Madam Speaker, when we proposed the minimum granted price for a certain period of time, we actually said that if farmers, (I mean there are people who might actually move out of Suva and other urban centres have moved from rural areas) if they acquire land and if they have a minimum guaranteed price for a period of time and the support, they will actually go back to sugarcane farming. So, I think it is very important for us to increase the allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prem Singh, you have the floor?

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chairperson, I would like to support that allocation because it is easier for new sugarcane farmers. We have had these initiatives for a very long time but for the existing ones, these are especially for new farmers and the new farmers who came in and the mover of the motion has asked for land clearing expenses to be part of this with an increase.

The other thing that I would like to mention is that when new farmers move in after they have planted sugarcane, cleared the land, they planted the cane, it takes FSC 16 weeks to process the payment. So if there can be an improvement on that.

And on the cartage of cane, as the Honourable Attorney-General had alluded to, we have the Commerce Commission of Fiji looking at the harvesting by machines but what we intend to forget in here or what is missing is the regularisation of the lorry cartage on manual harvesting. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Parmod Chand?

HON. P. CHAND.- Madam Chairperson, I also support this motion for help for the new farmers assistance. One of the things we are looking at, when we get the cane farming growing, like I earlier alluded here said “that is a lot of land leases not expired but people have left those farms”. They do want to sell them at a very, very small price and new farmers if they get some assistance or if they are able to buy land in Seqaqa, we, in Seqaqa, will alone produce somewhere about 400,000 tonnes of sugarcane.

This will really revitalise the sugar industry because one of the best things about the Seqaqa belt is this; when the land was subdivided, hardly any leases under 50 acres. Majority of the leases are big land holding like 70, 80 and 90 acres. Mechanised farming in this kind of big piece of land will produce a lot of cane.

I myself have done a trial. I hold about 130 acres of land and I have done a new planting by twin row and it produces a lot of cane per acre and a lot of farmers beside my farm have started doing that and I encouraged a lot of business people in Labasa to take up farms. One of the Accountants has bought about four farms. If this grant is increased and assistance is given to people who are labourers now who are unable to buy farms, they could get this money and buy those farms and be owners and labourers at the same time. A lot of people might go back - from Vanua Levu, Savusavu, Nadi, Viti Levu and all those places because so important and it will really improve our economy, our mill is very good with capacity to crush about 1.5 million tonnes of sugarcane per year.

Madam Chairperson, I sincerely support this motion, people need help, new farmers need help, the sugar industry needs help and it is very, very important for the economy of Fiji.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I now give the floor to Honourable Samuela Vunivalu?

HON. S.B.VUNIVALU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I just want to teach some of the Opposition on how to plant cane.

(Laughter)

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU.- They are saying that there are vacant land, and as you can see, FSC have got their sector offices everywhere in Seqaqa, Labasa, Dreketi and also Kavanagasau.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU.- I mean in Rakiraki and to Kavanigasau, there are sector offices where they have field officers, including *sirdars*. The only problem here is the attitude and laziness. Before, we used to work in cane fields, we used to go to the overseer in the sector office, but now I do not know where they are coming from about the vacant land, it is because of their attitude. That is why I do not support this one, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other input, I will now ask the Honourable Minister to speak in reply.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Just very, very quickly I think everyone agrees that we need to increase cane production. We all agree on that. I just wish the Honourable Member would actually have enquired about what is the Sugarcane Development Farmers Assistance for. Actually the \$15.4 million is for preparation, \$6 million of that goes in land preparation for fallow land.

So those people they are talking about, who may actually have a lease were not able to do their cane planting have a lease, they can actually get their fallow land planted. We have \$6 million for the clearing of the land; Planting Inputs - \$5 million; \$34,000 for Aglime in Viti Levu; and \$47,000 Aglime in Vanua Levu. Then we have a cane replanting programme, people who actually made the planting, but only half of the land is being planted only. Again, we have got \$750,000 for land preparation; planting inputs, \$750,000; Aglime - \$85,000, Aglime, Vanua Levu - \$237,000. The new farmer assistance is a new one, it never happened before. Now, this is specifically to actually pay for the lease. This is for lease acquisition and then we have got the FSC assessment extension services of \$0.5 million and other administrative support.

So, other inputs of course from the \$50 million will also complement that. So, there are two separate issues and any fear that they may have in respect of land clearance not being given money. It is already there in the \$15 million, it will complement the new farmers. It is a new initiative, never have been done before, of course we are trying it.

There is a target of 50 new farmers in Labasa, some assessments have been done; 50 new farmers for Rarawai; 30 farmers or Lautoka; and 20 new farmers for Penang and we are targeting that. Of course, if it is going to work well and we have received a lot of positive feedback from people that they do want to get into cane farming, they do know about it and a lot of people do want to get back into it. It is suffice, we have an unprecedented amount of funding allocated for the sugarcane industry through the Ministry of Sugar alone and then of course we will go through FSC now. That is sufficient enough, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Is Honourable Parmod Chand included in your target?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- And also, Madam Chairperson, I would like to say this. We do not want to fund new files for accountants and lawyers, we actually want to target low-income people, to be able to get their land accusation, so Honourable Parmod Chand will actually still need to fend for himself. He can do that but there are others who do need assistance and they will of course be the once targeted assistance.

Madam Chairperson, there is one point that I would like to make. It is really quite disconcerting how Honourable Gavoka in particular, and the Honourable Member next to him, they really crumble into ethnicity. They always breakdown and start dividing us along ethnic line.

HON. MEMBER – (inaudible)



HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- You did not do it, thank you.

But, Madam Chairperson, that is what they do. They cannot think about a particular industry based on the industry as a whole. That is what we want; when we talk about sugarcane production we are not going to say “Oh, how much of this was produced by part-Europeans or Indo-Fijians or *iTaukei*? Look at the overall sugarcane production.

This land clearance does not have demarcation based on ethnicity, the land preparation does not have demarcation based on ethnicity. It is for every person that wants to access, this one is willing to do the job as Honourable Vunivalu said, he is there to assist anyone who wants to assist themselves.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We have got the right of reply, so we will now go into the vote, Parliament will now vote on this. Does any Honourable Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will now vote.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	3

There being 15 Ayes, 32 Noes and 3 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Parliament will now vote on Head No. 35 and the question is, that the amount on Head No. 35, Ministry of Sugar, be approved. Does any Honourable Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will now vote.

Vote Cast:

Ayes	-	32
Noes	-	15
Not Voted	-	3

There being 32 ayes, 15 Noes and 3 Not Voted, the motion agreed to.

Head No. 35 - Ministry of Sugar, agreed to.

Head No. 36 Ministry of Public Enterprises

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments. We are looking at Programme 1, Activity 1. Do you have any comments? Honourable Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Just a clarification from the Honourable Minister on SEG 8

...

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- (inaudible)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- ... why don't you relax, Sir, a little bit, I am coming to that.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Just relax, just relax!

... (\$1.7 million) for maintenance of seawall. I am just wondering because when we approved the guarantee for loan, we said that this was for the capital works at PAFCO, whether this is an additional amount. Also, there is a Government statement stating that there will be an investment in the new cold storage worth \$15 million. If the Honourable Minister could clarify that allocation?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, as you know that in this budget we have also announced in order to give that boost to Levuka and PAFCO and of course all of Lomaiviti, we employ over 1000 people, in particular from the Lomaiviti group.

There was quite a lot of damage caused because of *Cyclone Winston* to the seawall and so this \$1.7 million which is actually adjacent to the cold storage facility that is being built of \$16 million. There were extreme damages and we need to actually provide this grant to them to fix up that wall because it will actually impact upon the cold storage facility.

The New Zealand consultants, Davis Consultants actually helped us and to highlight the actual structural issues and we have provided this input for them to ensure that these were going to get done. We also just by way of information, we are currently talking to the Managers of PAFCO, the Board and the Chairperson, in terms of providing some long-term housing solutions to these people who come from the Lomaiviti group, so we can actually get them to invest in some housing projects too there.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Parmod Chand?

HON. P. CHAND. - Madam Chairperson, I wanted clarification on SEGs 6 and 10, both talk about Biosecurity of Fiji, if the Honourable Minister can elaborate more on that? What will it be used for?

My major concern is this; you might have seen all throughout the roads, you have got all these Japanese t-type grass on the road sides. My concern is this: According to Biosecurity, we have a lot of import of diggers, tractors and all those. What is happening to see that they are very well steam cleaned and done properly then imported into Fiji because in my opinion this grass never existed in the last 15 to 20 years in Fiji.

HON. A. SAYED- KHAIYUM. - Madam Chairperson, as the name suggests, it is for operating grant of Biosecurity Authority of Fiji and they will of course fulfil all the legal requirements. Any importation of any machinery or any other equipment or food, needs to meet the Biosecurity standards as set out by law and international convention.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- SEG 10.

HON. A. SAYED- KHAIYUM.- SEG 10, that is the capital grant Madam Chairperson, for Biosecurity. The grant will be used to setup the treatment base and mobile treatment facilities in Kadavu, Vanua Balavu and Natuvu.

Also, the operational activities of the termite programme and the construction transit facilities. As we know that we have now yachts coming in in Vanua Balavu, in Kadavu and various other places. So the idea is that these yachts, vessels, et cetera, need to be actually certified by Biosecurity of Fiji and not bring anything into Fiji which is going to be destructive to our

environment.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any further comments? Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, on SEG 7, I am just wondering what is this monitoring of Public Enterprises of \$50,000. How does that operate in terms of those that are employed at Public Enterprises?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SAYED- KHAIYUM.- Sorry, the monitoring of Public Enterprises, this is of course, we are looking at, if you go to the boards, et cetera, these are the costs related to that. The monitoring of Public Enterprises, so we have our staff who actually go and sit in the meetings, the desk officers may actually go out and for example audit their annual reports and all those types of things.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any further comments? Thank you, we will move on to Programme 5, Activity 1. Any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. – No comments. Thank you. We will now vote on Head No.36. Parliament will vote on Head No. 36. The question is, that the amount of Head No. 36 - Ministry of Public Enterprises, be approved. Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	29
Noes	-	15
Not Voted	-	6

There being 29 Ayes, 15 Noes and 6 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Members, we will now break for tea and we will resume at 5.00 p.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 4.25 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 4.59 p.m.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, we will now resume from where we left off and we will get on to the next item on the Agenda.

In Committee:

Head No. 37 – Ministry of Local Government and Housing

The floor is now open for any comments, Programme 1, Activity 1, do we have any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 1, Activity 2? Honourable Salote Radrodro?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I move a motion on National Fire Authority, SEG 10.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, Madam Chairperson, Head 37-1-2(10) – Valelevu Sports Stadium. This item was there from the last budget with the same amount, I seek clarification whether this was a rollover?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, that was a rollover from whatever was budgeted for last year. The Nasinu Town Council had engaged the consultants to carry out the consultancy work and this allocation will go on for the construction of the first phase of the stadium.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chairperson, the allocation is for the same ground at Valelevu?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Professor Biman Prasad?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chairperson, Head 37-1-2(6) – CEO Salaries for Municipal Councils; I am just curiously interested in the allocation and it says \$238,000 for the eight Councils. Obviously that is an average of about \$29,000 to \$30,000 for CEO, there would be variations but for last year, Madam Chairperson, the allocation was \$150,000 for five municipalities. I am just wondering what is happening there, whether it is reduction. The allocation does not sound right.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Reduction of what?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- SEG 6. I said that the allocation this year for eight councils is \$238,000 and last year, it was \$150,000 for five municipalities. I am just wondering whether the salaries have been reduced. The allocations from last year and this year does not sound right for the eight Councils and five Councils last year.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Yes, some of the councils will have to top up themselves so that is where there is a difference.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Madam Chairperson, Head 37-1-2(10) - Construction of Namaka Market. Can the Honourable Minister explain on this please?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- The existing market that we have in Namaka, we are going to extend because there is a lot of demand from the vendors. We will construct a new market and where the existing market is; will be demolished for the provision of car parks.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Head 37-1-2(6), Madam Chairperson, Navua Town Council - Operating Grant. We have not declared Navua Town, so this allocation is here. Can you explain on that?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- We are advanced in planning. Navua will be declared by the end of this year. The reason why we have not declared it yet is because the Government thought that we need to do the infrastructure first. The roads had been done, we are expecting the streetlights to commence in a month's time and after that, we will definitely declare Navua a town, and then this fund will be utilised for operating.

HON. SPEAKER.- Hon. Ratu Lalabalavu?

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, Head 37-1-2(9) - Purchase of Fire Hydrants; I seek some clarifications from the Honourable Minister on the amount here - \$200,000. Will this be Suva?

(Hon. Member interjects)

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Thank you, Honourable Prime Minister, that was for the nation, but my concern is on Suva because one of the constraints faced during the building of MHCC was that, the capacity was not there to take the water up to the higher levels. Are these enough?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- These hydrants is for the whole country but we also have some pending fire hydrants that will be used for the Central Division and Suva is included in that programme.

HON. SPEAKER.- Hon. Professor Biman Prasad?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chairperson, Head 37-1-2(10) - Construction of Rakiraki Market - \$840,000; the media reports at the beginning of the construction said that the total cost is \$5.84 million where Government is contributing \$2.64 million, and the Australian Government and the UN Women are contributing the balance. I am just trying to understand as this was catered for in the last Budget but we do not recall that in last year's Estimate. So, if this construction was already in trend and funded for, what is this allocation for this year?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- The total cost for the construction of Rakiraki market will be \$5.8

million. Out of that \$5.8 million, \$3.2 million will be given by the UN and the Australian Government. The balance was already given to Rakiraki Town Council in the last financial year for the consultancy works.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Head 37-1-2(10)– - Construction of New Swimming Pool - Nasinu Town Council ( \$1,000,000); I need clarification, whether you are going to start with this in this financial year, when you still have the stadium there for development?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- The swimming pool will be at a different location, not at the Valelevu grounds and definitely, the work will begin. Nasinu Town Council will do the construction and the Fiji Sports Council will oversee the operations of the swimming pool.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Since there are no comments, we will now move on to Head 37-2-1, and I invite comments.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Head 37-2-1(10) - New Town Development; I just need some clarification in relation to that amount of \$5.6 million, which I assume is for Nabouwalu. Can we have an assurance that this will be carried out this year in view of your promise last year?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, there has been a lot of talks about Nabouwalu and let me set the record straight. The work definitely started in late 2014 and then in 2015, there was a taskforce committee appointed. And then the negotiations took place with the landowners, so it almost took us a year to resolve the land issue.

Then the funding came in the last financial year and I can assure the Honourable Member that out of this \$5.6 million, \$2.8 million will go to Nabouwalu and the construction and upgrading works will begin by the end of the year.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON- Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, Head 37-2-1(7) - Review of Town Planning Act; when will this be completed?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, about 80 percent of the work has been completed, the only thing that the Committee that has to do is to visit the villages now, to talk to the landowners because normally landowners give their land for development. So we need to tell them the process as well, they need to know. We have to conduct this awareness and this is the time when they will also carry out this consultation with the villages. So, that is about 20 percent of the work being left, but by end of this year we should finish our review. This is the town planning, I am talking about.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, to add to what the Honourable Minister said in respect of SEG 10, you will see there is a lump sum payment, the Honourable Minister has already identified the particular amount of funding for Nabouwalu. But this also includes Newtown Development for some ground work also for Korovou because we are setting up a new market and a new bus stand. As you know they have already got a new Fire Station. There is also some preparatory work for Seaqqa and also in Keiyasi, there are some works identified.

Madam Chairperson, we have pooled that money together, to give the Ministry a level of flexibility to be able to target those areas because sometimes, as the Honourable Minister had highlighted, some areas may go faster than others, so they have the ability to move and direct those funds to those areas.

In that funding, we are looking at Nabouwalu. In Korovou, the Honourable Minister has already got some agreement with the landowners. They are going to lease some land for a new market and a bus stand, as you know the buses park along the main road in Korovou. Also, we are looking at Seaqaqa and Keiyasi in Nadroga.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other comments, we have one motion from the Honourable Salote Radrodro, to move:

That Head 37-1-2(10) - National Fire Authority Capital Grant, be increased by \$100,000.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chairperson, I second the motion.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, that increase is to specifically cover raising of awareness. As we know that there tends to be an increase in fires around the country and this is mainly due to negligence. So that is just to help the National Fire Authority sensitise the issue more with the community to avoid the loss of lives and extra financial burden.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone wants to speak in support of that motion? Honourable Nawaikula?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chairperson, very briefly, the motion is asking for an increase in order that there is more awareness. I think it is very, very important, most of us even in our homes we are taking for granted that there is no fire risk, that there will be nothing. And I am sure when we really get into it, we realise how much of the risk we put ourselves into in relation to fire. There is a need that there is more awareness, that it will be announced to us in the radio, that we will be educated to protect ourselves so that suddenly this happens, so it is very, very important.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Hon. Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu?

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Madam Chairperson, probably a second bite of the cherry again. I support this motion simply because as the Honourable and learned Minister for Economy raised yesterday in one of our topics of discussion that, we are building up, given the scarcity of available land in urban areas. My concern here is what I had raised earlier, was that the capacity to service high-rise buildings.

We have got high-rise buildings going up now. The recent tragic fire in London is a big lesson to urban areas. We also saw the firing of water which was falling short of the high-rise building so there is a need to really increase the sum in SEG 10 to the Fire Authority, to ensure that they have the capacity. We do not know about the size of the water mains, et cetera.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other input, Honourable Minister, would you like to speak in reply?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, first let me give the breakdown of that \$1.5 million. It is to cater for the purchase of ambulance which is \$200,000; fire trucks - \$400,000; equipment - \$400,000 and staff barracks in Taveuni - \$500,000.

The first two speakers basically spoke about the awareness. This fund is within NFA which is why they have not asked for it, the fund is there, so their concerns have been covered.

For the third speaker, in terms of fire trucks, we have got specialised trucks now which can cater for the high-rise buildings to fight fire. I am telling you as the Minister, who are you to say, "no".

(Laughter)

So we have got that specialised fire trucks in place now, one for the West and one for Suva, but NFA is also planning to get some more trucks as well.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote on the motion, do we have any opposition?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	16
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	2

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 16 Ayes, 32 Noes, 2 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Parliament will now vote on Head No. 37.

Question put.

The question is:

That the amount in Head 37 – Ministry of Local Government and Housing, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	31
Noes	-	16
Not Voted	-	3

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 31 Ayes, 16 Noes, 3 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Head 37 – Ministry of Local Government and Housing, agreed to.

Head 38 – Ministry of Environment

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments and we are looking at Head 38-1-1.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chairperson, Head 38-1-1(7) – National Waste Management



Strategy (\$230,000); is that to do with Kinoya Sewerage Plant?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. L. EDEN.- It is more to do with a whole of country approach.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- What about the Aid-in-Kind right at the bottom, does that have something to do with that?

HON. L. EDEN.- The Aid-in-Kind is a JICA Project where they give us technical support for volunteers who are based in our Councils to help with strategies on waste reduction.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- It has nothing to do with the Kinoya Sewerage Plant?

HON. L. EDEN.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments, please? Hon. Professor Biman Prasad?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, just on 38-1-1(7) - Compliance and Enforcement of EIA, it is just a small allocation of \$30,000. We know that EIA is very important in terms of the conduct of EIAs and then enforcement. I am just wondering whether that allocation is sufficient, Honourable Minister?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, the Ministry of Environment does not carry out the real EIA exercise? We are just monitoring, so that allocation of \$30,000 is enough for the staff to monitor and oversee.

(Hon. Member interjects)

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- The consultants.

HON. L. EDEN.- Madam Chairperson, just to add to that; the consultants that people hire to do the EIA for them bring the applications to the Department of Environment. We have a 35 day turnaround to approve those applications, so we do not actually go out and do the EIA Assessment. They get done by private companies.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Yes, I understand that, but I was just wondering because I tried getting EIA done and obviously the consultant had to deal with the Ministry of Environment, and I must say that it took quite a while. I am just wondering whether in the actual enforcement, you have the appropriate staff. I am just, sort of, worried about the allocation, even if it is just the enforcement of that amount.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- We have enough staff to oversee that programme. There is no issue with it, but in terms of consultants we have a got list of consultants with the Environment Office. Whoever wants it, we give the list and it is for individuals to decide and choose which consultant they want to use.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Viliame Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Head 38-1-1(6) - Subsidy Naboro Landfill; can you enlighten me, what is being subsidised here?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. L. EDEN.- This is a subsidy for gate fees that we help to subsidise the Town Councils and City Councils.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Just a question on Head 38-1-1(6) - Construction of Naboro Landfill - Stage 2. Last year, it was \$3 million and this year it is \$2.8 million. Is this a carry forward balance from last year or is this a new allocation for this particular area?

HON. L. EDEN.- Construction has actually started already, so this is the balance of what was required and this is for Stage 2, Cell 2. The construction will be completed in December of this year.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO,- Madam Chairperson, just on the Head 38-1-1(6) - Subsidy Naboro Landfill; I think this subsidy is basically including household wastes and industrial wastes.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.-Anything that is from the Municipal Councils, 50 percent of that Government bears the cost.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Bilitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Head 38-1-1(7) -Environment Programme - Northern/Western; what type of programme has been carried out?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. L. EDEN.- These funds are to cater for our divisional office operations in the West and the North. They use this money for site inspections, for EIAs, waste permits, the trade in endangered species, awareness and outreach and also include weekly reporting to headquarters. Both of these areas, the North and the West have very large areas to cover, so they have got a few costs involved.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Head 38-1-1(7) - National Waste Management Strategy was there from last year, I need a clarification on this amount of \$230,000?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. L. EDEN.- On this fund, we are working very closely with other authorities, like the Municipal Councils, for example, on how they manage their dump sites and how we can make them more environmentally friendly and sustainable. By way of information, Madam Chairperson, most of our towns and cities, with the exception of Naboro Landfill, are dumpsites which is where rubbish are just dumped, compacted and dumped on top and they just keep going higher and higher.

Naboro is a proper landfill operation. The difference is that when it was constructed they put in a geodetic lining into the pit which holds the rubbish in place and the liquid that are highly toxic that leak out (we would know from the old Lami Dump), leak into a leaching pond somewhat to what a sewerage plant does and then those toxins are treated. That is one of them.

Another one is, we are looking towards establishing more landfills as supposed to dumps, and we also looking at more a waste transfer station which you might have noticed was in the Budget last year. This waste transfer station that we had planned unfortunately became highly politicised and the residents in the area were sadly misled about what the station actually entailed. They were told of all kinds of things and eventually, ended up thinking that we were going to put a rubbish dump in their back yard which could not be further away from the truth.

The truth is that, it is the transfer station, exactly what it says - waste transfer station. What happens is that, the rubbish is brought to the transfer station; it is sorted and then compacted into little brick sized packages, so that when the rubbish is transported to Naboro Landfill, instead of having 100 trucks on the road every day, we will cut it down to 30 trucks per day which will decrease the cost. It will also increase the length and the lifespan of the actual landfill because the rubbish has been compacted so small into little brick sizes.

We have not completely forgotten about that project and we intend to put more waste transfer stations around the country eventually, because of this cost saving but from now, we will go back to the drawing board.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, just to add on to what the Assistant Minister said, I am happy to inform that the landowners have now approached me and they are willing to work with us now because they were misled. I just want to put it on record.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- (Inaudible).

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Kalabu. Do not go and talk to them.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Since there are no motions, Parliament will now vote on Head No. 38.

Question put.

The question is:

That the amount in Head 38 - Ministry of Environment, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	30
Noes	-	17
Not Votes	-	3

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 30 Ayes, 17 Noes and 3 not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Head 38 – Ministry of Environment, agreed to.

Head 40 – Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments and we are looking at Head 40-1-1. Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes, Madam Chairperson, on Head 40-1-1(6), can we get some clarifications from the Honourable Minister in terms of the additional responsibilities that will be taken over by LTA, has that already been covered in this grant?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, it is.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other question?

There being none, we will move on to Head 40-1-2. Are there any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, on Head 40-1-1(10) - Land Transport Authority - Capital Grants.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, we have finished with Head 40-1-1. We have done Head 40-1-2, we will now move on to Head 40-1-3. Are there any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-3-1?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, on Programme 2, Fiji National Database.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-3-1, any comments, please?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-3-2 any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. – Head 40-3-3, any comments? Honourable Prem Singh?

HON. P. SINGH.- Head 40-3-2, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We are on Head 40-3-3.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-3-4?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-3-5?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I am listening. Honourable Leawere, Head 40-3-5?

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- (Inaudible)

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You can put in a motion, just fill the form and we will address your issue.

Head 40-3-6, Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Head 40-3-6(4), Madam Chairperson; where are these fences and grounds that are going to be maintained, the \$17,000?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Maintenance of Fences and Grounds?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.-Which Head?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-3-6(4) - Maintenance of Fences and Grounds; the clarification and where?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This is for the yards that we have. The fences had deteriorated so we are going to improve the fences in the Central, Western and Northern.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are there any other comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-3-7, Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chairperson, can we have a clarification on Head 40-3-7(5) - Handling Charges? What are they?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, please?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This is for the freight. It is under Handling, but it is more or less to do with freight.

HON. MEMBER.- Change the word, change the word!

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Yes, it is an error.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Head 40-3-8?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-3-9, Honourable Bulitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chairperson, on Head 40-3-9(8) - Electrification of Rural

Government Station – Construction of New Power House, Rotuma - \$400,000?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, we have got the station there, that needs urgent repair and upgrading and that is what is allocated for a new one.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-3-10?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 40-4-1, Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- On Head 40-4-1(10) – Rural Electrification Project, I will put in a motion for that, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bulitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam, on Head 40-4-1(10) - Rural Electrification Project, there is an increase there, Honourable Minister, from last year, from \$14 million to \$33 million. What has caused the increase in allocation?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, there is an increase of application within the Ministry and there are some rollover from the last financial year, that is why it is an increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Parmod Chand?

HON. P. CHAND.- Head 40-4-1(8), I will move a motion on this.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Nawaikula?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Head 40-4-1(10) – Rural Electrification Project (\$33,827,049); can the Honourable Minister please, clarify whether that is only for solar or solar and hydro as well?

HON. P. CHAND.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This is the grid extension and we have got a list there, and I will ask the Honourable Minister for Economy to elaborate on that.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- So it is only for grid? Thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Member, you know the booklets we gave you which you should have a copy of by now, and it says here; “How the 2017-2018 Budget Allocation for Rural Electrification Projects will be spent”. So it sets out every single village, every single home that will have the grid extension. It also sets out the installation of new solar home systems in that too. It also sets out wherever it will go to, and that accounts for the full \$33.8 million.

If I could also just alert the Honourable Members, that in all the other infrastructure once that we will be discussing going ahead, you will see that in this breakdown the package we gave you, it also had for example Water Authority, how everything will be spent and the Fiji Roads Authority, how everything will be spent. It even heads right down to which place will get water tank and which size of water tank, so everything is in there. Please, you can refer to that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Is there any other comments?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I hope you already got your packages.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are there any other comments now?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We will move on to Head 40-5-1? Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, on Head 40-5-1, just seeking a clarification from the Honourable Minister, who looks after the borehole exercise there, is it under this section or the Water Authority of Fiji?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which SEG are your referring to?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- The borehole.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which SEG?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Just seeking clarification from the Honourable Minister?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which SEG?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- SEG 7?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- No, no that is different.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes, that is why I am asking. That is the whole idea why I am asking the question. I would not ask, if I did not know?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- It is with the Minister for Lands, the borehole.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- The Honourable Member is asking on boreholes. Boreholes are under the Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources. They have that allocation, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, we will now go on to motions. The first motion is from the Honourable Aseri Radrodro that:

Head 40-1-1(6) - LTA Operation Grant be increased by \$500,000.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. You may speak on your motion, Honourable Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, in regards to the reason for the increase, I think the Budget address that was announced by the Honourable Minister for Economy has a lot of activities that will be centralised in LTA, especially the third party collection payments and also other activities that will be centred around there.

I think LTA is one of the institutions which a lot of its workers have always worked hard on the road trying to see descent driving standards are maintained on the road, they stand in the sun, they stand in the rain even though there are a lot of allegations about their conduct. Therefore, there is a need also to look at salary, whereby the LTA Board is also considering giving them a pay increase as other institutions, to ensure that they are at par in terms of proper employment level as other

Government institutions around the country, Madam Chairperson. So that is the basis of the increase of \$500,000. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are there any other comments?

Since there are none, I will ask the Honourable Minister to respond.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We are equally concerned about the staff at LTA. What the Honourable Member had just said about the increased sum has been taken into account. The 27 staff had been included in the Enforcement.

There was a JEE conducted and they will also be paid around \$1.5 million and as the Honourable Minister for Economy has announced that very soon, there will be a consultant appointed to carry out another JEE for all the staff. So we are equally concerned, Madam Chairperson, as far as the staff at LTA are concerned and definitely, these are all calculated figures that have been given here, it is not from thin air, so I will ask my good friend to withdraw this because I do not want any embarrassment as this fund will cater for this subject matter. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Radrodro, would you like to withdraw?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- If we can get clarification on what percentage increase, probably as you have highlighted.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- As part of the overall reform, as you know, we have allocated \$250,000 for the review of the various positions and also the review of the structures themselves within LTA. So there would be perhaps, people who are not being paid the right amount of money.

There would be some people who may actually be paid more than the market amount, so we cannot say we have across the board increase. Some may actually be like the nurses whereby the union came to us and said; Give us a 15 percent pay rise across the board.” We said; “No, you may actually be short-changing the members.” And indeed, they did because nurses got to about 80 percent pay rise. So, it depends on the different positions and it being market-driven so that \$250,000 is very much to cater for that. Once that is done, then we will see the results, they will see the adjustments.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- So the motion is withdrawn. Thank you.

The next motion is by Honourable Aseri Radrodro and the motion is:

That Head 40-1-1(10) – LTA Capital Grant, be increased to \$500,000.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Radrodro, you may speak on your motion?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Similarly to the operational grant, I think there is also a need to improve the infrastructure in terms of the services provided by LTA. If you go to LTA, a lot people are queuing up, especially in their respective offices around Suva, in the West and also in the North because of poor infrastructure, probably poor computer services. There is a need to increase that to better facilitate the need that is currently with LTA now. With the increase in motor vehicles that are brought into the country, there is also a need for ...



MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which one, operational grant?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Capital grant.

... proper storage, management of all motor vehicle history and details of owners so that they are better looked after in the facilities of LTA. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Anyone else wants to speak on the motion?

There being none, Parliament will vote on this motion. Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition. Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	3

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 15 Ayes, 32 Noes, 3 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition:

That Head 40-4-1(10) – Rural Electrification Project, be increased by \$500,000.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leader of the Opposition, you may speak on your motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- There are just two issues on that one, Madam Chairperson. The first one is on cross-arms. I think the power poles on the main roads, the cross-arms look good because they are standing straight but if you go to some rural villages and settlements away from the main roads, you will see that the power poles are tilting which becomes dangerous for people who are walking under it, particularly if they are on footpaths, walking in the dark under these cross-arms which are tilting, some of them at a dangerous angle. Cross-arms have a lifespan of 10 years and some of those are well over 10 years, so in this particular allocation, if the Honourable Minister could also have a look at it.

The second one is on the electrification of 13 villages which FijiFirst had promised to the villages along the Wainibuka River that they would have electricity by Christmas 2015, and when we came back, one of your Ministers promised them that.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- It is an allegation, Madam Chairperson.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- I apologise, your previous minister, and I think those who came back from the funeral last week, Honourable Bala was there at that funeral, coming through in the dark, you would feel sorry for those villages because everywhere else is lit up but those villages are still in the dark. So I am requesting you, please look at it under your allocation, if you could support those 13 villages. Thank you.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. First on that issue, even though he is no more a minister, but the President of the National Federation Party, are you talking about him?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- (Inaudible)

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- No, no, the former Minister.

Now going back to that, Madam Chairperson, definitely it is all catered for and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is talking about Nailega Village. That will be the first village to have solar lighting. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, I just want to ask the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I do not know if she has been through this list, but she should read this list because we also have placed in Wainibuka that are actually covered in this, whether they are actually those particular villages, et cetera, I am not sure which ones you mean. But is a very extensive list and please, also remember Honourable Leader of the Opposition, people no longer have to make their 10 percent contribution. That is all being done now for free. That is a big issue.

A lot of those places where some homes actually gave the 10 percent and the others did not, so they never actually got that connection. The money is in the Trust Fund of Government. A couple of years ago you may recall that we have all the money and now all those connections were done without people having to make contributions. Frankly at the moment, we could have allocated more money but we are only limited by the fact that there is only limited number of qualified linesmen and women, who can actually connect those places.

FEA, over the past few years, has been working with private sector companies. There are 20 private sector companies now that are certified by FEA to actually carry out this work to fast-track the work, so we are only limited by that. If we have another 30 companies, it would have been a longer list. We could have done that but the fact of the matter is, this is how the amount of money that could be spent and we really pushed FEA. In fact, we wanted more to be done but we obviously cannot just sit there and allocate money if it is not going to be done, but you can be rest assured that all those places will get covered.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - Thank you. Any further comment? Honourable Ratu Suliano Matanitobua?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Thank you Madam Chairperson. Can we ask the Honourable Attorney-General for a copy of that list because we do not have any copy?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Please, you can also go to the Ministry of Economy website. They are all available there and also they were available outside here, but tomorrow we will make packages available for you again, again for the second time. You did not pick it up I know because the last time when the Budget was presented, you all scampered off because you were startled by the Budget. But this time around, we will actually present the packages again.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, Madam Chairperson, I am in support of the motion because on the ground, we come up with these locations where they bring their issues with us. In Waibau and Naqaraiwi Village, their houses had been wired but there is no line from the FEA. Rural

electrification provides the money to FEA for the lines but now they have been there for over two months now. Their connections were wired by the Rural Electrification electricians but for the main line, it is provided by FEA which is not on. That is why I support the motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, just for the Honourable Members' information, out of this allocation, \$2 million has been actually allocated to install proper wiring in homes that will connect the households to the FEA grid system. Honourable Member, please, read this, it gives you all that information.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- It is only two months. Thank you.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, I speak in support of the motion. Just going through the listing there, I am little bit worried that Sasawira Settlement in Davuilevu is not included in this list.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister, you are now making your final response?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, Sasawira the subdivision. As for Sasawira, this is a squatter settlement and my ministry has taken up the upgrading programme so that will be catered for and that is why it is not appearing. But I urge the Honourable Opposition Members to go through the list first and if you find any issues there, then you can bring it up in the next sitting because what you are saying now is all in that brochure that we have. We will give it to you, so say 'thank you', at least.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	16
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	2

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 16 Ayes, 32 Noes and 2 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is from the Honourable Parmod Chand and he is moving:

That Head 40-4-1(8) – Grid Extension to Solove Stage 1, be increased by \$2 million.

Would you like to say where you want to get this \$2 million from or Government find it? If you come up with such a substantial amount, then you can say take it out from the golf or something?

HON. P. CHAND.- No, I did not say to take it out from the golf allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Then take it out from where?

HON. P. CHAND.- The Honourable Minister for Economy will do the job, that is why we

pay him.

(Laughter)

HON. P. CHAND.-I only proposed, moved a motion, and he will have to do the cutting and fitting.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You spend on too much time on motions that are unrealistic.

HON. P. CHAND.- It is not unrealistic.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- It is unrealistic because you do not know where you are getting the \$2 million from.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- What, bus company?

HON. P. CHAND.- I will tell you where to get the funds from.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Oh, good. Please, tell us first before you speak on the motion.

HON. P. CHAND.- The motion has not been seconded.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I second the motion.

HON. P. CHAND.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, I move that the grid extension to Solove Stage 1 - Seaqaqa be increased by \$2 million. We are in an advancing world and I know each one of us have no doubts that urban migration and number two decline of the sugar industry is causing a lot of havoc. Therefore, this extension to Solove Stage 1 does not include a number of areas. Seaqaqa is a very big area, as I said earlier, with sugarcane plantation.

Firstly, one of the major problems is this, a lot of cane cutters do not want to cut cane because when they come, they do not have power. They want television, they want to watch the Fiji Rugby Sevens and do various other things. Secondly, there is a serious social problem, young women do not want to marry men who live in the villages because they say they do not want to wash clothes with their hands, and it is outdated.

(Laughter)

So I am moving that this extension should include an extra \$2 million, together with moving the power to Korotolutolu, Nakalou, Navidamu, Seva, Navai, Vunivere, Niurua, Nasea, Raviravi, Dagau, including the roundabouts in the vicinity because we have got schools there, we have got shops many people want to live there. A lot of people do not have power supply so they move out but once power supply is there, people will go there because life becomes very, very easy. Nowadays, women do not even want to cook rice in pots, they want the rice cooker.

(Laughter)

Together with that, we need refrigeration which is very, very important in the village. When people in the villages slaughter animals, they need a refrigerator because they cannot eat them all in

one day. So this will help the people move forward and also increase the capacity of the people. We are all talking about the same thing, the people of Fiji, so we must look after them well so that everyone moves up in life and not continue to stay there or want to leave the rural area and move into the urban area.

Madam Chairperson, this is very important and I believe that Government should do this. Would you like to know where the money will come from? The e-ticketing in the bus industry will save money. According to some people in the Ministry of Education, the pilferage happening with bus fare vouchers, et cetera, so once the cards are there, a lot of this will stop and I believe the Ministry of Education will be able to save over \$2 million and you can shift that there. That is where the money can come from. Thank you Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone else want to speak in support of that motion? Honourable Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- I would like to speak in support of that motion, Madam Chairperson. I am in the Standing Committee looking into the sugar industry. We visited those sugarcane areas and I can relate to what he is saying about how difficult it is in the countryside where they grow cane. We have held meetings in schools and we were told that the schools use to host 400 to 500 students in the past but are now down to 100. One of the huge factors there is the comfort, the sense of comfort.

As my Honourable colleague was sharing with us, it is really difficult today in the cane fields. We went to a house in Labasa and we were told by some of our friends that the owner is a very wealthy farmer, he has everything, but cannot find a wife. No girl wants to marry a farmer. I mean, he has everything. This is the perception in the sugar industry today, that people want to live, to go to the bright lights, to have comfort. I totally with what the Honourable Member is sharing with us today.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Bulitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I support the motion that is before the House by Honourable Parmod Chand. I think this is very important, the increase in the allocation for grid extension to Solove Stage 1. I think it is a highly populated farming area and also most of the villages down at Navidamu, even at Nakalou, are fisheries-based communities and they also need electricity to help them set up small business enterprises and all those participating in SMEs.

Madam Chairperson, those are very important areas. To increase that allocation, given the need for electricity and energy in the Seaqaqa area, given that Seaqaqa is now a town where nearly all the people from different provinces in Fiji go there to farm and there is a great need to support that area, I support the motion that there needs to be an increase. People in that area have raised this issue many times, that they need power, despite many opportunities that have come to them through Government officials, through the *Bose-ni-tikina* and *Bose-ni-yasana* being not attended to, and I hope that Government will attend to this and also increase this allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments?

Since there is none, I will now ask the Honourable Attorney-General to speak on the motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, I think the Opposition, in particular Honourable Chand and Honourable Gavoka, need some gender sensitisation, they really do. The stereotyping is quite mindboggling.

Madam Chairperson, we have said that we are only limited by the capacity of the people who can actually carry out these extensions. This is SEG 10 - Rural Electrification and grid extension. All of the areas that he is saying is happening. I also want to see people in Kavanagasau on the eastern bank of the Sigatoka River, get electricity. They grow a lot of vegetables. Most of the vegetables that people eat in Suva come from Kavanagasau. They do not have it, now they will get it.

Now, what do we do, do we take one away from the people in Taveuni, direct the resources from there and put it in Kavanagasau? He is being very parochial; he is only talking about Seaqaqa in Vanua Levu. We have to look after everyone, the entire country, so he actually should appreciate the fact that the grid extension is going to Solove Stage One. When you have Stage One, it means Stage 1 and Stage 2 will come after Stage 1.

Madam Chairperson, the fact of the matter is, he wants all of that done now in that area. We want to say, "There are other areas too that need to be covered", so we are only limited by that. At the moment, Madam Chairperson, on the one end they talk about debt, while we are talking about incurring debt for productive capacity. That was precisely what they said.

We agree with them in the Budget. We talked about the fact that when you connect people with electricity, you increase their income potential. They can keep the fish, they can keep whatever meat they make, they can have an abattoir or whatever it is, they can do all that but we have to spread that capacity around Fiji and these are the areas. Next year, there will be more, and the following year because we will continue to grow the economy. Revenue will increase and we will continue to do more, but the level of the grid extension and rural electrification is unprecedented.

Never before in the history of Fiji, has so much money been attributed to electrification. So I would urge the Honourable Member to please, think beyond Seaqaqa.

HON. P. CHAND.- We are.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- He has always spoken about that, Madam Chairperson.

All of these areas are being covered, Madam Chairperson, and let us vote on this. The fact is, like I said, we only have 20 companies in FEA that do this. If we have more companies, we can direct more money. We want everyone to be connected; there is no problem with the funding, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion.

Do we have opposition?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chairperson, let me also explain about this power issue in Vanua Levu.

Madam Chairperson, we are talking about stages in development. The first stage that was undertaken by the Government was to bring power from Seaqaqa, now to Muanidevo in Dreketi, along the main highway. However, for Government to be able to do that, we have to run the three-phase line again back from Labasa.

That project, Madam Chairperson, cost about \$60 million to Government and that was the first stage. Now because we have a transformer right at the end of Seaqaqa Town, then we should be able to do the laterals. Now, Solove Stage 1 will be covered in this and, of course, we have

already run the line in that area to the Vodafone power tower station that is already within that area, so we are doing it in stages.

Secondly, Madam Chairperson, I was there when we commissioned solar systems for the farmers in those areas. They have lighting but they wanted this grid, and that will come in the next stage. I wanted to clarify that, Madam Chairperson, that it is through this Government that these things are taking place, the Look North Policy.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	16
Noes	-	32
Not voted	-	2

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 16 Ayes, 32 Noes and 2 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The last motion is from the Honourable Aseri Radrodro to move:

That Head 40-1-3(9) - Purchase of Multi-Purpose Vessel, be decreased by \$8 million.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Radrodro, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The intention of this motion is that, there is an allocation in there from last year in terms of the purchase of a new Multi-Purpose Vessel and again this year, with \$8,000,000. So it needs to be clarified whether this is a purchase of another new vessel. Otherwise, there is a need to remove this, so that we can concentrate on utilising our natural resources. We have shipbuilding facilities here that probably could be utilised, to start commencing on shipbuilding activities.

Whilst on the purchase of a Multi-Purpose Vessel, Madam Speaker, we note that in SEG 4, there is an Annual Docking Fee for *MV Bai-ni-Takali* which ran aground in the Lakeba Reef. Yet this is part of the new vessel purchase that was done previously, so are we purchasing the right vessels that are needed for Fiji waters or are we just purchasing as the need arises as and when, without any proper feasibility study done for the purchase of these vessels. I also think there is a need for Government to consider activating the Shipbuilding Industries in Fiji. *Vinaka*.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- So the Honourable Radrodro wants to reduce this allocation by \$8 million and we are left with \$100,706, which means that you want to purchase the vessel with that amount? Why are you leaving that \$100,706?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- It is taken as the whole sum together, \$8 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You want to remove \$8 million and there is a balance of \$100,706?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes, so basically \$8.1 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I apologise, I will not continue to this motion because it is flawed.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- What is flawed?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The figures are flawed.

Thank you, Honourable Members, Parliament will now vote on Head No. 40.

Question put.

The question is:

That the amount in Head No. 40 - Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, be approved.

Does any member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	32
Noes	-	16
Not voted	-	2

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 32 Ayes, 16 Noes and 2 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Head 40 - Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, agreed to.

Head 41 – Water Authority of Fiji

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments. We are looking at Head 41-1-1. Are there any comments?

HON. P. SINGH.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prem Singh?

HON. P. SINGH.- Head 41-1-1(10) - Capital Grant, is there any allocation for the upgrade of Vaturu Dam, as the Minister would know that Nadi has been without water for the last four days and water ...

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Unprecedented!

HON. P.B. SINGH.- ... cuts are now reaching the outskirts and the affected villages and settlements around Nadi – Mulomulo, Solovi, Savunawai, Votualevu, Savolau and all these places because some operational work are being done at the Vaturu Dam. If I can ask the Honourable Minister, when will the water supply normalise? Are there any upgrades for Vaturu Dam in this allocation under Capital Grant?



HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, I am not going to tell him when the work will finish, but I can tell him that the fund is allocated for the upgrading of Vaturu Dam and it is an ongoing project. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chairperson, just a question to the Honourable Minister also on Head 41-1-1(10)– Capital Grant – Water Authority of Fiji; does that include Kinoya Sewerage Treatment Plant?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Yes, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Are there any other input?

Honourable Minister, would you like to make some concluding statements before we vote.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

We have two motions under this Head 41- Water Authority of Fiji. The first one is from the Honourable Nawaikula to move:

That Head 41-1-1(10) – Capital Grant – Water Authority of Fiji, be increased by \$10 million.

Again, where do you want to get the \$10 million from? Please, can you make a proposal?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I can tell you now.

Madam Chairperson, the Operating Grant is \$89 million. The Auditor's Report has been critical with the employment of many consultants, so we can send all those people home and deduct \$20 million from that.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Excellent!

(Laughter)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Yes, you look at your Auditor' Report. Send them away!

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Nawaikula, thank you. You identified the source of funding as well. So does anyone want to speak in support of that motion?

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Nawaikula?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you. Madam Chairperson, this \$10 million is to address a very, very serious concern relating to rural water supply in the villages. I note that \$27.3 million has been allocated, but it seems that it is not working. Last year, I outlined here, I think, about 15 villages that have not been helped and those villages are Karoko, Koroivonu, Kanakana, Natewa,

Nawi, Salia, and they have been waiting for up to six years.

In Kanakana, they gave up and they decided to buy their own pipes for their own catchment. I decided to check out what was the problem so I went to the PA's Office in Savusavu. He referred me to the Water Authority of Fiji Office in Labasa. At Labasa, I was explained that they received all these applications and they lie there for about as many years as they can up to six years. So I asked what the reason was. They said that those applications would be there and they will wait for an aid to come, then only will they be addressed.

So with this \$10 million, it will allow the Honourable Minister to attend to these very urgent needs immediately. Last year in Kanakana Village, they had two cases of typhoid. They went to the PA but the PA told them; "No, we cannot help you." So, there is a need for this need to be applied urgently in the same enthusiasm and the same priority that you give to the urban areas. And as I said, 46 percent of the population live in the rural areas and they are not low priority, they should be treated the same as we treat our folks in towns and cities. That is the reason for that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Anyone else wants to speak in support of that motion? Honourable Minister?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, the Honourable Member actually has a reputation of saying whatever he feels like it, and is not based on facts.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Those are facts.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, it is not facts, Madam Chairperson

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- They are growing marijuana and selling it. It is true.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, the reality is, he is absolutely incorrect to say that we are neglecting the rural areas. Under no other government has there been more attention paid to rural development than under this Government.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- (Inaudible)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Roads, water, electricity and all of these things, the connectivity has increased substantially.

The other point, again, I urge the Honourable Member to read this pamphlet...

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I've read it!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- ...because he and Honourable Chand are very parochial, they only talk about Vanua Levu. They actually need to see where the development is taking place. He rebukes people with expertise and knowledge. I can tell you what happened previously under PWD; in Nadi, they put up a reservoir and until today, they cannot use it because they did not get the engineering right.

The same thing happened in Labasa. They put up these water catchment areas, these reservoirs but because of their lack of gradient fee, monies have been wasted because they did not get the right experts. He thinks, we can just go and build the pipe. You have to get the right engineering and you have to get the right specifications. This is what is happening, Madam Chairperson.

Similarly, the water projects, we are only limited by the level of competent people who can do the job.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Six years?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, he is choosing \$1 million, why is he saying six years? Prior to that, they never had water. Why did he not say 30 years? They have not had water for hundred years. Why did he not say that? He is only saying six years because of the term of his government.

There are many places in Fiji that have never had reticulated water system nor water tanks or rainwater harvesting. Today, they have it and, of course, there is a vast area to cover and it will be covered, and this is the largest amount of money ever been given to water projects in Fiji, over \$300 million, Madam Chairperson. So we should actually be supporting this and we should also be working together to be able to say, "What are we going to do next year?" And we will continue to do more next year.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion.

Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition. Parliament will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	13
Noes	-	32
Not voted	-	5

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 13 Ayes, 32 Noes and 5 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The last motion is from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to move:

That Head 41-1-1(10) - Capital Grant - Water Authority of Fiji be increased by \$500,000. Can you also let us know where you want to get the \$500,000 from?

HON. RO T.V. KEPHA.- The Honourable Minister for Economy will find the \$500,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, he has got all his money already.

HON. RO T.V. KEPHA.- This is in terms of the Kinoya Treatment Plant, from Head 50.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Too much money there!

HON. RO T.V. KEPHA.- This is in terms of the Kinoya Sewerage Treatment Plant, Madam Chairperson, which is a big issue because the all sorts of waste that end up in that sewerage plant is growing and it is very difficult to cater for something that gets dumped into that sewerage system which was only supposed to be human waste but trade waste, toxic material and everything else are going into that treatment plant, ending up in the Rewa River and that is where my concern is because

our people use that river for a different purpose, and their livelihood is the most important one.

Also in terms of COP23, Madam Chairperson, the Marine Protected Areas, that is one of the biggest sanctuaries in the world for hammerhead sharks and we would like to keep it that way, as long as it is not polluted to the level where they cannot survive in that river. So, there are different issues here, it is for the humans most of all and also for the different species that live in that river. So, there is a very urgent need for it and I hope the Honourable Minister will be able to remedy that problem.

I heard from the Ridge to Reef Committee that they can also put in pipes, I am not sure how this can be done but maybe the Honourable Minister knows, that you can put in pipes that go right out to the reef and then whatever it is gets put out beyond the reef rather than in the river. So, that is where my concern is.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, this was raised in Parliament and I assured that time that Water Authority of Fiji have engaged a consultant and this is what the Honourable Attorney General has been saying from the day he presented this Budget, for Honourable Members to go through this. If the Honourable Leader of the Opposition had bothered to go through this, she would have found that under the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Kinoya has been allocated \$7.6 million.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- (Inaudible)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- How much did they actually need?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- That is why we have allocated, so what is that \$500,000 for?

(Hon. Opposition Members interject)

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Would you like to withdraw your motion?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- No, I will not withdraw it, because it is needed.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- For the Honourable Leader of Opposition's information also, as part of the urban water supply and water management project, we have plans of over \$30 million in the greater Suva area. It also includes the new 40 million litres treatment plant that will be constructed in Viria, Rewa.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, Naitasiri.

(Hon. Member interjects)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Viria.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- *Qai siro ga mai Viria ya i Rewa sara.*

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- *Lako sara yani vava i Lakena.*

(Laughter)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It is all there, please read this.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Make it Vutia!

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I think we are ready to vote on this motion.

Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	30
Not voted	-	5

There being 15 Ayes, 13 Noes and 5 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Parliament will now vote on Head 41 – Water Authority of Fiji.

Question put.

The question is:

That the amount in Head 41 - Water Authority of Fiji, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	30
Noes	-	15
Not voted	-	5

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 30 Ayes, 15 Noes, 5 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Head 41 - Water Authority of Fiji, agreed to.

Head 42 – Ministry of Waterways

The next item is Head 42 - Ministry of Waterways. The floor is now open for any comments and we are looking at Head 42-1-1. Do we have any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 42-2-1, do you have any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 42-2-2, any comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 42-3-1? Honourable Aseri Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, Head 42-3-1(8) - Drainage and Flood Protection, this has a new allocation of \$8.4 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you want it increased or decreased?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- We would like to have it increased, and if we can get some details of this drainage and flood protection. How many rivers are involved in this?

(Hon. Member interjects)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you want to respond to that Honourable Minister?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It will be used for the following activities:

- Phase 2 - Sigatoka River Dredging;
- Phase 1 - Penang River Dredging;
- Rewa River Maintenance Dredging;
- Qawa River Maintenance;
- Slipway Maintenance Dredger;
- Daqueuneasivi River Dredging;
- Vunibau (which is Navua) River Bank Protection; and
- a couple other relocations - Nasekula Floodgate Structure.

All those will be covered under the \$7 million.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chairperson, I just need to clarify that these were projects that had been identified already when it was with Land Resources and Management Unit, Ministry of Agriculture. They are not new, these are old projects that have been transferred across.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Kiliraki?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chairperson, Head 42-3-1(9) Purchase of Dredgers (\$3,000,000), can I get a clarification on how many dredgers will be bought?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- At this stage, we are looking at one. It is from Holland actually, with an estimated cost of about \$660,000 or FJ\$1.4 million. But, of course, you have transportation cost and other costs that are involved in it since it is coming from Holland, as you know, it is a very modern clock country and they have very good dredgers.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will now look at motion by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to move:

That Head 42-3-1(9) - Purchase of dredgers, be increased by \$250,000.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALVU.- I second the motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In terms of dredgers, I think this is long overdue. That is something that is badly needed along the waterways, especially the Rewa River. I know that the Government Dredge has been coming under LWRM, but it comes to Naililili every year. I think it just comes to visit, it sits there relaxing, doing nothing and then it goes back again and then comes back again.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Who are you talking about?

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- This is the Dredge from LWRM, Ministry of Agriculture. So, I am not sure if the Honourable Minister knows about it, but that is what it does. In the meantime, the silting continues, the river gets shallower, so I really support the purchase of this Dredge and hope that it will come and do the work that it has not been doing. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I apologise, Madam Chairperson, and Honourable Leader of the Opposition, when the question was asked about this earlier, I said that the cost of one was about FJ\$1.5 million. So with the \$3 million, we are actually getting two Dredgers, that is what we are doing. So they will increase not just the visibility but actually the dredging work that will take place.

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I will come back to the Honourable Minister for Economy when I see that Dredge there, and I hope that it does not just come and relax.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	30
Not voted	-	6

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 14 Ayes, 30 Noes, 6 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Parliament will now vote on Head 42 – Ministry of Waterways.

Question put.

The question is:

That the amount in Head 42 – Ministry of Waterways, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	30
Noes	-	16
Not voted	-	4

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 14 Ayes, 30 Noes, 4 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Head 42 – Ministry of Waterways agreed to.

Head 43 – Water Authority of Fiji

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We will go on to the next item, Head 43 – Fiji Roads Authority. We are now looking at Head 43-1-1 and the floor is now open for any comments. Honourable Semesa Karavaki?

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Madam Chairperson, first of all, Head 43-1-1(10) - Cyclone Rehabilitation Works - Roads, Bridges and Jetties, an allocation of \$13,850,000 is there. So when we look at the explanation in the second last paragraph above that, \$11.1 million is allocated for jetties to be upgraded. One of the items in there is Wainiyabia Jetty. There is one Wainiyabia here in Serua and there is one in Lakeba. I just want a clarification whether this is Lakeba or Serua?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- There is no conflict in the allocation because you quoted \$13.8 million in SEG 10. That \$13.8 million, if you see the paragraph you quoted, is actually for the cyclone rehabilitation works, so that is the \$13.8 million. You see in the paragraph you quoted, a budget of \$13.8 million is allocated for rehabilitation works on roads, bridges and jetties which were damaged by *TC Winston*. That \$11.1 million relates to the new financial year and the jetties to be upgraded, and include all of those ones. That is the clarification for the first one.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you need a jetty in Wainiyabia, Namosi?

HON. MEMBER.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No. So, it is Lakeba. Wainiyabia in Serua, they have bus stops, they do not have water. It is in Lakeba.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Madam Chairperson, my next question is; to upgrade, there must be an existing jetty. But Wainiyabia in Lakeba has no existing jetty, and which one to upgrade? It says there that jetties are to be upgraded.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- It says here, “the maintenance and renewal of jetties”.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- “Maintenance and renewal”, but there is no existing jetty. Which jetty to maintain?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Was there ever a jetty there?

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- No, no jetty there. We are asking for a new jetty.



HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Well, now, you have got one.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Maybe that was what it was for. It was earmarked, maybe that is what it means.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- That is why, Madam Chairperson, I would like you to be considered to increase this allocation for a new jetty in Wainiyabia because we have talked about the allocations of empowering the sawmill for pine production in Lakeba. To do that, there must be a jetty because there is no jetty to actually extract all these timber out from there.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, to make right what is in this document, can we increase the allocation to include a new jetty?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- The jetty is the only one at Tubou which the *Bai-ni-takali* uses.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- You have got the jetty, do not worry about how much it costs.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Sir.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Problem solved. Honourable Salote Radrodro, now it is for Vanua Balavu.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, before we go on to that, it is for Lakeba, and the money that is allocated is for consultancy work, so they are getting a new jetty.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, I am just looking at the listing on that same item, I do not see Cicia Jetty.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- You don't have to see that.

(Laughter)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- And I know the Honourable Minister has not been to Cicia, but I have been recently after *TC Winston* and it is badly damaged, and I do not see it here. Can he give us an explanation why it is not included?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Member, read this brochure. It says here, "Emergency Repairs, Storm Damages, Emergency Response, Contingency Funds, Role of our Projects 2016-2017, Cicia (\$600,000)". Read the Report!

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- And Moala, \$400,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- That is it. Parliament will now vote on Head No. 43 – Fiji Roads Authority.

Question put.

The question is:

That the amount in Head 43 – Fiji Roads Authority, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	33
Noes	-	14
Not Voted	-	3

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 33 Ayes, 14 Noes, 3 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Head 43 – Fiji Roads Authority, agreed to.

Head 49 – Peacekeeping Missions

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We are on Head 49 – Peacekeeping Missions, and the floor is now open for any comments and we are looking at Head 49-1-1.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 49-1-2?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 49-1-3?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 49-2-1? Honourable Bilitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chairperson, can I just seek clarification from the Honourable Minister on Head 49-2-1(7) – Standby Arrangement for Rapid Deployment for our Peacekeeping Missions?

HON. RATU I. KUBUABOLA.- Madam Chairperson, this allocation on Head 49-2-1(7) is when there is a situation, the threat escalates, this allocation is on standby for the re-deployment of our soldiers from that area.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote on Head No. 49.

Question put.

The question is:

That the amount in Head No. 49 – Peacekeeping Missions, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The motion is agreed to.

Head No. 49 – Peacekeeping Missions, agreed to.

Head No. 50 – Miscellaneous Services

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments and we are looking at Head 50-1-1-1.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 50-1-1-3?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 50-1-1-4?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 50-1-1-5?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 50-1-1-6?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 50-1-1-7?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 50-1-1-8?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I like the sound of that, it is almost musical. Head 50-1-1-9?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 50-1-1-10?

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Head 50-1-1-8, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- SEG 8, you had your hand up?

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Yes, on SEG 8.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, you did not. I was looking like this.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- You did not see me.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Alright, Head 50-1-1-10. Any comments on this SEG? Honourable Viliame Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- I just wish to give notice that I have a motion on Head 50-1-1-10(15)?.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bulitavu, did you have your hand up for SEG 10?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- A motion

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Alright.

We have all the motions here. The first motion is from the Honourable Professor Biman Prasad to move:

That Head 50-1-1-5(3) with regard to consultancy services be decreased by \$9.1 million.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson, Head 50 should not be considered as a slush fund for the Government. Any allocation in Head 50 must come with proper explanations and details. This particular allocation, Madam Chairperson, does not provide any details and I respectfully suggest that we should have details of some of these allocations for us in this Parliament to know and to understand what might be involved in this. And it is not prudent financial management to have allocations entirely without any explanation. So, I do not think we need this allocation and, therefore, I move that we reduce that amount.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone second the motion? You have no seconder.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- It has already been seconded.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. So does anyone want to speak on the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Could I have a response?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This consultancy vote has been named Item 3 in SEG 5, essentially is to pay for consultancy fees that we do incur by the respective Ministries, and you will see that in some years they will be completely underutilised.

One of the major reasons why it has actually gone up, as you know, that we are also divesting some Government shares too in FEA and also we are looking at some concessional agreements by

AFL, so Government needs to hire these consultants, for example, we have an investment advisor, we have people who do the legal work for that too.

So, that is why those amounts have been put there. As we saw in one of the other allocation that we had, for example, in the Municipal Councils, with the new towns, we put that in one lump sum because we need to sometimes, for example, Korovou may actually go further ahead than Nabouwalu and Keiyasi, so we need to be able to move those funds around within that. But I think it is incorrect, in fact, improper to suggest that just because they have been put together, that it is some kind of a slush fund. It is not a slush fund.

Obviously, the Auditor-General will come and audit these funds. Obviously, when you have consultancy fees, it has to go through the Fiji Procurement Office. The tenders have to be called. In some instances, where waivers may be granted, for example, if there is only one provider of that. But all of them have to go through proper procurement processes, so it is not a slush fund per se.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	4

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 14 Ayes, 32 Noes and 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

We will now look at Honourable Viliame Gavoka's motion to move:

That Head 50-1-1-10(15) - Marketing Support to Fiji Airways, be left out of Head 50. Does anyone second the motion?

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Gavoka, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We are just about coming to the end of the Committee Session and since we begin late Tuesday, this side of the House had highlighted numerous areas where we need help. It is almost sinful, Madam Chairperson, to provide the support amounting to \$18 million, to one of the most profitable companies in this country. Last year, as we all know, it made \$82 million and that is pretty difficult to compare against any other company in Fiji.

Madam Chairperson, airlines in general all over the world are doing very well. Even before the fuel prices came down, the airlines were learning to adapt to the new realities of trading. There

was a period there when airlines were struggling very badly. It was a global phenomenon, but as they began to adapt, many were already profitable, including our very own.

Then came the reduction in fuel prices which was quite significant, from about US\$105 and came down to as low as US\$27 or US\$28. It became like a bonus and we saw that last year. But even if the fuel prices go up, our airline will still make profit because this is a global phenomenon. Like I said, and I used a word 'sinful', to be supporting a company like Fiji Airways. As much as we love it to continue to perform well, it is wrong when you have other areas in Fiji that need this kind of support and I have often raised this point.

Madam Chairperson, 46 percent of the Airline is owned by Qantas, one of the best known brands in the world. Somehow through the FijiFirst administration, they pushed Qantas away and we are not benefitting from what Qantas could be bringing into the airline. So, really, Madam Chairperson, I would ask that we take it out of Fiji Airways, they will continue to be profitable, and uses this money in other needful areas, and we have highlighted so many from Tuesday until today.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Professor Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I wish to support the motion. We know Fiji Airways is a private company where Government is a majority shareholder. I think the Airline has had too much of what I call, mollycoddling from our public funds and we have raised this issue in the past. I mean, of course, Qantas as a fellow shareholder would be very happy with this. We know that staff of Fiji Airways obviously had some bonus pay out but that was long after 2006.

I would have supported this, Madam Chairperson, if this allocation was for the staff for continuous pay rise but not putting this \$18 million to a private company from whom we do not get the annual report to Parliament, despite the fact that the Honourable Attorney-General used that legal argument that they are a private company so they do not report to us, but we put in \$18 million.

I think that the mover of the motion is correct in saying, why should we subsidise a company which is making profit and also, a large amount of profit? If this is marketing to the tourism industry, then it should go to the Tourism Marketing Authority because there is a justification for more marketing then it should go there, not to Fiji Airways directly. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Is there anyone else who wants to speak on the motion? Honourable Nawaikula?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- My brief contribution is that, firstly, this is public money and for public money to be used, it is important and vital that this company must bring to this House its Audited Reports, otherwise there is no justification in relation to that.

Secondly, in relation to the bonus payment, it will appear (in my view) that we are subsidising their bonuses because they are a company, they are making money, they are paying bonus and why should we or the taxpayers be supporting it again? That will be the appearance, that they will be subsidising their bonus. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I will now ask the Honourable Minister to speak in response.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson, very briefly, in particular Honourable Gavoka and Honourable

Professor Biman Prasad, their statements actually demonstrated that they know very little about the tourism sector and they know very little about the aviation industry.

Madam Chairperson, Honourable Gavoka has this convoluted way, sometimes when he likes to actually strengthen his argument, he says that the tourism industry is not doing well or the aviation industry is doing well, world prices went up that is why companies went down, companies went up, but the reality is that Fiji Airways is the only secure and largest Pacific Islands airline company...

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- ...with the largest footprint. It has now a much bigger footprint in terms of the capital that has invested in buying the A330s. We are actually looking at expanding that, before we were using Boeing 737s, much better financial position. We have one year's financial profit of \$63 million or \$64 million and say; "Let us not give it back."

On one hand they talked about; "Let us get the numbers up to \$1 million." Why is flying to Singapore important? It is because we want to actually get bigger market sources. We want to get to India. As a result of flying to Singapore, we now have a Code Share Agreement with Jet Airways. We are getting our footprint into the largest outbound market in three years' time. The Indians would be the largest travellers. They are one of the highest spenders per heat. Why is that a wrong thing? Why is it a bad thing?

On the other end, Madam Chairperson, when we did introduce this market in support to fly to Singapore, we said it will have an end-of-life. Now, the numbers are actually looking quite good and we are hoping that in the next six months' time, at least, we will be able to do three times a week to Singapore. The moment you do that, the route becomes a lot more viable, hence requires less support. That is the point, it is creating more Fijian jobs, it is getting more foreign revenue into the country, and it is actually extending our footprint in the tourism sector.

Samoa today is relying on Fiji Airways to help them set up the Polynesian Airlines again. They are actually paying us money to do it right for them. Is that not a good thing?

On the other hand, Madam Chairperson, they actually re-convoluted the process. The problem with them is, they get hold of an idea, they do not want to let go of it. They should be supporting this, this is our national carrier. When we have a cyclone, when something catastrophic happens in Fiji, the only airline that flies in and out of Fiji is Fiji Airways, everyone else pulls out. So it is very critical for us that if you have tourism as your largest contributor to the GDP, that you need to have a national carrier, in particular when over 90 percent of tourism arrivals come by aircraft and in particular where nearly 70 percent of the arrivals come on your national carrier.

They go on about Qantas, I really think that they have shares in Qantas. Qantas still owns their shares, Madam Chairperson. They have veto powers, even though they are a minority shareholder, over our national airline. It was in breach of the Chicago Convention and we changed that but they are still harping on about that. Actually, Qantas is not harping about that, their share prices increased.

Madam Chairperson, this is the true position, we are not subsidising for their bonus payments, this marketing grant goes directly into the marketing of that particular route. We are able to offer a particular pricing of the Singapore route, so it becomes a lot more attractive and that is the way to go, but we are not subsidising with profits.

Madam Chairperson, this is the point, they have absolutely no understanding and I really want the staff of Fiji Airways to think how the Opposition is trying to curtail this. They need to understand

that and as we had said, this is not a grant or a marketing supportive perpetuity. It is only for a few years and then the route becomes strong. We are currently looking at trying to fly to other destinations. We had already started flying to Adelaide, we are currently looking at actually getting a bigger wide-body aircraft. Is that not a fantastic thing for Fiji?

Madam Chairperson, I can also go into details and tell them, they harp on about the past, when Fiji Airways then trading as Air Pacific, lost \$96 million in hedging. They got the fuel pricing wrong and the people who were there got the hedging wrong, so they lost \$96 million. The following year, they lost about \$70 million in hedging. We have not lost any money in hedging. That was what used to happen.

We were paying, and I repeat, we were paying US\$500,000 a month for the Boeing 747s, of course, it is, and for Boeing 767s we were paying US\$800,000 a month. We are in a much better position now. Yes, the world fuel price tomorrow can shoot up to \$150 barrel. It goes to show the lack of understanding. If it shoots up to \$150 a barrel, obviously it has an impact on the bottom-line, so you need to still make sure that your national airline still flies, it is still solid.

There are so many national carriers throughout the world that have actually collapsed and the reason why they have collapsed is because of the footprint of the larger four or five airlines in the world. The UA Emirates, the Etihad Airways, they are taking over. We need to ensure that as a small boutique national airline from the Pacific, we actually made a viable proposition because it is actually now our national interest and a strategic interest. That is why we should vote against this proposition.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Are you ready to vote on this motion? Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	4

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 14 Ayes, 32 Noes and 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to move:

That Head 50-1-1-8(3) - Construction of Funeral Rites Facilities, be increased by \$500,000.

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Just a question on that before I move the motion, Madam Chairperson, that one includes how many facilities, and whether SEG's 4 and 5 go together with 3?

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You can ask that when you speak on the motion?

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- How many facilities?



MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have any seconder to this motion?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- It has already been seconded.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- I just want to....

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, no you speak on your motion now, and he will clarify. You can ask him the question during your speech. Would you like to speak on the motion?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chairperson, I want to speak in support of this allocation, but I really want to know how many facilities are these, and whether Items 4 and 5 come together with Item 3 because I think it is much needed, particularly with the groups whom we have a special relationship with and this is very important for us? I just want to know where is this, in Suva, Nadi or where?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone else want speak on the motion?

Since there are none, Honourable Minister, would you like to respond to this motion and the questions asked?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chairperson, if the Honourable Leader of the Opposition had listened to the Budget Statement, I actually gave the details. In fact, in the Budget Statement, I did give the locations. I said that we are looking at having one in the Suva-Nausori corridor, one in the Western Division and possibly one in Labasa, Vanua Levu. We are also looking at looking at some gas furnaces for cremation. That is why I made the point earlier about *dogo*, but not using that, so it is for a number of locations.

Now, Madam Chairperson, this issue about the *Ghat*, we built the first *Ghat* where people actually performed the religious ceremony after the cremation is carried out. This has been debated since the 1990s. We are the first Government to actually put in money, now in Vatuwaqa you will have a proper facility. We did the ground breaking ceremony just a few weeks ago. It has taken much longer; it is a proper facility, costing us \$900,000.

What this does also is to be able to provide more facilities, similar facilities, so we bought in the gas furnaces also, so it covers a number of areas. It requires a lot of planning, and you need to work with the communities. There is one in Raralevu. There is a crematorium there, and we are looking at Korovou to have a chamber there as well. So that is what that money is for, and we believe this is the price, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, for the time being, to be able to put in these facilities.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	15
Noes	-	32

Not Voted - 3

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 15 Ayes, 32 Noes, 3 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

The next motion is by the Honourable Dulakiverata to move:

That Head 50-1-1-10(17) - Land Acquisition and Survey for Infrastructure Assets (Roads and Water), be increased by \$2 million.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. You may speak on your motion, Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Before I comment on the motion, Madam Chairperson, I just want some clarification from the Honourable Minister on this allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You are speaking on your motion, he will make his clarification when he responds.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Just a clarification.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I want some clarification first.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- You should have sought clarification before putting in your motion.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Alright, thank you.

This motion, Madam Chairperson, is for an increase of this amount. This land acquisition and survey of all lands for public purposes is one area that has been pending for a long time. I want to ask the Honourable Minister if this will take care of all the previous roads and I know most of these roads have not been surveyed. When they are not surveyed, the compensation that is to go to the affected landowners is always paid in part. It will only be paid in full when the actual area is confirmed by a survey. That means that with the developments that are going on now, it would mean that if the same procedure still applies and is ongoing, then there will be lots of arrears to be paid on this.

As you know, Madam Speaker, we had already discussed in the morning about the lack of surveyors, which means that most of these roads that are already being constructed have not been properly surveyed and the final transfer of all these rent to the Government will only be finalised when the survey is completed, when all the land that are acquired are transferred to the Government. That is why, Madam Chairperson, I move that \$2 million be added to the budgetary allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak in support of the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister, would you like to respond?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, I would like to say to the Honourable Member, we do not want to do half-paid job as they did before, I know they did. Before they used to take land but did not pay for the full amount.

This \$5.7 million is for land acquisition on project sites. It is also for securing of the sites of the existing asset sites and that is about \$871,000. We have \$3.1 million for land acquisition project sites. Pipeline easement registration, there are a lot of pipes, as you know there are a lot of easements, which is about \$1.5 million, to formalise WAF pipelines in major towns and cities and also for some of the project management costs.

So, essentially as you rightly pointed out, you need to do the surveys. They have been doing work and as you know this financial year, some have actually been completed and finalised, so we need to actually pay the full amount. So there was ongoing work, and a lot of it also, as you had rightly pointed out, is a lot of easement work that needs to be completed and we need to actually pay whoever is the landowner. For example, the four-lane road in the Nadi, we had to acquire some assets and they were freehold properties, so whoever was the owner, we actually had to pay compensation for them or have to in time to come.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	14
Noes	-	32
Not Voted	-	4

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 14 Ayes, 32 Noes, 4 Not Voted, the motion is defeated.

Question put.

Parliament will now vote on Head No. 50.

The question is that the amount in Head 50 - Miscellaneous Services, be approved.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	31
Noes	-	15
Not Voted	-	4

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 31 Ayes, 15 Noes, 4 Not Voted, the motion is agreed to.

Head 50 - Miscellaneous Services, agreed to.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Members.

Honourable Members, as was explained at the outset, Heads 51 and 52 are standing appropriations, sometimes called, "below the line" appropriations.

As was explained last year, Head 51 lists all the pensions that are payable, these are a charge on the Government finances. Head 52 are the charges on account of public debt. These numerous pages list all the information on interest and loans by the State. Neither Head is voted upon because they must be paid and are, therefore, already catered for.

That brings us to the end of the Estimates. We shall now move to considering the Schedules and Clauses of the 2017-2018 Appropriation Bill 2017 (Bill No. 15 of 2017) as required by Standing Order 101. I advise Members that as we have not amended the Estimates, Standing Order 101 prevents any amendments being moved and made at this stage. Standing Order 101(3) also prevents any debate on these questions.

#### Schedule 1

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is:

That Schedule 1 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The Schedule is, therefore, agreed to.

Schedule 1 agreed to.

#### Schedule 2

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is:

That Schedule 2 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS. - No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - Schedule 2 is, therefore, agreed to.

Schedule 2 agreed to.

#### Clause 1

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is:

That Clause 1 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS. - No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - Clause is, therefore, agreed to.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is:

That Clause 2 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Clause 2 is, therefore, agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is:

That Clause 3 stands part of the Bill.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS. - No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. - Clause 3 is, therefore, agreed to.

Clause 3 agreed to.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- That brings us to the end of the Committee of Supply. We have now concluded voting on Heads 32 to 50, as well as the Schedules and Clauses of the 2017-2018 Appropriation Bill 2017 (Bill No. 15 of 2017). Therefore, I will resume the Speaker's Chair at the end of dinner because we will now break for dinner.

Do you want to break for dinner or we finish it because we are now on to the next Item in the agenda?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

The House resumed

HON. SPEAKER.- The Committee of Supply has agreed to the 2017-2018 Appropriation Bill 2017 (Bill No. 15 of 2017) without amendment.

I now call upon the Honourable Minister for Economy to move the third reading

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I move:

That the 2017-2018 Appropriation Bill 2017 (Bill No. 15 of 2017), be read a third time and do pass.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Parliament will now vote on the third reading. The question is:

That the 2017-2018 Appropriation Bill 2017 (Bill No. 15 of 2017) be read a third time and do pass.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of Ayes and Noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	32
Noes	-	14
Not voted	-	4

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being 32 Ayes, 14 Noes and 4 not voted, the motion is agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, read a third time and passed.

[A Bill for an Act to appropriate a sum of three billion, nine hundred and ninety-six million, seven hundred twenty-one thousand and twenty-six dollars for the ordinary services of Government for the financial year ending 31 July 2018 (Bill No. 15 of 2017) enacted by Parliament of the Republic of Fiji. Act No. .... of 2017]

MADAM SPEAKER.- Parliament has now passed the 2017-2018 Budget, and I congratulate all Honourable Members on their contribution to this significant and integral process. Thank you for your support.

(Acclamation)

Honourable Members, you will recall that last year, there were some amendments necessary to the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority (Budget Amendment) Bill 2016, as well as the Revised Edition of the Laws (Consequential Amendment) Bill 2016. This was circulated ahead of time and the then Leader of the Government in Parliament moved the procedural suspension motion to enable this to proceed.

This year, there is an amendment needed for the Customs Tariff (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017. I am, therefore, allowing a procedural suspension motion by the Leader of the Government in Parliament for this purpose. I now call upon the Leader of the Government in Parliament to move his motion.

**CUSTOMS TARIFF (BUDGET AMD'T) BILL 2017**

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

That Standing Orders be suspended so as to allow that when the Honourable Attorney-General moves the final debate on the:

1. Consequential (Budget Amendment) Bill;
2. Accident Compensation Bill 2017;
3. Commerce Commission (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017; and
4. Regulation of Building Permits Bill 2017;

that the House takes into consideration the amendments made to the Customs Tariff (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017 which was circulated to Honourable Members earlier this afternoon.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Madam Speaker, I second the motion.

MADAM SPEAKER.- I now call on the Honourable Leader of the Government in Parliament to speak on his motion.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, the Amendments distributed to the House earlier today and I am sure all the Honourable Members would have this with them, with regards to the Customs Tariff (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017 does not, in any way, drastically change the substance of the Bill. Thus, the amendments to the Bill are mostly for clarification and cosmetic in nature, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, to further elaborate, the amendments are for the purposes of clarity with regards to the incentives provided by Government in this year's Budget and to cater for some procedural issues of the Customs Tariff Regime set out in the Customs Tariff Act of 1986.

Madam Speaker, apart from the minor necessary cosmetic changes to the Bill, I will discuss the two proposed changes to the Bill which are for the purposes of clarity and they are as follows.

Firstly, the procedural and administrative aspects of retrieving duty foregone in Clause 8 of the Bill and the changes proposed, Madam Speaker, allows for the removal of procedural aspects, providing for the determination of our duty foregone on goods that are imported on concession, can be retrieved by the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority (FRCA) where a person who enjoys the concession sells the goods at any time within five years of importing or brining in those goods on concession.

Madam Speaker, the general rule under section 17 of the Customs Act 1986 is that, goods obtained on concession cannot be disposed of until the lapse of a five-year period from the time the goods were first obtained.

Madam Speaker, after much deliberation on this issue, it has been decided that the current provisions in section 17 of the Act which allow FRCA to claim duty forgone where a person disposes or sells goods brought into the country on a concession within the five-year period are sufficient and are the procedural aspects of how the duty is retrieved and will be provided by FRCA in their Practice Statements.

Madam Speaker, the Practice Statements are general guidelines, much like the Standard Operating Procedures which are issued by FRCA. Practice Statements provide a step by step

comprehensive guideline on how tax, duties and levies are to be collected, and how the tax laws administered by FRCA are to be implemented.

Practice Statements as well, Madam Speaker, provide simplified and easy to understand guidelines on tax and duty administration which are used by FRCA Officers, and are available to the members of the public who are interested in gaining an understanding on this issue. Essentially, having this procedural administrative issue provided for in the Practice Statement under FRCA make for more user-friendly and fluid administrative practices in terms of being able to expand and better administer the steps to be taken.

Madam Speaker, secondly, on clarity on tariff items in clause 11 of the Bill, Madam Speaker, the Bill provides for a decrease in duty on seals and fabricated steel structures, is for the purpose of building construction and for these items, a decrease in duty of 32 percent to 5 percent, is provided to offer some relief to Fijians using these items for the purposes of construction.

Madam Speaker, therefore, in addition to the current items which fall under the tariff items for fabricated steel structures and seals which are already included in the Bill, tariff items for scaffolding equipment which is a prefabricated material and coating which is the sealer, have been included to complete this package.

Conclusively, Madam Speaker, other changes in the Bill are minor and include only stylistic changes of the clarification on an item already provided in the Bill. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you the motion is now open for debate. I am inviting input, if any.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Just a clarification, Madam Speaker, there are two Bills, Bill No. 31 and Bill No. 32. I was not very clear on what the Honourable Minister was talking about, whether he was talking about Bill No. 31 or Bill No. 32.

HON. MEMBER.- (Inaudible)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Bill No. 32.

Are we having the debate, Madam Speaker, on the substantive...?

HON. MEMBER.- (Inaudible)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you. There being no contribution, Leader of Government in Parliament, would you like to make concluding statements?

HON. LEADER OF GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT.- No, thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Parliament will now vote.

Question put.

The question is:

That Standing Orders be suspended so as to allow that when the Honourable Attorney-General moves the final debate on the:



1. Consequential (Budget Amendment) Bill;
2. Accident Compensation Bill 2017;
3. Commerce Commission (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017; and
4. Regulation of Building Permits Bill 2017;

that the House takes into consideration the amendments made to the Customs Tariff (Budget Amendment) Bill 2017 which was circulated to Honourable Members earlier this afternoon.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

HON. SPEAKER.- There being no opposition, the motion is agreed to anonymously.

Motion is agreed to.

That brings us to the end of our sitting. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all Honourable Members for your contribution to the Budget process.

Parliament is now adjourned until tomorrow at 9.30 a.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 7.21 p.m.