

WEDNESDAY, 6TH JULY, 2016

The Parliament resumed at 9.35 a.m. pursuant to adjournment.

HONOURABLE SPEAKER took the Chair and read the Prayer.

PRESENT

All Honourable Members were present except the Minister for Local Government, Housing, Environment, Infrastructure and Transport and Honourable Assistant Minister for Youth.

MINUTES

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

That the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Tuesday, 5th July, 2016, as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

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

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Acknowledgement of Visitors in the Gallery

I welcome all Honourable Members to the continuation of the Budget process. I also warmly welcome students from Suva Methodist Primary School here in the gallery. Welcome to you students and teachers and also members of the public who are joining us in the gallery and those watching proceedings on television, the internet and listening to the radio. Thank you for taking time and interest in your Parliament.

Daily Hansard – Tuesday, 5th July, 2016

Honourable Members please be informed that due to the late sitting last night the *Daily Hansard* for Tuesday, 5th July, 2016 will be circulated later than usual this morning. Honourable Members, before we continue onto our next item of business, I would like to provide some guidance and caution to all Honourable Members.

Committee of Supply - Comments

When the Deputy Speaker was presiding yesterday, there was a Point of Order raised by the Government Whip in relation to some comments by the Honourable Ratu I. D. Tikoca which was dealt with at the time.

As I ruled on Monday, 4th July, 2016, and had indeed urged all Honourable Members please focus your responses to the substance of the debate and relate your contributions to the issue or in the Committee of Supply to the Head being debated. Thank you.

Deferred Item on Order Paper

Honourable Members, as you will recall from Item 5 of yesterday's Order Paper was deferred until today and we will deal this item now, before we reconvene into the Committee of Supply.

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

REVISED EDITION OF THE LAWS (CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS) BILL 2016

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

- a) That the Revised Edition of the Laws (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2016 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- b) That the Bill must pass through one stage at the single sitting of Parliament;
- c) That the Bill must not be referred to a Standing Committee or other Committee of Parliament; and
- d) That the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament immediately after the vote on the Budget Consequential Bills but that a maximum of one hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to me as the member moving this motion.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Is there a seconder?

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

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Attorney-General, you have the floor.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the law revision is a process where written laws are updated and consolidated. This means that all the written laws including the subsequent amendments are revised and consolidated into one and published into volumes of law, which contribute to the advancement of course amongst other things, the rule of law. With the last consolidation in Fiji taking place in 1985, the laws of Fiji have not been consolidated for over a period of 30 years. This has resulted in time consuming legal research, incorrect referencing of laws and incorrect legal analysis.

For the ordinary Fijian, reading and knowing the law is a daunting task in particular if there is poor accessibility to the law given the myriad of amendments that have been made to those laws for more than three decades. We have had also, Madam Speaker, you will notice in 1985, four Constitutions.

In the last consolidation of laws in 1985, there were 14 volumes of laws altogether, those black volumes that we find still lingering around in those offices. This consolidation, which will be done through this fashion here, Laws of Fiji, will now have 20 volumes with a total of 363 laws. In order to effectively carry out the process of law revision, according to modern day standards, we need to tidy up these laws to update all the laws with correct cross referencing, annotations for historical references of the law, gender neutrality and an overall modern style of legal drafting.

This by no means is an easy task, Madam Speaker, it has been attempted twice before in the 1990s and from 2001 to 2006. But as we are all aware no consolidations ever released to the public. A team of

over 30 staff of the Attorney-General's Chambers have been working tirelessly to review and consolidated all the laws. This requires going back into history of our laws to ensure that all relevant laws are captured.

As you can imagine, Madam Speaker, 30 years' worth of laws is an immense amount of laws to review and this work has been going on for more than a year. The features of the consolidation, historical reference, for example, in the consolidation, Madam Speaker, historical references will be annotated within the text, allowing the reader to trace the origin of that specific section of law. For example, an annotation to a specific section of a law will show all previous amendments, insertions, substitutions or repeals that have been made. Annotations also provide the reader with a perspective of how the law has evolved since the 1970s.

The role of the National Archives has come to the forefront in this exercise, as we would not have been able to complete the consolidations of the laws without them providing us with copies of all Ordinances, Gazettes and Orders in Council which provide us with the historical evolution of the laws.

Gender neutrality, Madam Speaker. Gender neutral terms are used to refer to positions and persons, for example, the change from "Chairman" to "Chairperson" and the inclusion of "she" and "her" from the original usage of the terms "his", "him" and "he". This ensures that our laws reflect modern day Fiji and the goal of this Government to provide equality and justice for all Fijians.

Madam Speaker, the purpose of the Bill is to tidy up the laws as they currently stand. They do not change the law in substance. Similar to other law revision exercises in Fiji's past through the Law Revision Process, minor amendments are required to be made to the laws to bring them in line with each other and with Fiji today. For example, Madam Speaker, the Endangered and Protected Species Act 2002, when it was enacted, it required the Minister to table certain reports to both Houses of Parliament.

Now, of course we have a unicameral system. That reference does not make sense, so the Bill needs to reflect the change that we no longer have a Senate. Another example, Madam Speaker, is the fact that some of our laws still refer to her Majesty and her Majesty's pleasure publicly signified in the colony.

Now, the days of Fijians doing anything for her Majesty's pleasure are a thing of the past, so we need to amend the laws to reflect this. Their leader made sure of that. Along the same lines, currently the Promissory Oaths Act states that oaths are made to her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, her heirs and successors. As Fijians, we should pledge allegiance to the people and Republic of Fiji and not to obviously a distant monarch since we are a Republic, particularly given Fiji's Independence and the Republic declaration after 1987.

Similarly, a Fijians should be required to not defraud the State rather than her Majesty. So, some of the laws says you cannot defraud Her Majesty, of course you should say, "you should not defraud the State" as it is currently stated in the Stamp Duties Act which is a very old Act. Other amendments, Madam Speaker, include things like the Ozone Depleting Substances Act, correcting the reference from the Finance Act to 2004 Financial Management Act, in the Sea Ports Management Act, the reference is to the Fiji Islands Maritime Safety Administration will be corrected to the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji.

In the Small and Micro Enterprise Development Act 2002, updating the references from the Fiji National Training Council to the Fiji National University or FNU as it is now called.

These are the kinds of things that can be amended through the Law Revision process, and this is what this Bill seeks to do. It will tidy up the laws to be clear, it will not change the substance, as I said

earlier on, the intention of the law, but will update the law to reflect modern times. The Law Revision process also allows us to align the laws so they are consistent with each other.

With our Constitution being the supreme law, there are many archaic laws that fail to meet the required standard when compared to the freedoms and rights enshrined in the Constitution. It is clear that these laws need to be updated, but the amendments are not something that would go to a Standing Committee which is why we are moving the amendments through Standing Order 51.

The amendments are consequential to the Law Revision process to tidy up the laws or make them consistent. They are not new laws.

As with other law revision exercises in the past, all these consequential amendments are contained in the one document and Honourable Members have been given a copy of that, as it will be extremely burdensome and time consuming for this House to have to pass 227 separate Acts to tidy up these laws.

It is imperative, Madam Speaker, that the laws of Fiji be revised and consolidated to allow all persons, not just judges, magistrates and lawyers, but ordinary Fijians as well to have greater access to laws and to justice. Upon completion of the consolidation of all the laws of Fiji, the Fijian Government will set up a Government website where all Fijians will be able to access the consolidated laws of Fiji for free. Of course, others who go overseas, they go to the LexisNexis website and they have to pay for it.

Consultations, Madam Speaker, were held with the Office of the Solicitor-General and LexisNexis Australia, which is well known for carrying out such works. For those who are not familiar with LexisNexis, they are a corporation that provides computer assistant legal research, as well as business research and risk management services. During the 1970s, LexisNexis pioneered the electronic accessibility of legal and journalistic documents. LexisNexis provides several other services to Fiji including publishing of the Fiji Law Reports, providing online services to the High Court of Fiji, providing legal tax and online resources including law reports from other jurisdictions. This is the company responsible for bringing our consolidated laws to international standards.

The consultation and consolidation process included correcting the errors of the 1985 consolidation in which there were errors too which required laborious research of historical notes, gazettes, ordinances, orders in Council, and then translating those findings into correct annotations and cross-referencing of all laws. The result of the work that has been done on the revised edition is this Bill which will tidy up 227 laws from the Adoption of Infants Act to the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Madam Speaker, before I conclude, we seek to pass this Bill by way of Standing Order 51 given that it has gone through the Law Revision process. We present this Bill in Parliament for the purpose of transparency and accountability. The Commissioner could very well have amended these laws without presentation to Parliament as the laws actually allow the Commissioner to do so. We want to give all Fijian laws which have been updated since 1985, this is progress. We want to have these laws out here for all Fijians to access so this being the last sitting of Parliament for this Session, it is appropriate that this Bill be passed by Standing Order 51 after Parliament comes out of the Committee of Supply at the end of the week.

Altogether, over 30 staff of the Office of the Solicitor-General have been working consistently and tirelessly, and indeed 7 days a week and 36 hours a day, in every effort to ensure that the consolidation of laws is a success. A team of five staff from LexisNexis were also based in Fiji in the Solicitor-General's Office.

As again, Madam Speaker, we said this has been attempted twice in 1999, 2001 to 2006, it was not done. Just to show a brief to Parliament, this is how it will all look. There will be about 17 volumes, and for those who may want to know what is actually inside, each volume will have this tabulated form. It says, Contents, How to use (Honourable Nawaikula) Repeal Legislation and the individual Acts so they are annotated here and its subject manner. So you have Public Enterprise, National Bank of Fiji Restructuring Act, the whole shebang so different subject areas which will make it very easy.

And, what happens, Madam Speaker, for example, if there is a change in this law like Fiji Development Bank Act, so they mean various pages. If for example, Parliament carries out an amendment to a particular section, you simply pull this out, you will get in the mail that page that needs to be lifted out and the replacement page, and all you have to do is put it in. It also is available online for a fee. Very easy for surveyors too to follow because you can very quickly take it out and put it in, Honourable Dulakiverata.

Madam Speaker, with those introductory remarks, I move that this Bill be referred to Parliament under Standing Order 51. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. The Bill is now open for debate. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, I wish to make it clear that we do not have any objection in relation to the need to review this. Normally laws are reviewed 10-yearly, so we have 1978, it should have been 2008, but 2005 or 2016, so there has been a 20-year gap from 1985 to now, and the last one before that was 10 years. So, normally it should be 1978, 1985, then 2005 then 2015, so there is a 20-year gap.

We congratulate the Government for coming with this because it has been overdue. What we object to is the need to refer this to the Standing Committee. Why we say that, Madam Speaker, is that we pass the laws here, but those who look at the laws daily are different segments of our community. For example, the *iTaukei* Land Trust Act, and the *iTaukei* Lands Act are looked at daily and daily by those who work in iTLTB and NLC, as well as Agricultural Landlord and Tenants Act (ALTA). So those people look at their Acts daily and they know what is wrong. We appreciate that you have a Committee that has looked into this, but I can say here with all certainty that they will not find out all the details or all the errors that are there.

Take for example, whilst at iTLTB we found that even the 1985 revised volume did not contain the Rivers and Streams Act, so it was not there, but it was in the 1978, so there are errors there. And, I took a look quickly at this one and the Rivers and Streams Act are not there, I do not know why. The Honourable Attorney-General might want to text his experts to ask them why is the Rivers and Streams Act here and that undermines or underscores the need to refer this to the Standing Committee so that they can call upon those who attend to these laws on a daily basis, and they know what the mistakes are.

That is the basic reason why we object to this. So, there is a need for it to go there so that people who know the laws, and as well we ask ourselves, why is not the 1874 Deed of Cession there and the Promulgations or the Orders in Council or the Ordinances that comes straight after that? That is part of our history. It was left out in 1978, and they should be there. The laws that are here should start from there, so those are the basic reasons why we need consultation, especially to those who administer these laws on a daily basis. Rivers and Streams Act, please, if the Honourable Attorney-General can check that out, it is not here.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you. Your input, Honourable Bilitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Speaker, I concur with my friend, Honourable Nawaikula. We all agree that the current version of legislation needs to be accessed by the people, and the current presentation by the current book that we have there is simple, but I think it has to go through the Committee for more public awareness and for them to understand how to use the particular revised version that we have there. And even in practice, we have different versions of legislations where people do use sometimes, but they are not updated, and for them even to bring their views to the Committee for the Committee to compile a report and bring it to us on what are some of the things that they do not use. If you go through internet, through PaCLII and other legislations that are there, I think it could be different from what will be in the book itself and that has to be updated and the online version too has to be the similar version that is used daily in our courts and everywhere and where people refer to and that is very important. If we have a particular legislation that is recognised in the current version, it could be a different version used elsewhere, Madam Speaker and that is why we have to have a wider consultation and take it around to the people that this is the version that will apply in this particular field of law.

That is very important and with that Madam Speaker, I would suggest that this particular Bill come through the normal way, go through the Committee and let the Committee go around and let the people speak and see in areas which could help for the implementation and for the usage of the latest version that we have here.

On the other hand too, Madam Speaker, we look at some of the amendments that were introduced by promulgation, by amendment and by Decree that will now be permanent laws and to be the current version of legislation but has not gone through proper review and other things for example, the Fijian Affairs Act which is now referred to as the *iTaukei* Affairs Act and all those changes, I think there are different in the country and even political parties have reservations on those kinds of amendments. But now it will be, like imposed on the people on what will be the current usage and the name of the legislation and those are some of the things that will be properly ventilated if it goes to the Committee. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER. – Thank you. There being no other input, I will invite the Honourable Attorney-General to speak in reply.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am sure that we will be venting up many of this in the debate when we have it after the Consequential Bills are attended to. Just very quickly, the Honourable Nawaikula when he said that the laws are revised every 10 years that is the old way of thinking. Once you have this revised and you have this modern way of changing laws, you do not have to wait for 10 years. You constantly change it as the law changes. You constantly edit. If there is a section amended by this House, you immediately within a week or two, you get the page, replace it, it is up to date; that is how is done. That is the old way of thinking Hon. Nawaikula when they did not have the technology, et cetera. Now they do have it.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It is a consolidation of the laws. Those are the amendments to existing laws. Rivers and Streams, it does not mean just because it is not in that Bill it is missed out.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Why?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Why what?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Why no rivers and streams?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Because those are whatever corrections being made, that is the point.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- You will get it in this.

Honourable Bulitavu talks about that the PacLII may have a different version, et cetera. The Laws of Fiji is the official version. The 1985 black one is the official version. If someone else goes and does his own version, you do not follow that because a court of law will only follow what is in the black bounded ones, as you would know. So, similarly once this is put out, it will be this version that is used by everyone.

Honourable Nawaikula is absolutely right. The 1985 consolidation of the laws did have errors and as I said in my introduction that this is going to correct all of that. Now we have of course and they are absolutely right. We have, of course, hired people from overseas whose business is to do this. They have the expertise, they have sent out teams here, so obviously there has been a lot of work that has been going on, we need to move along and put this in. Just to highlight again Honourable Nawaikula, the Bill that you have before you shows you which Acts, which laws have been brought in alignment through the consolidation. It does not mean that just because a particular law is not in that Bill, that it will not be in here.

As I also highlighted earlier on, the specific Act actually allows the Commissioner to go ahead with this without even referencing it to Parliament but we have actually brought it Parliament, so you know exactly what is happening. With those concluding words, Madam Speaker, I refer this motion that we debate this Bill for the consolidation of laws which will bring Fiji's laws into the modern day era. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

- (a) That the Revised Edition of the Laws (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2016 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 Committees of Parliament; and
- (d) That the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament immediately after the vote on the Budget Consequential Bills but at the maximum of one hour be given to debate the Bill, with the Right of Reply given to the Hon. Attorney-General as the member moving the motion.

Does any members oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	29
Noes	:	16
Not voted	:	5

Motion agreed to.

HON. SPEAKER.- The next - Appropriation Bill. Now the Parliament will resolve into the Committee of Supply to continue consideration of the Heads of the Budget Estimates and then the Schedules and Clauses of the 2016-2017 Appropriation Bill 2016.

As explained yesterday, for the Committee stage, I will sit at the table with the Secretary-General and Members should refer to me as Madam Chair. The mace will also be placed in the bracket under the table.

The Secretary-General will announce each Head separately, Members may then stand to speak on that Head, you may speak more than once on each Head. You may also move amendments to the Estimates in the Head. If a Member does move an amendment, the Parliament may debate it and then we will have a vote on the amendment at the end of the debate on the Head, we will also vote on the Head.

Please be reminded that amendments in Committee of Supply are limited to those permitted in Standing Order 100(2), this is an increase, decrease or removal of the item or sub-head from the Head being debated.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON THE 2016-2017 APPROPRIATION BILL 2016

In Committee

Head 21 – Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts

MADAM. CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for Head 21. Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, just some clarification on SEG 1 in terms of Repatriation/Relocation Allowance from the Honourable Minister which is about \$1 million. I will wait for his response, Madam Chair.

MADAM. CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, 'Repatriation Allowance' means if a staff, and I want to explain in detail because the wrong practice was undertaken in the Ministry of Education which I have stopped. 'Repatriation' means, Madam Chair, for a staff, let us say working at the Headquarters in Suva has gone to attend a workshop, let us say in Sydney, and passes away. Then it is the Ministry responsible to pick up all expenses to bring the body back to the home.

Madam Chair, unfortunately until now, what was practiced was if someone passes away, let us say, in Suva, the Ministry was footing all the bill for funeral expenses. We have stopped it to ensure that the allocation is used for what it is intended for, so that money is for that particular purpose. If a staff is a school teacher in Nadi and attends a workshop in Labasa and something happens to her, we will pick up all the expenses to bring the body back to the West. Thank you.

MADAM. CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Let me start by saying, on behalf of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and Honourable Leader of NFP, a very happy *Eid Mubarak* to all of us in this House and to all our brothers and sisters in Islam throughout the country.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, Honourable Prem Singh. I think Honourable Leawere wanted to have further clarification on that one. I thought you were speaking on the same issue.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, in relation to the response made by the Honourable Minister, I would like to move a motion to the effect regarding the Relocation allowance and Repatriation allowance.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prem Singh, you may continue.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair, sorry. It is Programme 3, Activity 3, SEG 1 – and in fact all the activities with SEG 1 – Established Staff there is an increase in allocation. My question to the Honourable Minister is whether this is additional established staff or an increment to the existing salaries of the staff.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, no, there is no additional establishment in this budget. So it is to deal with existing staff and see if there is a need to re-look at the salary structure for the ancillary staff in the Non-Government schools. So there is no additional establishment.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I wish to ask the Honourable Minister in relation to Head 21, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 2 – Government Wage Earners. It is in relation to the overtime and allowances?

Before I do that, let me just let me correct the Honourable Minister on the figures that were given yesterday; 21,000 students still remain in tents, not 4,000 as he said and that information came from the inside of your inner circle.

Madam Chair, my question is this, and depending on this, I might move a motion, if the answer is no. So could the Honourable Minister explain if that figure there, \$420.5 includes the allowances of teachers and staff who are employed overtime during the emergency period of *Tropical Cyclone Winston* for which authority was given from the Honourable Prime Minister to all Ministries, which Ministries have all paid but not the Ministry of Education? Does that include that SEG. 2 overtime allowances, overtime allowances – Head 21-1-2? Did you pay them?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Let me first respond to the comment he made about the data. Madam Chair, we called every school to find out the number of students studying in tents. So, where that inside source is, give it to us and I will give you data, school-wise. Yesterday, I gave the data district-wise, now I will give you data school-wise.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- See me lunch time, I can give you the data school-wise. Thank you.

Now, Madam Chair, on the overtime allowance, there was a practise in the Ministry of Education, salaried staff, and people earning \$30,000 were getting overtime allowance. We have stopped that, no more of this.

(Inaudible interjection)

Why should a salaried staff get overtime allowance?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- I do not know about other Ministries, I am saying what is right needs to be done.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- SEG 2 gets overtime, not salaried staff.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Which one, show me, show me!

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, to answer this question about those staff who were involved in DISMAC work, we had said to them, they had abandoned, very senior staff abandoned their offices as if the Ministry had ended. We said to them, “we will give you time-off. We will get meal allowance. If you can vacate the office for two months, three months, we can say, “take two weeks off, time off, and leave off overtime pay because we need this money to construct the schools that he is talking about”. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair, can we move motions now on Activity 1?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- An amendment, yes.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- I have three motions, can I move them all now under Activity 1. –

The first motion is to increase the allocation for the National Substance Abuse Advisory Council – Activity 1, SEG 6, National Substance Abuse Advisory Council. I am moving a motion to increase that allocation by \$500,000.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Why?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- I will explain when I am given that opportunity.

My second motion, Madam Chair is to increase the allocation under Higher Education Commission by \$500,000 - Activity 1, SEG 6.

The third motion, Madam Chair, is on Activity 1, SEG 9 – Boat and Outboard Motor Engine for Schools. I move the motion that, that allocation be increased by \$200,000. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I just need clarification Honourable Minister. When they are moving for an increase in an allocation, do they need to identify where they are going to take that allocation from?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, the question is, for example, in SEG 1, if they want to allocate more funding for SEG 1, they should specify where in SEG 1 they want to increase as opposed to saying “let us increase SEG 1”.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- And where they decrease to put it into the increase or do they leave it to you to find the money?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It depends on the motion on what they want to do. Whatever motion they present, we will have to go with it but it is always good and makes more sense rather than saying, in particular you have one SEG that may have a number of expenditure items, in that one SEG, you should say where you want that increased in that particular SEG.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei.

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 1 – Fringe Benefit Tax of \$135,000. Can the Honourable Minister advise what is this Fringe Benefit Tax relating to?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, we have some staff who are given mobile phones but there is a limit with respect to talk time and data. I think that is the only fringe benefit our staff are getting. These are Permanent Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Director levels and PEO level. Other than that we do not have any other fringe benefits apart from myself that I get a vehicle, a driver and a phone. The PS is getting a vehicle and a driver and a phone, of course. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Just a clarification on the mobile, that attracts a lot of tax for \$135,000. So how many mobiles is that?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- As I said, Madam Chair, we have got two Deputy Secretaries, Permanent Secretary, 10 Directors and then we have got Principal Education Officers, they are the ones who are getting this benefit. So it should be around 25 to 30 mobile phones.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- How many?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- We do not provide, no one gets housing.

The Divisional Education Officers gets to stay in Government houses but they pay the rent.

HON. P. SINGH.- Clarification on the Fringe Benefits, the amount of \$135,000 could not only be for mobile phones because if you calculate the percentage of Fringe Benefit Tax, it could be other benefits that these employees receive.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, you would see that in some of the Heads, they have a separate Fringe Benefit Tax allocation, in some of the Ministries there is no separate Fringe Benefit

Tax allocation. It does not mean that the Ministries where they do not have a separate Fringe Benefit Tax allocation that they are not paying fringe benefit. They are actually paying it from SEG 1 too, so they see it as part and parcel of the payment that they do to the individual staff members. For example, you have in Ministry of Defence, there was a Fringe Benefit Tax that was paid out separately, they requested for that.

So one of things that we are going to do from next year is show with all the SEGs the separate Fringe Benefit Tax or we will consolidate it all into one. And of course, whatever Fringe Benefit Tax is applicable will be paid, you know whether there are mobile phones in some instances, they may be housing in some Ministries and any other form of fringe benefits that the individual staff member gets, that is calculated on that basis. It does not necessarily mean that a \$135,000 will get used up in the entire year.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, still on the same SEG, SEG 1, for the Honourable Minister for Education, in terms of the teachers assessment, this is both for primary and secondary schools where the Principal and the Head Teacher is to assess the teachers and also a certain percentage for the students themselves to assess the teachers. What sort of training, if any is provided, for them in terms of how they assess the teachers? Just a practical question on that for the students so that they are assessing correctly.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, the Divisional Education Officers and the Ministry staff, the two Directors have undertaken workshops on how to undertake those and are still continuing. We had completed the Leaders Forum and the Heads of Schools Forum in the Western, Northern and Southern Divisions completed at the beginning of this year as well to pick up any issues that the school heads may have with regard to teacher assessment. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, please when you are making interventions, identify which allocation on that SEG you are speaking on, anything outside from that, this is not the forum for it. Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Head 21-1-1 SEG 10 - Building Grant, referenced New Bau Central College \$1.5 million. Can you give a brief on that development, please?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, this is for the construction of a new 1x8 concrete double-storey classroom at Mokani in Tailevu. This will also include administration block, staff room, toilet plus the balance is for back bill compensation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This is a question the Honourable Minister on Programme 1, Activity 1 – just on the issue of Aid-in-Kind.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which SEG, please?.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- No, it is Aid-in-Kind I am talking about, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- It is not in this?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- I said Programme 1, Activity 1 and you go right down to SEG 10 and after that it says Aid-in-Kind.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- So I want to raise some query on that Aid-in-Kind. Access to Quality Education Programme (DFAT) \$11,150,048; Education Programme for *TC Winston* Emergency Response (UNICEF) \$1,000,000; Technical Assistance (JICA) \$575,000; Australian Pacific Technical College (DFAT) \$14,176,489.

I just wanted to ask the Honourable Minister to clarify whether this Aid-in-Kind is directly under your Ministry and what sort of oversight do you have and what is the relationship especially with Programmes like Access to Quality Education Programme and the Australian Pacific Technical College to your Ministry's own programmes?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, let me talk about the AQEP Programme, it has been there for some time. They are associated with the Ministry because they deal with this particular programme and it is for Education.

They have done a lot of work in our schools, they have got schools designated as AQEP school where they have constructed an ablution block, they have constructed classrooms, they do repair and maintenance and so these are designated schools where they are helping and these are the schools that they have now adopted to do the whole reconstruction. There is about 26 of them, so they work very closely with us and the AQEP Programme was supposed to end this year, it has been extended for one more year, but the funds do not come to the Ministry directly but they are there and the funds are held by them. So that is what all of this aid-in-kind is, they work with the Ministry but the funds are held by them.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Honourable Chair, may I request the Honourable Minister before I move a motion if he could explain, sorry, can we move on now to Programme 2?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sure. Any programme.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you.

If the Honourable Minister could explain what is the progress with the Free Milk Programme Head 21-2-1 SEG 5.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, the Government last year, the Honourable Prime Minister launched this Free Milk Programme and all schools, Year 1 students were getting milk and Weet-bix, it is continuing this year in all schools. Year 1 students are getting milk and Weet-bix. The allocation has slightly increased to ensure that we provide the same package to the students, so all schools are getting it. Thank you.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, can I just seek further clarification again from the Honourable Minister if that service actually reaches the maritime and remote rural schools?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Absolutely, Madam Chair. All the schools, I said all the schools including maritime and remote interior schools are getting this. In January there was a delay to maritime schools because we could not keep the stuff which is perishable in nature in the schools. And also the schools in the maritime and interior are not well secured so Madam Speaker, there was a slight delay but all schools in Fiji are getting that.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, and thank you Honourable Minister for that explanation. That is exactly what I was trying to get at in terms of the maritime schools because of the shipping problems, these products have a very short shelf life. Would there be alternatives to this programme be

given to those kind of schools that is more beneficial to them? If that could be factored into this programme or same allocation?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- No, it is not a short life, but the way the milk is packaged when you can keep it for a long period of time. So it is not really, I mean we send in bulk to maritime schools so that it lasts there. I think two months' supplies are sent there to maritime schools, so that is not an issue.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair, Program 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 – Bus Fare Assistance. Madam Chair, now that the bus fare subsidy is limited to first stage, is this allocation of \$20 million enough or is it the same as last year?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, again I do not know where he get his information that it is limited to first stage. I have said it time and again that if a child lives in that particular place and the nearest school requires a three stages bus fare, we will give three stages bus fare - take the child to the school and bring them back to their home. Who has said this that they are getting a one stage bus fare? No, that is absolutely not true, absolutely not true. We are saying whether it is three stages or four stages, it is our responsibility to take the child from home to the nearest school and bring back the child to the home.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair....

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- President of the Fiji Bus Operators Association is probably giving the wrong information.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prem Singh.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, no, he is, and his bus company charges money. You know that? Yes, they do.

HON. P. SINGH.- The Ministry is taking care of students to the nearest school. What happens to the children who travel outside the zone?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- We will do that, do not worry.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, Honourable Prem Singh is asking that to fund a child who skips a nearest school, why should we, Madam Chair? We have a fully-fledged infrastructure, teachers....

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- It is our responsibility to give a place, but if you cannot find a place, will give the child a school where there is a place.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- We will transport the child to the school and bring him back.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, the Education Act stipulates that any parent can take his or her child to any school. We do not put a barrier there, we go wherever, you know the parents who want to take their children to school, that is according to the Act. Thank you, Madam Chair.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other input? Honourable Gavoka

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- If they can take them, that means they do not need the bus fare. It is income tested, means tested, why should the rich be given bus fares, you want the rich to get bus fares?

HON. OPP. MEMBER.- No, you want to help everyone in Fiji.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I am giving the floor to the Honourable Gavoka, please have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Programme 5, Activity 1, SEG 6, can I ask the Honourable Minister to explain this Tuition Fee Free for TVET at \$1,250 million. Can I get an explanation on that, please? And I might move a motion once I hear from him.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, we have schools offering vocational programmes in the interior. In the urban area where we have got the campus of a technical college then the schools around that technical college campus those vocational programmes have ceased. So we still have vocational programmes in the interior and in the maritime zones and students attending those programmes, they are not required to pay a single cent for tuition. Those are picked up by this allocation, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- For the benefit of those watching, please it is not \$1,250 million but \$1.25 million.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- So we have two colleges running now providing the type of education for the vocational and the technical colleges; is that what the Honourable Minister is saying?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, we used to offer vocational programmes which was not an award programme. We used to offer, let us say Certificate II in Electrical, Mechanical, Cookery, Pastry but they were training or up skill student's basics skills in Cookery, Pastry, Carpentry, Joinery, et cetera. So these vocational programmes exist but they are now linked to the nearest campus of the technical college. These students will now move on to these technical colleges later on and graduate with a formal award qualification in Certificate II in Electrical, Mechanical, Cookery, Joinery, et cetera

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I would like to move a motion to the effect on SEG 6 regarding the Bus Fare Assistance to \$500,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, fill the form please. Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to move a motion on Head 21-2-1 SEG 9 – Primary School Water Tanks.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will give you a form to fill up.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, if that could be increased by \$50,000 and also on Head 21-3-1 SEG 9 – for the same item but for secondary schools – SEG 9 if also that item could be increased by \$50,000. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Semesa Karavaki.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to also move a motion on Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 5 – Free Milk Programme to reduce it by \$3,570,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other input. Thank you. Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, I would like to move a motion on Head 21-1-1-10 – New Bau Central College (\$1,558,326). I want to move it up to \$2 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 9 – I think there is a new allocation in this year's Budget of \$2.6 million but details on page 135 says "Digital Literacy Programme of \$800,000, I think this was \$1 million provided in the last Budget. Can the Honourable Minister also provide us information on the boats and the purchase of furniture for 127 damaged schools of \$1.5 million?"

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, I lost the first question but I have got the two questions; the second and third one.

On the Boat and Outboard Motor Engine, Madam Chair, yesterday in my response I gave a list of schools that will be provided from this allocation. In addition to this, we have discussed with the Honourable Minister for Economy any other school that requires a boat and engine which is not in that list that are provided which is in this small supplement in the budget, we will provide, Madam Chair, from the Transport Assistance Budget. So we will provide a boat and engine from the Transport Assistance apart from these nine schools that we provided the list, which in the Budget Supplement.

Madam Chair, the third question was on the Digital Literacy Programme, this is a continuation from the previous year where we provide laptops to schools in the interior and remote areas where they do not have a PC. So, this is what it is for.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 6. I would like to move a motion for an increase in the Remission of Fees and the use of the words “free education” to “free tuition”.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 9 regarding Digital Literacy Programme. I think last year the Honourable Prime Minister had launched that programme

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- What programme?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- The Digital Education Programme Framework and there was a request last year of \$2 million but it has been reduced to \$800,000. What is the progress now in the delivering of those laptops, whether that is sufficient or not?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, we are going to roll out the Digital Literacy Programme in a progressive manner. For example we will start with Year 12. All Year 12 students will have, let us say, laptops then when they progress to Year 13, we do not have to provide laptops, they will take their laptops forward. Then next year, the new Year 12 will be provided, this is how we are going to roll it out. So we do not need to provide a laptop to every child in one year. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 7. I need two clarifications on the same SEG. The first one is the ongoing Distance Learning programme at the Distance Learning Centre of \$200,000. I need an explanation on that one. The other one is Child Protection Programme (UNICEF) of \$54,600. Can he give us an explanation on that one and how effective is this programme? Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, on the first one on Distance Learning Centre, we have a Radio Broadcast Programme every week to the maritime and interior zones on special topics so, let us say, particularly people from the Curriculum Development Section will come and talk about a particular topic, and the schools in the maritime will tune in to that particular radio station and listen to that discourse and delivery by the curriculum officers, so that is what that is for. It is covered for that one.

The second one on the Child Protection Programme, that is organised for workshops and activities for children, school teachers in our school system, so that provision is for that.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 7, I just need some clarification from the Honourable Minister on the Renewal of Lease Premiums for \$50,000; does this concern only Government schools on native leases or all the leases on *iTaukei* land?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, all the leases that we have for schools, when the lease expires then we pick up the cost of ensuring that all the costs are met with iTLTB or the Ministry of Lands. So that allocation is for that particular purpose. For all the leases, when a lease expires, the renewal cost

will be paid to the TLTB and the Ministry of Lands and give the lease to the school and from there, the school will pay the annual rent. Thank you.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I am referring to Programme 5, Activity 3, SEG 8.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata, you wanted to speak on the same issue? Sorry.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes.

Thank you, Madam Chair. The clarification on the expired lease, how many leases of Government schools expire in one year, in this year to warrant that \$50,000?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, I do not have the exact figure, but you do not have two dozen or three dozen leases expiring every year. It is all staggered.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- That's how you should base your

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair, SEG 8 of Programme 5 Activity 3, referring to the Construction of Workshop, this is for technical colleges. A clarification, Madam Chair, how many of these technical colleges that still do not have workshops of which is going to be applied to?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, there is one technical college which has got 12 campuses. We have got 8 new campuses this year. Let me enlighten the Honourable Member, we have got:

- a) Navua, second place with a technical college;
- b) Nadroga Campus, campus of the technical college (I am taking about the new ones for this year);
- c) Lautoka Campus, campus of the technical college;
- d) Tagitagi Campus, campus of the technical college;
- e) Rakiraki Campus, campus of the technical college;
- f) Nawaca Campus in Bua, campus of the technical college;
- g) Navualevu Campus in Wainikoro, campus of the technical college; and
- h) Nausori Campus, campus of the technical college.

So these 8 new campuses, Madam Chair, we need to establish quality workshops and equipment so that we offer this Level 2 Programme with that level of quality that is required by the Higher Education Commission.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Therefore, I would like to move a motion on this because my understanding, even the technical college up here in Nabua, they do not have a proper workshop. Their workshop is to work on the cars that are already wrecked. They put them in the yard and work on those cars. I would like to move a motion on that to increase that allocation.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- This is what it is for.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Madam Chair, just a question for the Honourable Minister; what is the valuation given for extra-curricular activities and where is that hidden somewhere here in your budget, extra-curricular activities like Boy's Scouts, Girl Guides and Saint John?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Excuse me, which programme, which activity and which SEG are you referring to, Honourable Member?

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- That is what I am asking the Honourable Minister because I do not see it anywhere here, if he can explain where is that if it is hidden somewhere in these allocations because that is an important activity.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, that is not something that we are going to deal with right now. Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Programme 2, Activity 3, SEG 3 – Transfer Allowance. Alright, I will stop there. Can I have an explanation before I have a motion in that regard, pending his explanation?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, I am glad the Honourable Member raised this. Transfer allowance is paid to teachers that we initiate the transfer. The practice before was, when a staff member requesting that a staff be transferred, let us say from Labasa to Lautoka, the Ministry was giving a transfer allowance. I said, "no". We appointed the staff, the staff member we have appointed, let us say, in Lautoka and Ba, et cetera, that is it, that is your workstation, you report to the workstation. So this transfer allowance is where we initiate the transfer because we need the staff in Labasa, et cetera, this transfer allowance is to pick up the expenses of the staff; the cartage cost.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I would like to move a motion to increase that transfer allowance.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I just want to ask the Minister on Programme 5, Activity 1, SEG 5 - Agricultural Education. I want clarity on that because I want to move a motion on that issue.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, in the high school system, we have technical subjects like Agricultural Science and that requires certain assistance, equipment as well so that particular allocation is to support teaching of those subjects. These are the technical subjects, from Year 9 to Year 13: Agricultural Science, IT, Home Economics, et cetera, so Agricultural Education is meant to support that particular subject.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I want to move a motion to increase the budget to \$200,000 to cater for the awareness programme and agricultural shows in each division.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 8 - Maintenance and Upgrade of Schools and Institutional Quarters. Can the Honourable Minister explain this programme as to how many schools and institutions that will be covered in this allocation?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, we have got nine primary schools and two Government high schools, a total of 11 Government schools. We are looking at picking up the repair and maintenance costs of these schools. Thank you.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- I need to move a motion to increase it by \$500,000.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, Programme 2, Activity1, SEG 6 - Salary Grant for Early Childhood Education Teachers. Before moving a motion, I would just like an explanation from the Honourable Minister as to what type of allowances and other benefits these teachers are getting?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Salary grant to EC teachers, Madam Chair, what they are getting is, we are giving a grant to the managements, the schools to provide the salary to those teachers. Now, what used to happen before is - one, the salary was very low, and two, one-third used to be paid by schools, so they were struggling. We are now picking up the full salary, they are teaching half day and secondly, the only thing the school will have to do is to pay the FNPF contribution as the employer's side and the rest of the money from the tuition grant they are getting of \$50 per child, they will use it to enhance the facilities of the ECE Centres.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Is the grant per teacher? I did not get that Honourable Minister and I would like to move a motion on that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you Madam Chair. Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10 – Building Grant - School Heritage Sites Levuka. Can the Honourable Minister please explain?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, this is for repair and maintenance work to Heritage Schools in Levuka - LPS, Delana Methodist Primary School and Marist Convent Primary. By law we need to maintain those Heritage Schools which is under Heritage.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to ask the Honourable Minister, Programme 5, Activity 1, SEG 1 – Personal Emoluments of \$1.04 million. Are they qualified, what are their qualifications on those?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, the question is, are they qualified? Of course they are qualified, the recruitment system, their MQRs. Positions are advertised, they fulfil the MQR and then that is the basis of their recruitment.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei you want to speak on the same issue?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Yes, Madam Chair. The retention of staff, I just want to move a motion in that regard to increase it to \$5 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, back to my previous question, last year these heritage site schools in Levuka were allocated \$300,000. So if there is a need to conform to the heritage requirement then there is definitely a need and taking into account that damages done this year, so the increase from \$300,000 to \$400,000, I think it is less. I will move a motion that we should increase this allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I am back on Head 21, Programme 1, Activity 1 – Capital Grants. I am looking at the figure of \$1,974.7 million, and I wish to ask the question whether, because I am asking myself whether that sum includes assistance or capital grants to all damaged schools? If the answer is no, where does the assistance appear.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Which one?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Schools that are damaged. Head 21, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10 – Building Grant \$1,558,326. You have a figure of \$1,974.7 million there, does that include all the schools that are damaged by *TC Winston*?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Actually we have had clarification on both, these two allocations.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I am on the right one, Madam Chair.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No you are not

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Yes, I am

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You are saying....

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Because this is General Administration, they should have an allocation there to cover all the schools that were damaged by *TC Winston*.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Absolutely. Madam Chair, unfortunately, the Honourable Member did not listen to my speech yesterday. The \$132 million in Head 50 to look at the damaged larger schools – the damaged ones. *Kerekere*, please listen carefully.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I am sorry. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair, Programme 4, Activity 1, SEG 5 – Implementation of New Assessment Framework and National Curriculum Framework. May I seek clarification from the Minister whether this is an ongoing programme or is it a new one that will be completed with the 2016-2017 Budget?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, it is an ongoing programme. We continuously look at our curriculum and see what revisions need to be made, and how we need to update it and therefore the materials are revised and sent to students. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, Programme 2, Activity 4, SEG 6. Can I have a clarification from the Honourable Minister regarding this Programme for Blind, Intellectually and Physically Handicapped, please?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, this is a Special Education grant payable to Special Schools to support mainstream inclusive schools that enrol students with disabilities. There are mainstream schools which take on the children with special disability because we cannot have Special Schools in every area. So, what we are encouraging schools to mainstream and allow and admit these children. So, we need to provide certain support to these schools, like a teacher who can teach sign language, certain equipments et cetera. So, this allocation is to support those schools which will admit students with special disability.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, in that regard. I would like to ask for an increase by \$300,000 in terms of that programme. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I give the floor to the Honourable Gavoka.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Point of Order.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Programme 4

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- No Point of Order during Committees.

(Laughter)

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Madam Chair, I just want to make a comment.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are you talking about the Budget?

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- What SEG?

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Madam Chair, I am going to talk on the Budget. The whole issue here is that the Opposition comes here, and pick up figures from the Budget exercise, they have been given two weeks to look at this Budget, at least if they give recommendations to the figures that are here, they should give a reason on the changes in the figures and explain why that will assist in the forecast of the Budget for the year. It is no use if they cannot win in a normal debate in Parliament, they should not be debating during this time.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The issue is noted. I give the floor to the Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, Programme 4, Activity 3, SEG 5. Can the Honourable Minister explain the extent of this School Broadcast Programme because I will move a motion to increase that, please? What is the extent you go to in providing the school broadcast programme in SEG 5?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- What was the question, Madam Chair. What is the extent?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- How far do you go in providing this? What do you go to provide this - the school broadcast programme?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- We have a section which does the broadcasting, where there is a particular time that schools in the maritime and interior know that we will be making the broadcast. They will have their radio in their classes and teachers will be there and the Curriculum Officer will go and talk about that particular aspect of the curriculum.

So, any doubts are clarified it and there will be activities, et cetera. So all the schools in the maritime zones know about this particular programme.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, in that case I would like to move a motion to increase this to \$200,000. Thank you.

HON. CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. On Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 5. Can the Honourable Minister please explain Training and Community Development for \$80,000; what is this about, Honourable Minister?

HON. CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, we have got a Programme by the Library Services where they have community literacy groups and this is what this utilisation is. They go around to the communities, they establish literacy groups in the communities including mothers and school teachers so they around supporting them by providing them with books in different interior, different areas. So, this allocation is to support those community groups to enhance or spread literacy in that particular areas, so the Library Services does that.

And, when we have library functions, Madam Chair, those community groups come in and set up their booths.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, there is another activity there, it is Literacy Programmes for \$20,000. I am asking about the Community Training and Development which is \$80,000, so what is that about?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, this allocation facilitates the library holiday literacy programme. During the holidays, the library goes out and works with the five libraries that we have outside Suva, in the Town Councils. The libraries that are attached to us, and they organise literacy programmes. So, this small allocation is there for them.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, I think we are spending a lot of time asking questions, and the questions have been answered. These allocations have been provided by the people on the ground, and this is the allocation that they think is sufficient.

However, if you find that there is a problem in one of these programmes and you want that problem to be addressed, which means increasing on these allocations, then bring that up because otherwise, all these allocation have been confirmed by the people on the ground.

Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, your advise is taken, but the thing is, we should know what the development entails before we can know whether we want a decrease or increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Has there been a problem?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, can I offer a workshop for them, at a time convenient to both the parties? I will be present and my Directors and Heads of different sections, we will run a workshop for them.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, free lunch, free morning tea and free afternoon tea.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Free bus fare.

Sorry, Honourable Members, an offer has been given to you, are you taking it?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Otherwise, we will spend the whole day and night here. We are spending too much time on this Head.

Honourable Gavoka, did you want to say something?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, it is just that, the way we understand the Committee of Supply is line by line, so if you do not like it, tough. Thank you.

(Chorus of interjections)

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Please, the debate is really line by line, yes, but to approve, reduce or refuse, that is it. All these other information that you are trying to seek, that is outside of this and we are going to will spend the whole day and night. Alright, you can sit here until midnight tonight, that is no problem.

Honourable Vijay Nath?

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chair, may I request, we are doing line by line, that is fine, but often we have seen the Opposition go to and fro. Why not we go Programme by Programme, that will be faster. They keep on flipping here and there, which becomes confusing.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Issue noted. There being no other input, we will go into the amendments. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6, we need clarification from the Honourable Minister on the Fiji Teacher's Registration Authority. What is this, is this fees for teachers or office set up?

HON. A.T. VADEL.- Workshop.

HON. A. M. RADRODRO.- Workshop?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, that is the grant that we give to the Fiji Teachers Registration body to pick up their salaries. So, that is a separate body, they have a Board chaired by our Permanent Secretary.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, do the teachers have to pay a fee or admission to be registered under this Fiji Teachers Registration Authority?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Yes, Madam Chair, they pay a fee when they renew their licence to teach. I cannot recall the exact amount.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Can I request the Honourable Minister to advise this House, what is the standard fee that is applicable to all the teachers?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Can you ask the question in the Parliament session, I will respond.

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA.- It is not relevant.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input?

HON. A.T. VADEL.- Madam Chair, on Programme 6, Activity 1, I wanted to move a motion, but I need clarification on SEG 7 - National Research Council.

HON. DR. M. REDDY. Madam Chair, unfortunately, it looks like Members are not aware of what is happening in Parliament. There is a Bill, I am sure the Honourable Member if he was in Parliament on the day would have noted.

HON. A.T. VADEL.- What is on the ground now?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- *Wawa, wawa!* There is a Bill to establish a National Research Council.

Madam Chair, probably in the next Parliament session, the Bill will come. It is now in Committee stage, my feeling is the Committee has done and - the report had been submitted to Parliament. When the Council comes into being, this money is a seed grant to the Council to start the Council's operations, to pick up the salary of the Director and one or two ancillary staff. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I wanted to move a motion to increase the National Research Council budget.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We have not started yet. Thank you. Honourable Matanitobua.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Madam Chair, on Programme 4, Activity 2, SEG 5 – Printing of Textbooks.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- We are on Programme 7 now.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Why is there an increase from last year – from \$3.2 million to \$5.5 million this year? From year 2016 to 2017.

And, last year, we had complaints from the parents for the late delivery of textbooks to schools.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, we have got the allocation, we are printing ahead so that we have in stock. Every November we will get details from schools on how many textbooks have been returned, what proportion has not been returned and then we will supply the textbooks to them. So, the allocation is there to ensure that we do not, at the last minute, do not run out of funds.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other input, thank you, we will go on to the amendments.

We have a proposal by the Honourable Anare Vadei, who moves that Head 21 be increased by \$5 million in respect of Programme 5, Activity 1, SEG 1. Do we have a seconder?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Vadei, would you like to speak on the motion.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. On this item, we want quality teachers to provide quality education to those people who are looking for jobs and opportunities in the market. So, to retain them in the education sector, we need that increase. That is why I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone else like to speak on the motion? There being none, we will put this motion to the vote. Do we have any opposition?

HON. MEMBERS.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, we will put this to the vote. Do we have any opposition?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, we will put this to the vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes : 15

Noes : 30
Not voted : 5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Next one is by the Honourable Leawere who moves that Head 21 be increased by \$600,000 in respect of Programme 2, Activity 3, SEG 3. Do we have a seconder?

Honourable Leawere, you may speak on your motion – Transfer Allowance.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I would like to move a motion to that effect because of the fact that schools are scattered all over the country in terms of their remoteness – rural areas as well and due to the geographical location of the schools and the cost of transportation is what I take it into consideration, the fuel cost and a hire carrier cost. Any movement of that nature will incur a lot of expenditure on the Ministry of Education because from past experience I know that some teachers have moved but they are still waiting at that time because of the amount given in the allocation.. And because of that, Madam Chair, we feel that there is a need to increase that allocation to cater for the needs of the teachers who want to move from one place to another, whether they ask or whether they do not ask because if you move from station to another I think that will incur cost.

Madam Chair, in that regard, I feel that the Ministry of Education to take note of that and increase the allocation as requested.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Hon. Prof. Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I just wanted to add very briefly to what Honourable Leawere said in response to the Honourable Minister's session that they will only give transfer allowance where the Ministry decides to transfer teachers. I think there are very good cases where teachers themselves you know request for transfer and circumstances change. For example, if someone gets married and is teaching in the islands and the wife may be teaching in Suva or some other place, and there are very good reasons why teachers would ask for transfer. This has been the case for everyone throughout the time that we might want to look at. So, it is not a good idea to impose and I think the Honourable Minister has the habit of imposing things without actually looking at the pros and cons. This may sound very small but it is about providing the right incentive to teachers. Teachers have genuine requests at time for transfers and it would be very unfair if someone has a very genuine request for a transfer (not to you), I think the increase in allowance is a reasonable request.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have any other input? Will ask the Honourable Leawere to speak in reply, if you need.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I think I have said what is needed to be heard in this House. Thank you very much.

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	:	30
Not voted	:	5

(There being 15 Ayes, 30 Noes and 5 Not Voted, the Motion is defeated)

We will move on to the next amendment proposal by the Honourable Leawere who has moved that Head 21 be increased by \$500,000 in respect of Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 1 - Repatriation/Relocation Allowance.

Honourable Leawere, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Madam Chair. As I have said earlier, we look at the geographical nature of the schools in terms of their location because of the scatteredness of the schools and moving a teacher, especially the personal belongings in terms of relocation and the family will cost a lot in terms of the amount that will be accrued from the movement. Take for example, if you move from Kavala to Vunisea, that is about \$300 or \$150 one way. If you want to go by boat

(Chorus of interjections)

No, you are going to move the teachers.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- No.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Yes, of course.

Also if someone dies from that area, that will incur cost on the Ministry. This is why I am proposing that because when someone dies the relatives will not be able to afford, in terms of moving the body to their villages or to where they live. So, this is why I am proposing, Madam Chair, to increase the allowance to \$900,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder? Does anyone want to speak on the motion? Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I think that is logical to increase this given that say if a teacher is from Tailevu and is teaching right in Taveuni but passes away there. In that case, there needs to be an increase in regards to where the burial or the funeral is to be conducted. Also even officials from the Ministry, if they are going to that particular place and to be transported back, some areas we have boat and some have even aircraft or come by either mode of transport. There will be a difference in fare and that is why I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- I fully support the motion regarding the relocation allowance to be increased because what I encountered in the maritime areas when teachers die, when they were referred to Suva (CWM) and they die in Suva, the financial burden to the relatives here in Suva is far, far more. If the relocation was enough for the family. This is why we have being crying for the increase and we support the idea to bring the deceased back to their relatives.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Leawere, would you like to speak in reply.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- I think I have said what is to be heard in this House.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote and this motion. Does anyone oppose?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The next amendment proposal is by the Honourable Salote Radrodro to move that Head 21-1-1 be increased by \$500,000 in respect of Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 on Higher Education Commission.

Honourable Radrodro would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to speak on that motion on the increase of the budgetary allocation under Higher Education Commission to \$500,000 based on the submission that was done by the Education Commission themselves in the Committee proposing that the budgetary allocation be increased due to the high staff turnover in the Commission, and also bearing in mind that the Commission requires specialised skilled staff so to be able to address the high staff turnover, there is a need to review the salary to make it competitive, to ensure the retention of quality staff in the Higher Education Commission. Also they mentioned in their submission is the need to have the IT technology improved in the Unit and also the purchase of equipment. So based on that submission by the Education Commission themselves, I am moving the motion that the allocation be increased to \$500,000 to be able to address those needs. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Is there anyone who would like to speak in support or non-support of the motion? Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I support the motion before us because the Higher Education Commission is going through the accreditation process which is an expensive exercise so that they are also internationally and regionally recognised. So, I support the increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I support the motion before us because as been highlighted, that is the result of the submission from the Higher Education Commission. As the

Honourable Minister has already alluded to earlier that what is here was from the ground, but it looks like it is not because there are two conflicting views here in terms of what the need on the ground is from the Higher Education Commission. They needed an additional \$500,000 more instead of \$1.5 million and, therefore, I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, my brief submission is that, the Honourable Minister himself presented this to us and there is an urgent need for the upgrade of the standards in the Higher Education Commission. We understand that the Universities do their own, but these other institutions do not, and we need that. It has been years that this has been happening and if the turnover of staff is such that this cannot be addressed, the only solution for that is to increase it so that they can be retained, they can address all these institutions and they will bring them up to standard.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other input, Honourable Salote Radrodro, would you like to speak in reply?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to add on to what has been mentioned on this motion, I would also like to highlight that the Commission is responsible for the accreditation of those educational institutions and they are having problems in having to get the institutions to upgrade and to be able to meet the criteria of the accreditation. So to be able to do that, the institution needs high quality staff and the funding in terms of equipment and to be able to help the institution undertake the accreditation responsibilities to be able to bring those educational institutions to the requirement of the Higher Education Commission.

On that note, Madam Chair, I propose the \$500,000 increase in the Higher Education Commission budgetary allocation.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, the next motion is also by the Honourable Salote Radrodro, who is moving that:

Head 21-1-1(6) - National Substance Abuse Advisory Council is to be increased by \$500,000.

Honourable Salote Radrodro, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I rise to speak on this motion and to support the \$500,000 increase to the National Substance Abuse Advisory Council. This is based on the very high rate of substance abuse in Fiji. It is considered as one of our major problems and this concerns our young and this concerns our children.

Madam Chair, this allocation is to help the Council undertake their work in terms of implementing the National Drug Policy in terms of raising the awareness, partnering and networking with civil societies to be able to raise the level of awareness amongst our community in terms of the protection of our children from this substance abuse that is really getting to be a big problem in our country.

As mentioned in the *Fiji Times* in June this year, there were 20 cases of substance abuse from primary schools and secondary schools. Also, recently, we have heard in the news the increasing marijuana cultivation in Fiji and this is really getting to be a social problem. So this \$500,000 increase is to help the Advisory Council undertake their work in terms of implementing the National Drug Policy to be able to help our children. Otherwise, the economical and social costs to the country is huge if we do not address this problem now. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other input to that? Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, in support of this motion, the staff at the NSAAC, they need to be mobile as well, and move around the country, in villages and settlements, and they need to be conducting awareness programmes, as alluded to by Honourable Radrodro. But the fact is, this problem is rising in our society now and our children are to be, they need to be reminded that this is not a good thing to be doing because in some cases in some primary schools, we have students sniffing drugs and all those kind of things. I know that the Ministry is conducting this awareness but they need to move out to the villages as well to settlements and tell the people and advise especially the parents to advise students from home as well because as we know, parents are the first teachers of our students. When they come to school, they should be knowledgeable about drugs.

And the officers there, they should be, as I have said, they should go out more and inform the people and work with other organisations, like the Police, Social Welfare, Women, Provincial Councils and other network that are available around the country so that this awareness programme is conducted widely around the country.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other input? Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I support the motion because we have a policy and we really need to implement this through that Advisory Council. Also, when we look at things from the various Conventions that are coming in, the CFC and we have the other one that is coming in with regard to parental responsibility, child protection and other programmes initiated by the Police in regards to cybercrimes involving children and these are the contact areas where children learn all these from – the internet shops, mobile phones and websites, such as *facebook*. These are all the things that are available to them, even giving laptops.

Those are the things that children learn, and not only illicit drugs is a problem now, there are other basic things that are covered like sniffing glues in school because there is a workshop there, even perfumes are being used by children. These are the things that are readily available and they just pass from the bus going to town, these are all available in the shops. There has to be awareness done to them because these things are also readily available at home. Not only focussing on that, the scope has to increase in that

regard. Because most of the children in rural areas were affected by *TC Winston*, they resort to this kind of thing because of emotional stress they have, they are not being counselled because of the trauma they have, you know all that. Given the tents that they still learn in that environment, these are all factors and forces which affects the child and makes the child to commit or side track, he becomes an offender at a very young age, still a minor.

These are some of the areas which I think the Government should support to increase this particular allocation for proper programmes to be conducted because schools are not only in urban areas but also in rural areas. The assessment for children in urban areas should be totally different from what other activities the child encounters in the rural areas. Therefore, Madam Chair, I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I fully support the motion before us. From a professional background, one of the theme is prevention is better than cure. So, we need this money to prevent our future generation rather than trying to put more money to cure our future generation. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you for that Honourable Vadei.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Just picking up on the line from Honourable Vadei that prevention is better than cure and also in all sittings, we welcome our school children in the gallery and even today, the gallery is packed with school children. As I had mentioned earlier, Madam Chair, the economical and social costs are huge if we do not address this problem now. If indeed we make some truth in our commitments towards the protection of our children, this is where we can start and allocate the additional \$500,000 to the National Substance Abuse Advisory Council to help them implement the national policy on drug and substance abuse. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

We now have another motion moved by the Honourable Semesa Karavaki that Head 21 be increased by \$500,000 in respect of Programme 5, Activity 3, SEG 8. This is on the construction of workshop. Honourable Karavaki, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The explanation given by the Honourable Minister is that there is going to be a new technical college constructed. That means new workshops. Even now, Madam Chair, there are existing technical colleges that do not have proper workshops. I briefly mentioned the one at Nabua because from my understanding that students over there were carrying out

their practical outside in the open space, where wrecked vehicles were brought from wherever they were to be placed in the open space, and that is where they had been carrying out their practical learning.

If we do not have proper workshops right now, and then there are going to be new colleges constructed, we need proper workshops, even for those that are existing now, including the new ones that are going to be constructed which needs also proper workshops because we need these students coming out of these colleges with this proper understanding and also at the proper level of knowledge that they should have acquired after completing their studies over there.

This is the reason why I am suggesting and moving that motion, Madam Chair, that an additional \$500,000 be added to this so that it can take care of the existing colleges, state of the art workshop because this will indeed help our young people, our youth who have not completed the formal education, come through this channel of education and also bring them into the workforce marketable with the proper knowledge, not only locally but would be even attractive to the overseas markets.

This is the reason why, Madam Chair, I am humbly moving this motion to actually prepare our young people going through this channel of learning to prepare themselves to the highest standard that one would be able to get to. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other input to this? Honourable Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Chair. From that motion, there is an aspect to that in regards to OHS. If these students are exposed to the environment while they are doing their practical work in regards to their education, then the onus is on the education to see that these students are properly educated in the proper environment for safety; their health from the sun, rain and especially when they are in Nabua in the open space and they work in the mechanics of vehicles, there are possibilities of sharp metals lying around the ground and probably will also be a danger to other students of the school. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, there being no other input, the Honourable Karavaki, would you like to speak in reply or put it to the vote.

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	:	29
Not voted	:	6

(There being 15 ayes, 29 noes and 6 not voted, the Motion is defeated.)

The next one is again by the Honourable Karavaki who is moving that Head 21 be increased by \$500,000 in respect to Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 8. This is on the maintenance and upgrade of schools and institutional quarters.

Sorry, that is the Honourable Ratu Kiliraki's and not Honourable Karavaki. Honourable Ratu Kiliraki, you can have the floor.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you Chair. I am moving this motion because I have personal experience on this. I was the President of the QVS Parents and Teachers Association for six years (2009 to 2014) and this provision of \$1 million has always been a problem in upgrading and maintenance of the school and the quarters for the teachers. As alluded to by the Honourable Minister, there are 11 schools. These are big schools, boarding school, Government schools, you talk about Labasa, you talk about Bucalevu, you talk about QVS, you talk about RKS, Adi Cakobau School, Natabua, Suva Grammar, Vunisea and these are boarding schools, the rolls every year increase. In my years at QVS, the roll was 200 to 300, now it is about 600 or 700 and the structures, the schools are barely accommodating for these numbers in these schools.

As far as QVS is concerned, most of those structures were built in the 1950s, in 1953 the school was opened, ACS, in 1948, 1949. And as you know, Madam Chair, this \$1 million, if allocated evenly, that would be less than \$90,000 for each school, but it does not happen that way.

For upgrading, most of this money is allocated to one school and that means that the other schools will be denied for consecutive years in terms of maintenance and repairs for the schools. As you know Madam Chair, the proof of this is the effect of tropical cyclone on QVS, for the neglect of the maintenance of the buildings, and the school was completely devastated due to the lack of maintenance of those school buildings.

We acknowledge with much gratitude the Indonesian Government for rebuilding the school but that goes only to school buildings. The quarters which are important because of the teachers have to be accommodated to be able to perform and to be conducive, to be able to stay in QVS for that matter RKS, Bucalevu from the benefits of staying in the cities.

Quarters is very important Madam Chair, and that is why I am moving the motion to 50 percent, from \$1 million to \$500,000 more, to be able to look after the schools as the schools progress in terms of rolls, in terms of the quality of education. The schools were built for the education programmes that were there in the colonial times. Now we are moving to digital, to IT, and we progress so much and including also the increase in the population of the schools to be able to be accommodated so that they, especially in boarding schools, can enjoy their schools.

As you can understand, Madam Chair, in ACS (most of us here are graduates), even the Prime Minister spent some time in RKS, he could understand the boarding environment, the school, even the Minister for Agriculture, the Assistant Minister and some others here, I hope they will support this motion because it is for the betterment of our future generation, especially those who will graduate and sit in this House, Madam Chair. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other input to the motion? Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- Madam Chair, just a brief contribution in support of the motion and technically if you pull out one piece of timber, the repercussion in terms of the other portion of the house will also be affected. So in terms of the amount allocated, it should be more to cater for that. When you pull out the electric wire, the pipes, all these will be affected in terms of upgrading or renovating a house.

In support of that motion, I would like to ask that this SEG be increased to the amount that is alluded to by the Honourable Member. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you Madam Chair, I support the motion. Last year, the proposed allocation was \$1.5 million, but this year, it is just \$1 million and I understand that some of the schools have been affected from an act of God. But for other schools that were not affected, there is the wear and tear in the years that are coming, so there is a need for renovation, and there is need for maintenance, given that Government schools are only painted white and grey like Government quarters, there are many old furniture and desks in those schools and just like renovating Parliament, they too go through this furnishing and all that because it is all part of Government colours and we have dining halls, dormitories and other laboratories in the schools, plus playing fields, the fences, given that there are boarding schools and some like Labasa College and Natabua, they were in town areas and people, they jump out too at night, given that the children nowadays are different.

Given that Madam Speaker, I think the Government should support this that these Government schools be brought up to standard, given that other private schools and other schools that are run by committees, they are more colourful and even the results too will give an indication of how these schools are performing in order to lift up the standards of the schools which will affect the performance and the grading which is now being introduced by the Minister, I think we need to support this motion for the betterment of the students that attend these schools.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki, would you like to make concluding remarks?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, just a final remark, Madam Chair, I hope Delainamasi is included in this motion, I just wish they could be voting also. I hope the students will see if they vote against the motion. It is against their school, also at Delainamasi and Nasinu. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Parliament will now vote on the motion, do we have opposition to this motion?

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	31
Not voted	:	5

(There being 14 ayes, 31 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

There is a motion by Honourable Leawere, who is moving that Head 21 be increased by \$500,000 in respect of Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 on the Bus Fare assistance. Is there anyone to second the motion?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Leawere would you like to speak on the motion?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Thank you, Madam Chair. As I have already stated, the Bus Fare Assistance, we have been told, it covers only from the first stage.

So, in terms of, as I said because of the Education Act, our parents have the right to choose the school where they want to send their children to. For example, someone from Navua wants to come to a school in Suva, so let them be. And then the Ministry should be looking into that regard because to assist them in terms of bus fare. I feel that this allocation is less, that is why I am proposing another \$500,000 increase and also take into consideration some island schools, they also travel from their villages to schools and in terms of buses and maybe hired trucks. So, in that regard, there are boats in Kadavu. They should also be accommodated in that in regard in terms of this Bus Fare Assistance Scheme, Madam Chair.

The most important thing that I would like to stress is that, the Education Act is very specific in that regard, so why curtail the Education Act? Let us follow that, and if any parent wants to send his or her child to another school, so be it. Government should be accommodating in that regard and we are trying to trying to help him, Madam Chair.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- We are trying to help you so that all students are assisted and no one should be left behind. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite other input to the motion. Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I support the motion to increase this allocation, given that this allocation last year was about \$19 million and then it went up to \$22 million, given the experiences that are faced on the ground. However, this not only includes bus fares but also RSL vehicles and boats. I think this issue has been raised in the House before that there are still some schools that they need boats and outboard engine, and all that

But, there is a problem with this which I think the Honourable Minister is aware of, in the payment of RSL coming from drivers from vouchers verifying with Education officials who are responsible there that it is taken to LTA – the payment. Most of the time, payment is delayed which also affects the drivers of those vehicles because they have commitment in the banks with regards to payments to be made. Most of the time, a particular vehicle is under mortgage by the bank because of the unavailability of funds, so if that could improve in particular, the printing of vouchers because of the increasing number of children in rural areas. Even school students are coming home saying that they were not given any vouchers because it was out of stock. These are the areas which need to improve on this particular programme because it affects the rights of children to access to education to attend classes and also the proper environment. I support the motion to increase this so that everyone is given a fair opportunity.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank you for the allocation that has been granted but I am cognizant of the very important increase that is proposed here but just an addition, I would like to bring to the Honourable Minister, apart from the increase that we are actually requesting, children may have accident and the bus may end up in the river. These children will be hospitalised, some will die. Do you understand that we have to cover them with insurance to cover that? There must be some space of allocations to increase what you allocating now to cover for any death benefit or anything that might have happened to the children. I support the increase, thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I support the motion in order that the Government can consider within this, the plight of the poor student, who are entitled and have merit to be in the schools that you may go schools of excellence or top schools. For example a student from Waikete, Bua, who cannot afford and he has the marks to go to Rishikul or Marist, within that, there is no provision there to look after these poor students. Rich families can send their children right to these schools but in order for the poor and meritorious students with high marks to attend schools of excellence or high schools, I am supporting this motion so that they can be taken care of in relation to that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other input, Honourable Leawere, would you like to make conclude in remarks?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Yes, Madam Chair, very briefly the Right to Education, Section 31 of the Constitution states, and I quote:

“Every person has the right to –

- (a) Early childhood education; and
- (b) Primary and secondary education”

In that regard, Madam Chair, I totally support this motion with the simple reason is that allocation is not enough. As already mentioned by my fellow colleagues, I am moving a motion regarding the increase in that allocation of \$500,000. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

There being Opposition, we will now vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The next motion is being proposed by Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca and is moving that:

Head 21 be increased by \$441,674 in respect of Head 21-1-1(10) - New Bau Central College. Honourable Tikoca.

Would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Actually, on civil engineering calculation, you apply 200 students and you estimate what sort of floor space based on dollar per square metre, and then you see the high rise of cost of material and the delay of supply that is coming through because of non-existence of the supply right now, and even if you plus a 30 percent contingency, the

estimate is below. So, to rise it up to my proposal to \$2 million that will consume those hiccups between times, up until completion.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- I beg to second the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite Honourable Minister to speak on the motion.

There being none, will put the motion to the vote. Parliament will vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

There being opposition, we 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 one is a motion moved by the Honourable Ratu Nanovo that Head 21 be increased by \$400,000 in respect of Head 21-3-1(6) - Remission of Fees.

I invite the Honourable Ratu Nanovo to speak on his motion.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think the remission of fees has been in place for some time now in all the schools of Fiji, but what we have noted during the implementation of this Programme, mostly the schools in the urban areas are benefitting based on the number of students that are enrolled in those schools. When we look at the schools in the rural areas, they are not really getting that benefit because the number of student who enrol in those schools are mostly, on the average, below 100 students. Then basing on the amount that each student is allocated, for example, a school in an urban area which has about 500 students (many of them do have that), the benefit of this scheme is mostly experienced by them as compared to schools out there in the remote areas.

So for that we are requesting, Madam Chair, if the current allocation be increased to \$400,000, mostly geared towards rural-based schools so that schools in the rural areas will get that benefit, as well as some improvements to the facilities that they do have out there in the schools... because they are not comparable to the facilities that do apply in the urban areas. So on that note, Madam Chair, I request that this allocation be increased from the current \$200,000 that is stated on the Budget to \$400,000. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prof. Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I support the increase but I was not sure what this remission of fees mean because you have free education under the same SEG and I think it is really a pathetic attempt by Government to call it free education when they actually should say, "tuition free". They have got used to this term "free" and it is actually not free education in that sense, it is "tuition free".

So really I think there are two things; one, we support that remission of fees and I think in the narrative in the Budget, they should remove that idea of free education. They should say “tuition-fee free” because it is actually quite misleading, Madam Chair, when they talk about free education in this way.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I support the motion very strongly because this amount has been provided for boarding fees for all the boarding schools and the amount has been consistent right throughout, just like the previous motion on the allocation for repairs and maintenance of Government schools. I think it is also warranting that this amount be increased so that we all know that the cost of living has also increased and therefore it should be accommodated for a student of QVS to be charged or levied an amount of 11 cents as the cost of his meal provided in this allocation. I think it is about time that this allocation should be reviewed and increased to ensure that the boarding fees that are reflecting to the students of the school also is equitable to the standard of the day. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite other Members, is there any?

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

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	29
Not Voted	:	5

(There being 16 ayes, 29 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Thank you, Honourable Member. We will move on to the next one and this is by the Honourable Leawere who is moving that Head 21 be increased by \$300,000 in respect of Programme 2, Activity 4, SEG 6. This is on the Programme for the Blind, Intellectually and Physically Handicapped.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I would like to move an increase of \$300,000 regarding Programme 2, Activity 4, SEG 6. The simple reason, Madam Chair, due to the nature of disability of the students and also if they are going to be taught in mainstream schools, if they come to the Special School of the Blind in terms of the transport cost to the School and back or if the teachers from the Special School of the Blind go to mainstream schools where the students are located, in terms of the transport, this is why I am asking for an increase of \$300,000. Whilst there in the mainstream schools, they need space, proper equipment to teach the students but if they come to the Special School of the Blind, the teachers are already there. However, what I am saying is that, in terms of movement, we need that, in terms of equipment, we need an increase because of the simple reason as I have stated, of the special needs of the students because if we look at the student : teacher ratio in a Special School of the Blind or any other school for that matter, there is a ratio of 1:8 probably in terms of the disability nature of the student. So this is why I am advocating, Madam Chair, to increase SEG 6 to \$300,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

I invite input to this motion. Honourable Professor Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I actually wish to commend the Minister for Education and the Government for actually bringing this idea of mainstreaming and getting people with disability to attend mainstream schools. It think it is a very good and commendable way to support the people who may not be able to get to special schools. I think the request for an increase really would allow the Ministry to also provide the appropriate infrastructure because a lot of the normal schools will not have those kinds of facilities, so I think it is a good move, it is a good suggestion to increase the amount for that particular programme. The programme by Government is actually commendable.

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

There being no other, Honourable Leawere, would you like to make concluding remarks.

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	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not Voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The next one is by the Honourable Nawaikula who is moving that Head 21 be increased by \$200,000 in respect of Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 2.

I give the floor to the Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, let me first put to rest this question of whether there are 4,000 students or 27 students under tents. The Honourable Minister had said that he got his figures from outside. I said that I got my figures from inside but the proof that I am correct is that, none of the schools have started construction and the Minister himself admits in Head 50. All the help is waiting there for 250 schools for \$132 million and they are waiting for this to be passed before they can start. Let us agree that I am correct here and the Honourable Minister is wrong.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Now on this motion, the purpose of this motion is to allow us to pay all the staff in the Ministry of Education who were engaged in the emergency time of *Cyclone Winston* overtime to do the important work of assessment and survey. With this amount, this will allow them to get what they are entitled to.

Madam Chair, immediately after work was completed, a memo was directed to all ministries to please pay their staff who were engaged overtime their dues and every other Ministry paid theirs. The

explanation from the Honourable Minister this morning is that, they will want this money to pay for the schools but that is totally unfair because this is what they are entitled to on the terms and conditions of employment, this was a directive from high above that they should be paid. So he himself can admit that he is not following those directives. So to be fair, to give them their right, to give them what is due to them, I am begging everyone to please support this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you and does anyone second the motion?

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite input to this motion.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, two weeks ago I was confronted by a number of people who have been mentioned here.

HON. MEMBER.- Who?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- You should pay them, that is your business, but the list is quite long and they are demanding, what is the right way to actually approach so that their dues can be met? Come again?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Don't have a conversation, go through the Chair.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I will talk to you, understand that?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input? Honourable Nawaikula, would you like to make concluding remarks?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I have said enough.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on this motion. Do we have any opposition?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	6

There being 15 Ayes, 29 Noes and 6 Not Voted, the Motion is defeated

Next is by Honourable Salote Radrodro, who is moving that Head 21 be increased by \$200,000, in respect of Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 9, this is on the Boat and Outboard Motor Engine for Schools. Honourable Radrodro, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to speak on the motion that the budgetary allocation be increased by \$200,000, based on my recent visits to some maritime islands where schools are, and they really have problems in getting to schools. I believe, I had mentioned this

in one of my responses in this House, for example, the children of Dakuilomaloma, they have to walk. A better alternative for them is to catch, maybe about a five minutes boat ride and to be able to catch the RSL free transport. Also the children of Namalata District School, they have to cross that passage in Namalata every day, every morning, they too also need a boat. Even when I was there in a previous visit, there were problems in having to get a boat to get across to the village.

Madam Chair, these are just two examples I had witnessed myself and I am requesting that maybe there must be other schools that do need boats and an engine, and just from a rough calculation, it would need about \$20,000 for a set of fibre boat and engine, but it would make a lot of difference to these children's lives. That is why, Madam Chair, I am moving that motion if that allocation could be boosted by \$200,000, to be able to identify schools, to assist schools that may not be in the list, as already mentioned by the Honourable Minister for Education, so that these children are assisted to be able to access their schools every morning so that they are not left behind. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder? I invite input to this motion. Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Thank you Madam Chair. I think we do all know that this is one of the many problems that are normally faced by Maritime Provinces, whereby roads are not being constructed and school children are mostly relied to walk from their villages to the school.

I think, Madam Chair, in Kadavu there are a number of villages where children are still walking from their villages to the school, which is quite a distance from their school and if this is provided, that will be a very valuable assistance that they will enjoy while going to school every day. I do support the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite the Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I support the motion for the simple reason that it is not only students who have access to education in schools, but it is also the teachers who may be able to use those boats to travel from whatever location to another school in terms of meetings, and other school programmes and their mobility depends on the availability of boats that are there.

So, in that regards, Madam Chair, it is better to support that motion for the simple reason for accessibility of teachers as well, because sometimes they find difficulty in getting access to the internet, as in some schools, they do not have access to that, so those boats can also be used by teachers and also whilst on shopping leave, to come to the mainland or to travel to other shopping centres, hence the request for an increase in the allocation, Madam Chair, is supported. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, I do support this motion to increase this allocation because this is a very important component for schools, particularly the island schools, the coastal schools and the schools too that are by the village. I do not see any provision here for life jackets because that is what is needed in these boats and I hope that is also factored in. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to support the motion to increase this allocation by \$200,000. This is very important, given that the Honourable Minister has

assured the House that he is going to do an Awareness or a Programme in regards to this, especially to identify the schools which need this and time and again, there are complaints and even some of the applications that are coming that most of the schools in rural areas, they still do not benefit from this and whether the Ministry is closing working with school committees for them to identify their needs.

I think I have already informed the House that there is a school in Cakaudrove (I have already emailed the Minister, but the Minister has not responded) in regards to a request for a boat (he is laughing), these are the things, Madam Chair, it not only comes with this, but a proper review needs to be done on issues like life jackets and even these engines, they will go through wear and tear because of the sea water, and that repaired of that, whether they are maintaining it, whether there is proper fuel with school committees, where is this kept, and all that.

These are the important things because we have rights in the Constitution, rights to education but these rights are only fulfilled when Government provides the resources. If the Government cannot provide the resources, those rights are dead and that is why to increase this, Madam Chair, by \$200,000 for this programme to be properly implemented for those students in rural areas, because we also have issues like climate change, adaptation and mitigation. We have flooding in other areas in coastal schools and these are not only used for transporting students but also to rescue students who are boarding, and probably the best way to increase this is to enhance this programme.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Salote Radrodro, would you like to take your right of reply?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, I would like to reiterate my support for the motion, based on real needs that is on the ground and request that the Honourable Minister for Education really do look at this request very seriously and approve the \$200,000 increase to this budgetary allocation. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	13
Not voted	:	6

There being 14 Ayes, 13 Noes and 6 Not Voted, the Motion is defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I now invite the Honourable Anare Vadei to move his motion, that Head 21 be increased by \$200,000 in respect of Programme 5, Activity 1, SEG 5 – Agricultural Education. Honourable Vadei, you have the floor.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I would like to support the motion that I presented before the House. Before we used to have this philosophy in education, that we have agricultural shows in our various

schools. So, to stimulate education in relation to their natural habitat, that is why I request that \$200,000 be increased in the budget.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Madam Chair, I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being a seconder, I invite input to this motion.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I am sure the Honourable Minister for Agriculture will agree to this and we will ask for his vote in this regard, for the simple reason that we will need to educate our children as well in terms of this fund.

I can recall in those days, we used to have an Agricultural Education Officer stationed in every Divisional Office and they assisted the Ministry of Education in terms of advisory services for school gardening and whatever the schools follow in their locality. I believe that this fund will also help in that regard.

Also, for Agricultural Shows, we only have a national Agriculture Show that is conducted here in the City but we need to go out to the schools, especially in each Division or District to conduct awareness in terms of agriculture shows so that students know there is a career path as well in agriculture, rather than just picking up pen and paper and going for white-collar jobs.

There is also a lot of opportunities available to our students. When they come up to tertiary institutions, they take up these courses so we have to entice them right from the early stages by having agriculture shows in the Divisions.

I remember when I was in Nausori as the Divisional Head, we conducted a first ever Agriculture Show in Syria Park, and our guest then was the former Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Jocketani Cokanasiga. He was very happy and the Ministry of Agriculture assisted us in that regard. A lot of schools in the vicinity of Nausori and Nasinu corridor attended. So, I am supporting that motion in terms of bringing awareness to our students as a career path as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other input? Honourable Vadei, would you like to make concluding remarks?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, just a short conclusion in support of the motion, as is always stated by the Government that they cultivate, so we need to cultivate our young children or our future generation now in bringing the philosophy of agricultural education in the forefront. Thank you.

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not Voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The next motion is by Honourable Viliame Gavoka, who is moving that Head 21 be increased by \$140,000 in respect of Programme 4, Activity 2, SEG 5 on the School Broadcast Programme. I invite the Honourable Viliame Gavoka to speak on his motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I believe this is an exciting opening and opportunity to expand the scope of our offerings to our children through broadcast, and I think we need to boost this budget to ensure that the content is suitable and exciting, and be part of the education of our young.

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite input to this motion. Would you like to speak on the motion, Honourable Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I think all of us have little ones at home. I know with my grandkids, there is a particular time in the day when they sit transfixed in front of the TV. There is some programme in there they love watching. I do not know what it is, but I see that there are some happy-looking people, a lot of songs and all that, and I just wonder, Madam Chair, if we can create better content for our children. Let me rephrase that, not better content, but add to the content that we already have on TV. I mean, TV, is now across the land, you can view TV in virtually every part of the group now.

We create these contents, bring in specialists and I think FBC have some excellent facilities for these, and grow up a storyline, one that will help our children grow in the way we want them to be.

Let me just give an example, Madam Chair. I know his name is under a cloud now, I know he is under a lot of grief, but you remember the “Bill Cosby Show” in the 1980s. That ran for 10 years, and even though Bill Cosby is now under the cloud, but a lot of Afro-Americans have said that because of that Show they went to university and took on advanced degrees. That was the effect of that Show- a middle-class black family. I think it was Dr. Cliff Huxtable, and his wife who was a lawyer. A lot of black-Americans went to University because of the motivation they saw from that programme. That was the content that was created by either CBS or NBS, and it ran very successfully, and he had this effect of motivating Americans to be like the Huxtable family.

Imagine, Madam Chair, we create some young people in a way you want them to be and tell a story line. They, run from 4.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. every day, and our children would sit there watching and consuming the storylines that we, the parents, want them to consume. You can imagine the effect it will have on them. We have all love heroes and these could be heroes and heroines for our young to help them develop.

I am just thinking out loud, we could start with Timoci, Ashok, Litia and Premila from the very young age; how they go to school together, how they mix, how they develop their career, how one becomes a pilot, how one becomes a doctor, how one becomes a lawyer, the growth process. Our young people can identify with them by the vision they see every day and the messaging that is there. I just see a lot of opportunities on this, Madam Chair. I just think that we need to boost this budget....

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU.- *Koicalevu*, talk on the Budget.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- He needs a hero, he needs a hero!

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Imagine if we do that, Madam Chair. Can you imagine our kids now in the prisons? Who did they see when they were growing up? They must have just seeing people who drank a lot of *yaqona*, who drank a lot of alcohol. Let them see something positive like that. Let us develop a storyline, it can cost a bit of money, but the content is very important. And I think we have the facilities to bring in some gifted people, creative people to develop a storyline which our kids can watch every day and help them mould their character and vision over what they want to become. It could be a small start, by taking it up to \$200,000 but it could be something that could be part of our future in educating our children through the broadcasting facilities available with us.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input to this motion? Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, years back this school broadcast programme has been in the Ministry of Education and now it should be innovative. I am supporting the motion to increase SEG 5. My grandchildren watch *Play School* in the morning. Maybe those kinds of programmes can be emulated by the Ministry of Education and also teach your officers or they go through training so that we can also conduct that for school broadcasting in terms of just listening to a voice coming out from the radio. The children need to see for themselves and feel you know all the five senses. So, that is one area where I am coming from and that is why I am supporting this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input? Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU. I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, I think when you hear what has just been delivered by my fellow colleague, Honourable Gavoka and then you compare that with propaganda that affix the brain of a young child to go on a political drive and not on something that can enhance our solidarity, then I think we should pay a lot of attention to what is happening now.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. RATU. I.D. TIKOCA.- That is what I am trying to say, yes. Because the propaganda now being used by radio and television is only control by you people, and what you are trying to sell will drain this country. Listen to my well advice, and you especially, when your uncle is talking you do not talk. *Vinaka*.

(Laughter)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Don't interfere with my family. That is my family, leave us alone.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leader of Opposition you may have the floor.

HON. RO T.V. KEPHA.- My motion?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, would you like to speak in support of Honourable Gavoka's motion?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think I have said and I believe if you a very honest I think I have touched a nerve here, I think people see where I am coming from. I just wish we would embrace this and I think in every country there is always a soul like this. There is always someone who comes up and then he ends and then another character comes up. But those characters become very

important in shaping the vision of the people of the country. We could do this, Madam Chair. What it needs is creative people to sit in FBC or one of the TV stations and create these things. It can be a running show. Every dinner everyone watch that New Zealand episode, what you called it....

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- *Shortland Street.*

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Yes, everyone watches that. There is a Hindi one that is also quite popular. I mean we start creating healthy storylines like this for our children through this, we can go a long way in raising the standard of education and bringing in a lot of understanding between the communities in Fiji.

One day Timoci and Ashok can go to a Hindi gathering and one day they can go to a Fijian one. Opportunities are so huge, I just feel excited about the whole thing, Madam Chair and I wish he could raise the budget and start this process going. I am talking about serious contents by professionals to create these kinds of story lines.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote in 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	:	30
Not votes	:	5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

We will now move on to the next one and I invite the Honourable Salote Radrodro to move her motion that Head 21 be increased by \$50,000 in respect of Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 9. This is on the Secondary School Water Tanks.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. On the Secondary School Water Tanks, I had also included in there the Primary School Water Tanks under Head 21-2-1, SEG 9 and the Secondary School Water Tanks is on Head 21-3-1, SEG 9. They are both on SEG 9, can I cover both of that in this, Madam Chair?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Yes.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. That motion to increase the water tanks in the primary and secondary schools is also based on the reality on the ground and on the request that I had received while visiting maritime areas and I am sure the Honourable Minister for Labour can also allude to that because from his visiting the maritime areas also, and also those that had visited the maritime areas particularly after *TC Winston*. So, I am moving that motion, Madam Chair, that those two allocations be increased by \$50,000 each and that will bring \$50,000 to Head 21-2-1 SEG 9 and \$50,000 to Head 21-3-1- SEG 9. It is not a big increase, Madam Chair, but the impact on the health of the children in the schools

will really be boosted with the preservation of rain water with the tanks, particularly Madam Chair, in rural areas and maritime areas.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Would you like to add more to what you have just Honourable Salote Radrodro?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. This morning I had moved four motions and in total we are looking at about \$1.4 million and you had initially asked earlier on or you had mentioned if we move motions where can we identify the allocations where we could vire from or transfer funds, and on that maybe I just suggest to the Honourable Minister for Education that on the free milk programme there is \$3.6 million which in my view is not really beneficial to this school or education communities in terms of the four motions that I had moved. I had moved \$500,000 for the Higher Education Commission, \$500,000 for the Drug and Substance Abuse Council, for the Boat and Engine \$200,000 and for the Water Tanks it is just \$100,000. And in total of that because the benefit from the Free Milk Programme, you can do away with that, but use that money as the Honourable Minister for Economy always say "exercise prudent financial management". The allocation is there, just for this time around push it to these needy areas and you can do without the Free Milk Programme which in my view is not really a needed item under the Fiji Education Sector right now.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone have an input to this motion? Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, On the water tanks, in the dry part of Fiji such as the Western Division, I think we really need to look at the school roll and the number of tanks to suit. I was Chairman of our local school there in Cuvu, the school roll was a little under 200, but I think we managed to put in three water tanks and that was sufficient for the school. I believe in some schools, there is only one water tank and that quickly dries up.

I was in Labasa, Madam Chair, with the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs and being from Nadroga I was surprised that people stopped me on the streets in Labasa and one said: 'Hey Parliamentarian, we have this problem,' and one in particular spoke about that particular day when a number of schools closed because of shortage of water. Luckily the Honourable Nath was there, so I gave his number to Honourable Nath and I think they spoke.

But that is the extent of the problem that the rural areas are experiencing right now, especially during the dry season, more so in the Macuata area and also in the Western Division. So I would urge that we support this, increase the Budget and provide the number of tanks relative to the school roll. If there is a school of 200, you cannot do with one tank, you have to provide more than that.

So, Madam Chair, I would support this very strongly, as it is something that is there that needs to be addressed right now. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you Madam Chair. I fully support the motion on the water tanks. It is a problem, not only in the dry areas of Fiji. Most of the schools are not connected to the water system or piped water. They do not have access to piped water system, they have to find their own water source or they have to have water tanks. You know Madam Chair, water is very essential in all institutions, especially in schools where children need to have water all the time for sanitation and also for their daily needs.

I think, Madam Chair, the Honourable Minister should make a survey in all schools that do not have access to piped water and see how many need water tanks, he can then put up a proper budget for the allocation of water tanks for all these schools so that their needs are catered for.

So for that, Madam Chair, I support the motion. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I now invite the Honourable Bulitavu to have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you Madam Chair. I support the motion too, basically from the perspective of climate change that we have. There is continuous drought and changing weather patterns and most of our schools do have water tanks but they are not up to quality and standard. Some have tins and some have table tanks, big tanks because the material is not so strong, and given the weather condition and how they up-keep those tanks, most are on concrete and some tanks are built on a wooden foundation.

Also, the type of water system used, it is either coming from treated water that is used under tap water or it is coming out directly from a catchment, but it depends on the location of the school and the continuous pressure on the pipe also affects the burst of water pipes and affects the tank when it overflows.

I think there is to be a proper survey and inspection on that, and for that, Madam Chair, I support the increase to standardise all these tanks and also to look at other schools that do not have enough water tanks, so that they are provided with the actual amount reflected on the rolls of schools and also the location of the school, given the changes in weather conditions that we have.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I support the motion. I know that last year on our tour to Savusavu, we met these trucks carting water to all the schools right up to Napuka. So the problem is real and should be resolved in this manner.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- I will make a small contribution, Madam Chair, this is in relation to climate change. We should be aware that we should promote water cultivation and that means that every school must have a water tank, even though they have water pipes because at times, water pipes burst and most schools they just finish off maybe half a day because there is no water.

So in that sense, firstly, I support the motion that for every school, it is a must to have water tanks and secondly, water tanks are to be provided to those schools that do not have them because it is important for them to be provided with water tanks. I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Salote Radrodoro you may take your right of reply.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- I thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, I would just like to reiterate the importance of water in our lives, particularly for our children in ensuring safe health and sanitation issues in schools will require water. So that demands that all schools must have tanks to be able to provide the needed water services or water supply in schools for children.

So it is not anything new that we are bringing into the House, it is just to boost Government activities or contributions towards our achievement of the MDG goals and also, Madam Chair, as I had already requested that we have money under the Education Sector, for example, under the Free Milk Programme which, if you weigh the Free Milk Programme with all the motions that are coming from this side in terms of advancing or uplifting the Education Sector in our country, those motions carry more weight than the Free Milk Programme, Madam Chair.

So I am suggesting that the Free Milk Programme be scrapped, relocate, divert, and transfer via that allocation to support all the motions that are coming from this side. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on these motions. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition and since we have two motions, we will first vote on the first motion, which is the provision of water tanks to primary schools.

Motion on the provision of water tanks to primary schools

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	6

(There being 14 ayes, 30 noes and 6 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Motion on the allocation of water tanks in secondary schools

Now on the second one, which is the allocation of water tanks in secondary schools, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	5

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

Honourable Members, the next one will be from the Honourable Leader of Opposition and she is moving that the Head on Education be increased by \$200,000 in respect of Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 6, and this is with respect to salary grant for education, trainings

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Madam Chair, can I just make a point. It is not that I am supporting the motion from Honourable Radrodro but her presentation is quite the example of what I had initially stated in that, whatever they have on the Headings that they would like the changes, they should have alternative funding within the Heading to replace the submissions that they are making, not just to

pluck any amount from thin air and then state that they want this amount, because at the end of the day the whole budget has to be balanced.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, can I respond?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, we have done away with that motion, please we will move on. I now give the floor to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to move her motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Madam Chair, in terms of the salary grant for early childhood education, I ask the Honourable Minister as to how much was the salary grant and it is so, he could not even remember how much they are being paid. In this regard, this is a very important part of the education of children, in that, the teachers ready them with the different skills, especially social skills to prepare them to enter Year 1 with all the social skills intact, Madam Chair. So, what I am suggesting here is an increase in that salary grant because even these teachers have to walk to school. They see the children having free bus fare and free boat fare but the teachers have to walk to the river bank, cross the river and they pay. So, all these is part of their life and what I am asking here is for an increase from that amount that the Honourable Minister cannot even remember.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- No, it is here.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Tell us how each one is getting.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- That is why I am asking for that increase.

(Hon. Member interjects)

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I now invite input to this motion.

There being no input from Honourable Members, we will now vote on this motion. Do we have opposition?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Since we have opposition to this motion, Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	29
Not Voted	:	7

(There being 14 ayes, 29 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

I now give the floor to the Honourable Semesa Karavaki to move his motion:

That Head 21 be decreased by \$3,570,000 in respect of Head 21-2-1(5) - Free Milk Programme.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair.

I apologise, Madam Chair, sometimes I even say this in Court “Madam Speaker”, when I am standing before a Madam Magistrate. I am so used to it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I had move a similar motion like this last year, exactly on the same basis, to remove this programme from the Budget. The reasons I had briefly outlined last year when I moved a similar motion. I think the intention of this Programme I think is clear. It is really to provide milk for the purpose of providing calcium into the diet of children, and mostly, we think that calcium only comes from milk.

Madam Chair, the most important diet available to human beings are fruits and vegetables. When a baby grows up, there is a time that he or she is denied from continuing to have milk and we call it in Fijian “kali” – no longer to drink milk from the mother. At that time, Madam Chair, the fruits and vegetables are available for them to continue with, and that is where they get their calcium supply.

This one is totally unnecessary because if our children continue to drink milk, this has been proven that it contributes to NCDs. That is one of the biggest health enemies we are trying to fight. We must research this and bring in a reform, there must be total reformation in this area because someone has deceived from somewhere in the beginning and we had followed all along.

Madam Chair, why do we have to go and drink milk of animals?

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Oh!

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Young animals whether they are calves or whatever in their young age, they drink from the animal milk source.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- We have to think seriously about this, Madam Chair. We, as human being, when we grow up, just like what we are now, we do not go back to the source of our human milk to drink from.

HON. MEMBER.- Some still.

(Laughter)

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Because they are still being deceived. This is common sense, Madam Chair.

We must, as adults and as responsible leaders, must seriously think and bring reform into this area so that our children, as we are going to depend on them, are not going to be subjected to the sickness that will come from the milk that we are giving them, but instead we can give them fruits and fruit juice. This is the reason why, Madam Chair, I am rising with this motion for this Programme to be removed, meaning that the whole budget there, that amount of \$3,570,000 is to be removed from the whole SEG 5 allocation. This is why, Madam Chair, I am asking for this.

Madam Chair, I was thinking when my motion is going to come up because the children were sitting down here. I was actually praying whether they should hear it or not. Actually, when they left, that was the answer of my prayer, for them not hear it but for us here to hear it because we are going to make a decision on this.

Madam Chair, this is what nature is all about. It is very logic and common sense that we must embrace and understand because we may be doing things that is exactly the cause of our own problem. When we know it is the cause of our own problem, we change and make it right. That is why I am humbly requesting through this motion for this amount to be taken somewhere else or even used for alternative and better purposes for our good health and the health of our children.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite input into this motion. Honourable Radrodro.

HON. S. V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I am glad and I acknowledge that this motion has come up and also to respond to Honourable Koroilavesau's comment on where do I suggest to which allocation do I suggest to be able cover or to address the suggested motions that I had put forward. Madam Chair, I had actually mentioned in my motion to take away that allocation on free milk which is on Head 21-2-1-(5) - \$3,570,000, and that is a lot of money to be used in that programme.

As I had already mentioned, that money could be better used for the motions that is coming from this side in terms of boats and engines, water tanks, our assistance to the Drugs and Substance Abuse Council and in the Higher Education Commission. There were other motions from this side. If we look at this huge amount of money - \$3,570,000 and we weigh it against the use for the Free Milk Programme and all the motions that is coming from this side and what kind of impact it will make in the education of our children and in the education sector as a whole, I am sure if you ask the parents, I request the Honourable Minister for Education, "go ask the parents, do they want free milk or do they want all these?" I am sure if parents are listening now, they would say, "no, let us have water" because when you do not have water in the schools it will also affect their sanitation issues and that is big health issues.

So, Madam Chair, I am really supporting this motion that we take away the Free Milk Programme and take that same allocation and use it for the increases of allocation under the motions that is coming on from this side of the House. Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. CDR. S.T. KOROILAVESAU.- Madam Chair, I just wanted to correct Honourable Radrodro. I used her example as a classic good solution to what I have been saying because she removed some of the money and then made the recommendation on where the amounts should come from. I actually congratulated her and I said this is a classic example of what the other Members should do, balancing it.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to support the motion. You will recall, Madam Chair, that in my Budget reply I mentioned that the Government should review some of the programmes they had been running over the last few years. My mind Madam Chair, was exactly on the Free Milk Programme because we know that it can be better utilised and there can be other alternatives for this Free Milk Programme.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes, you listen!

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Only one person is supplying this Free Milk to all the schools. If we look at other healthy living alternatives like what my Honourable colleague had alluded to, where you can provide fruit juice and fruits to all the schools then the community could partake in all these activities and everyone will benefit. So this why Madam Speaker, I mentioned that while the intention may be good, but over the years, some of these programmes should be reviewed to reflect the real needs there is. So, for that, Madam Chair, I support the motion by Honourable Karavaki. Thank you.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I support the motion. I can remember that last year when Honourable Karavaki put the same thing, we laughed. But it is not a laughing matter, there is a lot of things that we take for granted which has been reviewed scientifically that is bad for us. And this matter, well it is not based on the Bible or anything that my colleague usually rely on but it is scientific.

There are a lot of problems in dairy milk and I can say that when I was in the US, no one is drinking this, they are drinking milk that is derived from nuts. And I asked them, “then how do you expect us to milk our porridge” and they said, “squeeze the milk from the coconut, that milk is much healthier than milk from the cow. It causes a lot of problems, it causes prostate cancer, there is too much cholesterol, the saturated fat there is everything bad here.” So I support the motion.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, two things, one our children are not malnourished so they do not need this milk. Secondly, Madam Chair, someone is making money out of this milk programme, it is a political propaganda. This one was issued before the Elections. So this is why it is here and we are not going to be hoodwinked and the community in Fiji should not accept this because free milk coming out is they pay the milk from other taxation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other input, Honourable Karavaki would you like to speak in reply?

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Just very briefly, Madam Chair. If anyone wants to understand the basis of why I am bringing this motion, you should go to my *Facebook* page and you will see all the scientific reasons why I am moving this. This is for the betterment of our children and for the betterment of this country now and in future. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30

Not voted : 5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

We will move on to the next motion. I invite the Honourable Dulakiverata to move his motion that Head 21 be decreased by \$800,000 in respect of Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10 - School Heritage Sites in Levuka. Honourable Dulakiverata you have the floor.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. We all know that Levuka had been declared World Heritage Site. I would like to refer to what had been alluded by my fellow colleague, Honourable Kiliraki about some of the old schools that were not properly maintained and they were further damaged by *Cyclone Winston*. The schools in Levuka, Madam Chair, you would know are very old and with the fact that the site now had been declared a World Heritage Site, they are not allowed to repair as they wish because they have to maintain the structures to comply to this heritage requirements.

So Madam Chair, that would substantiate the increase in the allocation for the maintenance. There are three schools there, as you mentioned, the Public School, Delana School and the Marist School, and with that allocation of \$416,000, if it is divided amongst the three, it is a \$100,000. The allocation last year was \$300,000 and if they increase the allocation this year to \$400,000, that means that there is a real need for the maintenance and coupled with the damages by hurricane *Winston*, then there should more to be able to address all these issues. So, for that Madam Chair, I move that we agree with my motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- I beg to second the motion, Madam.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite input to this motion. There being no input. We will vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	13
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	7

(There being 13 ayes, 30 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Now we are onto our last amendment. I invite the Honourable Anare Vadei to move his motion that Head 21 be decreased by \$400,000 in respect of Programme 6, Activity 1, SEG 7. I invite the Honourable Vadei to speak on his motion.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- There is an increase from \$100,000 with an additional \$400,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Yes, you filled in the form and you mentioned there a decrease. I will correct it, that you want an increase by \$400,000.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. On SEG 6, the National Research Council is allocated \$100,000. I propose an increase for the preparatory or the setting up of their new office of the National Research Council.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I second the motion.

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

HON. A.T. VADEI.- We all knew, Madam Chair, that the National Research Council Bill is before the Committee as alluded to by the Honourable Minister for Education that once it is passed, they will take it on board. So that is the reason why I propose that additional funding for the preparatory work for the setting up of this new office. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite input to this motion. Yes, Honourable Prof. Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I think it is a good motion. As I said, during the second reading of the Bill, it is a very good idea to set up a National Research Council. It is no use, Madam Chair, to set up institutions like this and there are many others, where you set it up and you give very small grants for few people to be on the staff, dragged off the Research Council and all that.

I think the idea behind the National Research Council ultimately would be to leverage and seek more grant so that people can apply for grant and do research. But I think to start (in anticipation of the Bill being passed) the work of the Council and to give it some teeth and some credibility, you need to provide additional good seed grants so that you get people to understand that it is an important institution. Just putting in \$100,000 and putting a few staff there is not going to get the idea up and running. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Salote Radrodoro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I would just like to add on to the contributions to this Bill and as already mentioned, it is before the Committee and there were a lot of contributions to the Bill and very good contributions from the key stakeholders.

I would like to support the Bill based on those submissions that this motion is very good. One of the key issues that was raised in the presentations during the discussions on the Research Bill was the concern on how the Council will be able to start with only \$100,000 and based on those concerns as raised by those key stakeholders, Madam Chair, I am supporting the motion to increase the allocation by \$400,000. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite other inputs, if any? There being none, Honourable Vadei, would you like to make your concluding remarks?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The reason why I suggested the increase is to get proper and qualified people to set up this institution in the initial stage.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The motion will now be voted on and do we have any Opposition to 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, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

And because all the amendments were defeated we will now move on to vote on Head No. 21. Parliament will now vote on Head 21, and the question is, that the amount on Head 21 – Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts be approved, does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- (Chorus of “ayes” and “noes”)

There being Opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	30
Noes	:	15
Not voted	:	5

(There being 30 ayes, 15 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is agreed to)

Head 21 agreed to.

Honourable Members, at this point, we will suspend proceedings for lunch. You will note that once we get into the debate on a Head, we cannot really suspend in the middle and then come back to it, and this is why we completed it. So, please note that lunch is provided for Honourable Members in the Big Committee Room.

The Business Committee Members are also hereby reminded of our meeting in the Small Committee Room. We will resume proceedings at 2.00 p.m. Do you want exactly one hour?

HON. MEMBERS.- Yes, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, therefore we will resume at exactly 14.11.

The Parliament adjourned at 1.11 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 2.20 p.m.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prime Minister and Honourable Members we have a quorum and we will begin from where we left off. Only this time we would like to be more organised. We will go page by page so that we do not jump around from one page to another. The only thing, once we have passed one page and gone to the next, we are not going to retract.

HON. MEMBER.- Very good.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I hope that is clear. I also remind you, Honourable Members that we will have to finish today's agenda so the longer you want to keep it, you might have to have breakfast also.

Head 22 – Ministry of Health and Medical Services

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The floor is now open for any comments on Head No. 22. We will look at page 157, Programme 1, Activity 1. Do we have any comments? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, Head 22, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 3. Can the Honourable Minister please explain what assistance they will provide to the overseas medical teams that will cost \$1.3 million?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Madam Chair, for the overseas visiting medical teams, the allocation that is provided is to help with their accommodation, meals, custom clearance and transportation and this is for teams like the Seventh Day Cardiac Team, the Pacific Islands Programme Team, the Chinese Team and the American Team. As they come in, we provide the services to help them while they are providing their services to our people.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- One clarification, Madam Chair, some overseas teams, especially from India ...

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- No, not this one.

(Laughter)

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- ... when they come and perform here, the local patients pay for these services that these people provide, and on top of that, the local nurses in the Surgical Unit, they work with these people and they work overtime without being paid. So those services, ...

(Laughter)

Madam Chair, if the patient pays for the performance of heart surgery and all these things, why should we be giving these people this money to pay them for all these services. I need some clarification, thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Those are two different groups. The allocation that we have here is for the teams who come in to provide free service, which is what the allocation is for. The arrangement that we have with the Sahyadri Team is different. For that one, we do not provide this sort of assistance, they pay for their own cost and for which they get the fees for their service, and if you have the names of the nurses who have not received these, please pass them on so I can look into it.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Still on SEG 3, Madam Chair, can I just have some clarifications on the repatriation of \$30,000?

HON. J. USAMATE.- This is the cost to meet the repatriation of deceased patients, either locally or abroad, so sometimes they are sent to CWM and have to be sent back or abroad and back. This is what this money is set aside for.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I would like to move a motion of increasing that allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- I would like to move a motion on Head 22-1-1 SEG 6 on Kidney Dialysis Treatment.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We are still on Programme 1, Activity 1. We are going page by page.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- So on Activity 1, SEG 6, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, SEG 6.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Yes, Kidney Dialysis Treatment if that could be increased by \$700,000 so to make it \$1 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments on Page 157, Honourable Vadei?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- On SEG 3 - Transport of Patients, does that also include the deceased?

HON. J. USAMATE.- I assume that you are referring to the \$136,000?

HON. MEMBER.- Yes.

HON. J. USAMATE.- That is the airfares for patients for overseas treatments, so that is obviously while they are still alive. Repatriation is used for those who have passed on.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any comments on Page 157?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, still on SEG 6 - Project HEAVEN Trust, an additional \$300,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, you can fill the form.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- On SEG 6 - St. John Association of Fiji Grant (\$100,000), I move that we should increase this amount?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Please, fill the form. Any other proposals on Page 157? Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair, SEG 9 - Purchase of Equipment for Urban Hospitals; does that include MRI machines and those machines that are out of order at the moment?

HON. J. USAMATE.- This is the purchase of equipment for urban hospitals. I do not have the exact list of equipment, but there is a list of equipment that the people who look after all the facilities have agreed, the kind of equipment that we need to get and all those items are covered in that. However, for the specific machines, I cannot give you the exact listing of what those are, it will be a very long list.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I have a few questions to the Honourable Minister. My first question is in relation to Head 22-1-1(8) - Navua Hospital - Boundary Fence (\$3.8 million); was this not part of the Aid package as part of the construction of Navua Hospital?

The other question I have on the same SEG to the Honourable Minister is the construction of the new Ba Hospital with an allocation of \$13 million, whether he can tell us because I understand that that is a public private partnership. What is the contribution from the private partnership yet?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It is not a public partnership, we had called for an Expression of Interest (EOI). (inaudible) ... not at the moment but it is going to happen but Government owns the assets. Government is building the assets.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- That was the original plan.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, it was not.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- That was the announcement.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, the hospital started. The EOI for public private partnership was called for later, so we are exploring various avenues.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- So there is none at the moment?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The Navua Boundary Fence?

HON. J. USAMATE.- The original component of that Aid package was the completion of the hospital, so upon its completion, obviously these are additional things that need to be done to complete the whole package which includes the fencing and the landscaping. As you walk, as you drive past, you will see that there is an apparent need for landscaping. So, this will make sure that it becomes a completed package.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- On the same item - Boundary Fence, can you again clarify that some portions of the boundary fence have been constructed and you are saying that the remaining portion costs \$3.8 million?

HON. J. USAMATE.- For this one, at the moment, the notes that have been given is that, the lead consultant has been appointed as a consultant that needs to look into this, and the consultant will carry out the site surveys and we have to produce the tendered documentations so that the construction takes place, and that will also include the cost of the construction that needs to be part of that.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- On SEG 5, Madam Chair, can the Honourable Minister enlighten us on the Annual Software Maintenance Fee of \$335,000? Can you enlighten us on what kind of software in particular that has been paid a maintenance fee?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Annual Software Maintenance these includes the payment for software licences for things like our Patient Information System (PATIS), our Consolidated Monthly Return Information System, Lab Information Management System, Human Resource Information System (HRIS), training on our CANREG which is the software for cancer patient information, actions and other software, and it also includes payment for providing the reports and the analysis of software.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, can the Honourable Minister, please explain the outsourcing of \$3.3 million in SEG 7,? What is covered under that category?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, what the Ministry tries to do is try to focus its attention to its core activities, so there are a lot of things in the Ministry of Health that are not core activities, for instance, things like security. So, these issues are outsourced to other parties. We have now outsourced the cleaning of our facilities to cleaning companies rather than hire cleaners. We outsource it, and that is what this will cover for all the facilities around Fiji.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, there being no other input, we will move on to the next page and that is Page 159 – Head 22-2-1. Are there any comments on this?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, in SEG 1, there is an increase in terms of the allocation compared to last year's. Can the Honourable Minister advise us as to the reasons behind this increase?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Again, you will not get a clear ability to draw the variance and the variance in fact is a decrease of 26.6 per cent overall in the SEG 1 allocation for the Ministry of Health because as you know that \$40 million has been moved for the doctors to the Ministry of Civil Service. However, in respect of this personal emoluments for Public Health Services, overall, the packages decreased but in as far as this is concerned, there would be some variance that you would not be able to exactly compare but I think in respect of some of the allied health workers, we have also increased some of the salaries that took place last year, as you know.

Regarding public health services specifically, the amounts as you can see is the \$1.6 million for the emoluments, allowances account for \$42,000, FNPF is \$168,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are you wanting more information on the same SEG, Honourable Radrodro?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- A clarification, so this particular allocation does it mean that the same salary level that they had enjoyed in a current year would be carried forward and there will be no salary review or salary increase in terms of this particular allocation for Public Health Services?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, Honourable Radrodro you may recall that we have said that we have already had a review of over 135 positions in Government. So, that review is taking place independently. How many people that fall under this programme and activity will get affected by that, is something that we will see as time comes by. Once the report is done, the analysis is done, so we cannot specifically tell you, "yes" or "no", it depends on the analysis that comes out of it.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I wish to clarify some issues with the Honourable Minister regarding SEG 5 - Suicide Prevention Programme (\$43,000). What are some other programmes. I want to move a motion on that SEG.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you. These funds are used for advocacy to talk about this issue and the importance of this issue. This is also used for training. We have the Youth Champs that do Mental Health Training and a lot of these funds are used by our Divisional teams, our teams out in the Northern, Western, Eastern and Central Divisions to provide advocacy and training to the people out there to try to make sure we can minimise suicide in our country.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you Madam Chair. I wish to move a motion to increase the allocation on that SEG.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, fill the form. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- SEG 6 - Local Rural Authorities and a sum of \$200,000. Could we have an explanation of what is the purpose of that, as I might need to move a motion?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister

HON. J. USAMATE.- The Rural Local Authority is constituted under the Public Health Act. There are Boards that are appointed by the Ministry and this money is for grants that are issued by the Central Board of Health to the Rural Local Authorities and they are acquitted back to the Ministry for the issues of programmes that they wish to undertake.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Nanovo

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- On Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 4, Madam Chair, I am just seeking a clarification on the allocation under Quarantine, Burial and Cremation amounting to \$30,000. Can we be clarified on what all does this involve?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- This Quarantine, Burial and Cremation is for control of communicable diseases at ports of entry. Ships, boats and planes come in bringing food and all those kinds of things that can bring disease, so getting rid and burning those things so that we do not spread disease in Fiji. Clearance of all vessels and aircrafts that come for MalariaSpots and other ports as per the Quarantine Act.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- And burial?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Burial too, sometimes things need to be burnt and buried.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, on SEG 7, can we get clarification on Community Health Workers to the tune of \$210,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- One of the important things we realised in the Ministry of Health is to do a lot of the work we need to do, we need to work in partnership. So we have the *Nasi ni Koro* in a lot of the villages and we also have them in the settlements and we have set aside this amount of money, sometimes we give them a little incentive in their work and we have a whole host of them right across the country. That is what that fund is for.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Thank you. I have two questions, one on the Rural Local Authority allocations. Some of the local authorities do not have transport, particularly the Nadi Rural Local Authority which comes under Public Health and they do a lot of work. I believe this is only an administrative grant, and whether there is provision for a vehicle for them. The second one is, on Communicable Disease Prevention and Control which remains under \$100,000 and given the NCD crisis that Fiji is grappling with, the programmes and awareness whether it should be enough for NCDs.

HON. J. USAMATE.- One by one.

The first one I think was on the Local Rural Authorities and making sure the Health Inspectors have transport to move around. Under each of the Divisions we do have the Health Inspectors and we try to make sure in the programming of the vehicles that we have, so that they have access to these vehicles. That can be a challenge but it is something that we try to do to the best of our ability. . That was your first question.

The second question, is something to do with Communicable Diseases, is that in the same SEG?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Yes, \$600,000 – SEG 5, third allocation.

HON. MEMBERS.- SEG 5.

HON. J. USAMATE.- This is the \$600,000?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Yes.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Non-Communicable Disease is not only from this particular segment, , it is covered also by the work, for instance, our zone nurses and what they do, the health centres and what they do. They also do a lot of work on communicable diseases, in terms of advocacy and teaching people and so forth, but these are in addition to that in terms of the things that are already programmed for the Health Centres and the Divisions. This is targeted to reach at least 80,000 Fijians annually and to screen them and this month is actually the NCD Screening Month.

You would have seen the advertisements in the papers, its role is to target that. It is also to look at supporting the NCD Intervention for our special Outpatients Department, Clinics and for diabetes et cetera and also to enhance NCD prevention control in Ante-natal Maternal and Child Health, School Health and Adolescent Health Programmes.

So there are a range of programmes happening, the screening, and I would like to mention also, Madam Chair that since this is NCD Screening Month, we have also arranged for all Members of Parliament to be screened here on Friday for NCD as part of that whole exercise.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, just some clarification from the Honourable Minister on SEG 7 - Food Supplement for Malnourished Children.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, one of the interesting contrast that we have in Fiji, we both have people who have too much weight and those who have too little weight in the same country and that is one of the challenges that we have. So, this food supplement for malnourished children supplements the National Iron and Multi-nutrient Supplementation or the NIMS Programme. We tried to provide this which includes the procurement and distribution of nutrition supplies and equipment and it also supports the roll-out training on Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition Programme and the printing of guidelines.

So, it is focused on trying to get the micro-nutrients to those that are malnourished and the biggest contradiction that we have is, some of the most places where you have the best vegetation in this country is where examples of malnourishment is happening and that has been an interesting problem in Fiji.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair, the last question that I have on the page is, can the Honourable Minister explain why the allocation for Dengue Prevention and Control; Filariasis Control and Leptospirosis Control Programme under SEG 5 remain tagged at \$100,000 and below and whether again this is realistic given post-*TC Winston*.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- I did not get the last part of that question.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. J. USAMATE.- In the immediate aftermath of *TC Winston* there was a whole lot of activities that had taken place to try to eliminate these All the nurseind of diseases so this particular allocation will allow us to carry through from now until the end of this financial year (2016-2017).

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Kiniviliame Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- SEG 5 - Tobacco Control Enforcement for \$200,000. Can the Honourable Minister explain how will this enforcement be conducted in regards to this allocation?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This allocation is used to try to enforce the Tobacco Control Decree and its regulation. It is also used too for the Celebration of the “World No Tobacco Day”. We have used the funds for instance to create project positions, we have Tobacco

Enforcement Officers all around the country, their job is to visit the shops, walk around in Suva, the places where people are not allowed to smoke and try to ensure compliance of the law. That is what that money is used for.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you Madam Chair, on the same SEG - Suicide Prevention Programme. Can the Honourable Minister enlighten us on what is involved in this Suicide Prevention Programme?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- I have already addressed that issue, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- On SEG 7 - Cardiac Arrest (\$40,000). Can I have an explanation from the Honourable Minister, please?

HON. J. USAMATE.- This is a particular allocation for one of the problems that we have in Fiji, which is rheumatic heart disease, and there is an issue that if children have sore throats we need to be very careful with that, need to get them screened in case it can lead to rheumatic heart disease. So, that is what this Programme is for, specifically for rheumatic heart disease screening and promotion of children, and to support the Heart Services in Fiji in relation to that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will move on to page 161, Programme 2, Activities 2 and 3. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair, on Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 1, can we get explanations on this decrease in the allocation under SEG 1, of \$19 million from \$28 million?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, as has been expressed, one of the reforms that we are undertaking this year is to reform the way that we manage our doctors, of all of the doctors' salaries have been taken out to the Ministry. They have been put into the Ministry of Civil Service and that, as we reform the way in which we manage the remuneration and the way in which we develop doctors and so forth, that is why the big change.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Just a follow on question from that one, Madam Chair. So, this allocation under SEG 1 is not related to any doctors, just the allocation for non-doctors who are under CWM Hospital?

HON. J. USAMATE.- All the nurses, allied staff and all the other staff, their salaries are still here.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Professor Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Just on SEG 4, Madam Chair, under the same Programme and Activity, Spare Parts and Maintenance - \$149,000 for the CWM Hospital. We know that the MRI machine

did not work for a while. I do not know whether it is still working or not, but there are obviously other equipment. Do you think that, that is sufficient?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, just to clarify, the MRI machine is working at the moment, but the issue that we have with the MRI machine is that the Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) needs to be working, and that needs to be addressed, and that is currently being addressed. We just wanted to save the machine in case something goes wrong, but this particular allocation is for vehicles. So it is about \$149,000 for repair, service and maintenance of the vehicles that the Ministry still owns, the old ones that we have. That is what this allocation is for.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, from my observation regarding the 'Ration' on SEG 5, there has been a lot of decline in the quality of food being provided to the patients in the hospitals, so I want to move a motion in that regard, and I want to clarify those issues with the Honourable Minister whether the allocated amount is sufficient?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, he is going to be moving a motion.

HON. J. USAMATE.- I thought it was a query.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I want to move a motion to increase the amount to purchase the ration on SEG 5.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Alright, fill the form, please. Honourable. Semesa Karavaki

HON. S.D. KAVARAKI.- Madam Chair, just on SEG 1, the 'Overtime' is \$500,000. I would like to move a motion to increase that amount on the basis, Madam Chair, that staff; the nurses, Ward Assistants, in the past year, they have been encouraged to take day-offs because on the understanding there was no more money to pay for the overtime.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. You can fill the form.

We will move on to page 163 on Programme 2, Activities 4 and 5. Any comments? Honourable Professor Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, just a very quick question to the Honourable Minister. We have an MRI machine at CWM. We do not have one in Lautoka and we do not have one in Labasa. Would it not be ideal for the Honourable Minister to consider that we should have MRI machines in all three major hospitals in the country? I know there is no allocation for that, but whether that is something on the cart, and whether that is your plan to do that?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which SEG are you referring to?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- I am talking about Programme 2, Activity 4, that is Labasa Hospital and also Programme 2, Activity 3, Lautoka Hospital. This is a general question, if the Honourable Minister can...

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which SEG?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- I am not referring to any SEG because I cannot find any allocation for MRI machines for those two hospitals.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you for your comments. Any other input?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, the focus of the Ministry is to provide the best possible service at all times, and always there is a discussion on what sort of, there are clinical service networks, the experts that we have. They sit down and they go through the kinds of services we need to be able to deliver at each of our facilities, and they come up with the list of the equipment. It is possible that perhaps in the future, that that might be considered, but I will depend on the technical expertise and advise of the doctors and the technicians that I have in the Ministry.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, SEG 5, I just wonder if the Honourable Minister could give us a brief on the overall philosophy on the Ambulance Services. By that I mean, is there an arrangements where the ambulance service to the hospital or would observe a uniform travelling time, say from Sigatoka Hospital to Lomawai or to Tau or up in the valleys - the time it takes to travel from that point to the hospital? Is it 30 minutes, 1 hour 45 minutes? I am just trying of look at, if there is an overall plan that you have in terms of time, distance on the responses from the base for the ambulance to the nearest hospital? Is there something like that?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Currently, at the moment, the ambulances within the Ministry are used largely for the transport of patients between facilities. So, I am sure that in that particular case, the people who run that service should have some targets for them, for picking up from outside to come into our facilities, that is something that is normally done by people like the National Fire Authority, St. John and so forth. Whether they have the standards, I am not too familiar, I am not too sure what those standards are. But, it is something that I need to have a look at, because I am not aware if there are specific, as you said, times by which these services should be provided. I need to check up on that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, on Programme 2, Activity 4, SEG 3 on the Transport of Patients (Local and Overseas) - \$45,000. I just want to ask the Honourable Minister to explain more on this and if this amount is enough?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- We are on 22-2-3?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes.

HON. J. USAMATE.- This is basically for Lautoka Hospital, the transport of patients...

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- No, Labasa Hospital.

HON. J. USAMATE.- This will be for this money that is set aside for patients referred to Labasa Hospital returning to their home. Sometimes, they have to come from Napuka or somewhere and then when they are returned home, this is what this fund is for.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. J. USAMATE.- Because this is for a Divisional Hospital so it is from Labasa Hospital to the areas that are served by Labasa Hospital which is the Northern Division. Outpatients as well, local and overseas.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I would like to move a motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Can you fill a form please? Thank you we will now move on to Page 165.

Head 22-2-6 and Head 22-3-1. Honourable Vadei, you may have the floor.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair. I would like to move a motion on SEG 5 -Ration.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You can fill the form please? Thank you, we will move on to Page 167, Head 22-3-2 and Head 22-3-3.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- I want to move a motion on Head 22-3-2(5) – Ration (\$114,000) and Laundry (\$6,700).

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You can fill the form please?

Thank you, we will now move on to Page 169 – Head 22-3-4 and Head 22-4-1. Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Speaker, SEG 5 - Emergency Ambulance Service. I want to move to a motion on this.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, please fill in the form. That is the end of Ministry of Health and Medical Services.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I would like to move a motion on Head 22-4-1(4) - Biomedical Equipment to increase its allocation.

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

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, on Head 22-4-1(5) – Free Medicine Programme 4 (\$10 million); can the Honourable Minister brief this House on this item?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- The Free Medicine Programme, Madam Chair, is once again an indication of the attention that the FijiFirst Government pays to those who are most marginalised in a society and it provides them an opportunity to access medicine from private facilities because free medicine are provided at Government health facilities. Last year at the beginning of this year, the list of medicines were extended to 142 items. Those new items should be on our shores within the next two months, and we will try to make sure that these are sent out to many pharmacies as possible as part of this Scheme so that we are in a position to provide the medicines to the people of Fiji.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I now give the floor to the Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Still on the same item, Madam Chair, on the availability of this Free Medicine Programme, one is that it is available 24/7 in terms where it has been allocated to supply; and secondly, when patients come from the hospital, how do patients access these medicine when they go out to pharmacies?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, if a patient is in a hospital, they can get free medicine from the hospital itself or from the health centre. They also have the opportunity then to go to the pharmacies outside. It will also depend on the opening hours of those pharmacies. One of the things that we have done within our own facilities in areas where we have large concentration of population, to extend their opening hours of our pharmacies.

So, now in places like for instance, Valelevu, Makoi and Nadi, within the hospitals, the hours have been extended up to 10.00 p.m. However, in other areas, it depends on the private pharmacies themselves, and I understand that there are some pharmacies now that are considering operating for 24 hours. Already one. In that case, that should then become available in those pharmacies.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Professor Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I was looking for an allocation for Mental Health and I see it is under Head 22-2-1(7).

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We have finished with that when we were on Page 169

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Yes, Madam Chair, I only wanted to make a point Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- At least deal with Page 169. Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, Head 22-4-1(9) - Dental Equipment, Urban Hospitals and Sub-Divisional Hospitals (\$500,000), I like to move a motion to increase that allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, please fill the form. Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Head 22-4-1(5) – Drugs (\$9 million); can you explain that, Honourable Minister?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, for the drugs, once again the clinical experts in the Ministry identified the kinds of medicines that we need to make available within all the health facilities in Fiji. So, these are medicines that are to be made available in the health facilities, \$9 million worth to be purchased and to distribute across all of the health facilities, whether they be Divisional, Sub-Divisional hospitals, health centres and nursing stations. That is what that amount is for.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, while we are still on that SEG, Expansion in Drugs and Medical Supplies, are they related? I seek clarification from the Honourable Minister.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- One of the important functions that we have for the Fiji Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Services is other than procure drugs, they need to have a regulatory function viz-a-viz, the private pharmacies. So, this money is used for drug regulatory activities, for example, inspection of retail pharmacies, registration exams of new pharmacies which are supplemented, so it is a regulatory part of making sure that we are getting the right kinds of medicines into Fiji.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I would like to make an inquiry with the Honourable Minister in regards to medical evacuation, referring to boats and engines. I cannot see, I am just checking, is it being provided in another allocation?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, we will not entertain that question.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- And so as in the Eastern Division. I am just making an inquiry.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Head 22-4-1(5) - Consumables; can the Honourable Minister inform us on this allocation and whether it is enough for the whole of the year for Fiji Divisional Hospitals?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- As Madam Chair, the Consumables, things like syringes, needles, catheters IVs, switches and all that, once again, the amount of money that is being put together here is a figure that has been together by the clinical experts. Experts within the Ministry come up with the figure and that is going to be discussed with the Ministry of Economy.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU. I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, Head 22-4-1(9) – Dental Equipment, the same programme.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- \$700,000?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- The dental equipment and services provided, it is only \$500,000. My question is to ask the Minister how much revenue does the Dental Department get in a year?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Activity 1, SEG 5, is it? The only dental thing here is the Dental Prosthetic Material for \$700,000.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Yes, Madam.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- What is your question again, please, Honourable Tikoca?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- My question, Madam Chair, is why it had decreased?

HON. J. USAMATE.- What is the question?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- \$5,500,000 SEG 9 – Capital Purchase. Look at your page 168 of the Estimates; from \$14 million, it has now dropped to \$5 million. Why the decrease?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Once again, Madam Chair, that is basically looking at the needs now and looking at what is available, so once again this is the list of things that have been developed by the experts that are within the Ministry.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Programme 4, Activity 1, SEG 5 - Vaccines, \$5.8 million. Can you elaborate on the \$5.8 million in terms of that particular word “vaccines”?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- The vaccines, I think this has been one of the most successful services that we have used for preventive health, to try to stop people from becoming sick in the first place. So, currently there are about 12 different types of vaccines that are given out to our people especially from the time they are young.

Some of the vaccines that we will be using in this period have been purchased in the year before this, so they drag on into the next period. This is the fund that the medical experts within the Ministry have seen as appropriate for the vaccination programme that we have for this period from 2016 to 2017. You would also be getting assistance for some vaccines from our international development partners.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Does that improve the *Zika* Virus?

HON. J. USAMATE.- *Zika* vaccine is still in the exploratory phase at the moment. There is no confirmed *Zika* vaccine at the moment. These looks at things such as pneumonia, cervical cancer and other areas.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, if I may be given the chance to actually ask the same question on Capital Purchase. The remarkable decrease from \$14 million to \$5 million, would this be able to make up for the increase of the doctor’s salary? We all do budget during our time and why are you actually reducing this to make up for that because the answer given does not actually provide the services required every year to cater for these services. That is where the confusion is, can you please clarify.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think planning is a dynamic process. So, every year you scan the environment, you see what you need to do in a particular year, you look at the resources that are available to you as a nation, the amount of money that needs to be made available to the Ministry of Health and you try to allocate that money so that you can get the best possible outcome for the country. That was what was being done in this case. There is always a need to pull things out from some allocation and pass onto others, so at the end, you get the best total output that you want. That has been the focus of that and it has been reflected in this particular Budget.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A. M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, just a similar line on the line of expenditure, SEG 9 - Bio-Medical Equipment – Urban Hospital of \$5 million. Can the Honourable Minister enlighten us what is the equipment that is involved here and which urban hospital will be affected in this particular allocation of \$5 million?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- There is a list of different equipment that goes to all the different hospitals and it will also include the new facilities. For instance, Ba as a new hospital will need equipment that goes into it, Makoi Medical and all of these others. So there is a complete list. I would suggest that a question could be raised during Question time where I can give a more detailed explanation.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Just to make a clarification, if you look at the overall health budget which has in fact increased notwithstanding the fact we have a reduction in capitals. If you had the doctor's salary in the overall allocation to the Ministry of Health, it has in fact increased to what it was previously.

The other issue that we would also like to address and to inform the House as we have discussed with the Minister for Health also is that we want to improve the overall procurement methodologies and the procurement system in particular pertaining to medicines and the various consumables pertaining to drugs and other consumables like whether it is bandages, et cetera.

One of the things that we did find a few years ago is that the way the purchases were taking place, in particular, from some of the local suppliers, that a lot of the medicine and the reason why we had a high write-off, a lot of the medicine that was being bought, was being bought towards the end of the shelf life of those drugs. So there was a bit of a scam and as you know there were some changes that did take place within that particular Department.

We believe that there is a lot more room for improvement in that respect and of course we will be working together with the Honourable Minister and his team to be able to, through the Fiji Procurement Office and the Government Tender Board to ensure that the way the tenders are called, the drugs that are purchased, the quality of the drugs that are purchased and our ability to source from other lot more competitively priced markets will actually be furthered in the coming financial year.

So they are some of the issues that are at play at the moment. Of course there has always been the issue with logistics which we want to improve and lot of that can be solved also through the introduction of greater accessibility to Information Technology by the various health centres, by the various divisional hospitals and of course the sub-divisional hospitals too. So there is a lot of work in play at the moment and you would probably see a lot of changes taking place within the next six to nine months in respect of ensuring that we not only get value for money in terms of our purchases, but we also reduce the amount of write-offs, but also to be able to get better logistics in place to improve this specific area.

Just also a word on capital purchase, which is generally SEG 9 also, is a capital purchase as the Honourable Minister highlighted, is not something that remains constant all the time, because you have to buy equipment as and when it is required. One of the issues that we have, of course, faced is that when we buy equipment, even like an MRI machine, you need qualified people to operate them and one of the issues has been in Fiji generally, there has been a lot of attrition where people get trained, they get sent off by the Ministry of Health, overseas they get placements and then people tend to migrate or they go to the private sector. So, this is another part of the review that is taking place, as was announced a couple of years ago.

There has been an improvement in the salaries that have been paid to Allied Health Workers and this is one group of people where their salaries has also been subject to the remuneration assessment that is currently on foot. So there are a number of things the balls being juggled in the air at the moment, to be able to improve these specific areas, in particular to service delivery in the health department and that is what we are working on.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I want to move a motion to 22-4-1-5 in regards to drugs pegged at \$9 million, I would like to increase that, Madam.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, you fill the form, please. We will now move on to the amendments. The first one is by the Honourable Bulitavu that Head 22 be increased by \$2 million in Programme 4, Activity 1, SEG 9 in respect to Biomedical Equipment – Urban Hospital. Would the Honourable Bulitavu like to speak on that?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. To increase this, I think the Honourable Minister for Economy just a while ago, touched on this. I think one of the problems faced by this particular department is the change of the suppliers. I think they used to buy EBOS that Australian equipment but there has been recent influx of other machines that are coming from China and one of the problems that comes out of this is the lack of spare parts that we have.

Once we buy from different suppliers and there is not enough spare parts here, we cannot interchange them to swap those, but given the capital projects that have been announced in the various hospitals that we built, the expansion of services, I think there will be a need for biomedical equipment in those areas, given that most of the current machines that we have are either obsolete and some are even out of order and people have arrived at our hospitals and they have been told that machines are not working. But whether it is a procurement problem or whether spare parts has been ordered but the request has been sent. Probably, the procedure are quite bureaucratic. That is something that needs to be dealt with internally after the review is conducted on monitoring and control of systems that should be put in place.

For that, Madam Speaker, I move that, that be increased given the new need that is coming for capital projects and the increased capital projects, at the same time, maintenance also will increase. So, machines too will always increase because we are providing new services. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do you have a seconder?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I second the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I invite input to this motion. There being no input, we will put this motion to the vote. Parliament will vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not Voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The next motion is by the Honourable Anare Vadei and he is moving that Head 22 be increased by \$1 million in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 5 with respect to Suicide Prevention Programme. Honourable Vadei, would you like to speak on the motion?

HON. A. VADEI. – Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe this is one of the major issues with us nowadays and I wish to support for the increase to engage more professionals in this programme, make more active and visible programme and awareness and more outreach in the dailies and also in our TV programmes. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Do we have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite input to this motion. Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I believe this is a very important motion and I do thank Government for highlighting this by allocating some funds towards this. What I believe is the scale of the problem today, we need to up that budget. More than 10 years ago in my village, a young man took his life and it shocked us. That was the first time in my district for someone to do that. I was in Australia at that time when I got the phone call and I spoke to someone in Australia and he said “You know, it is a huge problem in Australia also but they have in place a highly structured programme to help children save them from this kind of action.”

I believe Fiji has seen quite an increase in young people, especially the young people. I think we need to intervene at the right time and the intervention will take a lot of professionals who we need to bring from abroad or train locally.

Madam Chair, you may remember a period, 20 years ago, I think when suicide was very prevalent. I think Polynesia and Micronesia, it was quite a big issue. Our young people as soon as they fail in something, they took their lives. I know what they did but it is no longer an issue now. I did remember that particular period and I believe Fiji is coming that way and with growth in population, the growth in youth today, and the many peer pressure and what they face every day, I think we need to at this budget. I think we need to equip specialist in this field to help our children, move them away from inclination to take their lives. I would strongly urge that we accept this. We take this motion and increase the budget for this to help the professionals in the Ministry of Health to set up teams, to set up a structure to meet this threat to our youths. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. Thank you. Any other input? Honourable Vadei, would you like to make a concluding statement? Thank you, we will now vote on this motion and does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	29
Not Voted	:	15

(There being 16 ayes, 29 noes and 15 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The next one is by the Honourable Vadei again and he is moving that Head 22 be increased by \$1 million in Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 5 with respect to ration. Honourable Vadei, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I have been observing the budget allocations and I found that there has been a decrease in this expenditure. When I enquired further, I found out that the cost of ration has been going down and the quality of the ration provided in these major hospitals are pathetic as well. So, that is why I propose for that increase.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite input to this motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I totally support this motion and all Honourable Members in the House should also support this.

If you go to our the hospitals during visiting hours when they serve around the food, you will notice, Madam Chair, that probably, some patients do not need some kind of special diet from dieticians but they cannot do much because that is the dinner that is provided, either they have cassava, *rourou* and some tinned fish there, Madam Chair. However, there is no balanced diet that should be targeted there, Madam Chair.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- That is a very sad situation. If you had gone around the hospitals after *TC Winston*, you would have seen that most were patients with fractured legs and were either served with diets that were served for other sick people. Again, Madam Chair, there needs to be an improved diet in our hospitals and that is why this particular allocation should be supported to increase this supply so that we can prepare good and healthy diets for patients. It is there but probably there is not enough funds. I do support this motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.. I will go back to where I left off. Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	5

(There being 16 ayes, 29 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The next motion is from the Honourable Bulitavu and he is moving that Head 22-4-1(4) – Biomedical Spare Parts and Maintenance (\$500,000) be increased by \$1 million.

I now give the floor to the Honourable Bulitavu to speak on his motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I think this is also related to the new machines but given the current spare parts allocation, I think it is insufficient, given the continuous breakdowns that we have. As also alluded to by the Honourable Minister for Economy, that there is really a need for proper training of our technicians in hospitals. Most of the machines that are coming in, we do not have proper qualified technicians to repair them.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, no, there were shortages, I did not say there were no qualified technicians.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I apologise for that, there is a shortage, but the need is there, Madam Chair, that we have machines coming in, we have qualified technicians but they have Degree in Electronics and other technical aspects but not specialised on these kind of machines that are coming. That is the reality.

Madam Chair, given that there is a need for spare parts, orders were being made and those have been delayed, while some machines are still sitting there at the workshops not attended to and given that most of the machine users in our hospitals have to learn on how to maintain machines, like cleaning up blood after operations and the chemicals that should be used, these require proper trainings, Madam Chair, proper maintenance of machines, the need for spare parts to maintain our current machines, all those are affecting the services in our hospitals. I would like to move that we support the increase in this particular allocation.

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite input to this motion.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, to support the motion, these machines are very important but when you look at the machines around the country, some of them are in need of repairs. Take, for example, just recently in Rakiraki Hospital, their machines needed upgrading/repairing and with some intervention from Suva, the machines were repaired. That is why I support this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other input, we will vote on this motion. Do we have opposition to the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	6

(There being 15 ayes, 29 noes and 6 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The next motion is by the Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca and he is moving that Head 22-4-1 SEG 5 – Drugs (\$9 million) be increased by \$1 million. I invite the Honourable Tikoca to speak on his motion.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair.

In the IC Unit for those of us who have friends and relatives who died there but during their last two weeks, the demand is that the medicines that is supposed to administer their sickness is not available at the hospitals right through for the period of a month or two weeks whatever the length of their there, it is going to be purchased by the family members. They are going to rush down again to the chemist to get the prescription prescribed for a sickness. So, that is the current happening day to day and I seek a \$1 million increase in this allocation to, at least, purchase those medicine to attend to patients in the IC Unit.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite input to this motion. Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair, I rise to support this motion as it is a good motion. I will give an example, Madam Chair. An inpatient who is admitted at a hospital, all drugs and treatment in respect of that patient is supplied by the hospital. However, there are instances were hospitals run out of drugs for a

particular treatment, these drugs are not available in the hospital, so the patient or the relative is asked to buy this from the local pharmacies.

This is very prevalent in the Western Division. On a daily basis, people come to complain to us, Madam Chair, and this is one of the reasons I support this motion. In a sense, I agree with the Honourable Minister for Economy when he said that we have to move away from the conventional way of buying, distributing and supplying the chain right through which is encouraging. However, what we need in this Budget, Madam Chair, according to the needs of the people is the increase in the purchasing of drugs for a particular treatment.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Is there any other input? Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I would also like to support that motion, given that most of our people when they reach the hospital, there is a shortage of drugs and also their prescribed drug is not available. Most of them are being advised to go to private pharmacies in towns to buy their medicine because in our hospitals, they only give Panadol, Antibiotics – Flucloxacillin and Amoxicillin. Those are the things that are available but doctors tend to improvise, consultants (I think) sit and try to mix up few medicine in order (at least) inject on the patient until the specific medicine arrives. This is an issue when people are even dying and people have been denied their right to health, given the lack of drugs are not available at our hospitals. That is why I support this motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, I think, as has been acknowledged, we recognise (of course) that there have been lapses and it is not an issue that has come out of the gloom. It has been a systemic issue and yes, we do recognise at times that people have been told to go and do that. That is a fact, we cannot deny that, but the reality is that there has never been a shortage of money to buy the drugs. The problem has been the manner in which the message has been sent and the time at which the message has been sent to the central procurement agencies that is in Suva. We recognise that.

As we said earlier on, we are looking at the entire system as to how it can be improved. By simply allocating \$1 million, if the logistics is not solved, if the organisation is not solved, there is no point giving a million dollars because you still have the same problem. So it is not the throwing of money at them that will solve the problem, what will actually solve the problem is getting the entire system right and we are working on it, we are talking to few people, people have been involved in other systems and trying and help them so that the Honourable Minister for Health when he stands up, he just simply has to put out his hand and the drugs is there; that is what we are saying. In the same way, as he talked about the core business of the hospital is not to do cleaning of the hospital or do the laundry, they our outsourcing that.

In the same way the core business is not procurement *per se* but it is to ensure that the drugs are always there for them to deliver their services to the patients. So that, Madam Chair, is what we are addressing at the moment. You will see a lot of traction in that in the next few months, but what we ask the Honourable Members to understand, by allocating more money to it is not going to solve the problem because the problem has never been a shortage of money. What sometimes we find some civil servants doing is, because the drugs have not being there, because of the lapses on their part, they have said “there is no money that is why we did not buy it”; it is a very easy way to get out of it as opposed to saying “well, actually we did not send the message to Suva on time.” That is the issue.

So I would urged you to understand what we are trying to do here and then by allocating a million dollars, it does not necessarily change the fact that the logistics is not proper in place.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEL.- Madam Chair, may I refer you to last year's Budget, the same issue and they also came up with the excuse. This year we are proposing for an increase because we really suffer in providing medicine to our relatives in ICU.

Now they are making excuses that this not a problem of money but now it is an issue that we need to do something. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite the Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, I just like to back up the points that are being made. The Honourable Minister for Economy has just explained that this is systemic systems issue. It is not an issue of having the drugs or not. It is an issue of making sure that the information transfer is improved. That is why you will notice that one of allocations that we have in the Ministry is to enhance our ICT.

One of the important thing when you have supply chains, the purchase of equipment and the distribution, your information and supply on demand must be very good. So that is an issue that we need to focus on and we are improving on.

Now immediately after he talks about that then you stand up again and talk about medicine, if you add more medicine, it does not improve. The volume of medicine that you purchase is a very delicate matter because if you purchase too much, you enhance your wastage. It is a fine balance so the solution to not having enough medicine is not always to buy more medicines because when you do that, then you cannot make use of it, your wastage goes up. So it is not something that it just like one plus one equals two. You need to look at the whole system, how everything works, and very carefully select the kind of medicine, the time that you buy the medicine, when you buy the medicine and the quantity of the medicine you buy; it is not that simple. That is what I am saying. The whole system is being relooked at so that it can be improved, so we can try to deliver medicine on time where and when they are needed.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I now give the floor to Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca to give his right of reply.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. When the doctor could not administer that medicine to the patient, he turns to the relative. The relative goes to the chemist and collects that, brings it back to the doctor and he administered. The only time it took is for him or her to go, catch a taxi, get it from the chemist and back; so simple.

You are actually providing free medicines and most of that medicines are not being used. We need those because all the time at the ICU, they run out of the prescribed medicine that would sustain the life of patients. All those things that you are saying, you are complicating the issue. The answer is very simple, but you are going around Lautoka to even go to Lami when you are supposed to go here straight to Lami; very simple. So take that complex explanation on the side, just see to the simple administration, just include that in your free medicine list. You do not have any problem. We are asking that, how can you do that, that \$1 million can help you. So please support this, it is good for the people who are hearing because they are dying because of laxity in administration. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on the motion. Do we have Opposition?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	6

(There being 15 ayes, 29 noes and 6 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The Honourable Anare Vadei would like to move that Head 22 be increased by \$800,000 in Programme 2, Activity 4, SEG 5 with respect to Ration. Honourable Vadei, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. A.T. VADEL.- Madam Chair, the same reason as I mentioned with the CWM Hospital, the quality and also the quantity of food supplied to the patients does not make them recover quickly. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder? I invite input to this motion, if any.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I agree with Honourable Vadei. Sometimes we become sicker when we come to hospital and see the food. We become sick because the environment, the atmosphere and the taste of the food, it all gives to the quick recovery even the smell of the food, Madam Chair. I think that is a very good motion. There are people who are there because they are sick and it smells bad.

Madam Chair, I will support the motion to improve the quality of our food in the hospitals and to treat those who are lying in bed in hospitals with no proper humanity, and it comes with the food and with a smile too, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think it is a sensible motion because the patients will need the best food for their recovery as part of the medical service. Having an amount that will limit that requirement for the patient is the essence of this motion. If you have more money, it does not mean that you have to use the whole amount, as long as you have the quality and the amount of food for the patient to be able to recover quickly. So in our motion, we move that that allocation should increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister for Economy.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Sorry, I just lost track. Was there an amendment to Programme 2, Activity 3? This is an amendment to Programme 3, Activity 2, is it?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- This is Programme 2, Activity 4.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM,- Programme 2, Activity 4 for Labasa Hospital. Sorry, I thought there was an amendment to Programme 2, Activity 3.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. In my visit to the Maternity Unit, I feel ashamed and sick seeing the mother's there after giving birth as they were served with tea not milo or cocoa. I asked as to what was the problem and they said that there is no more money. So that is why I have ask for an increase for Ration. Thank you.

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, open the vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	29
Not Voted	:	5

(There being 16 ayes, 29 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Salote Radrodro would like to move that Head 22 be increased by \$700,000 on Kidney Dialysis - Programme 1 Activity 1 SEG 6. Honourable Radrodro, would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. As we all know that kidney problem is a very life threatening disease right now and it is also on the increase and the increase is attributed mainly to also the increase in diabetes and high blood pressure, and the treatment for kidney patients is also an expensive treatment and I am moving the motion that \$700,000 to top up the \$300,000 to make it a million so that it could boost the services in the three main hospitals that are actually offering kidney dialysis services to patients which I believe most of those suffering from kidney problems are on the lower bracket in society and they really cannot afford to go to the Kidney Foundation for services and they depend on these services in the hospitals for treatment, Madam Chair. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have a seconder? I invite input to the motion, Honourable Professor Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think this is a very good motion and it is actually quite disappointing and saddening, Madam Chair, to see again, despite our request last year to increase the budget for dialysis. It is actually quite shameful. I mean, this is a government, we boast about not leaving anyone behind and yet we have a situation where we are allocating only \$300,000 for kidney dialysis which is a very, very expensive treatment for ordinary people.

I do not understand why the Government cannot increase this allocation. I remember Hon. Dr. Brij Lal was there to support the fundraising drive for a young man for kidney dialysis programme and we see the pain and suffering of those who are poor. Those who are rich and elite in society can always go and pay for it and raise funds but the for poor, low income-earners, once they have that, Madam Chair, it is a very, very difficult proposition for them to go and actually have a treatment and here is a Government which has a lot of other expenditure, which it could reprioritise, for example, giving \$9 million to golf. I

mean all these any penny benefits that we are talking about from golf tournament, we have to talk about that, but here is a very very simple allocation that we ask for it last year. Alright they did not vote for it last year, but it should have had the audacity and understanding that this is an important issue and included it this year. We would not have to come here and move another motion to raise this allocation to a million dollars, so I urge the government, the Prime Minister to think about these things.

HON. MEMBER.- That's good.

HON. MEMBER.- Enough. Let's vote.

HON PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Prime Minister, did you say "bullshit"

HON. J.V. BAINIMRAMA.- No, I did not say it.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. MEMBER.- Get your hearing checked.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- I thought you actually said it. I'm sorry you did not say it – my apologies.

But this is a very very important issue, if you have a government which cannot understand that there has to be an increase in this allocation, they should stop talking about this big idea that they are not leaving people behind. Madam Chair, I beg all of them to support this allocation and I challenge them to vote against it. The people out there are watching and trying to understand what this government is all about. It is all about ordinary people, it is about the elites, it is about playing golf. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, like my colleague, Honourable Professor Biman, I am also surprised, based on what you went through last year in this debate, that there has been no increase in this allocation in a meaningful way. I think last year when this came up, was the day that Jonah Lomu died. I remember I brought that up in here when we were debating this and Jonah Lomu, we know what happened to him – kidney, but it did not seem to move anyone in this Parliament and I was hoping that it would move them to include it this year.

As I said last year, Madam Chair, it is always sad when one of your relatives comes home and they say things like, "There is nothing more we can do" and it is worse still when you know that there is something you can do but you cannot afford it here in Fiji, and that is very painful.

Immediately after that vote last year, one of my cousins passed away. He came to the Private Hospital and we took him to San Diego and he passed away there, he came back, we were at peace because we had done the best for him. It was paid for by his supporters but the number of people who just go home to die is very sad, it is very painful.. I can remember a time, Madam Chair, when no one in Fiji would be denied what was available here. If you were ill, and the facilities and the medicine was in Fiji, you got it, I can remember that. Somewhere along the line, we become very mercenary about the whole thing that we put prices on these things and we no longer value life the way our parents used to. It is only a matter of another million dollars or whatever we are saying here. It will not break the bank, it is just a matter of passion, thinking of your own people and doing what is right. I would urge Government, please, support

this increase. It is something that we all need and as we said, it affects mostly the lower income people. I would urge you all, please, vote with your conscience and vote for an increase on this.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. We all support this. Significant reports coming out almost on a weekly basis, talking about deaths on the same issue, last year and the year before last year and right through this year, and it is surprising that we are not addressing it as lawmakers and parliamentarians of this country. I remember a significant individual in the word, he stated because of his worry about the balance of resources in the world and he was worried about the number of population and whether resources can feed the population and this guy said, "If I die and I reincarnate, I reincarnate into parasites so that I can kill as many people as I can to maintain the balance." We do not need that here because here we have plenty resources, we have plenty places available to plant, so if we continue to deny people their right to be given medicinal treatment and all the treatment, you may be falling in the same bracket. Please, revisit that area and we are supposed to be supporting that and the people are wanting your leadership to provide this assistance to the dying population of this country, I support this.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I will just give a short brief on this issue. I support the proposal and the reports coming out from the professionals regarding the increase in the kidney problem in our country is increasing annually, then we need some money to arrest the problem, otherwise we fail in our duty in this honourable House. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite the Honourable Minister if would like to contribute.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, I would just like to mention the fact that, there is no one on this side of the House that does not take the health of our people very seriously.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. J. USAMATE.- We take it very seriously. We care for all of those people that need dialysis and that goes without question. I think for all of us, on both sides of the House, we care for our people. That is why they voted us to be here. We believe that their health is very important.

However, if you have to address a problem, this is the same issue that I had talked about in relation to the distribution of drugs. The Honourable Ratu Tikoca seems to think that it is a very simple problem that required a simple solution, there is no such thing in life. Everything in life is complex. You change one part of a system to produce one particular outcome, you will lead to a negative outcome somewhere else, that is the way it is.

The same thing applies when we are talking about these issues on dialysis. As has been mentioned here, dialysis, one of the biggest problems is diabetes. If you do not address the issue of diabetes, you will not be able to address this problem. The root cause of the problem is the issue of diabetes, that is why, as I had mentioned earlier on, the targeted approach - more approach needs to be focused on prevention, and that is the focus of the Ministry of Health at the moment. How do we try to do things so that the people do not get diabetics in the first place?

This issue of diabetes, if you go back into our history, a 100 years ago, our people were not diabetic. So, if you want to address the root cause of this problem, you must look at prevention. That is the focus of this, and it is going to be the focus. It is going to be a long term. So, the whole focus of our approach as

Government, is find the cause of the problem, and the cause of the problem is lifestyle. You need to be able to address that, that is why I am inviting all of you, when you have the screening this week, come and be screened. That is why we are inviting everyone.

We need to have the solution that addresses the problem. The solution is prevention and that is going to be our focus. In the meantime, however, we understand the depth of this problem and I have always interacted with our specialists in the Ministry who are looking after this particular area, I have also gone to the fundraising programmes that you talk about and it tugs at my heart about what happens to people that need dialysis because they are in a chronic situation.

What Government has been focusing so far, for the past few years since I have been there is to look at those whom we can help, those who have acute problem that if we provide dialysis, they can get better. Those are the kinds of people that have been supported so far. I believe that, that is something that we will need to continue to do but ultimately, the long term solution has to be addressed - the issue of diabetes and go back to prevention, and that is going to be the focus of the Ministry of Health.

We will try as much as possible to help those for whom we have been able to provide dialysis, that they can get better. These are the kinds of people for whom we are providing services in the hospitals. So, we feel for everyone, but we must come up with the right solutions to address the problems, and that has to be the way that we need to move ahead in the future.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I now invite the Honourable Salote Radrodro to give her right of reply.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair, and I thank the Honourable Minister for his explanation. As already mentioned, in the Ministry of Health there are two main Division; you have the Preventative and the Curative. What the Honourable Minister has alluded to is on the prevention side and prevention will take time.

Madam Chair, what we are looking at in this Kidney Dialysis Treatment is curative, it is now, it is instance.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- That is why, Madam Chair, we are proposing that it be increased by \$700,000 because like the Honourable Minister had rightly said, the number of diabetic patients are increasing and when that increases, the number of kidney patients also increases.

Right now, Madam Chair, that is what that is needed to boost the \$300,000 to \$1 million by adding on another \$700,000 to be able to provide that kind of treatment to be able to treat those kidney patients because like I had already mentioned, it is a life threatening disease and they need to be treated, if indeed that we do not want to leave anyone behind, and if indeed if we are concerned about the poor in our country.

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	:	16
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	5

(There being 16 ayes, 29 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The next motion is by Honourable Anare Vadei and he is moving that Head 22-2-3 SEG 5 – Ration of \$450,000 be increased by \$600,000.

HON. A.T. VADEL.- I withdraw that motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, that motion is withdrawn

The next motion is proposed by Honourable Dulakiverata. He is moving that Head 22-4-1(9) - Dental Equipment - Urban Hospitals and Sub-Divisional Hospitals (\$500,000) be increased by \$500,000. I give the floor to Honourable Dulakiverata to speak on his motion.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, I had moved a motion to increase the allocation by \$500,000.

Madam Chair, dental is something that affects everyone, so we need to have proper services there to cater for the services so that everyone who needs the treatment, the service is available. There is a need to have the right equipment to carry out the dental service. So, for that, I move that we increase the allocation by \$500,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite input to the motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I support the motion that is before the House. I think there is a need to increase this allocation, given that some of our urban hospitals and even sub-divisional hospitals give limited services. For example, they can only conduct extraction of teeth not the cleaning, because they do not have the proper equipment and they refer us to other hospitals and other sub-divisional hospitals. Even some of the equipment when they are out of order, they try to borrow from health centres.

This is the reality on the ground, Madam Chair, and some of the equipment that are there, like the bed that they use especially for patients to lie on, they are all Chinese brand. When they arrived, most of them became faulty because they come with accessories and the warranty period expires and all that. I urge the Honourable Minister to also have a proper review on what equipment or other better suppliers that we can order this equipment from because we need long lasting ones rather than the ones arriving that are already expired or arrived but already have defects. These are the issues that we have at the moment at the hospitals. I would like to support the motion to increase this so that this particular service is not affected and people should not be lined up in our hospitals. They have come early in the morning, first bus at 6 a.m. to come and line up to get a number, they go back once these dental services closes at 3.30 p.m. or 4 p.m., they are not treated so they come back the next day. This is the kind of things that

they have, and most of the dentists go out at lunch hour and forget to come back, and people are there waiting. These are the things, Madam Speaker, that really needs proper monitoring and proper supervision so that the standard of our health is maintained and the people are satisfied.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input? Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to address these issues based on what Honourable Koroilavesau was alluding to, when you remove something from here, and then you replace it here. Well, Madam Chair, when you increase tax on sweet drinks, you improve and increase your funding on dental, on tooth decay and improve dialysis services to the needy.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other input, I give the floor to the Honourable Minister.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, I would just like to mention that continuously while we are sitting through this debate, we still hear this term they say, “most of them” or “all of them”. I think if you are going to make a statement like that, it must be based on some data. Did you physically count this? They have this habit of saying, “most of them”. Do you understand that most of them means 50 percent plus one, because I am sure if you do a survey, these are basically lies if you are saying, “most of them” and you cannot substantiate it with facts. We are doing a debate on something that the whole nation is listening to, we should make sure that the data that we use is based on something sound and not some idea that you pull from the stratosphere.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to reiterate that dental problem is everyone’s problem, everyone is affected and there is a need that we have the services in all the hospitals by having the necessary equipments. Therefore, Madam Speaker, I support the increase in allocation by \$500,000?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on this Motion. Does anyone oppose?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	28
Not Voted	:	8

(There being 14 ayes, 28 noes and 8 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The Honourable Anare Vadei would like to move that Head 22 be increased by \$300,000 in Programme 2, Activity 5, SEG 5 with respect to Ration. I give the floor to the Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I withdraw that motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, motion is withdrawn.

The Honourable Vadei would also like to move that Head 22 be increased by \$300,000 for Programme 2, Activity 6, SEG 5 with respect to Ration.

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Also withdrawn.

The Honourable Salote Radrodro would like to move that Head 22 be increased by \$200,000 in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 with respect to Project HEAVEN Trust.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. For Project HEAVEN, I am proposing the increase for this budgetary allocation because of their Health Outreach Programmes, particularly in terms of vision and hearing. In their outreach, they reach out to the rural communities, and that also includes the poor communities around our country. I am proposing this also because at the same time, they provide reading glasses at a very cheap cost, and even sometimes I believe it is free, as those rural communities cannot access these kind of services in terms of eye glasses from their nearest nursing stations or health centres. So, along that line, Madam Chair, I am proposing that that allocation be increased by \$200,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder?

HON. RATU S. NANOVO.- Madam Chair, I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite input to this motion. There being none, we will put this motion to the vote. Parliament will vote. Is there any opposition?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	28
Not Voted	:	8

(There being 14 ayes, 28 noes and 8 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, the Honourable Semesa Karavaki would like to move that Head 22 be increased by \$200,000 in Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 1, with respect to Overtime. I give the floor to the Honourable Karavaki.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This is a well-known situation that I am referring to here. In the Civil Service, Madam Chair, we know that certain time of the financial year that the overtime allocation would be exhausted, and for the workers to continue taking care of the services required out of them, they would be asked for their overtime. Instead of being paid, they are to take time-off, and this is actually the situation that would happen if this continues, because the health workers, I am referring here to the CWM Hospital, but this is a common problem that happens in all other health facilities.

When they are asked, Madam Chair, to continue to give their service, their overtime would be accumulated to the extent that by the end of the year, they would all be asked to take the balance of their overtime, so that the next year would start fresh with no overtime left.

And, this is the problem. It goes to the extent that even if they cannot take their overtime, because they are required to work, they cannot take the time off, because there would be less workers and they are required to be there to carry out the service, especially for the nursing service, Madam Chair. And, the balance of those overtime would be taken out altogether. This is the kind of treatment. We do not have to see that we do not leave anyone behind, but we must not treat the workers as slaves, Madam Chair. The workers have given all.

I am one who had experienced this, Madam Chair, as sometimes I do not even meet my wife in a week because this is the real situation. When I go back home, she is already back in the hospital working. At the time that I would leave in the morning, she would still be working, and when she goes home I am already in the office working. And, this is not the problem that I go through myself, a lot of families they go through this, and this is why I say that we do not have to only use this statement to say that we do not leave anyone behind, but we must not treat the workers as slaves when they deserve to be paid their overtime. Make sure that we as leaders provide for the payment of those overtime, because they have worked for it. They sacrifice their time and their family time when they are supposed to be home. They gave it for the service for the nation. It is important, Madam Chair.

This is not anything that we should joke about but take it seriously as leaders of this nation because as leaders we must remember we are not only responsible to the people, but we are also responsible to God Almighty who looks upon us in carrying out service. This is important, Madam Chair, and I see this with passion because our workers must be treated with dignity. They must be respected. They must be given what is due to them. I am only asking for \$20,000 to make sure it covers the period when all the money is exhausted to take it to the end of the financial year. I only asked you for that.

Madam Chair I hope you know we would have the spirit in us to understand that and work according to that commission. That is all Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON- Thank you, do we have a seconder?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I second the motion.

MADAM. CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite input to this motion. There have been none we all vote on the motion. Do we have an opposition?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	28
Not voted	:	8

(There being 14 Ayes, 28 Noes and 8 Not Voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, Honourable Leawere would like to move that Head 22 be increased by \$170,000 in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 3 with respect to repatriation.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, in terms of repatriation taking into consideration what the Honourable Minister had alluded to earlier regarding bringing in bodies of those who have died from other parts of the country to their areas. I feel that this amount is less in terms of the segment of \$30,000 for the simple reason Madam Chair, the cost in terms of transportation unless the medical services have a helicopter then \$30,000 would be enough. But since people will be depending on public transportation and other means of getting to bring the issue on repatriation I would suggest and request the members of both Houses of a both sides to support this motion. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite your input into this motion. –

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Yes, Madam Chair, I would like to support the motion in regards to repatriation. This is a very important issue and it affects our people in the rural areas Honourable Minister, especially when a sick person is being brought through the services of hospital and transferred to the main hospital in Labasa from Taveuni or from here, Labasa to Suva or to Lautoka and the patient dies in the hospital. This has been a problem because there is a morgue service that is now outsourced at our various hospitals, mortuary services and they provide coffin box and even transportation and also they provide the ferry services from those coming from Taveuni . But most of these patients that come from the island when they die in Labasa, I think mostly because we turn to cater for funeral expenses in Labasa and they cannot afford to take back the relative to be properly buried at the village so the funeral depends on a few relatives who come around even today boat fares for those who will come and attend given that there is no proper awareness in this regards where a particular fund is available and they come around to purchase coffin box in Labasa and try to even as far as Bua and all these places are concerned.

There is a need because they came in through the expenses of patient of hospital they were brought to the main hospital by the ministry and when they die at the hospital they are currently been treated and they are not returned to where they are originally from. I think there are needs to be an increase in this particular allocation because many people in our rural areas they suffer the same problems especially *iTaukei* families, they do not have the means to pay this expenses and I hope that Honourable Members of the House will support this because this is an area that probably can be improved and even proper awareness is done in our hospitals for the people to know that it is available but to have proper funds to allow this to happen and I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have any other input? Hon. Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I have encountered the same issues in our community, whereby patients were air lifted to our CWM hospital and they die in the hospital. So, whatever we have encountered is that they do not have enough resources to take them back. So, their loved ones can bid them a good farewell and their relatives also can be acknowledged for the hard work that they have done. What you have encountered so far, first of all there was shortage of funds in that allocation when we requested to ship the deceased back to the island. That is why I support the motion for an increase in the allocation.

MADAM. CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have any other input? Maybe no other input, Honourable Leawere, would you like to make concluding statement. Thank you. Parliament will vote on this motion, does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	7

(There being 14 ayes, 29 noes and 7 not voted, the motion is defeated)

Honourable Dulakiverata would like to move that Head 22 be increased by \$100,000 in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6, with respect to grant to Saint John Association of Fiji. I invite Honourable Dulakiverata to speak on this motion.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. First of all, I would like to thank the Government for recognising the services provided by the Saint John Association, by giving a grant of \$100,000. Being a board member of this organisation for a number of years, I know what it goes through. The services they provide to supplement the services provided by the Government and the organisation have yet to carry out fundraising activities to supplement their resources, to be able to provide all these services.

So, for that Madam Chair, I move the motion that we should increase that allocation by another \$100,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have a seconder? I invite input to the motion, if any.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- I think we do know that the Saint John Ambulance has been around for some time now. They have been doing a great service to the whole of Fiji and yet, all these years the allocation has almost been on the \$100,000 level. To improve these services further, I think it is only prudent that we give them the support and give them the necessity, additional funding as now been requested.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodoro.

HON. A. M. RADRODRO.- Thank you. Madam Chair, I strongly agree with the motion that there is a need to increase the allocation for the St John Association of Fiji. I think this allocation of \$100,000 has been a consistent amount over the periods and the scope of work the St John Ambulance do is basically, to provide ambulance services from residential homes to hospitals and I think the basis of the operation is for them to levy some fees for those that are supposed to use the ambulance services.

Sometimes, most of those levies are not paid by the people who are being carried, why? Because they have to do the services first in which to transport people from home to the hospital and this is also one of the things that the ambulance services has also been crying for over a period of time, is the improvement of their infrastructure, especially the ambulance vehicles, the staff administration and also the facilities in which they conduct their services. This has been a cry for over a period of years and that is why I support the proposed increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think all are rugby loving people here and as a former President of the Western Rugby Union and Chairman of Lautoka Rugby Union, this is the problem because we have to go and seek assistance from doctors, if they can spare some time in the weekend to provide that services to us. And then we have problems in actually running games when the doctor is not there because the St John cannot present themselves because of other commitments. An increase of this fund will be able to provide the necessary medical expertise to provide that support to our players all over Fiji. I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T.VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. In support of the motion, I believe that we are moving on a new era that we need to equip our staff with more modern technology, so the increase in the funding in the support of the services of St John Association. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite the Honourable Dulakiverata to speak in reply.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. As you know the St John Association supplements the services provided by the Government and most of the young people work for this organisation for free, as volunteers just to keep the organisation going.

Madam Chair, we have levied new taxes on the sweet drinks and tobacco, so all these taxes should be directed to some of these organisations that support the health services.

Madam Chair, for the type of services that they provide, I am glad that it has been mentioned that most of the time there were calls from homes and there is no guarantee that the services would be paid. It takes quite some time to collect all the funds and most of the time, as I said before, fund raising had to be carried out to meet all these shortfalls

For that Madam Chair, I again reiterate that we should increase this allocation by \$100,000. Thank you.

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	7

(There being 14 ayes, 29 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The Honourable Dulakiverata would like to move that Head 22, be increased by \$55,000 in Programme 2, Activity 4, SEG 3 with respect to transport operations. Honourable Dulakiverata, you have the floor.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, this is with regards to transportation of patients from Labasa Hospital to the rural areas and overseas.

Madam Chair, as you know the cost of transportation now days have gone up and most of the people in the Northern Division that come to Labasa Hospital are from the rural areas and I think the allocation that is here now, is inadequate to cater for these services and therefore, I move that it be increased. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite input to this motion. Honourable Bilitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I rise to support the motion in regards to this particular amendment that is up for transportation of patients local and overseas which is only given about \$45,000 for the Labasa Hospital.

Labasa Hospital, as we know, it does not only deal with people around Labasa but as far as Cakaudrove, from Saqani, the other side, even patients that are referred from Seqaqa, Savusavu and Nabouwalu Hospitals are brought to Labasa before they are airlifted to Suva or Lautoka for special scanning or other treatment that is done here. I think, given the number of population that is there and the amount of services that is in Labasa, that sometimes because of problems in machines that are out of order and those services are only available in other hospitals in Viti Levu, they are transported mostly by aircraft.

On that, Madam Chair, there have been many delays in regards to this because of the costing and patients they wait for either one or two weeks in Labasa to have all those procedures cleared and available of a nurse to accompany that particular patient on flight to Suva and also the services of the transportation to the airport before that patient is lifted to Suva. Also the availability of the service in Suva, availability of the machines in Suva and also the doctors in Suva and they also do advance booking before they are brought to Suva. That is why I support the motion, that this be increased so that people in the North have proper funds when they come into this kind of situation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other input, we will put this motion to the vote. Does any Member oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will now vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	9

(There being 14 ayes, 27 noes and 9 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The Honourable Bilitavu would like to move that Head 22, be increased by \$25,000 in Programme 3, Activity 4, SEG 5, with respect to emergency ambulance services. Honourable Bilitavu, you have the floor.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, that is for Labasa Hospital. The emergency ambulance services which is at \$50,000, just an increase of another \$25,000 given that most of the services, I do not know whether the Honourable Minister is aware when you call to get your emergency service as ambulance, I think there is a fee that is paid - \$5, some \$10 and that is one of the problems when

you start calling emergency cases through the operators, they are saying that “the ambulance will come” until you can confirm that you are going to pay. These are the issues that people face at the villages.

The other thing too, Madam Chair, given the location, sometimes it takes even for a patient to call and give a location, the ambulance ends up somewhere else. That provides a lot of delays and sometimes when there is a call requesting for ambulance, the ambulance is somewhere else attending another emergency as there is only one ambulance available or two and if we call and the ambulance is in the garage because of a repair, breakdown and that has also been a problem, given that this particular ambulance also services not only Labasa Hospital but it goes down to Seaqaqa to pick other emergency cases from there to be brought to Labasa. With the unavailability of other ambulances in the other health centres around the North, then that particular ambulance in Labasa is being engaged.

Given that additional funding is for proper upkeep of those ambulance that are available, if you go down to Labasa, at Qomate House where the headquarters of the Ministry of Health is, I think the Honourable Minister for Agriculture will confirm this, there are some old ambulances that are parked there at the compound. They have not been removed and that could be repaired and used to provide this service. Even efficiency and more effectiveness why people are denied this proper services when they are needed because they cannot be paying carriers and even carriers do not want to take patients who need crutches and wheelchairs but they do not have special vehicles. When an ambulance comes, it accompanies a nurse with a stretcher and everything, so those are the technical bits. That is why I would like the House to support this particular motion, given that it is a real need for the people in Labasa.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, I wish to support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are you seconding it?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I second the motion and I would like to contribute too to the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, Labasa is a rural area and it covers a very wide area and the roads are very bad. Most of the roads are gravel surfaced and we need services. The majority of people in Labasa live in the rural areas and to ensure that all the health services are provided, we need to have a good ambulance service for evacuation. Madam Chair, I support this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I fully support the motion for the increase in ambulance services in Labasa. Basically with ambulance services transporting patients from hospital to hospital, to transport a patient from Labasa, from Bua, from Savusavu to Labasa, there is quite a distance there and therefore warrants an increase in the emergency ambulance services. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other input, Honourable Bilitavu, would you like to speak in reply? Parliament will vote on the motion, does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, open the vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	28
Not voted	:	8

(There being 14 ayes, 28 noes and 8 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The Honourable Vadei would like to move that Head 22 be increased by \$10,000 in Programme 3, Activity 2, SEG 5 with respect to Laundry. Honourable Vadei.

HON. MEMBERS.- His gone.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Proposed amendment is defeated. Honourable Vadei, have you withdrawn your motion on the laundry?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

No amendment was approved, so we will vote on the Head. Parliament will vote on Head 22, the question is that the amount on Head 22 – Ministry of Health and Medical 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	:	28
Noes	:	17
Not voted	:	5

Head 22 agreed to.

Thank you, Honourable Members. We will now take a break for refreshments and resume at 10 minutes past five.

The Parliament adjourned at 4.45 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 5.10 p.m.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We will resume where we left off. Secretary-General.

Head 23 – Department of Housing

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is not open for any comments on Head 23. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Yes. Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 7 – National Housing Policy Implementation Plan. Can we have an update on this because I also want to put on record that I will be moving a motion in relation to that?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- In the debate, we should not be really looking at past performance. We should really be looking at whether we approve, do not approve, that is it.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I will move a motion anyway.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You want to reduce or increase.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Increase by \$5 million and reduce SEG 10 - First Home Buyers by the same amount, so that it balances.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to move a motion under SEG 10 to increase the Town Wide Informal Settlement Upgrade from \$4 million to \$10 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, can you fill the form, please.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, Activity 1, SEG 10 – Housing Assistance to Fire Victims. I would like to move a motion on that, Madam Chair. Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S. NANOVO.- Madam Chair, still on SEG 10 - HART, I would like to move a motion to increase that by another \$500,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, fill the form.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Can I ask for some clarification on SEG 8 – Squatter Upgrade and Resettlement. Where is that; when is it happening? Just a point of clarification, from there I might consider a motion. SEG 8 on Squatter Upgrade and Resettlement.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- They are in Omkar, Caubati in Nasinu, Naidovi in Sigatoka and Ledrusasa in Nadi.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other input?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, SEG 8 - City Wide Squatter Upgrade Project. Can you make a clarification on that one, Madam Chair?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- City Wide Squatter Upgrade Project which has a \$400,000 allocation, it is looking at upgrading four settlements in the four municipalities; Delainasole in Beaumont Settlement in Nasinu, Vunato in Lautoka, Nauluvatu in Suva and Valenicina in Lami for settlement road upgrading.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Can I move a motion, Madam Chair, by \$100,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Please fill a form.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair, SEG 10 - Housing Assistance to Fire Victims - \$500,000, I note that it is reduced, it was \$1 million before.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- What do you want to do, Honourable Member?

HON. P. SINGH.- I need a clarification from the Minister, why is it being reduced to \$500,000.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It is because of the low utilisation rate.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, I want to ask the Honourable Minister on SEG 10 - First Home Buyers, if he can give a clarification on that, before I move a motion..

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would you like to move a motion?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- But I would like to have a clarification from the Minister.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, you can move a motion, without a clarification. I knew he is spending too much time with all that, especially if you want to move a motion. Go ahead and increase to 12. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Clarification to be made on SEG 10 on the big increase to \$4 million; from \$16,000 to \$4 million, why?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Town Wide Informal Settlement Upgrade Project \$4 million?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Yes, why the big increase? It is increasing from 16 to 20?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you want to reduce it; too big?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- No, I am asking why the increase?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you want to increase, reduce or refuse?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- No, I am not moving a motion, I am seeking clarification.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- That is actually Matavolivol, commonly known as Votualevu in Nadi. That is a big project there and one of the reasons as we highlighted in the last Budget, we are trying

to bring down the cost of the development for the development of the land that should not be passed on to those people who are going to buy lots over there.

Let me just give you some figures for Matavolivoli. The total cost of the project is about \$4.9 million for about 400 lots, \$2.5 million was paid in June this year and the balance of \$2.5 million is to be paid in September, where the \$4.9 million is to subsidise infrastructure costs is as follows:

- Roadwork construction
- Storm water drainage
- Water Reticulation
- Sewerage Reticulation
- Telecom
- And the Pump station

We will bring down the price of the lots from \$23,600 to \$10,400. The idea is, we want to get low income people to actually come and buy the lots over here, so we are targeting, for example, people who work in the tourism industry, people who may have jobs whether they get paid from \$10,000 to \$20,000, so it makes it a lot more affordable for that.

As part of this, we can also tell you, there is a particular area of the subdivision, that we will also put in place strata titling and the Honourable Leader of Opposition talked about the First Home Buyers and we also hope to bring all those people into the strata titling. So, we want to increase home ownership. Home ownership has been very elusive for many low income people in Fiji, generally because the cost of development has been quite high for land development et cetera.

So, this is part and parcel of the subsidy that we are putting through in the Matavolivoli Development Project. That is why the cost has gone up.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Speaker, can the Honourable Minister just explain that Housing Authority Social Housing Policy. It needs more clarification, please.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This is a programme that was started under the Bainimarama-led Government, where we discovered that the Housing Authority over the years because of the internal issues, because of the computer systems, people had sometimes paid more than two or three times than what they had borrowed. So, its five time, It is in fact, some are more than five times. As a result of that, people have been continuously paying. This money was set aside, originally we set aside about \$2 million a year, to pay off those debts for them on their behalf. At the moment we have \$5000,000 set aside, so essentially we are targeting low income earners.

Some of these people earn less than \$10,000, we provide assistance to them and where the debt is \$10,000 or less, we pay it off completely for them from these funds. If it is more than that, then depending on what percentage, Government actually pays about 60 per cent of it and Housing Authority then also contributes about 40 per cent towards paying off the debt. So, this is to help people who have accumulated debts with no fault of their own, to help them write off those debts and this is what helps them.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other input. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, just on SEG 6, I would like to move a motion but before that, can I can get a clarification from the Honourable Minister on which particular housing area has been looked after by the Public Rental Board? The subsidy of \$1 million.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- All of the public rental housing areas, wherever they are, this is to provide assistance to those people who are the beneficiaries of the Public Rental Board. So, it is across the board, irrespective of whichever location it is. This is the subsidisation of the rents.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I would like to move a motion on that SEG 6.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, there being no other input, we will go on to the amendment proposals and the first one is by the Honourable Professor Biman Prasad, who wants to move that Head 23 be increased by \$6 million in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10, with respect to Town Wide Informal Settlement Upgrade.

Honourable Biman Prasad, you have the floor.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I need a seconder?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are you moving? Do you have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, you can speak on your motion then.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair, let me first of all give some credit to the Government, for actually making housing as a key national agenda and attempt to bring different stakeholders in dealing with the issue of housing; whether it is informal settlements, whether it is first home buyers, whether it is those in the city. Madam Chair, it is an important one and we support the Government's effort to ensure that we have adequate housing for all our people. With respect to Town Wide Formal Settlement Upgrade Project, Madam Chair, the rate of urbanisation is going to overwhelm the allocations in the Budget. It is only going to be a small catch up in the long run, if we continue to allocate amounts such as those allocated in this and in particular, squatter settlements, informal settlements, Madam Chair, around towns and cities. If you go around the outskirts of Suva, Nausori and Nasinu, you find that many of these informal settlements do not have electricity, water, do not have proper footpaths and children are walking to school in bad weather. They have great difficulty in accessing the basic facilities, amenities going to the schools.

In many countries, Madam Chair, the issue of proper housing, proper titles, blocks is a long-term issue and in many countries where they have had this huge squatter problem – informal settlement, they are actually dealt with the basic issue of water, electricity, little roads and footpaths in the way the settlement are until such times that they are able to find a way to permanently settle them with proper houses.

So, I think what is needed now and my own assessment, Madam Chair, you know if you do the projection at the rate at which people are moving into urban areas, towns and cities, in the next 10 years, we would have a large number of people. In fact, I think the next census that we are going to have next year, will actually show that the rate of urbanisation would have increased significantly.

That is why I am saying that we need to immediately put in more money into upgrading basic facilities. FEA should have no excuse, I know when you talk to them they said "oh, we need proper title, we need approvals from the landowners, freehold titles holders and so forth". I do not think, Madam Chair, that that should be an excuse for us to provide basic facilities such as water and electricity. I know that

there are kids studying in Vatuwaqa, in squatter settlements around Suva, Western Division and Northern Division who do not have basic facilities such as electricity and water.

So, I think increasing this grant from \$4 million to \$10 million and I think we can find that money quite easily, Madam Chair, would go a long way in addressing these issues within the squatter settlements. I really want to commend this motion to the House. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Are there any other input, Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I support the motion for the reason that why I am keeping talking about this National Housing Policy. I have a feeling too that it has not started well and there is a need - it proposes a Council. The National Council to look after the housing at the national level.

One of the important aspect of that policy is that, in relation to squatters that you must not mitigate standards and regulations that applied to sub-division of lands. So, with these money, this can be allowed to this informal settlements for the time being. The squatters can afford electricity, water but they cannot afford the roading and they cannot afford other services to bring it up to the standards required nationally. That is where this money will come in and I also urged the Government not to rush into giving titles, separate titles to them. It would be better for the Government with this money to hold the title in relation to the whole squatter for the time until things can be done well. So, this money is important, this motion is very important and I seek the support of this House.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you other input to this motion? There being no other input, Honourable Minister for Economy.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, I am glad the Opposition does think like the Government side. As you know that the addressing of squatter issues in a very fundamental way, was started by the Bainimarama Government. This is the continuation of that work. Madam Chair, that we have been working with Father Kevin Barr in what is commonly known as Jittu Estate, where people were sort of languishing in a very squalid condition right in the middle of Raiwaqa and all that road was built. Now, people are living in concrete homes, with proper sewerage, proper water, proper roads and electricity. Of course, in the other side, there is another development that is taking place. That work continues.

In respect to the Town Wide Informal Settlement Upgrade Project, this \$4 million actually is targeted specifically for about 1,200 families. I will tell you where they are located; in Qauia and Nadonumai Settlements in Lami, Wakanisila Settlement in Nasinu and Waidamudamu Settlement in Nausori. These are the four areas and part of this development includes the upgrading of the infrastructure amenities such as roads, water, sewerage, electricity, telephone access - landline, of course now, most people have mobile phones, hydrants and drainage.

The completion of the civil works and we also been talking to TLTB, which holds the head lease which it will be issuing leases to all of these people who are living at informal settlements with 99 year residential leases. You would have heard that with the Honourable Minister for Lands, together with the Honourable Prime Minister gave out 99 year leases recently in Lautoka, I think it was the end of last year. Similar works are carrying on in Ledrusasa, which is behind Legalega and Matavolivoli - that area. Again, there has been work carried out in Naidovi where people have been living for more than 50, 60 years. Most of these people were labourers during the indentured period, had been living on a one year terms basis of leases with tenancy at will as it called; year to year.

Now, with the development of these areas, with the roads but more importantly, the ability to get secured leases, they can then get into the mainstream financial system, they can use the leases as mortgages, they can access finance. This is where the Honourable Leader of the Opposition had asked the question and I understand she wants to increase the funding. This is where they can also tap into the First Home Buyer Programme. Once they go there, if you are building your first home and they will be treated as building their first home because most people do not actually have proper homes. They will get a \$10,000 grant as long as the bank assesses them to be able to make repayments and even many of them have jobs. In fact many of us would know that those people who serve you, even as tellers in the banks are probably living over mangroves swamps somewhere in Vatuwaqa. There are people like that in Suva we know that but we need to address those issues.

But we do not agree that you do not need landowner consents. You do need the landowner consents because if you do want to issue proper leases, you need the landowner consent. Similarly, we have instances for example, where people are living there as informal settlers but when FEA brings in the power pole, they need the consent of the landowner. In some instances, they do not allow that. The landowner knows, they only getting like \$20 a month from these people, why should they give consent? That is how some of them think and rightly so in most of these instances. These people can become permanent, it is very hard to take them out. However, if the landowner were paid the proper lease amount and there is development in that area, it increases the value of the land around the settlement for the landowners too. So, we have to look at all landowners in respect of this development.

What we see, Madam Chair, is that, we are trying to approach these issues from many different angles. So we have the first home buyer, we have the Town Wide Informal Settlement Upgrade Project, we then have the Public Rental Board policy that is working in place and of course, then we have at the same time, we are applying a different mix, so place like Vatulevu where we are giving hotel workers the opportunity to own their own homes. All of this is set up in SEG 10 of this particular Head. So, as far as that is concerned, we also have to have the capacity by increasing the amount of money and the reality is this, we have a huge spend in the coming year. We have \$132 million, we have a lot of individual buildings that are being constructed and already we are seeing a couple of construction companies have brought in workers from overseas like from Philippines and Indonesia because there is a shortage of skillsets in Fiji, for example, good tile layers, et cetera. So we need to also know that we have capacity on the ground to have these works carried out, so these are the four areas that have been targeted.

We have, of course, as capacity increases, a lot more areas are being identified through the Ministry of Lands. The Hon. Prime Minister has already given instructions to the respective Ministers that are looking after these various squatter development areas, some of it rests with the Department of Housing, some of it is with the Ministry of Lands, a little bit of it is with the Minister for Rural Development, so what we are trying to do is put in place a broad-based approach and have a single pronged approach in respect of solving the housing issue. We completely agree, and of course, we have been the driving force behind the increase in the home ownership and getting people who live in informal settlements, in squatter areas, to not just live a life of better dignity but also at the same time provide benefit to the landowners and also to increase what we call the "economic sector" as far as the construction industry is concerned.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other input, Honourable Dulakiverata?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, I thank the Honourable Minister for his explanation. Squatter rehabilitation or squatter resettlement is a big issue. We went to Lami and met with the landowners there. There is one area regarding the land at *Vale ni Cina*. Their proposal is to develop the squatter settlement and issue permanent leases to the squatters.

The members of the *mataqali* were split on these things. Some did not want to give their consent, maybe some gave their consent but without resolving that issue, I think the programme had gone ahead. It was not properly explained to them, the real benefit to them as landowners. Though the Government is contributing to the development cost, but what do the landowners get at the end of the exercise? These lots, it is a high-class residential area, it is not subject to flooding, and if properly subdivided, the lots there would fetch round about \$30,000 to \$40,000 per block. But the landowners are told that because the Government is providing the development cost, the sitting tenants would be paying only \$3,000 to \$4,000 per block.

From the landowner's point of view, though they will be getting rental but if they have found the right partner to develop this land, they should have a fair share of the value of the developed lots at the end of the exercise. Unfortunately, that would not be realised. This is why some of the landowners are raising the issue, and unfortunately only *itaukei* squatter land area that have been occupied by squatters are being targeted for subdivision to issue leases for the sitting tenants.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, that is not true.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- No, this is true. Because this one here is outside of the Lami Town. It is not Town Wide Upgrade, it is outside the town. It is outside of the boundary of Lami Town.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- City Wide Squatter Upgrade Project.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- No, we are talking about the Town Wide Informal Settlements - SEG 10.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, I am also telling you that *Vale ni Cina* as you have mentioned

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes, it is outside Lami Town.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It is close to City Wide Squatter Upgrade Project, under SEG 8 - \$400,000.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- SEG 8 - \$400,000.

Madam Chair, I think a proper research and assessment should be made on this type of settlement to ensure that the landowners get a fair return from their land on the development.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yeah, agree.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Not all of them agreed.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- They were forced to agree.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- No, no, not all of them agreed.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, I am saying that we agree with what he is saying ...

HON. K. DULAKIVERATA.- There are still some aggrieved parties there, because I went to their meeting in their village in Lami and this is what they told us. I am informing the House, Madam Chair, of what I was told when I went there for consultation, this is what the people told me.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- We would be quite happy, if Honourable Dulakiverata believes there are some issues which he needs to bring to our attention, please, do so, we will look into it because our objective obviously is this, that we want all the parties to be winners.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, I hope you will look into this.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Most definitely. Please bring it to our

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have any other input?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Sorry, Madam Chair, just we started this and the objective of this is to make sure that wherever there are landowners, the landowners benefit and wherever there are squatters, they will also be able to be accommodated and the policy that was started under the Bainimarama Government will make sure that all the parties benefit from it.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prof. Biman Prasad for your right of reply.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, I was not for a moment suggesting that developments on land owned by either the *iTaukei* landowners or freehold landowners should not be taken. Obviously, if you are developing if you are developing more permanent blocks or leases then you need to do that, Madam Chair. What I am concerned, Madam Chairman, I agree with the plans and the vision that the Government has on providing, but what I am saying is, the rate at which people are moving into squatter settlements and the rate at which we would be able to provide them with proper leases and land development and so forth, there is going to be a huge gap, given the rate at which people are moving in. What we are saying is, there are people, for example, in Vatuwaqa on freehold land who have been living there for say, 10, 15 or 20 years and they do not have water, electricity and so what I am suggesting and there are many others that we visited. I think what they are calling for immediately are simple things like footpath, availability of water, if we can provide electricity. For example, in Nasinu, around Sasawira, you go on the roundabout and you see all these big houses with electricity and then you cross that gully where kids actually walk to their school and all those houses do not have power. All I am saying is, FEA should not put out excuses to say, “no, we cannot provide power even for these people who are living there temporarily.” That is the kind of development that we are talking about and this is like addressing immediate needs of those living in squatter settlements. That is why I am saying that an increase in the allocation would help Government to actually deal with some of those issues, thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you Parliament will 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	:	16
Noes	:	30

Not Voted : 4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The Honourable Nawaikula would like to move that Head 23 be increased by \$5 million in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 7, with respect to the National Housing Policy Implementation. I invite Honourable Nawaikula to move his motion.

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

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

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

HON. N. NAWAIKULA..- Yes, Madam Chair. First, let me remove this misconception that the address of the squatter was a Bainimarama Government initiative because this targets way back to the previous government, obviously it was linked to the millennium goals which started in the Millennium Convention in 2000. It was part of the SDL Government and examples are there, even if you go up to Khalsa Road, on the right hand side.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Yes.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- How much?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- A lot. More than you ever think.

(Laughter)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Show us. If you continue to say that ...

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- So, let us take away, it is not the initiative.

Secondly, Madam Chair, I ask if my motion can be taken together. There is an increase and a decrease. So an increase of \$5 million on SEG 7 and a corresponding decrease for the same amount because the Honourable Minister for Employment had reminded us that we should balance the budget. So, I plus five this side and minus five on the other side. So, minus five from First Home Buyers, allocation for First Home Buyers is \$10 million, so take away \$5 million from there and put it on this side.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- So we are dealing with. both motions?

(Laughter)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Well, yes.

This is my motion, but let me give you the reason. I keep talking about the National Housing Policy and I urge the Government to please implement this policy. I suspect there have been some difficulties in

this policy getting off the ground and the figures tell us that the emphasis has been on the two components; the people who live in the towns who earn, as well as the squatters and the figures speak for themselves.

I repeat that the total allocation by the Government to those of us who work and who go to banks, who are entitled to go to Housing Authority and elsewhere is \$241 million and the amount allocated to the squatters is \$24 million as opposed to, as we discovered yesterday, \$500,000 for Rural Housing.

So, I am asking here if this amount could be given to the National Housing Policy Implementation to allow them to consider the rural and village housing. These are the people who live in the rural areas, the farmers and those who live in the villages who, according to the figures in 2012, occupy 30 percent of housing units in Fiji and 50 percent of the population.

So, the figures speak for themselves, the figures justify that we need to look into this much more closely than we are. We tend to be guided by what is coming from overseas, from conventions, from the UN and whatever comes there, we implement it, and we do not look at ourselves. This is our history and our integrity is to look after ourselves, look after our villages and look after our rural areas. That is the reason why I am asking for this. I know this motion will fail, but I hope that by raising this, the Government will, next year, seriously look into this sector of the National Housing Policy.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Member, I would like you to reconsider this motion because your Leader of Opposition is moving a motion to increase, so, either you withdraw or...

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I withdraw the motion and I urge the Government to please hear what I said, include it in next year.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Motions are withdrawn, Thank you. The Honourable Leader of Opposition would like to move that Head 23....

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I am still on my feet. I withdraw my second motion where I am reducing

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, but then you do not have money for the others.

(Laughter)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Well, every other person is doing that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, but you cannot change the motion.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I withdraw that but I am asking you to hear my message please, that is enough for me.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The Honourable Leader of Opposition would like to move that Head 23 be increased by \$2 million in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10 with respect to First Home Buyers. I would like to give the floor to the Honourable Leader of Opposition to move her motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- I move that motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Madam Chair, I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The Honourable Leader of Opposition would like to speak on her motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, I really feel for my friend behind me here, who had to withdraw his motion because I think it is a very important one also, but for First Home Buyers, Madam Chair, this is the dream of every man and woman and that is to own their own home.

I commend the Government on the policies they are putting into place. In this regard, Madam Chair, I am looking at the first home owners, if the rural areas could also be considered to make it attractive to live in the rural areas, and I am raising here, the villages and the settlements.

Because what we must be mindful of, is not to make the urban areas so attractive that people think of moving out and this is what they are doing in numbers, is they are moving out from the rural and coming into the urban areas and taking up land and developing it into squatter settlements in which the Government now has to look at pouring in large amounts of money to make it liveable for them.

So, my motion here, Madam Chair, is that the first home owners also in the villages and settlements be considered because the implications when they move into the urban areas is on hospitals, schools and then they become part of the social problems also in the urban areas and I am looking at the provinces of Tailevu, Naitasiri, Rewa, Namosi and Serua...

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Actually this allocation to First Home Buyers applies to the whole nation and not only just the urban areas.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- I am talking about the Suva squatter areas, Madam Chair. The surrounding provinces are contributing to this, so if they are considered for the first home owner, this would be able to alleviate this problem. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- They are considered.

Do we have a seconder? Any other input to this and please be very clear that this \$10 million is for first home owners Fiji wide.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The first home owners, I agree with the Honourable Leader of Opposition that this is the dream of every young woman and man to own a home, but first of all, Madam Chair, I would like to mention here that the squatter settlements had been government's activities long time ago.

You would remember that the Pony Club was occupied by squatters, they were resettled in Nasinu. The people from Ra used to squat in Edinburg Drive, now they are living in Narere, Nasinu. After the 1987 *coup*, a lot of squatters squatted on the Fiji Golf Club. They were all resettled in Nasinu. Valelevu was a squatter resettlement area, it was developed by the Lands Department and they were given blocks. They were people from Vatoa, they were squatting in Narere too, and they were given blocks by the Government, so it is not a new thing, Madam Chair.

The problem here, what a lot of people are doing is, they go and squat because of the system, the unavailability of developed land, to be available in the market for leasing, and people prefer to go and squat because when you go and squat, you go ahead of the people that follow the normal channel to get a lease

or get a Housing Authority lease. When you go and squat, then you have the priority of giving the land, jumping in the queue. So, this is something that should be properly looked at when dealing with squatters.

Also, Madam Chair, if this \$10 million, now it is the first time I heard that this Programme covers everyone in the country, including villages. If this is the case, then definitely, I support that this \$10 million should be increased, if it covers everyone in the country, not only the people that live in the urban areas. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I support the motion to increase this 'First Home uyers' grant of \$10 million. This is Fiji wide, and there are numerous applications that are pending in regards to this, because there are two sets of people here; those who are building their homes for the first time and those who want to buy home for the first time. These are the two categories of people that are eligible to apply for this; those who are going to build for the first time and those who are going to buy for the first time. And, they have to go through lending financial institution and they have to meet the requirement of the lending institution.

The other issue here, Madam Chair, even if joint spouses, their combined income should be below \$50,000, and this has been an issue where people have applied and following up on the applications, their combined or joint salary is \$50,000, but they come back to us and ask, why there is a slow process? And, we have heard the Honourable Minister for a while now, 'it is in the pipeline. It is in the process', but because this is probably centred here in Suva, and applications are coming from the four divisions in Fiji.

People who are applying to build their first homes, they are eligible to apply for \$10,000. For those who are applying to buy homes, they are eligible to get \$5,000. I hope that the Government will improve the process in this, and also to improve this allocation, probably to streamline the two categories so people can know where their applications should be directed to, and which funds should be available for the two categories.

Madam Chair, I support the increase in the allocation that is given, and probably other policies that could be inter-related to this on how their FNPF could also be a contribution to meet financial deposit in regards to securing their loans.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other input, Honourable Nawaikula?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, in supporting this, I feel there is a need for clarification from the other side that this allocation for home buyers apply nationwide, because I can remember that we requested the Minister the last time to tell us that also people in villages and in rural areas are entitled, and we feel that they are not entitled. So, there is a need for clarification from the other side because people are listening and if this is so, then I will invite every single village, every people who are in rural areas to please come and fill their application.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, just a clarification.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, as the Honourable Minister for Rural Development highlighted, they have funding in their Ministry too for Rural Housing.

This particular First Home Buyers policy, as I stated earlier on today relates to people who go through a commercial bank, who are buying their first home or who are building their first home, they must

have security over the title. Now, securing the title, let me tell you exactly how that works, most of the lawyers will tell you, if they have a proper lease or you actually own the land outright, if it is freehold land. You can lease either *iTaukei* land or Crown land.

The Honourable Members on the other side would also probably remember, may be they do not, we change the law a few years ago where the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) did not recognise. If I were a member of a landowning unit, and I have the legal right, my customary right to go and build on that land, FNPF would not give you money to withdraw from the amount that is available for your first home buy, to build upon that land.

We amended the law to say, 'because you have a legal right as a member of a landowning unit, to build a home there', FNPF now also gives you funds, you can withdraw the funds like anyone else, your one-third whatever it is, to borrow or take that money out and build your home on your land through a landowning unit as long as you are a registered member in the VKB. So, they may not know that, but that is already there. It was just done three years ago. It was not done by SDL, it was done by this Government. So, just remember that. It was there, we amended it. FNPF did not allow that before. These are the facts, facts speak louder than words. So, we amended it and that is there.

So, by the same token, if a Member of a landowning unit who wants to build his or her home on their land, on which they are a member of that landowning unit, and for example, they want to build a \$50,000 home. They have a job, they go to a commercial bank, they say that they have the ability to build the land because they have the possessory and the legal rights over that land, they will be able to get their FNPF contribution, the Bank will then assess them to see whether they have the right level of income to make their repayment on that loan or not, and they will also tell them, 'we want to apply for this First Home Buyer' under this First Home Buyer Programme.

That is precisely what is happening at the moment, where when you want to go and build your first home, you go to the bank, you make the application, they assess you, the bank says, 'yes, you can do the repayments'. You say, 'I want the grant'. That application comes from the banks. So, as far as the Department of Housing is concerned, all the checks and balances have been done. They simply check to see whether you are someone who earns less than \$50,000.

The reason why it is less than \$50,000, obviously we want to target low income families, not people who earn \$100,000 or \$150,000. Then, it gets processed. So, you can have, if you are a member of a landowning unit and you want to build your home there, you can access your FNPF, you can access this grant, and you can access the loan from the bank and build a nice home. So, it applies to them, either you can be a member of the landowning unit in Tamavua, in Naitasiri or you can be someone in some city area in Nadi or Lautoka, it applies to anyone as long as they go through that commercial process. That is the verification that I wanted to provide.

Now, in respect of the rural housing that the Honourable Nawaikula is talking about, the Honourable Minister for Rural Development has already highlighted that, they have that funds allocated for that, where they give one-third, and then Government gives two-thirds. So, that Programme is also there.

Honourable Nawaikula, I also refer you to Sustainable Income Generating Project. This is in SEG 10 where that also encourages people as we talked about, how we do not want people to come into the urban areas if they have land available, but they need to have some form of activity that will keep them in those areas.

Let me tell you exactly where this is taking place. The Sustainable Income Generating Project is about providing livelihoods and sources of income, so \$50,000 in this Budget Programme is allocated for Land Acquisition and Continuation of Beef Farming in Nakoro; \$50,000 will be for the continuation of eight Poultry Farms in Vunisinu, \$50,000 for Continuation Poultry and Honey Farming and Community Canteen in Naboutini, \$50,000 for Poultry and Beef Farming in Nakama in Macuata; \$91,332 for Cash Cropping and building construction in Vanuakula in Naitasiri; and \$50,000 to the *Soqosoqo Vakamarama* of Ba for poultry and bee farming.

So these are the small projects where we are providing people sources of livelihoods, where there is land around so people have access to sustainable livelihoods so they actually stay in those areas. As you know that we have a massive project in terms of rural electrification and also water reticulation systems or standalone reticulation systems. So all of these combines to ensure that people who may want to have a sustained livelihood through the rural areas are assisted also. So it is a holistic approach.

In respect of the first home-buyers, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, we want to have full utilisation the \$10 million first, and I can tell you that we do not have full utilisation as yet. It has reached sometime \$8 million, sometimes \$9 million, it has been going on now for three years at \$7 million, it depends on the appetite of the people to be able to go to the commercial banks.

But we are hoping now which we would want to tie it up with, as I referred to Matavolivoli where you are able to get people access to land lots that are cheaper so therefore we will have more people wanting to build more homes and they will be able to not just access their FNPF, but they can also access the first home-buyer programme. So, it all ties in together.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- May I contribute Madam Chair, that is all wonderful. I suppose this follows the example of the similar scheme in Australia, they also advance, I believe about 20 percent of the cost to a new home buyer and then you go through the process of applying through the lending institutions.

For the tourism industry, Madam Chair, in Nadi in particular there is quite a huge need for housing and I think something that we all know, something that we should try and rectify is this overcrowding in Fiji especially in the urban areas. Nadi, in particular can be different because of the tourism industry in there, and we continue to push for that service tax and if this is introduced like as they do in Japan, Korea and everywhere Asia, our people in the tourism industry would have about \$115 million a year and much of that can be spent on housing. Everyone, every tourism worker can complete his work, retire at 55 with a decent house, with a scheme like this plus a service charge that he gets.

I know the other side keeps saying this that “what if we pay the tourism worker the service charge what will happen to the others?” Madam Chair, that is quite shallow. Every industry should have its own reward system in place. Just because the tourism industry has this in place should not disadvantage the minors, should not disadvantage whatever other industry. We have put together our own reward system to suit our industry and service charge is well known to be a tourism thing. I do not know where we get this idea from.

During the hearing on this, someone from the employees department, rubbished this and said, “what happened to the others?” That is a very shallow view of it. As I said the minors, once you give the incentives to your people, why should we tourism worry about it or worry about that? So, it is almost to reach his own loan to suit the industry and it should not be seen to be destabilising the total reward

system in the country. So, for this, Madam Chair, Nadi in particular, the tourism belt would welcome this scheme but in conjunction with that service tax, we should give them the added ability to be part of the scheme.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Now I invite the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to speak in reply.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank all those who have contributed including the Honourable Minister and I hope that he will advise the workers who are looking at this allocation, if they could facilitate it, because many people would want to be part of this first home buyer allocation and not hinder.

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 now vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Aseri Radrodro is moving that Head 6 be increased by \$1 million in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 with respect to Public Rental Board. I invite Honourable Radrodro to move this motion.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I move a motion to increase the allocation for Public Rental Board Subsidy to another \$1 million dollars to take the total up to \$2 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

HON. RATU S. MATONITABUA.- I second the motion.

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

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I think the important gist of this motion is that the demand for need for housing is evident as we go around the City of Suva. There are a lot of squatter settlements, there are a lot of projects that have been taken here for upgrading of projects, but I think the bottom line is that the Government should be responsible to provide proper housing and proper facilities like it has been doing, for example, the Raiwai Housing Project. It is only proper that the Government continues this exercise and therefore improves on its subsidy programme.

One of the projects that is supposed to be due for completion this year is the Savusavu Project and this has not been allocated in this subsidy. The subsidy has been consistent from the past years and therefore to accommodate this Savusavu project subsidy and also future subsidy, we see a lot of projects

also coming up around the Suva area - the Lagilagi Projects. These projects should also be undertaken by the Public Rental Board. Unfortunately it has been taken by PCN which therefore differs in terms of the rental levied out to the tenants as compared to those that are in the PRB which have schedule levy as compared in PCN and hence the need for an increase in the rental subsidy for PRB.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone have an input to this motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The PRB has a very important role in the provision and management of housing projects and as being alluded to by my fellow colleague, there is a big demand of housing in the urban centres especially in Suva.

The demand in Suva is also fuelled by the number of regional students at universities, you will be surprised, Madam Chair, that some of these students are renting in the squatter settlements because for convenience as it is near to the university. Some of them are renting in the flats in Raiwai and Raiwaqa. Unfortunately, Madam Chair, the old site for the Raiwaqa high rise building which was managed by the PRB had been knocked down a few years back, but no development has taken place.

So, if these had been carried out, it would have eased the demand for housing and for that, Madam Chair, because of the non-performance of the Unit, it has given rise to the number of squatters in the area. If we are serious about addressing the housing issues, then we should address these development projects. For that, I support the motion that we should increase this allocation. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have any other input? Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you Madam Chair. I rise to support the motion. I think because of the need that is there, Government will also agree that there is a need for housing and there is a lot of programmes that is being run by the Home Buyer Scheme, other projects like Matavolivolvi Stage 2 and other sub-divisions that are coming through, even that \$10 million grant, all these points to say that there is a great need for housing.

There is another indication like we have squatting and people are now moving from villages for education and to send their children to tertiary institutions but they come and settle on a *vakavanua* arrangement with some relatives or *vanua* ties and this happens all around Fiji.

I think probably in the Northern Division, there is about three, we have got the Damadama Housing, Tuatua Housing and Vunimoli Housing and also the need to upgrade those housing facilities for renovation and maintenance and painting because development is now increasing and other better homes that are coming in those areas and I think there should be an increase in the allocation, given the proper need of this and probably the Honourable Minister was asked too on this in regards to review of rentals for those who are now accommodated or are tenants at the Raiwai Housing PRD flats. I think we are still waiting for that review of rent, given most of those are students and some are new employees and they cannot afford that high rates of rental.

I think considering that, Madam Chair, I stand to support the motion to increase the allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ro Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you Madam Chair. I support the motion of the increase. As we rightly all agree, that there is a problem of shortage of housing because of the migration to the city areas for employment for opportunities for all our people and that has contributed to the overcrowding in

settlements, squatter problems and the Public Rental Board to address those who could not afford homes because of their earnings.

As you know, Naitasiri people are very accommodating and you can see the number of informal settlements around the Suva area, semi-urban, peri-urban and even as rightly mentioned by the Honourable Minister for Economy, the re-settlement in Vonuakula of the squatters as well as in Lomaivuna.

Those are opportunities for the people of Naitasiri and I would suggest in the presence of the Chairman of the Naitasiri Provincial Council that the opportunity of engaging Naitasiri in a partnership with the Public Rental Board so that we can make a go forward in addressing this issue.

If you go down to Sawani, as you go down to the junction where it goes to Sawani, Serea Road and you will see all the houses, you will be surprised that those who work in Suva are renting in those residences. Those are our Indo-Fijian residents but you will be surprised to see that the *iTaukei* are renting in those houses and they have moved out from the greater Suva area to find affordable accommodation so that the accessibility to Suva or Nausori for employment in Sawani is very accessible in terms of the road, vehicles and transportation.

There is the opportunity to solve all these problems by engaging rather than being informal because we are very accommodating and our traditional and cultural connections in the *vanua* aspect whether we can engage in partnership economically so that the landowners also benefit.

We have just heard about Tamavua, in that \$10 million opportunity and Honourable Karavaki has recommended forward for the Water Authority of Fiji to have partnership with Tamavua. So the opportunities are there, Madam Chair.

That is my contribution and I support the increase to the allocation to the Public Rental Board. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Aseri Radrodro to speak in reply.

HON. A. M. RADRODRO.- Thank you Madam Chair. In addition to Savusavu, there is also new flats that will be completed at Vuci place in Kalabu. So all those completion will actually need increase in Public Rental Subsidy.

Also, Madam Chair, because we heard in the previous days that there is a need to standardise housing in the upgrading of squatter settlements, I think it will be better if Government takes the responsibility of building up standardised homes and standardised facilities to ensure that there is compliance with the National Housing Policy that they are implementing, so that in cases of disasters, there is stronger reliance on the housing facilities that will be provided for the population of Fiji.

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

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes : 13

Noes : 30
Not voted : 7

(There being 13 ayes, 30 noes, 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, Honourable Dulakiverata would like to move a motion that Head 23 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10, with respect to housing assistance to fire victims. I invite Honourable Dulakiverata to move his motion.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you Madam Chair. The fire victims, I think this is a very discriminatory policy. I am moving this amendment on the hope that Government will review this policy because at present, only people that live on Leased Land on Freehold land, they are entitled to get \$5000 for the policy. If someone's house is not on a leased land or in the village, they are paid \$1,000 as compensation. So, some of the houses in the villages are much more expensive than houses in the leased area and even in the squatter area, there are some good houses. So, I hope that they should amend this policy to reflect or be fair to everyone that have their houses burnt, that they have the same compensation of \$5,000. That was the understanding on why I moved this motion, Madam Chair, that this amount be increased.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I second the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I invite input into this motion.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I strongly support the increase of the housing assistance to fire victims. As we all noted that last year, it was allocated \$1 million but now it has gone down to \$500,000 and the reason given was that, a lot of people did not access and that has led to the reduction.

I think I have had a good experience in terms of fire victims, most of the victims do not even know the existence of this housing assistance. There are criteria set by the Ministry in terms of those who will have to get access. I think it is either a complete burnt out homes and is not even providing assistance to partly burnt homes. You will know that when there is a fire, it is a shocking experience for home owners and they sometimes, forget about all the type of assistance available and therefore, they do not come to access this. Actually, their houses got burnt down and they used to resettle with the relatives or with others nearby. Therefore, I support the increase for the housing assistance to fire victims.

Madam Chair, now as you see the cost of living has increased. The allocation that has been given previously needs to be reviewed to accommodate the rising cost of living. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think the Honourable Minister for Economy had said that this particular item was underspent but given the prayers in the motion, for this to be increased. I think that is a valid argument, given that we cannot predict fire and we cannot say from past experience that 10 houses will be destroyed in 2016-2017. Unless we go past the year, then we will know how many did actually eventuate but given that, we should increase this, Madam Chair, especially the criteria that is there. For emergency assistance, I think the Honourable Minister for Women will enlighten us on that - \$1,000 is given. The other assistance, Madam Chair, another \$5,000 is given.

Fire victims, Madam Chair, they lost everything. They lost their house, they lost everything - documents that they will need, their cards for them to verify with the banks, FNPF and they lost everything. They are only left with what they are wearing. They should increase this, Madam Chair, or revisit this particular policy that all fire victims from this particular allocation, to have their houses to be rebuilt and the value of their house that was there to be rebuilt rather than giving a mark-up of \$5,000, which will be very hard for them to rebuild a house worth \$5,000, given a full assistance Help for Home initiative is the \$7,500 which is for the destruction of cyclone.

Also, the value of a house destroyed by fire cannot remain at \$5,000. It should improve in regards to that, and I ask the Government to review that policy, increase the allocation and also vary the criteria that is there; from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Some are there without insurance. For those who are insured are lucky but those who do not enjoy insurance, they should be given those criteria. It can be well set out and this can also be made aware or people need proper awareness to get them prepared when they are faced with this kind of situation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have any other input?

HON. .A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, just to clarify, like CBUL, this initiative was started by the Bainimarama Government and the FijiFirst Government. It is also factually correct, there is no such thing as CBUL that was under the previous Government.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.-That's rebranding.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, there's no rebranding.

(Laughter)

It was actually done by us.

We started the whole branding Fijian Made, Buy Fijian, we are the ones who did that also. But, Madam Chair, I would like to remind the Honourable Members, like this was started only recently, this programme. As you know, no such separate allocation was ever made to assist people whose homes were burned down. Yes, the Honourable Minister for Poverty Alleviation has emergency funds of a thousand dollar available to anyone whose house burns down, immediate relief. Yes, there is \$5,000 given under this initiative but you must have a proper possessory rights or legal right over the land. So, whether you are the member of the VKB and living on your *mataqali* land or you have a lease, so it is only applicable for those people, the \$5,000. That is how it works.

The reality is this, I hope as the Honourable Minister for Health pointed out to us earlier on, that we must be concerned about prevention rather than cure. The way that all of you are talking, as if there will be fire every day, in a way, you want fires all the time. We are obviously trying to avoid fires in the first place. That is why improving standards, telling people not to put their mosquito coil near mosquito net and all those kind of things because prevention is better than cure, but this fund is here, in the event that actually and unfortunately, a house does burn down and if you are earning below a particular income level, the income tax is \$20,000.

We cannot be funding people who are earning \$30,000 to \$40,000. We cannot do that. I mean, all of you have said to us for the past few days, including your spokesperson for economy/finance that we must live within our means, we must cut budget, et cetera, cut the expenditure, so far, we have been keeping a running sheet. So far, all the increases you want and some of the decreases, I think you are wanting about

\$40 million increase on the current figures. That is what you have been asking for. So, on one hand you are saying when I cut back and on the other hand, you are asking for increases.

What we are saying is that, this initiative is available to the ordinary Fijians who previously did not get access, we are now providing them with the access, let it run for a couple of years, obviously there has been no significant flaws identified, we can always improve things. We are obviously, willing to always improve things and we want to do that, so let us help these people who do need the assistance.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I will now invite the Honourable Dulakiverata to speak in reply.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank the Honourable Minister for Economy for his reply and explanation. It is good that you are going to review some of the policies. That is what I said in the morning, you had some policies, the intentions were good but over the years, you need to review them. Maybe some of these policies are disconnected with other developments. Maybe, Madam Chair, it is about time we have a national insurance policy, so we do not have to rely on the Government handouts to cover all these fire adaptors. Maybe, that is one of the area, if they think of reviewing their policies, that is something that can be considered, a national fire insurance policy for all people who own houses

For that, Madam Chair, I move that we increase the allocation for that.

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 on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	12
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	8

(There being 12 ayes, 30 noes and 8 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, the Honourable Ratu Kiniviliame Kiliraki is moving that Head 23 be increased by \$400,000 in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 8 with the respect to City Wide Squatter Upgrade Project. I give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chair, I move the motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I second the motion.

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

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. I think there are so many relevant issues that have been raised in regards to squatter, so most probably this is not a separate issue altogether.

In terms of the squatter problem, for our people who cannot find decent homes and land in the city area, not only in Suva, it is Lautoka as well. As we can witness every day in Wailea, and Veiquwawa, all those areas are known to us. If we do attempt to go there and see the condition, it is really unhealthy living.

This initiative is welcomed but the motion is to increase the allocation. Taking regards to the settlements that has been alluded to by the Honourable Minister for Economy, I did not hear him mention Veiquwawa and the Tamavua/Cunningham area. If you go down to Cunningham, you see the houses on the road, they are infringing into the road allocation, even they are building houses under the powers lines and that has been allowed to happen. That is very dangerous and it breaches the condition of those housing. As I mentioned the informal housing through traditional going to the *mataqali* of Tamavua and Kalabu. So those are some of the issues that keep recurring and we keep hearing those issues tonight. The gist of the motion is to increase so that this can be addressed conveniently and adequately.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite input to the motion, if any? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Squatter is a very hot issue because it affects everyone. I think we should strive to improve our standard of living. The squalid conditions squatters live in and you try to spend this money and give them titles and never improve the living conditions, will never improve their standard of living. What should be done, Madam Chair, is to relocate these squatters for two things:

- a) Where they move to should be properly developed with all the amenities;
- b) The area that they are squatting on are very valuable industrial or commercial land; right in the middle of the city and it should be developed for its highest and best used. That is good for the economy overall.

That is what we should be driving at and for that suggestion I fully support the motion that we should increase the allocation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other input? There being no other, maybe Honourable Minister for Economy.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- The Parliament agrees that we need to ensure that people get proper leases or titles to land on which they build their homes on. It gives them a lot of dignity, it also creates a lot of investment, and it actually creates economic robustness.

The issue that we have on hand is that the squatter issue in Fiji has not been addressed for a long period of time. I agree with Honourable Prasad, that there is huge backlog. The reason why you have such a backlog is because we have legacy issues. They were not seriously addressed, everyone knew Jittu Estate existed, no one did anything about it. Jittu Estate smack in the middle of Suva in the CBD area.

It was the only the Bainimarama-led Government that did that and if you look at the allocation of it, the allocation for squatter resettlement, development city wide application, etcetera, whatever you may call it, all of this combined, if you compare the figures from now to what it used to exist previously, you will find a huge percentage of increase. It increased manyfold but the problem is that we need to ensure that we have the capacities.

Honourable Dulakiverata has hit the nail on the head, it is a balancing act. Some of the areas where the squatters are living are in gullies, so it may not be such a high value in terms of alternative land development. So you could do that there, in many areas as the Honourable Minister for Lands will tell

you, if you want to carry out development, because the homes are built in such a haphazard manner, you cannot sort of have a road going in between the homes. You actually have to, maybe within that area itself relocate one home to move it to the side whilst we build the road. So these are many sort of logistical issues that we have to face in terms of these developments.

So at the moment what we are saying is that we have got targeted areas whether we want to carry out developments. There may be some green field projects. Honourable Kiliraki, I can tell him that we had a meeting on Saturday last week too. We met a group of young men from Tamavua Village who were actually interested in developing some undeveloped land beyond the Nursing School. So there are obviously potential for areas to be developed, there are pockets of areas that they want developed and we are quite happy to work with them, of course, together with the \$10 million allocation that has been provided, we can also use that to develop green field projects. So, it is a combination of areas and I would urge that, we are all committed to it of course, but we must ensure that we do it properly, that no one losses out. And let us not just throw money to say, "oh we deem it to be important". Just throwing money at it does not mean that it is important, it is how you actually implement it and the quality at the end of it goes to show how important it is.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Kiliraki, would you like to speak in reply.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- I think we are on a common understanding in regards to the squatter issue. But the issue is the implementation through the funds available whether it is going to be addressed completely or it is a half loaf job. So that is the issue why I am moving that we should increase the allocation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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 now vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	6

(There being 14 ayes, 30 noes and 6 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Thank you. Honourable Members since no amendment was approved, we will now vote on Head No. 23 and the question is that the amount of Head No. 23 - Department of Housing 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
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Noes : 15
 Not voted : 6

Head 23 agreed to.

Head 24 – Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head 24 is open for comments if any and we look at page 177 - Programme 1, Activity 1 and Programme 1, Activity 2. Do you have any comments? Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Head 24-1-1-6 under Fiji National Council of Disabled Persons be increased by \$1 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. You may fill the form. Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We have not debated that yet, she has to fill the form. Are there any other?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- This is not a motion, it is a clarification.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Clarification.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- There is a big increase, Madam Chair, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10 from \$863.2 million to \$1.350 million. Can you get an explanation for that increase?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister, clarification is sought.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- On Capital Grants and Transfers.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Page 177.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- It appears to be Welfare Graduation Programme, could she explain what does that relate to?

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, before I move onto that I just want like to put on the record my vote for Head 22. I have full support for the Ministry of Health and Medical Services I think it was a human error on my part for a very long day. Coming back to the clarification, Madam Chair, SEG 10, we have an increase because of the Welfare Graduation Programme that has seen an increase of \$500,000.

Madam Chair, this is a programme that complements our Poverty Benefits Scheme, where we have recipients who benefit from the Government Poverty Benefit Scheme, which has a cash component and a Food Voucher Programme. In order to graduate these recipients into self-reliance we have this Welfare to Workfare Programme, where social welfare recipients are put into training and are given skills. At the moment we are using NCSMED, we are using the Makoi Vocational Women's Centre to train recipients into skills and trainings where we can graduate them and slowly remove them from the Poverty Benefits Scheme. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, thank you. I just want some clarification from the Honourable Minister for Women on Data Migration. What is this about? Data Migration - SEG 7.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This is a new allocation that has been given to our IT Section, for the simple reason that we have a lot of programmes where we have beneficiaries. This Data Migration Budget will allow us to employ extra officers to help us integrate all the data that we have into a system which will allow us to pick up double dipping, triple dipping. The officers would be on a project basis and we need to strengthen our ITC in terms of data collection. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10.

I need an explanation on the Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations, in terms of which organisations and the criteria of qualification for the grant.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The Voluntary Organisation, these are NGO grants that are given to assist NGOs that complement the work of the Department of Social Welfare, especially in terms of child protection, caring for the elderly and persons with disability. These NGOs include the homes for the children, we have children's residential homes run by NGOs, where we provide them with Operational Grants as well as the NGOs working with disabled persons.

Every year the Ministry assists close to 20 NGOs and in this 2016-2017 Budget special allocation is directed to assist organisations working with disability. You will see that there is a reduction in \$100,000 that is because \$1.6 million has been given towards the organisations working with the disabled for the Western Centre. So the NGO that were assisted from the West under the previous allocation that will now come from the \$1.6 million allocated for the Disabilities Centre and operations that will be in the Western Division and that is in Head 50.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other input? Honourable Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. In regards to that particular SEG 10, I need to move a motion to increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Please fill the form. Honourable Prof. Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to seek some quick clarification from the Honourable Minister before I move a motion. Programme 3 – Women and Gender development, Activity 1

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are we on page 177? No, we are still on page 177.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- I thought we are that is why I said it. Alright I will wait

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- I thank you, Madam Chair, I move motion on Head 24-1-2-7 – Integrated National Poverty Eradication Programme to be increased by \$1 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Can you fill the form please? There being no other inputs, we will start with page 179, do we have any on comments on page 179? Programme 2, Activity 1 – Programme 2, Activity 2. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, in relation to the huge increase in relation to Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 6 – Operating Grants and Transfers it nearly double the amount.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister. Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 6 on page 178, this is the summary. Operating Grants and Transfers.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- From \$33,000 to \$41 million. It is a big amount, the total amount.

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Thank you, Madam Chair. We are looking at \$41 million that includes our Poverty Benefit Scheme, sitting at \$23.20 million and then in addition to that we have the Child Protection Allowance at \$3.5 million, the Social Pension Scheme at \$14 million and NCOP at \$200,000 and also including the Food Voucher Programme at \$500,000. It is increased because we are looking at including more disadvantaged Fijians who fall under these programmes.

Madam Chair, if we look at the increase in the Social Pension Scheme, this is to cater for the new age that has come into effect from July this year; to 66. If we look at the Poverty Benefit Scheme, we were given \$22 million last year, this year we have an increase of \$1.2 million, given the fact that there are applications coming in from families who have been affected by *TC Winston* and other circumstances which puts them in a position where they need the State's assistance.

Child Protection Programme Allowance: Again, we have been given an increase there. This looks after children from single mothers, prisoners' children and those who need our assistance, so they are also given a cash component, a cash transfer allowance, as well as the Food Voucher Programme to assist families look after their needs.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, I just need some clarification from the Honourable Minister on the Social Pension Scheme. I know you had mentioned the lowering of the age to 66, what are the other criteria for people to qualify on this?

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The Social Pension Scheme, Honourable Member, is a Scheme which captures senior citizens, especially now above the age of 66 who have not received any form of superannuation. The only criteria is, you have to be over 66 years and you do not have any other form of superannuation. They need to fill up a form, and then they are provided with \$50 cash voucher per month.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, just the clarifications from the Honourable Minister on Head 24-2-2(5) - Commission Charges. What are these charges?

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Madam Chair, these Commission Charges are incurred in our Social Welfare Programmes like the Poverty Benefit Scheme where a cash transfer is made into the recipient's account. We have close to 22,700 recipients, who receive cash allowances every month. We also have the Care and Protection Allowance that is also deposited into bank accounts, and these are commission charges that we pay to the banks and Post Fiji for having these transactions done.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will move on to Page 181. Head 24-2-3 and Head 24-3-1. Do we have any comments? Honourable Professor Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. First of all, let me acknowledge the Honourable Minister's passion about mainstreaming women and gender, and I think that is a very positive thing. I just wanted some clarification before I move a motion. Under Head 24-3-1(6), what are those NGO Grants (\$150,000), and why is there Voluntary Contribution to UN Women (\$10,000), and why Women's Plan of Action's (\$1 million) allocation is under Requisition?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Madam Chair, this NGO Grant of \$150,000 is given to Non-Governmental Organisations that assist the Ministry in advancing the rights and interests of women and girls across the country. The 2016-2017 funding will be distributed to identified women's groups, who request our assistance for their work and programmes, and they basically include members of our Fiji Women's Federation which is the *Soqosoqo Vakamarama*, *Shri Sanatan Dharam Naira Sabha*, Catholic Women's League, Shrest Mother's Club, Nasalia Women's Group and Fiji Muslim League.

For next year, we are looking at working with Ba Women's Forum for the Training Centre that they have established and we will refurbish the Training Centre. We are going to also look at Methodist Women's Fellowship for capacity building and empowerment programmes, and Fiji Muslim League for training programmes and implementation.

While this Grant was recently used to build a Training Centre for the Shrest Mother's Club in Samabula which we opened last week, this will provide training for the local women. While there are existing NGOs nationwide, Madam Chair, the work of the Ministry is further complimented with our partnership with DFAT. Last year, we set up a Fiji Women's Fund, which is also going to assist these NGOs for the next seven years, and basically for the advancement of gender equality work at grassroot levels.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I move a motion under Head 24-3-1(6) – NGO Grants, to have an increase of \$1 million, and also under Head 24-3-1(6) - Women's Plan of Action to increase by \$10 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Salote Radrodro, have you identified where we are going to have such huge amount of money from?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. For those increases, I suggest that we look at Head 50.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I seek clarification in relation to Programme 3 – Women and Gender Development, and I ask this question because in the world over, this is the top priority. Can the Honourable Minister explain, why is it that there are no allocations for SEGs 8, 9 and 10, Capital Construction, no Capital Purchase and no Capital Grants, given that a lot of priorities should be given to women?

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Before I answer that question, Madam Chair, I forgot to answer the second part of the question asked by Honourable Biman Prasad, why are we giving a contribution of \$10,000 to the UN Women?

Honourable Members, because Fiji is a member State of the United Nations, and by contributing to UN women core resources, it demonstrates our commitment to promoting the empowerment of women, which is a strong economic development imperative. Of course, the Ministry is working very closely with UN Women in terms of Women's Empowerment Programmes, and this is aligned to Assembly Resolutions 64/289 on 21st July, 2010, and is referred to herein, I quote:

“...34. Urges Member States, when legislative and budgetary provisions allow, to make financial contributions to development-related activities of the United Nations system in the form of multi-year commitments in order to improve the predictability of resources;...”

Honourable Nawaikula, coming back to your question on Capital Projects, I do not see a need for Capital Projects.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input? We will now look at the motions.

The first one is by Honourable Salote Radrodro, who would like to move that Head 24 be increased by \$12 million?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, we start with that one or you would like to start to start this from Fiji National Council of Disabled Persons under Head 24-1-1(6)?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We have to start with a bigger increase first.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Alright, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- So, Head 24-3-1(6) to be increased by \$12 million with respect to Women's Plan of Action.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I am moving that motion in response I believe to commitment that has been done by the Government, and I applaud those commitments. However, when I look at the budgetary allocation, it does not match those commitments to be able to make the difference in what we, as a country, are committing ourselves to. So, Madam Chair, that is why I am suggesting that we allocate \$10 million to be able to work the National Women's Plan of Action and it is only being given \$1 million and that \$1 million has always been the same allocation, even last year I had moved a motion that that amount be increased but it still remains the same.

Furthermore, Madam Chair, I believe the Honourable Prime Minister had made that commitment in the Women's Forum in Turkey and also because of the very nature of the increasing level of violence against women and children in Fiji that continues every day to flood our newspapers and we cannot just sit and turn a blind eye to that. That is why, Madam Chair, I am suggesting that we look at that Women's Plan of Action, allocate it an additional \$12 million from Head 50, and if you like, I can even identify where from Head 50 that we could source from.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, there is no Head 50 and therefore your motion cannot be accommodated.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair there is a Head 50, we have not gone there yet.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We do not have Head 50 anymore. I am sorry.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, it is here.

I understand that Madam Chair, but it was just a suggestion because you had asked where I could source from to make up that for increase. It was just a suggestion that we could consider that, but that is actually up to the Government and to the Minister for Economy.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone second the motion?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any input to that debate? Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- For the same reasons, Madam Chair, in overseas and everywhere, the top priority now is women and youth. Every time you go to a Convention or somewhere, “where is your women representative? They want the women and the youth to be there. All the time this is happening and that is all the reason why I ask my question because I feel we should do more and we have not done enough for women. That is the reason why I support this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other input?

HON. R.S. AKBAR- Madam Chair, can I make a comment in that regard. We are turning a blind eye to domestic violence and the rising incidents of domestic violence, which I believe is not true, totally incorrect. Never before, I think, we have done so much to bring this issue to light. The other day I had a conversation with one of the most influential NGOs, the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre, the coordinator. I just posed the question to her after the closing of our training with the Senior Police Officers where the Police Commissioner was also present and I said, “are we doing enough?” And this is what she said to me, “never before has such awareness being raised on issues, never before had her NGO been given such importance and priorities” so Madam Chair, I think as a Government, we have strengthened our relationship with everyone who is working with us to fight this issue. It is not only the Government’s responsibility as we have been saying, it is everyone’s co-ordinated effort. We are working with faith-based organisations, we have NGOs and schools and to say that we need that much money proves we are not turning a blind eye to this issue.

Madam Chair, I think that is unjustified.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I think the Honourable Minister does not understand the area that the motion is coming from. No one disputes that there has been great awareness created by the Ministry of Women now, the stakeholders involved and the various Committees that are involved steering the whole issue of how to combat domestic violence, the No Drop Policy and the involvement of the Police, nobody disputes that. But what we have here, Madam Chair, is a plan of action being agreed by the stakeholders on how to implement a framework that is within that plan of action and that needs a proper set up of the structures, the coordinating office, who will be the central authority that has to be

coordinating all these and how the policies and the KPIs will be achieved. All that, because we have to come down to data. Once you come down to data, it means the rates of domestic violence cases will reduce and that will come into the less complaints that are coming into the Police Station. That will be reflected in the less court cases.

Those are the indicators that will be coming then we will be able to measure ourselves on how we are committed to the implementation of this and that is why we need a bigger allocation in regards to the proper framework of this so we can be more organised, so the approach is not only a kind of a media gimmick to stimulates the issues so the people are aware, it becomes very real. In cases of even there are other avenues where you need victims that even to give police statements in the police station, they still give it in the *Hindi* language, or recorded by police officers in the *iTaukei* language. Those translations, when you come to High Court trial, it comes down to the interpretation of the statements on how the judges will perceive the right of the victims who are there. These are the areas that proper convictions are done on those who are perpetrators of these crimes. That is why, Madam Chair, I really support the motion because it gives the bigger picture on how the whole framework will be coordinated and how the stakeholders will fit in, how will they coordinate, what the contribution is, what their special taskings are and I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- I would like to support the motion before us because we are now a member of the UN Convention now and people are watching. We must put our money where the mouth is. So that is why I support the motion, otherwise going around to the international convention, our record will be tarnished by their proposal.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Let me once again put it. If you look at the Budget in totality and it is entirety and you will see that funding is being given to Education, Health and to all the ministries and all these allocations affect and impact the lives of women. Our Ministry is an empowerment agency. We are not here to tell the Police what to do. We are not here to tell Judiciary what to do. They have their own budget to look at this issue and our Ministry's workplan is very clear in terms of dealing with domestic violence. We even have our task force, a very strong task force made up of a committee that looks into these issues. The \$1 million that is given for a Women's Plan of Action is sufficient for the Ministry to work with our programmes and to say that you put your money where your mouth is, I think the Budget speaks for itself. This Government is putting the money where our mouth is. We give children and women priority.

I think all these Question time, the answers that have been given, the way we work with the Police, with the Memorandum of Understanding, Police have their own resources, there used to be a time when there were the issues of transportation and staff. Now we are going to implement a 24 hours domestic violence help line. I know, like Honourable Bilitavu said where the emotions are coming from, of course, I am very emotional and passionate about these issues as well. That is why we are putting this on top of our national agenda. I know the world is watching us and this is a worldwide global problem and in Fiji I think we are doing a lot to address these issues.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I give the floor to Honourable Salote Radrodro for her right of reply.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you Madam Chair. I just like to draw our attention to the title of the Ministry, it says, "Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation" and which any reading of that would suggest that women would have the bulk of the budget, but it is totally the opposite. Madam Chair, 70

percent of that budget is sitting with poverty alleviation, only about 20 percent with the children and 10 percent with the women. Also, Madam Chair, this motion is being put forward, we are concerned and I was looking forward not to be defensive, it is a real problem and that is the reality on the ground. What is reported every day that is the reality on the ground and that is why I said, we cannot turn a blind eye to that and this kind of budgetary allocation, \$1 million, what is \$1 million going to achieve when you have four platforms for action under the Women's Plan of Action.

Also, Madam Chair, it had been admitted in this House that there was absence of data and I am surprised that we have heard from the Minister that \$1 million is enough.

I mean you do not even have the data, you admitted it in this House and having to do data collection it is going to need money. Having to say that \$1 million is enough and supported by that side of the House than you should be ashamed.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- After making that kind of international commitment, we need to put our money where our mouth is so that to be able to implement the programmes and do an evaluation if policies are not working ...

HON. MEMBER.- It's working.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- ...than you need to review those policies and if programmes are not working than you need to make new programmes. If they are working than you would not be reading and hearing all these in media.

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, it is really shameful that the Government side is reacting, interjecting and not supporting this motion.

If we talk about our women and children, we are concerned about them, then we should do something about it by allocating the resources to be able to implement the Women's Plan of Action and I had already suggested that there is allocation in Head 50. When we come to Head 50, you will see that there are allocations in there that could be deferred and could be put on hold and allocate that money for this programme to be able to eliminate violence against women and children which continues to increase every day. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister for Economy.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, I would like to once again draw attention to the Honourable Radrodro about expenditure. She talks about mainstreaming women. Mainstreaming is not just done through one Ministry, mainstreaming means that you mainstream it through every single Ministry and that is what mainstreaming means.

Your entire submission has been based on "we give \$10 million, the world will see we are giving \$10 million to the Ministry of Women." What about all the other Ministries? What about the vaccination

that is administered through the Ministry of Health, preventing cervical cancer and what about Legal Aid Commission?

Most of the clients of the Legal Aid Commission are women, we have breastfeeding rooms, we have maintenance now that is being protected, their legal rights are being forced by the Legal Aid Commission and they are now in every single town. We have squatters, a lot of the women are the ones who are recipients of that, we have the micro-enterprise and most of the micro-enterprise recipients are women.

In the cottage industries that goes through the Ministry of Agriculture and the other Ministries we have women. We have scholarship schemes, we have Toppers Schemes through the Minister for Education, a lot of the women are the recipients. We have early childhood education, we have a lot of graduate teachers, and they are also women. Remember that, they are also women! We have for the first time a women's prison other than the one in Suva so that we can cater for women who go to prison and so that they can breastfeed their babies.

These are all the changes that are taking place. The Fiji Police Force has a no drop policy in domestic violence. We have the Youth and Sports that is now encouraging women sports and unprecedented funding for women in Youth and Sports. We have also the Local Government; which Government setup sleeping centres for women in markets; which Government did that?

(Acclamations)

Our women were sleeping in the streets of Suva, Nadi, Ba, Lautoka, Savusavu and Labasa. They now have a place to stay because they come and sell their goods in the market, these are taking care for women.

(Acclamations)

Not by giving \$10 million to one Ministry.

Madam Chair, I can go on, look at the three women here.

(Laughter)

(Applause)

The highest proportion of women in any Fijian Parliament.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- No! No!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes! Yes! In terms of the Ministry, in terms of comparison to all the other Pacific Island countries, yes they are the facts. For the first time in Fiji's history we have the Speaker of the House, we have the Secretary-General to the House and we have the Secretary to Cabinet – simultaneously women. We have the highest proportion of Permanent Secretaries who are women at the same time.

Now Madam Chair, this is the point, you see the Opposition is doing completely reverse to what they are saying. They simply want to window dress by figures. We actually are concerned about the practical, tangible implementation of the Women Plan of Action, streamlining it in every single Ministry

and that is what is taking place in Fiji. I urge Honourable Radrodro, I know she wants to speak after me, to please think about mainstreaming but the point is this, just by giving \$10 million to the Ministry of Women does not do a thing unless it translates into a very tangible effect.

Which Fijian Prime Minister has ever openly spoken about domestic violence and sexual offenses in Fiji? The Honourable Prime Minister of Fiji, Voreqe Bainimarama has spoken about it, both in National Forums and International Forums.

(Applause)

Unreservedly! Unreservedly! it creates a particular level of awareness. You know by giving \$10 million, if people still have this attitude that women are inferior, they will continue to beat them up irrespective if they are given the \$10 million or not.

It is the value system that needs to be changed. We should be able to show that women can also hold positions of power and in practical terms that is what is happening. You need, what you call a multi-pronged approach. You need to have mainstreaming of women issues, you need to not think in a silo. Please, I urge you to come along with us and think along mainstreaming women issues, the Women Plan of Action. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I now give the floor to the Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I wish we were having a more public debate in a more public area so that women could be our audience. Madam Chair, you know a saying goes that 'actions speaks louder than words.'

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- And if action speaks louder than words, the increasing level of violence against women and children that speaks volumes to us on the level of violence that is happening in Fiji.

We heard the Honourable Minister for Economy said when we were debating about the health budget, he said that money is there. So where is the money, if the money is there than give this \$10 million to this allocation? Why are you arguing now just for that money, when you had mentioned in that debate that there is money. So just think that money was not really an issue and if money was not an issue than put your money where your mouth is.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- It is all very well for the Honourable Minister for Economy to say that there is money and when it comes to request such as this, he backs off. We all have heard that long verbal diarrhoea of all these emotive words and words that he had shared with us, it amounted to nothing. If the public prosecutor had said that almost 50 cases had come in in April this year were based on violence against women and children, how can be the Honourable Attorney-General say otherwise?

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- You are suggesting that t there is no need to put all these money in here.

(HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Who introduced the Domestic Violence Decree?

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Who changed the law in the Penal Code?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Hey, wait for your turn! Wait for your turn!

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, we are not disputing about the legislation. The legislation framework is there but it is not effective. It has not been enforced effectively and that is where you need to put the money, the enforcement of those legislation.

On that note, Madam Chair, may I again request the Honourable Minister for Economy to relook at Head 50. You can use the \$18 million – Marketing Support to Fiji Airways or you even look at the \$5 million – Construction of Executive Residence. You can even look at the \$9 million for golf – Fiji International Golf Tournament. Do we need those, or our women and children are more important to protect?

(Chorus of interjections)

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

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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)

Thank you, I will now ask the Honourable Salote Radrodro, as she is again moving that Head 24-1-1(6) Fiji National Council of Disabled Persons (\$420,000) be increased by \$1 million.

I invite the Honourable Radrodro to move her motion.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I thank you and I acknowledge the slight increase there. I have requested for that increase on the background that the Bills for people living with disabilities which is actually under the Committee right now, will be passed soon and will be implemented, and the Fiji National Council of Disabled Persons is the enforcement agency.

From that perspective, Madam Chair, I believe we need to up their allocation and give them \$1 million more to be able to enforce that piece of legislation effectively for the benefit of our people living with disabilities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I second the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The motion is now up for debate. Do you have input to that motion?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, just for the record, Honourable Radrodro who likes Head 50, she will notice that there is \$1.6 million there for organisations that represent disabled people, so it is there.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, may I seek clarification. The Honourable Minister for Economy is saying that \$1.6 million in Head 50-1-1-10(8) under “R” is for FNCDP is it so?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It is for all NGOs related to people with disabilities, so they can go individually to respective organisations like the spinal injuries, it can go to the Fiji Blind Society, various other organisations, it goes respectively to them.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Then, Madam Chair, I believe that is not the same as my motion. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, we are in the voting mode.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	10
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	11

(There being 10 ayes, 29 noes and 11 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

We have another motion by Honourable Salote Radrodro who would like to move that Head 24-1-2(7) - Integrated National Poverty Eradication Programme (\$300,000) be increased by \$1 million.

I invite the Honourable Radrodro to move her motion.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This is the Unit that is under this Ministry but specifically been given the role to monitor, asses and evaluate all the poverty interventions, all the poverty programmes in all Ministries and Departments and because of the non-availability of data in terms of poverty, I believe they have a big job to be able to undertake that monitoring and evaluation of all programmes in different Ministries and Departments, to be able to give us a clear picture on what the

poverty level is like in Fiji right now because right now, we have been given different scenarios and as a government agency within this Ministry that has 70 per cent of the Ministry's allocation for poverty alleviation programmes, that is why, Madam Chair, I am suggesting that this allocation be increased by \$1 million to help this Unit carry out their role effectively. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite input to this motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. We really need to support that motion because it concerns monitoring of all poverty alleviation programmes that are here and there, spread across all places and how they coordinate all that. To coordinate all that from other policies and other programmes that run in other Ministries, we are able to have a good reflection on how we are coping with poverty and whether the programmes are fully realised, whether we are reducing the poverty rate in Fiji, and this is an area where we can assess ourselves.

We can measure ourselves, it will be a good reflection if we have proper data and given that allocation, it will give us an indication whether these programmes are working and whether we really need to give more effort into it and whether other alternatives that could come from the feedbacks, whether it is positive or negative, and other alternative solutions that could be suggested by this monitoring unit.

We cannot be continuously introducing new programmes here and there just for the sake of the word poverty, but we do not assess ourselves. I really support this because this will make us evaluate ourselves in regard to this very important topic "poverty".

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other input? Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, that was the reason why I asked my first question of a big figure which was about doubled because it seems like poverty is increasing and where we should focus our attention is, is to decrease that. That is why it is very critical that you put some more money into the amount that is being requested.

We have heard the Honourable Minister talk about the Welfare Graduation Programme in relation to the food vouchers. That is to allow them and to teach them, but it is important to evaluate how successful our programmes are, so that we reduce poverty because that should really be the focus and I really support this motion because of that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other input, Honourable Salote Radrodro, would you like to speak in reply?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair.

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	:	11
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	10

(There being 11 ayes, 29 noes and 10 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, the Honourable Bulitavu would like to move that Head 24 be increased by \$1 million in Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 7 with respect to Child Protection Programme. I invite the Honourable Bulitavu to move his motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The motion states that there should be an increase in regards to this Child Protection Programme given that the Convention that we have now ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and there is a committee I suppose that coordinates a task force between all stakeholders and also the other convention that is coming in regards to Child Protection the Hague Convention 1996 and on parental responsibility jurisdiction.

There are new issues arising from children, not only the high rates of living victimised but also as offenders and I think there is a programme too that will be soon launched by the Police in regards to the involvement of children Cyber Crimes. This is an area, Madam Chair, that we really need put our focus on because these will be children who can become good citizens and they can become criminals too if they are already in the juvenile areas of things.

But this area, Madam Chair, given that there are issues where we have cross border situations where children under protection awaiting to be transferred back to a habitual residence. I think this is very important area because we do not have any facility at the moment to accommodate these children. The programmes are here and there and they have a Social Welfare Unit that is there that looks after children but more work has been given to NGO's and other homes to look these children.

Our Police Force do not have any specific facilities to look after children. I think there was a case, a few years ago, where a parent brought a child into the country and there was a claim by the mother from overseas. The child came with the father, the father was a Fiji citizen but they wanted to take the child back, he was not returned on time but after lodging a complaint at the police station, the police did not have any powers to declare that there was abduction or whether the immigration had the power to depot the child because the child was with the father. In doing so, I think that case was from New Zealand, that case was taken over by the New Zealand High Commissioner.

But if we have proper facilities here Madam Chair, and the programmes where these children who become victims of domestic violence but through international situations, I think, this kind of programme should be properly advocated through this Ministry on how children are protected, how they are maintained and how they are brought up given that they have lost, most of them are victims of domestic situations and the upbringing of this child is very important, Madam Chair. With that, Madam Chair, I would like us to support this, to increase this programme which is very important.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I invite input to the motion.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, the safety of our children is now a national issue, we must understand that. First and foremost, after every incidences that happened in this country, a nine year old was raped in Wainibuku and more recently a 14 year old was murdered in Deuba and that is painting a very bad story on the safety of our children. And that is the reason why I support this motion. It is a very good motion and you will really need to look at what is the cause of this moral decay.

There needs to be attention, not just programmes to cure but we really need what are the causes of the problems that are recurring all the time and all the time, rape of children, defilement and all those that has been unprecedented. And for that reason there is a need that we put more funds into this so that we can address those very issues. That is the reason why I support this very important motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. Thank you. Any other input to the motion? Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you Madam Chair, I think I would like to support the motion before us because there is another Bill coming before us, that is, the Adoption Bill and the issue about the children, they need equal opportunities in our daily lives and modern day now, we cannot afford to lose our children in the services rendered in the Education, Health and other opportunities being offered. So therefore I support this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input? Honourable Minister.

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Madam Chair, thank you. Yes, I totally agree with Honourable Bulitavu that incidences of abuse and harassments is increasing and we are working on that. In fact the Child Protection Programmes have seen an increase in its budgetary allocation and as mentioned, that we are responsible for looking after the Juvenile Centre.

If you look at the budget for the Juvenile Centre, the Ministry looks after managing the only Juvenile Centre that is here and at the moment we have about seven children who are placed under the instructions of the Court, awaiting sentencing and we have rehabilitation programmes within the centre.

With that, we also have, as I mentioned in my Budget speech, the Girl's Home that looks after the girls and we have a budget for Community Work Programmes for these children so that when they get out of the Juvenile Centre they are rehabilitated.

The care and protection allowance for children stands at \$3.5 million which has also seen an increase. In terms of the Child Protection Programmes, the work that the Ministry is doing, I think that is important. The increase in our budget allocation of \$500,000 this year, Madam Chair, will be utilised for the implementation of the various Child Protection Programmes that the Ministry has. This also includes the well-being and the safety of our children in the nine residential homes that we have.

Most of these children are placed by the Director of Social Welfare when these children are removed from the family due to abuse, harassments or under the order of the Court. And with this extra funding that we have, we are now going to have increased awareness and training like domestic violence. What the Ministry is trying to do is create more awareness and of course they will be increased to 14.

Through this awareness, this is what we are seeing in the media, increased reporting of abuses against our women and children. And this increased protection of course will also help us support our NGOs and partners that work with us. Again, like what Honourable Bulitavu said, these homes are run by

NGOs, we actually do not have a State home for these children. So we work well with our NGOs, these homes are monitored, now we have strengthened our Child Services Unit and in future we look at enhancing our staff capacity with this increased funding as well. This will also increase the disaster management preparedness for child protection as well.

Of course there is a need to engage in a more aggressive national campaign for the protection and care of our children and we have set aside an allocation of \$100,000 for media messaging. Of course other programmes include the National Coordinating Committee on Children that is also going to be looking after this. So all in all Madam Chair, the National Child Helpline that we have made 24 hours now, that is a toll-free helpline service for the children, so they have access to counselling and support services or for reporting of any crime that is needed.

So on that note, Madam Chair, the Ministry is going to go out of its way with this increased Budget funding to ensure that we all work towards protecting our children and ensure that no other child is subjected to sexual harassment, abuse and other social evils.

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

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	7

(There being 14 ayes, 29 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, no amendment was approved. Sorry, there is one more amendment. Honourable Salote Radrodro, moves that Head 24 be increased by \$1 million in Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 6 with respect to NGO Grants.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that that motion, bearing in mind the many women's NGOs out there in the various parts of our country. These NGOs can be the agents of change on behalf of the Ministry. They could be given their allocation and be part of the implementation programme of the Women's Plan of Action. If the grant is increased to \$1 million and also that there will be more organisations that could partner with the Ministry to undertake the various programmes, for example on elimination of violence against women and children. May I highlight here during the debate at the GPH on this very same topic there was a member of a Faith Based Group that had raised their concern in terms of wanting to be part of the ministries machinery in terms of implementation of Women's Plan of Action but I believe it was according to resource constraints they have not been able to play an active role in terms of the implementation of the Women's Plan of Action. Based on that, Madam Chair, I move that the allocation be increased to \$1 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The motion is open for comments if any? There being no comments, Parliament will vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

There being Opposition. Parliament will vote.

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Madam Chair, just one comment in that regards, in terms of the NGO Grant, I already mentioned that we are working with defect with complements the work of our Ministry and a Fiji Women's Fund has been established, whereby \$1.5 million annually will be given out as grants to this NGOs work with the grassroots levels and to the next seven years, a total of \$10.5 million has been committed to help us at the advancement of gender equality and support the work of other NGOs.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I would like to support the motion that the grants be increased, given that these NGOs that work closely with the Ministry and I understand they signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry, especially the Methodist Church is one of them. I think that they work closely with the Ministry, I think they have got their own homes too like Dilkusha Girls and like the Fiji National Council of Women all those groups are specific NGOs that they have very specific targets. It makes the works of the NGOs very easy because they are interactive people. Most of this people the demand increases because people come to them for help and they rely on this grant too, to improve their services the infrastructure that they have, the buildings that they have, to improve other programmes that they intently run and organise spiritually.

Other areas of programme, leadership and training that will help per individual become stronger and more empowered. I support that this particular grant be increased so the relationship between the Ministry and our NGOs is strengthened. They also become more friendly connection into the community and how they interact people. So in that, Madam Chair, I support that this particular allocation on grant be increased to help this NGOs.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I support the motion. I think it is a very important motion, I really think that the amount \$150,000 is not enough. The reason for that because everywhere in Fiji the biggest NGOs are every in Fiji, in the urban areas, in the rural areas, they have the *Soqosoqo Vakamarama*'s, all the faith based women's NGOs and these are the ones that are alive and are moving and empowering and even the villages and everywhere in the community are depending on them.

Where I come from there are three or four women NGOs who are running the shops for their villages. I come back to Savusavu to see that the *Soqosoqo Vakamarama* had met there. So these organisations are alive and they depend very much on their contribution to the community. \$150,000 is not enough. Surely we need to put that up to empower them to do the work that there are already been doing.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Salote Radrodro, would you like to speak?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. I just like to remind us that all these increasing violence against women and children is a sign of our society that is decaying. With NGO grant we can broaden our partnership, we can broaden the net to women's group which are very community based. Also there is Faith Base Group and I believe the group that I was referring to that made that request during debate at GPH was the Catholic Women's League. This are the kind of organisation we should capitalise on this Faith Base organisations to be able to build up our moral values in our communities, so that to help us in terms of trying to address this big problem violence against women and children. So that is why, Madam Chair, the proposal and suggestion that the NGO Grant be increased by \$1 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on this motion, does any Member oppose?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	13
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	7

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

Honourable Members, Honourable Ratu Kiniviliame Kiliraki wishes to move that Head 24 be increased by \$300,000 in Programme 1 – Policy and Administration, Activity 1, SEG10 – Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisation. I invite the Honourable Kiliraki to move his motion .

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I move the motion .

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Kiliraki, would you like to speak on your motions.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This has been explained by the Honourable Minister and she has identified the NGOs that looks at these grants to provide service to the disabled. I proposed for the increase because there is a need for the provision to other NGOs, so that all our communities are covered, especially in the interior, rural and maritime islands, and this is in respect of the disability mostly being impacted by NCDs, especially, amputation that is so prevalent now due to sugar-related diseases, and even stroke, all types of stroke due to high blood pressure, and the pressures of the social environment, and the impact of the economic position that affects all these social problems, and sicknesses that can be classified under this Provision of Disability. So, the coverage of this provision is Fiji-wide and most importantly, the accessibility.

Whilst we acknowledge the work that is being provided within the urban areas, easily accessible by roads, so for this increase, we will facilitate the engagement of other religious organisations. Women organisations seen in the villages, through the Provincial Council perhaps and Maritime islands, in respect to the diseases or what the social impact of our lives that has an impact in the disabilities of people through those courses, that I mentioned already, Madam Chair. So, I move that this allocation be increased by \$300,000. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The motion is up for an input from Honourable Members.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a small contribution. I will support that, given this Capital Grants will help our volunteer organisations that do work closely with the Ministry, especially some Homes that take in girls that are victims of domestic violence at a very tender age, and all those programmes that are run by those Homes.

I think this Capital Grants really help the survival of those voluntary organisations and they also have networks, and other available services that they have. Religious organisations such as the Seventh Day Adventist has its radio station, as well as the CMF, who has two girls who even look after victims of domestic violence, and they have their radio stations as well. I suggest that the Honourable Minister to use this voluntary organisations to make the public aware through the various means that they have because they have the numbers. Also, it is more related to their religious doctrines that are closely related to the issues of family, domestic violence and other issues that would help the Ministry in combatting all those objectives that they have brought on board because of the various conventions that they are to reflect, Fiji being the State party.

Madam Chair, with those words, I support that this should be increased because it will lighten the burden on the Ministry and more work is given to these voluntary organisations who come voluntarily. They even come on streets to feed shoeshine boys, as well as our poor people who live on the streets on Saturdays. I think these churches have their own committees, and those coming in partnership with the Ministry will really help a lot because they are moving on the streets feeding the poor, the hungry, giving clothes to those who do not have, and providing shelter for those who do not have homes.

With that, Madam Speaker, I move that we support this particular motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have any more input to that motion? There being none, Parliament will vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	8

(There being 15 ayes, 27 noes and 8 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, there being no amendment. We will now vote on Head 24, and the question is, that the amount of Head 24 – Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation be approved.

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	29
Noes	:	15
Not Voted	:	6

Head 24 agreed to.

Head 25 – Ministry of Youth and Sports.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, the floor is now open for any comments on the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and we will turn to Page 85 – Head 25-1-1 and Head 25-1-2. Are there any comments?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Madam Chair, on Head 25-1-1-5 on the National Youth Day (\$105,000). Can the Honourable Minister enlighten the House, is this fund sufficient for the whole of Fiji or only in Suva?

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- Madam Chair, for this fund, we are grateful to the Honourable Minister of Economy for the big increase of \$50,000 to the allocation this year because of the popularity of the National Youth Day, that has been conducted in the past.

To answer the question, the youth all over Fiji come over, and we look after their transport from where the youth clubs are in Suva, their accommodation, meals and the workshop for one week. We call it National Youth Day in this part – but it is annual.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? Hon. M.R. Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, just a clarification in Head 24-on Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 5 on Youth Entrepreneur Awards (\$30,000). What is that allocation for?

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- Madam Chair, this Youth Entrepreneur Award was held two years ago and we are grateful for this and it is opened to all youth entrepreneurs. The first Award that was conducted was in 2014, where one of our trainee, a young farmer in Nasau won the Award. We have a criteria of selection, and this goes along with the annual Prime Minister's Award, and the entrepreneur who meet all the criteria is the winner, and will be given the Award.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input or comments? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, on Activity 1, Programme 1, SEG 10 - Upgrade of Training Centres. I move that all these Training Centres' allocation be increased by \$10,000 each.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would you like to fill a form? Thank you, we will turn to page 187, Programme 1, Activity 3 and Programme 2, Activity 1.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, 25-2-1, SEG 6 - Engagement of Sports Coaches \$1.5 million. Can we just get the assurance that coach who will bring us a goal in Rio is included in this and is adequately being provided for?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- Yes, of course, after the two back to back HSBC victories that the international coach, Ben Ryan brought to us. There is hope and we are sure that with the \$30,000 announced during the Budget debate that is awarded to any athlete that brings Gold I think that is a new incentive and we are sure that our international coach will bring the gold back.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. That is very reassuring that we won the gold from Rio and we are grateful to the Minister for making that provision for that leadership for the team to Rio.

Madam Chair, can I have some clarification on SEG 6 - Sports Scholarship of \$200,000. I would like to move a motion once I get clarification on that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- Madam Chair, yes, every year they have a National Sporting Organisation annual meeting where they bring up their proposal on the talents that were found and the scholarship they require. The National Sports Commission looks after that and that is when the sports organisations identify their athletes who need to go for that scholarship. They come up with that and we ask the Government for the grants.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- I would like to move that that provision be increased by \$800,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, fill the form.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Can I have another one, Madam Chair. SEG 10 - Rural Sports Ground Fields for \$200,000. I would like to move a motion that that is increased by \$4.8 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.-Please fill the form. Any other input? Hon. Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Madam Chair, 25-2-1 SEG 6 - National Sports Commission (NSO). Can we just be clarified as what this entails?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- These are grants that are requested by the NSOs, given to the Sports Commission that is shared out to the sports organisations.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Karavaki.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Under 25-2-1 SEG 10 – there are two programs there. The Rural Sports Ground Fields and the Construction of Rural Sports Complex. Are there not specific grounds that have already been identified for this fund or is it still open for applicants to apply for this funds?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- Yes, we have two programmes. . Those who requested for upgrading and enlarging to the standard size that we have put in our SOP and the rural sports complex has already been identified - one in Kadavu that is ongoing, Gau and Vunidawa. It has already been identified.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Hon. Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU. S.V.NANOVO.- 25-2-1 SEG 6 - National Sports Commission, I would like to move that the current allocation be increased by \$600,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Please fill the form. Honourable Ratu Matonitabua

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Madam Chair, 25-2-1 SEG 6, Can the Minister enlighten us on the grant to Fiji Sports Council?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- These are the grants that repair our current sporting facilities that are run by the Fiji Sports Council.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- On SEG 10 - Upgrade and Maintenance of FSC Sports Facilities of \$1.25 million. Can the Minister enlighten in the House, please?.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- Can I have the other SEG again?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- 25-2-1 SEG 10.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- First Delegation of SEG 10.

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- I am sorry that is the one that I meant for the current maintenance of sporting facilities.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- And the grant?

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- The grant that is in SEG 6. That is for the Fiji Sports Council, it is not for the facilities but as a corporate body. Although they are given a grant by Government, this is for the operation and some capital projects that do arise. SEG 10 is different.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I have a question first before I raise the second one. The Upgrade and Maintenance - 25-2-1 SEG 10. All these facilities comes under a statutory body and it is supposed to run, man, earn money and look after its own function. Why is it still being paid for by taxpayers? I need that answer first before I move my motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. L.B. TUITUBOU.- As I have said, this is semi business but the grant is provided by Government. Although they earn money from hosting national tournaments but is not enough because we have international facilities and they still are in an early stage and that is why they ask for more grants. They still ask for grant from Government.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- This is similar to FBC, so my motion is that, this is to be totally removed.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. You may fill in the form. We will deal with some of these amendments that have been proposed.

The first one is by the Honourable Viliame Gavoka who is moving that Head 25, Ministry of Youth and Sports be increased by \$4,800,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 10, with respect to Rural Sports Ground Fields.. I invite the Honourable Gavoka to move his motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I move that the allocation be increased by \$4,800,000.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I beg to second the motion.

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

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you Madam Chair. I am particularly interested with this motion in ensuring that rugby is developed properly across the group.

As I said in my budget speech, that just a few weeks ago the champion's side Nadroga and Tailevu played rugby in a village ground and that is not the only case. There are many other tournaments involving our super sides, our own version of the super franchise are being played in grounds that are not suitable. As I said in my budget speech, a lot of us here are rugby people. Some of us have served in FRU, we know that one of the limiting factors in the growth of rugby is the availability of proper playing grounds. What I propose here, Madam Chair, is that each union in Fiji must have their own grounds, properly developed.

Rugby, Madam Chair, as we all know is very special to us, it unites a nation and we have a comparative advantage on this one over the nations. A small Fiji has done very well and I know every being equal. We will win the goal in Rio. That will place us at a level that will be the envy of the world rugby and rugby is a growing sports.

Madam Chair, let me make a comparison with athletics, when you look at Fiji against the All Blacks, against the Springbok, against everyone else. Let me just go back to the 70s and 80s when the Americans ruled the tracks. All the American Universities produced the fastest people on the planet. No one ever dreamt on beating the Americans on the tracks, we remember that and we sent our track star, Tamani, Samu Yavala to go and train with them. We just could not think of any other nation on earth to beat the Americans on the short distance; 100, 200 and even 400 but what has happened lately, you now see the Americans chasing the Jamaican, a small Caribbean nation that worked on its comparative advantage to develop world champions who now dominate the tracks.

Usain Bolt if he does not run in any world events, that event is not a world event. That is a small nation working on its comparative advantage to become dominant in the world of sport. The Americans are now struggling very hard to catch up with the Jamaicans and we never dreamt of this, not long ago.

Similarly, if our people are properly prepared in rugby, one day they will beat All Blacks and beat them regularly, one day they will also beat the Springboks and beat them regularly as well. It is a matter of developing our rugby properly.

The grounds like I said, Madam Chair, needs to be developed, we need a proper ground in Burebasaga, Tailevu, Northland, Ovalau, Navosa up in the hills, in Rakiraki and in the whole group. I can count about 20 grounds that need to be properly developed.

My motion here is that every year we spend a quarter million dollars on grounds, gradually. This year, look at the surface, next year, something else, in five years, we will have 20 quality grounds, where our boys can develop their skills.

As you know, Madam Chair, where did Caucau come from; he comes from Bua, as well as William Ryder. Kunatani comes from Navosa. I mean these are areas where there are no proper playing grounds but we produced champions. Imagine, if we have these grounds all over Fiji and where our boys play regularly, playing within international grounds.

I am not talking about stadiums, I am talking about the quality of grounds that we have now here in Albert Park. The ANZ Stadium in Laucala is the kind of ground that we need to have and I am talking about immediately. I am talking about a gradual programme of improving our grounds. That, Madam Chair, is the way forward.

I think, as the Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs said the other day, China will have a million players in the next few years. What it means is that, the sport is going to grow in a way that we have never dreamt of before and this small nation, Fiji will be on the top of the ranks. We will be like the Jamaicans, the way they dominate athletics.

So, Madam Chair, I ask our colleagues to embrace this, go for it and start developing grounds to the level that will give us the quality of rugby players that we need. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have any other input to this motion? There being no other input, we put the motion to the Votes. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	28
Not voted	:	8

(There being 14 ayes, 28 noes and 8 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Thank you, Honourable Members. The Honourable Bultavu would like to move that Head 25 be increased by \$1 million in Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 7, with respect to youth capacity building and training programmes. I invite the Honourable Bultavu to move his motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think the increase in youth capacity building and training programme, I think there is a areal need to do this just to open up opportunities for our youths on where to find employment on the formal and informal sectors and I think there has to be a proper coordination. There is a National Council, I suppose at the gist but coming down to how they link up to our divisional youth groups and even to village youth groups on the types of initiatives that are there. I think there are programmes too by the Ministry in helping youths in our villages in setting up youth groups and giving them tools to be used for farming, even boats, they have assisted in the canteens but again, the training in regards to how they can become good entrepreneurs.

All that, Madam Chair, and how they can create youth dialogue on national issues. These are very important issues in regards to democracy, in regards to rule of law. These are the big topics, when you come to domestic violence because these youths will become parents, to come and understand the new Conventions that are coming in relation to children and all that. I think there needs to be more training and awareness conducted to build the capacity of our youth to become future leaders, not only in the area of sports but other areas of agriculture. I think the Honourable Minister for Agriculture has other programmes in relation to rural youth when it comes to farming and other institutions like Tutu Training Centre and other centres that do provide manuals for youth development.

I hope that this will be increased so that a proper framework (national framework) will be there and it will be more strengthened and how it links up at all sectors of the economy; agriculture, sports and other industries where youth can impact and change the status quo. They become agents of change in how they are able to change the situation and become people who can be relied upon. I think given the proper assistance, the proper programme and training and given the right environment, I think these youth will become good citizens of Fiji.

Madam Chair, I move that an increase be done so that more awareness is done on this and a proper structure is properly implemented so that our youths of tomorrow can come up in a very conducive environment.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Anyone who would like to comment on this motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, I would like to make a comment on that. This Programme, Youth Capacity Building and Training Programme, I think our youth should not be left idle. We should always find programmes to engage them. They say, Madam Chair, that idleness is a work of the devil and an idle mind is the workshop of a devil. So, if we get our youth organised and engage them in activities, they would not have the free time to think of negative issues, which is happening these days. We will see that the youth these days that are engaged in drugs and all these things because they are idle. They have nothing to do. So, Madam Chair, I think this youth capacity building and training programmes should be encouraged and we should find the fund to do it and should engage all our youth.

For that reason, Madam Chair, I support this motion.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I just want to comment on the youth, I go past the golf course every day and a lot of youth would be sitting by and they have written to the Honourable Minister seeking assistance because if they are engage in carrying the golf cart for those who come and play and they have money to take back home. If not, they go back empty handed and the thing they have written and asked assistance from the Honourable Minister in terms of assistance in brush cutters to assist them apart being engaged there in the golf course. Most of the time, they are just sitting on the road and I would like to support the increase and if consideration be given to others outside ambit of this SEG, in terms of what they can do to assist them regarding their livelihood, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other input to this motion? Honourable Bulitavu, would you like to...

We will now vote on this motion. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, open the vote.

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	13
Noes	:	28
Not voted	:	9

(There being 13 ayes, 28 noes and 9 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, the Honourable Viliame Gavoka would like to move that Head 25-2-1(6) – Sports Scholarship be increased by \$800,000.

I invite the Honourable Gavoka to move his motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I move that the provision for Sports Scholarship be increased by \$800,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Gavoka, would you like to speak on the motion?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, we have seen a lot of sporting activities over the last couple of weeks and last night I was watching the TV and I saw Eunice Bese and other people returning from abroad to prepare for Rio. I mean, these are our own, who went overseas for training in preparation for the Olympics. It warms my heart when I see our own young people go abroad and come back vastly improved, and I hope they qualify for Rio and do us proud.

For that to happen, Madam Chair, we need to increase the Budget. We have these young flyer, Tabakaucoro, he should run with the best anywhere in the world and that should be with the support from us with scholarships like this. I believe \$200,000, Madam Chair, is woefully inadequate, hence my motion to increase it to a million dollar. We saw the swimming here, Madam Chair, I know we have great swimmers in this country but against the Australians and the New Zealanders, it is like you were standing still when they swam. But give us a bit more time, our swimmers can take on the Australians and the New Zealanders. However, it takes exposure, Madam Chair, and exposure is not always in Fiji, the exposure is overseas to compete with the best.

I am recommending here, Madam Chair, that scholarship for our youth, I believe a million dollars would be sufficient for this time to start developing them in earnest and to prepare them for competition, either regionally or internationally. I think the South Pacific Games in Port Moresby shows us the dominance of the PNG athletes. I believe it is the Australian influence in their training, in their preparation that has made them so dominance in that last South Pacific Games. I think we know that overseas exposure, international competition will improve our young and we should consider increasing this allocation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other input into this motion? Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I rise in support of the motion. As we all know that remittance is one of the major contributing factors in our economy. With this stimulant provided to our youths, it will be a tripling effect to our economy. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input to this motion? Honourable Gavoka, would you like to make concluding remarks before we go.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- I think I have covered all the grounds, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- 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	:	13
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	7

(There being 13 ayes, 30 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, Honourable Ratu Nanovo is also moving the Head 25 be increased by \$600,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 6 with respect to National Sports Commission. I give the floor to the Honourable Nanovo to move his motion.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- I move the motion, Madam Chair.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would you like to speak on the motion, Honourable Nanovo?

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think we do realise at the moment that unemployment is one of the main problems that our country is currently facing and we cannot allow it to keep going at the current rate.

One of the major areas that our youth can seek employment in is through sports as most of them currently enjoy playing sports. Majority of our population too, Madam Chair, also involve themselves with sports. As we have just heard a few minutes ago, there are a number of major competitions that have been held in Fiji and the potential of our youths have been shown in the games that have been held here recently.

Imagine, many of them are targeting to have a firm employment or to earn a living from playing sports. Imagine Madam Chair, if we were part of the team preparing ourselves to go overseas for competition and at the last minute then the team is advised that we cannot go because there is not enough assistance from the Government. Imagine the morale of these people as they would be greatly affected by this.

So to avoid this from happening in future, I am suggesting that we increase the current allocation that is already there of \$900,000 to another \$600,000 to bring the total allocation under this Head to \$1.5 million. Hopefully with that, no team will be dissatisfied when they want to tour overseas. On that note, Madam Chair, I request for that allocation to be increased by another \$600,000. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The motion is open for any comments or input from other Members. Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, this is in regards to SEG 10 which I submitted to you, I am withdrawing that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. A.T. VADEL.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe that coordinating our sports in Fiji is not up to the level as needed by the Sports Commission. The proposal to increase will enhance the opportunity for us to be in the spotlight in the field of sports, so I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are there any more input? Honourable Nanovo would you like to concluding remarks? The motion is open for debate, does anyone oppose the motion.

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	11
Noes	:	30
Not Voted	:	9

(There being 11 ayes, 30 noes and 9 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, the Honourable Dulakiverata wishes to move that Head 25 be increased by \$50,000 in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10 with respect to Upgrading of National Training Centres. I invite the Honourable Dulakiverata to move his motion.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you Madam Chair, I move the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I second the motion.

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

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. All these training centres have been operating for quite some time and they are doing a marvellous job. These centres have absorbed most of the youths from the rural areas and they run a number of courses which benefit all the youths when they return to their villages and some had found jobs and are being absorbed in the work force.

Also Madam Chair, in so doing, the courses in these programmes in youth camps, the participants or the youths have developed a good discipline and they have become better persons. So with that, Madam Chair, the increase in the allocation will help these training centres to better their performances in the training of our youths.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The motion is open for further comments, if any? There being no further comment, the motion is open for debate. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being opposition, open the vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	13
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	8

(There being 13 ayes, 29 noes and 8 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Member, because no amendment was approved, we will now vote on Head No. 25 and the question is, that the amount of Head No. 25 -Ministry of Youth and Sports be approved. Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	30
Noes	:	14
Not voted	:	6

Head 25 agreed to.

Honourable Members, at this stage, I suggest that we break for dinner. We now break for dinner and we will return at 21.43 hours. Thank you, Honourable Members. Congratulations, you all are fit Members.

The Parliament adjourned at 8.43 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 9.47 p.m.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Members we will resume from where we left off.

Head No: 26 – Higher Education Institutions

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments and we are looking at page 189. No comments. Thank you. Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Head 26-1-1 SEG 6 – Operating Grant for the University of Fiji. Although TELS Scholarship has assisted a little in the operational cost and purposes of running the administration of the institution, for a private institute that has contributed massively to education in our country, it costs a hell of a lot to actually create expansion to accommodate the new students that are coming and the request is the infrastructure need to be expanded and for the allocation of \$2.3 million is more if we can revert to the usual \$5 million that used to be given as grant in the past. It will actually look after the infrastructure part of the expansion of the University of Fiji. For that, Madam Chair, my motion is to increase the \$2.3 million to \$5 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Yes, Madam Chair.

(Chorus of interjections)

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

(Laughter)

Thank you. Honourable Members, we have a motion for amendment by the Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca. The motion is that Head 26 be increased by \$5 million in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 with respect to the University of Fiji.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, the \$5 million minus \$2.334.862. The motion is to increase it to \$5 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I see. Thank you. Does anyone second the motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca, would you like to speak further on the motion?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Yes, Madam Chair, I did say a few words on that. It is to do with, especially when you look at the Indian Institutes, a lot of indigenous Fijians are educated through the Indian Schools and we lift our hat on the support rendered to Fijian Indigenous students by Indian Colleges as well as the University of Fiji.

When we look at the allocation now, one would say that the TELS Scholarship would probably reduce the reason why it is reduced from \$5 million to that amount, but when you look at the probable expansion to accommodate more students in the West are not actually the only one using the facilities, from Vanua Levu, and all from the Eastern and Central Divisions and it is growing and it need some further

support in terms of extending the buildings to accommodate the students. For that, Madam Chair, I propose the increase from that amount to \$5 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any further input from the other Members? No, thank you. Honourable Prof. Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I wish to support the motion. We have three main academic institutions. The University of South Pacific, long history and tradition of quality education provider in the Pacific including Fiji and the Fiji National University which is a new University.

I am happy that the Government has actually put in a lot of money to ensure that the National University improves its quality. I know the Honourable Minister for Economy pointed out that the increase in the operating grant for Fiji National University was really to improve the salaries so that good academic staff could be attracted to the university. I think the University of Fiji although it is a private initiative, it has grown into something very, very important, particularly its Medical Programme (MBBS Programme) because as we know we have shortage of doctors, and medical programmes, Madam Chair, does not come cheap. Obviously, to ensure that we get the same quality of doctors that we might get from the Fiji School of Medicine, as well as from the University of Fiji, I think the suggestion to increase the Operating Grant alternatively (they do not have any Capital Grant allocation), and I think it will help the University to further consolidate quality in that particular specialised area, apart from the fact that it can also help to build quality and expand some of the programmes that they are offering at the moment at the University of Fiji.

It would be a good investment. It was an initiative that was undertaken by a group of people with a very, very noble intention, and I think Government in the past, as well as this Government have quite generously supported that University, and I think that is the right thing to do. This increased allocation would further enhance the quality and the University's ability to offer quality programmes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have any other input? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to support the motion. We must commend this organisation for the initiative in establishing this University. At least, Madam Chair, it gives options for students across the nation, it gives them a choice where to study and also, the type of courses that they are going to pursue.

Also, Madam Chair, the increase in the allocation would help the University to enhance its programmes and bring about good level in the programmes to match the programmes provided in the other two Universities. If you see, Madam Chair, the Operating Grant to the other two Universities; University of Fiji and the University of the South Pacific are quite enormous, and by giving this University that additional grant would help the University in enhancing its programmes.

For that, Madam Chair, I support the increase in this allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Minister for Education.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, I met Honourable Tikoca outside Parliament, and one of things I mentioned to him is; "Your side should do solid research before they come and propose changes to the figures." Again, I find errors in his proposal. Let me point those out to them, Madam Chair.

What Honourable Tikoca has said to give back the \$5 million they used to get. The University of Fiji never received \$5 million, Madam Chair. That is factual error there.

Secondly, Honourable Tikoca, and also Honourable Professor Biman Prasad said that we do not have a separate capital grant. Honourable Tikoca said that we should increase it to allow them to expand the infrastructure.

Madam Chair, it is a private institution, and if they close some day and they liquidate, who will own that capital infrastructure funded by Government? It is a private institution, Madam Speaker.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Do not look at it that way!

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- No, no, let me finish.

Now, the issue about of operating grant, there is a formula that guides Government in allocating the funds. There is about 1,200 students there, Madam Chair, getting \$2.3 million. We got close to \$16,000 full time students at the Fiji National University. You can prorate that figure, Madam Chair, then you will see how much FNU should get if that is the rate you should offer.

Thirdly, Madam Chair, if the University offers a Programme with fee pegged to full cost recovery, then there is no issue. If the fees is based on full cost recovery, then they will get the full money from TELS. All those students who are enrolled at this University will be fully funded by TELS because we are allowing the students to get funding from TELS and Toppers, and there are students from this University. All those students are getting funding from TELS and Toppers. Therefore, if their fees is pegged at full cost recovery, Madam Chair, there is no need for an Operating Grant.

Madam Chair, over time, we have to stop giving Operating Grants to private institutions and tell them, 'all your students will get full-fee, cost recovery fee from TELS and Toppers.' There will be no issue for them to any additional. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Viliame Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I am disturbed about the thinking behind that because it is private and that there are surety in terms of the support for FNU and the support from University of Fiji. That is quite wrong. Here is an organisation that has come to establish a University in the Western Fiji. We should help them. We should extend a helping hand to help them establish, and to offer what we do not offer in the West.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- \$2.3 million.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Now, you are saying that because of the relativity in the size of FNU and the size of University of Fiji, you cannot justify the support someone is going to them. They are just starting out and I even admire these people. You know, to study in University is not easy. I mean, you must reward the pioneer spirit here, the long term beneficiary, and the people of Fiji. So, I would treat them differently because they are the starter, they are new, and you know that it is not a huge organisation, but they have started something that is of value to us and long term for Fijians, and to say that one day they will wound up, you have to have faith in your partners. You cannot say, you will wound up one way, that is why I cannot put money into you. I think you should change that thinking.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- Madam Chair, I think the nation has been misled when the Honourable Minister said that it is fully funded. No, it is not. TELS is a loan scheme so people have to ask for money to get inside there, to attend the University. I mean they have to ask.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Do you not understand what he is saying?

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- No, I am just saying that, but the thing is, Madam Chair, for the University they started on their own, and up to now the Government should be realising that most of our people, our students they go to this University for tertiary studies.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- There is a choice there, Madam Chair, they go to FNU, USP or to the Saweni Campus. I mean, the people of this country also attend that University. I think there should be some consideration to be given in terms of the support for the motion. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Tikoca, would you like to speak in reply?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, it is very sad to see that two Honourable learned Members of Parliament out there who are supposed to be supporting education, with your reserved comment, are not furthering the education for the people in Fiji does not augur well with your Programme.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Hold on! And, I thought the request of increase should be respected because there is a lot of people that flock that University that could not find chances to enter the USP or the FNU. And, not only that, overseas students in the Pacific Islands are also attending, so its investment, not only to them for their education or development, but it is also for the businesses in terms of the foreign earning brought into our country. If you look at it holistically, this is an investment, it is a win-win investment, win for our children, those that come in, it creates jobs and also you will be presenting batches of educated people in the world, in Fiji, and I do not know why you are so negative about it. I plead with you, please, for the sake of education, this institution that has been there for many years supporting primary, secondary education and now for a number of years, to come into the university level and also for the medicine, to opt for the second school that is actually given approval by Government for our medical students and our doctors that graduated from there are actually providing the shortage of doctors in Fiji right now, coming from that institution.

Madam Chair, I support this motion and I would like to emphasise the importance that this grant increased to \$5 million, thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Parliament will now vote on this motion. As anyone oppose the motion? There being no opposition Parliament will vote.

Vote cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	4

(There being 16 Ayes, 30 Noes and 4 Not Voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, the Honourable Leader of Opposition has the motion to table. I give the floor to the Honourable. Leader of Opposition.

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Madam Chair, this motion is in regard to 26-1-1 SEG 6 which is the Centre for Appropriate Technology and Development. This is the Nadave one, Honourable Prime Minister. Like this one in Nadave, I am proposing, Honourable Chair, to increase the allocation here to \$1 million. Here it is \$736,000 just increase it to \$1 million Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder? Honourable Leader of Opposition you can speak on the motion

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Madam Chair, this Nadave Centre is a very good one because it established in the 1980s by a German foundation called Hanns Seidel in regard to rural upskilling and upgrading rural people and 30 years the rural population has come particularly the younger members to attend garage workshops and also the other facilities that is part of their curriculum.

The Provincial Council also, Madam Chair, use his facilities because it is very well organised set up. So my proposal Madam Chair is to do with incorporating IT facilities, this is just to start it off because it is very good but the students who come there need to be able to access the latest farming methods which I believe can be done through technology and for them to keep up with what is happening in the world. I am proposing there is very small allocation for them to start off with internet facilities. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does any other member like to make input to this debate?. Does anyone oppose the motion?

Votes Cast

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	6

(There being 14 ayes, 30 noes and 6 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members no amendment was approved therefore Parliament will now vote on Head 26 and the question is, that the amount of youth Higher Education Institution be approved. Does any member oppose the motion?

Votes cast:

Ayes	-	27
Noes	-	17
Not voted	-	6

Head 29 agreed to.

Head No. 30 – Ministry of Agriculture

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head Number 30, is now open for any comments and will now be looking at Page 193 – Programme 1, Activity 1, and Programme 1, Activity 2. Do we have any comments? Honourable Vadei?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Before I move a motion I just need the clarification from the Minister on SEG 6 and SEG 10 of Programme 1, Activity 1. There are two, same issues but two different allocations. One, is to the tune of 1.3 million then on SEG 10 is \$4 million. So, what are the difference, Sir.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. the \$1.3 is the Operating Grant and the \$4 million on SEG 10 is the Capital Grant.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other input? Thank you, there being no other input, we look at page 1.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, I have just want to get more information on the Agriculture, Marketing Authority, with that allocation they will be doing a lot of work in terms of buying produce from local. In terms of the effect is it working according to plan, I need some input from the Honourable Minister

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Member this debate is not on the performance it is whether you want to increase, decrease or withdraw, thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I wish to put a notice that I wish to move a motion in relation to SEG 6 – Tutu Training Centre -increase the allocation there.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, please fill the form. Any other input, Honourable Prof. Biman.

HON. PROF. B.C PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair, just want to raise this question with the minister first before I move a motion 31-2 SEG 9, Farm Mechanisation. Minister; what is involved in it,. How are you are going to use that million dollar? Because I feel is very small amount but I want to know exactly how it is going to be used then I can move a motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Madam Chair this is to encourage our farmers particularly those are in the semi commercial/commercial level to go into buying machineries and at the same time for the Ministry for Agriculture as well, we keeping extending our services to the people because the hourly rates for our machines are quite low compared to the private sector and should farmers not fully utilise then Government will purchase the machines and preposition next to the localities.

So that is the main aim of the farm mechanisation. However let me also mention, Madam Chair, that there is also a separate allocation for land clearing. For those who still cannot afford machines but they need machines to do the land clearing, that is another allocation for that, Madam Chair

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- In that case, Madam Chair, I will move a motion to increase it by another million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Please fill the form. Honourable Semesa Karavaki.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The Honourable Minister has just mentioned the land clearing under Head 30-1-2-(10), I would like to move a motion to increase that to \$2 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Would you like to fill the form? Any other input. Honourable Ro Kilivilame Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you. Madam Chair. Head 30-1-1(6), I want to move a motion on Navuso Agriculture Training School for an increase.

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

Thank you. We will move on to Page 195, Programme 1, Activity 3 and Programme 1 Activity 4. Are there any comments?

Thank you. We will move on to Page 197, Programme 1, Activity 5, Head 30-1-5, any comments?

We will move on to Page 199, Programme 2, Activity 1 and Programme 2, Activity 2. Any comments? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, on Page 199, Head 30-2-2(8) I would like to move a motion that the rehabilitation for *Yaqona* should increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which Programme, Activity and SEG?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8 (Page 199).

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, which allocation again, please?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Rehabilitation of *Yaqona*.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. You want to move a motion on that?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Please fill the form. Thank you, Honourable Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- On the same SEG 8, Dalo of \$500,000, I move for an increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Please fill in the form. We will move on to Page 201 – Programme 2, Activity 3.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Another one, SEG 8, also for ginger development programme. \$800,000, I move for an increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Please fill the form. Now we are back to page 201. Any comments? No comments.

We will now move on to page 203, Programme 2, Activity 5, and Programme 3, Activity 1, any comments? No comments.

Page 205, Programme 3, Activity 2, and Programme 3, Activity 3, any comments? Honourable Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you Madam Chair. can I just ask the Honourable Minister to let us know whether in the personal emoluments because I do not see and I did talk about veterinary officers within the livestock sector, how important is it for us to provide that extension services. I am just wondering whether you have provision for Veterinary officers within that provision and whether your plan is to take it out to all the areas.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- That is Activity 3?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Yes.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you Madam Chair. the simple answer is yes. That includes the post for the veterinary officers but the problem that we face right now, Madam Chair, is the lack of veterinary officers in Fiji. We have advertised, so the next step that we are taking now is to relook at the policy that is within the Ministry because this was established years ago and it restricted our recruitment to a few institution zone but things have changed a lot. So that is in the process, Madam Chair. So, yes definitely.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Page 207, Programme 5, Activity 1, and Programme 6, Activity 1, any comments?

Thank you. We will now deal with the proposal for amendments that we have before us and the first one is by the Honourable Semesa Karavaki, to move that Head 30, be increased by \$1,500,000 in Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 10 with respect to land clearing. I give the floor to the Honourable Karavaki to move his motion.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Madam Chair, I move the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have a seconder?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- I beg to second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. You would like to speak on your motion Honourable Karavaki.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Madam Chair, the most difficult part for a farmer is the clearance of the land and I must thank the Government for providing this allocation. This would enable the farmers to lift the standard of their farming to commercial standards because mostly we know that we have farmers who

are out there in the farm areas but mostly they talk about subsistence farming. In providing the allocation for land clearing it has enabled them to have a big portion of land being cleared by the machines.

That is the most difficult part because if this is not done, they would not be able to reach the standard that other farmers have, like the Chinese farmers are doing right now because they use machines. They have the money to pay for the machines to clear up their lands and we do not have the funds for that. I must thank the Government for providing this. And for us to encourage the farmers to reach that standard we must reconsider the amount that is given here and I am suggesting that that should increase by another \$500,000 so that it becomes \$2 million.

It would be able to also help the farmers to contribute effectively to the export of agricultural products to overseas. This will no doubt help the economy through the Agricultural Sector. This is why I am moving this. I am grateful for what the Government has been doing because, Madam Chair, when we go to these farm areas, mostly the farmers they do not know about this and maybe the agricultural officers they have gone out to educate them or to bring some kind of awareness to them to be aware of this allocation and its availability but most of them they do not know about it. I could see the potential that is there. If they are aware of this and they can access it and I am sure this amount would not be sufficient because they will be very grateful to have the assistance given to them, that clearing of lands. Big big trees, Madam Chair, this is the thick forest that they would like to use their space to farm. If this is not available to them, they cannot farm, they will just form around the trees, the trunk that they are able to cut down. But with this assistance, Madam Chair, I would see that the agriculture sector really will take off to a very high level, locally and also for export purposes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have any other input to this? Honourable Ratu Kiniviliame Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Fiji has a total area of 1.8 million hectares and 16 percent is flat land that is arable, which is mostly cultivated now and 15 per cent is on the hilly slope, four to 15 degrees. That is 15 percent at 69 percent is steep land.

So, when you talk about clearing, as alluded to by the Honourable Karavaki, this is mostly the steep land area and the undulating rolling hills that require a lot of clearing because of the vegetation, the forest. I support the motion because for the agriculture sector to advance in crop farming, it needs a lot of input into the clearing because of the big trees, the slope and without any mechanisation or any input financially for clearing then unfortunately, the input into the expansion of farming, especially in the interior will be limited and thus it will impact in the total output of the agriculture sector, in terms of crop farming.

I agree with the motion for an increase, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do you have any other input? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to contribute to the motion. Madam Chair, I support the motion, as you know this sugar industry, all the frontline, the arable areas that used to be cultivated with cane had mostly been now consumed for commercial, industrial and residential areas, which then there is a need to move to the hill side for more cane cultivation. To do that, you need this land clearance, Madam Chair, to make it effective and to increase the area that will be taken up for sugar cane cultivation.

Also, Madam Chair, as has been mentioned by the Honourable Kiliraki, that most of the arable land that belongs to the *iTaukei* had all been leased out. So for the *iTaukei* to be engaged in the farming

activities, they will have to go for their land, which is in the hills and which are under heavy forestation. For them to participate in this agricultural activities, they will need to have a clearance.

I support the motion, Madam Chair that the Government should resist by increasing this allocation for land clearance. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Viliame Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I would like to support the motion. As you know, Madam Chair, when the leases expired whether it was sugar or agricultural, there was this period where land lay fallow and it is always a joke, when people said “Oh, look the land went back, look at it now it is all jungle”. Madam Chair, the exit and the entry of the new farmers had quite a bit of disconnect in there, hence the condition of some of the land today.

On the Programme that I spoke about during the Budget, up in the highlands of Navosa, there is a beautiful land there, Madam Chair, but they are overgrown with trees. The solution would be to have clusters of villages because if you have one set of machinery for the whole of that area, the five districts, it will be very difficult. The way to go is for a cluster of villages to have one set of equipment to clean up those areas.

We have a huge project up there, and as you drive up the valley road, what used to be the salad bowl is now badly overgrown and we need heavy machinery to clear that. The road has been improved, which is very positive but you will find that, that land, that used to be known as the Salad Bowl of Fiji, is badly overgrown with trees. It is going to be a huge exercise in clearing them, hence the need to increase the budgetary that are there. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. RATU S. NANOVO.- Madam Chair, I rise to make my contribution towards this motion that is on hand and I would also like to support the motion because right now, in many of the rural areas, they are mostly concentrating on subsistence farming. After the introduction of this land clearing allocation, only they will be able to really turn their farming into mechanised farming. Through mechanisation, they will be able to increase their output, which in turn will also increase the crops that they can sell in the market which can also help them to gain export market outside of Fiji, only then, they will be able to survive and I do thank the Government for their allocation that is on hand and therefore, I also support the increase in allocation from \$1.5 to \$2 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Karavaki for his right of reply. No right of reply, the motion is open for further vote. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, I will now give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Kiniviliame Kiliraki to move his motion that Head 30 be increased by \$1.5 million in Programme 2, Activity 2,, SEG 8 with respect to Food Security Programme. I give the floor to the Honourable Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I move the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do you have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ro Kiliraki, please speak on your motion.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I move for the increase in light of the recent experience that we went through during Tropical Cyclone Winston and it has affected the whole of Fiji in terms of not being able to have enough supply so that we can feed our population. That has a very great impact on the affordability of the food in the market, especially the root crops and the prices have gone up by 100 per cent or even more and it still ongoing after four or five months now after *Tropical Cyclone Winston*.

Sadly enough, Madam Chair, the desperation of having to put food on the table, we did come across the reports from municipal markets that workers they traded their uniforms, overalls, boots for cassava (*tavioka*) or for their food to put on the table. Some went on credit account to pay at the end of the week and those are the realities of such impact in our country that is so devastating and whilst we are here enjoying and affording on this side of Viti Levu while the affected areas were so affected that those scenarios was highlighted to us. It is very important that this should be taken into consideration as a priority in terms of food security.

In terms of health and you know that we will always go back to NCDs because of the economic fall ability that we go into cheaper food stuff and they are very unhealthy in terms of contributing to NCDs that is in the shop .Our children they go around eating those noodle dry and the sweets. We must have food security like we used to have before all the *molis* in the season of guava, the *vutu* that must be promoted and we must teach our children to have that type of food that we used to enjoy. We talked about the dental problem and we used to have all those sugarcane, it brushes your teeth and make your teeth strong and your jaws. Those are facts, Madam Chair, so the food security is very important and I support the motion to increase. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do you have other input to this motion? Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, just a short one. I think we have to support this motion to increase this particular allocation on food security, given the circumstances that have been alluded by Honourable Kiliraki. One of the indicators should be the price that is there in the market, if we go across in the market, you will see the price of one heap of cassava, now it is about \$10 and even *vudi* it is about \$10 too.

All those, Madam Chair, shows that the price have really gone up and there has to be proper planning. This morning when I was coming to Parliament I could hear in the radio that there has been many theft also, *cavu tavioka veiraiyaki* and all that. It is happening because people do not have food and they are doing that for a purpose because they want to feed themselves and also the members of their families.

I think this programme needs to be given more allocations so that even our villages and rural communities to be given seeds to plant, and those who can recover quickly after disaster, for them to put food again on the table so that other issues like crime, et cetera, do not come up when people are forced to do all those kinds of things when they are in hunger.

With that Madam Speaker, I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, there being no other input, Honourable Ratu Kiliraki, would you like to draw concluding remarks, we will put this motion to the vote. Does anyone not support the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Professor Biman Prasad, to move:

That Head 30 be increased by \$1 million in Programme -1, Activity 2, SEG 6 with respect to Farm Mechanisation.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, this motion was really similar to the motion by Honourable Karavaki. Some of the arguments put forward during that motion are quite relevant. All I want to say, Madam Chair, is that, I saw firsthand how support from Government in terms of mechanisation has improved markedly rice production in Dreketi and other surrounding areas and I know the Honourable Minister took a lot of interest in making sure that it happened and I really commend him for that.

I think in future, Madam Chair, that is the way to go and more and more, we find that there is labour shortage. When we talk about mechanisation, we just do not talk about tractors and other farm machines but I think we also need to talk about new technology, new breed, new techniques of farming and wherever agriculture productivities, especially in the non-sugar crop sectors which has a huge potential. That would be the way to go and I would really like to see the Honourable Minister have a lot more latitude in terms of funding so that lot more experiments and trials could be made in terms of supporting mechanisation, not only in rice for example, where I see a significant improvement, but also in terms of other crop sectors and Honourable Gavoka talked about Sigatoka.

I was in Sigatoka some time back to one of my friends trying to grow tomato and I saw how he was exploring the possibility of new techniques, new technology and indeed, mechanisation. So, really, this would be a great initiative on the part of the Ministry of Agriculture, if they continue to explore Agriculture if they continue to explore various crop sectors and how new techniques, machines, new technology can be infused and production increased. So, Madam Chair, I really think it is a very worthwhile consideration before the House.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do we have a seconder?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have any other comments on this motion? Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Yes, Madam, I support this motion so strongly. Whilst the Chairman of the Tailevu Resource Committee, we did an exercise which cost us \$7 million to provide mechanization, that is, including excavators and also ploughs and accessories for the 22 *Tikina*. That goes together with the operational cost and that would suffice to actually create the turnover we like so that we can expedite, creating our own farming development within the *tikina*. It costs us \$7 million after that exercise. However, from operational cost, expertise to assist us and the provision of each *Tikina* of the mechanization that is required to actually provide the maximum return to the piece land in each 22 *Tikina*.. That is why I said, if you are going to look at the Fiji concept than the \$1 million, Madam, is an underestimate. Therefore, at least for a starter, the mover of the motion to even at least increase it to the figure that he had actually proposed. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have any other input? Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I think I support that motion that is before us. I think it is now time that we move away from traditional agriculture technics into more machines because it will increase productivity, Madam Chair. I think most of our rural areas we still use fork, knife and even bullocks to plough the land and even horses.

The introduction of tractors and all these machines, Madam Chair, will really increase the productivity and also we are in the age now where our young people do not want to do hard work anymore. They just want to sit on the tractor and plough the land. No one wants to do the ploughing because of the idea that it is dirty and all that. These are some of the areas which we can bring back our youths to be more interested in agriculture, land and land use which is very important. But again more towards not only subsistence but to be able to become a supplier in the market. You have to meet the demand for commercial purposes where will you need machines and currently I think the Ministry of Agriculture in Labasa had hired a tractor a few times at about \$150 to plough cassava plantation, but again, if you could increase this allocation to provide more machines in our Divisional Agricultural Offices for our people to be able to have access into these kind of machines to improve their farm and also the quality of land. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. Can I contribute to the motion as I support it. I will be focusing mainly on the hilly slopes that I have mentioned already because in areas like Naitasiri all the flat lands have been taken up and only on the hills that are left or where we do the farming.

That type of land for mechanisation is the excavator that is being used for this purpose in clearing the land and also in tilling the land.

I acknowledge the Ministry of Agriculture for subsidising farmers in Naitasiri, for ginger and *dalo* plantation on the hills because to use an excavator, it costs about \$50 to \$70 per hour. That has been subsidised by the Ministry for some farmers, as some they had paid from their pockets and we are thinking about this increase for the 16 *tikina* of Naitasiri to be allocated one excavator each so that we go out from,

(as we have always mentioned) subsistence farming to commercial farming so that we can increase the output and make use of the land that are left idle.

We have been limited because of our own manpower, our own man resources and we will always be planting two chains, square chains, three square chains and we cannot go beyond that, because of the terrain, vegetation, trees and mechanisation is the way to go. For the purpose of Naitasiri in terms of farming *dalo* and ginger mechanisation is required in terms of the provision of this increase for the excavator or the digger for the purpose. So I support the increase, thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Prof. Biman Prasad would you like to speak in reply? Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not Voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Niko Nawaikula would like to move that Head 30 be increased by \$1 million in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 with respect to Tutu Training Centre.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, I move the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have a seconder?

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would you like to speak on your motion?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chair, the purpose of this motion is to increase the allocation for Tutu Training Centre by \$1 million. Tutu Training Centre is best described by Doctor Brij Lal as he then was Permanent Secretary for Education, and allow me to quote him, this is what he said :

“The Institution provides alternatives to those that cannot make it into tertiary institution the formal education is offered. It is indeed an enriching course, as it creates the character from within that will last a lifetime. It is pleasing to note that many students who have graduated from the institution are making a name for themselves in their villages have been successful in their career”

That puts it in a nutshell what the institution is, but all the same, Madam Chair, we need to expand the institution to take in more students in order that they can take other subjects. The institution has taught us a lot and I know the Honourable Minister will agree that the experiences in Tutu has been transferred to other areas, including Navuso.

At the same time, I wish to acknowledge one of the pioneers Father Mcwary who brought out this idea where you educate people to remain within their villages in the form of an Apprentice Programme where they are allowed to plant in their villages then the teachers go there to make the assessment, quite

apart or different from the school that we know now where we send our student to school, but at the same time we are training them or we are doing so to take them out because they cannot work in our villages.

They have to come out to the towns to work, so all the credit to Father Mcwary. The mission of the school, Madam Chair, it empowers the youths to become more autonomous to take charge of their lives to return home to their villages. So they become successful and without the need of taking them out of their villages. So that is the whole purpose of the institution, it is taken over now by Father Petero who has taken over from Father Mcberry, but there is a need that this be expanded and the Honourable Minister will agree to that this is the second time I am bringing this because I have been persistent in asking and begging the Government to please look into the need to expand this so that other students can come in, into this very important learning institution.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Are there any r comment on this motion? There being none, we will put the motion to the vote, does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	28
Not voted	:	7

(There being 15 ayes, 28 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

I will now give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Kiniviliame Kiliraki, to move that Head 30 be increased by \$700,000 in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6, with respect to Navuso Agriculture Training School. I now give the floor to Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chair, I move the motion for an increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki, would you like to speak on the motion?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. This is the same Programme as Tutu, and we acknowledge the Government for supporting Navuso in the mechanisation last year and the year before.

You may know, Madam Chair that Navuso was really starting from scratch again after those years in the 1960s and 1970s where we used to know Navuso as the agriculture centre of the Central Division. It is also known for its dairy products, piggery and all the farms that are in that Programme where they come out of there with the training. They even catered for the Pacific Islands, for example, Tonga who used to come to Navuso for agriculture education.

Fortunately, the Methodist Church has revived this Programme, and with the input of the Ministry of Education in terms of secondary education, inputting the Agriculture Programme so that the young students that go through are more focussed on developing the land. As already mentioned, the young

generation are moving out from the land because of the physical efforts that it has put into the land, and this is a very positive initiative. I think the Government should support this, because Navuso has the land, and the facilities is there, but all it needs is more input to sustain the programme so that we have regular output from the students, and to be able to go out and develop the land.

I know that there was a programme initiated by FNU where there was recruitment all over the villages to come to enrol in FNU, and once they graduate from there, they are subsidised by about \$17,000 to start up their farm. I do not know how far that programme has gone to, but this is already there.

We acknowledge the provision there, but this motion is for an increase so that it is a way forward for Navuso in terms of the national development in agriculture. Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Just a correction, Madam Chair, the Church did not revive the Programme, the Church killed it. Government revived it. *Vinaka!*

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you for the correction. Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, with the development of Navuso, it can be a place where students from Koronivia come and do some practical training in Navuso. I know for a fact that...*meu vosa vakabalavu!* Madam Chair, the Honourable Minister is asking me to keep on talking.

Navuso, used to be known as a place where students graduate from it, they come out with tools and then they go out to their respective villages to put into effect what they have learnt, and I know for fact that, as the Honourable Prime Minister has said, and I was in the Ministry then, the Government then had made that possible because it was sort of dying. So, the advice was to have two streams; technical in terms of agriculture and then academic. But, I am happy for the fact that the Government has seen it fit to revive Navuso because of the fact that it was a place where students enjoy.

Also, Madam Chair, as the Honourable Minister has alluded to, when I was discussing with him about the Agriculture Show in the Division, Navuso can get a place where students come in and showcase their products because of the fact that there are a lot of things going on in Navuso now that will assist the students of this nation.

With that, I support this motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, my short contribution to this motion, if a person dies and no realisation of his capacity or potential, that means we are failing in our part. Therefore, in that regard, we need to capitalise on that opportunity by increasing the assistance given to the Navuso Agricultural School to cultivate more of our own people in our country.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, can I contribute to this?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you. Madam Chair, as we look at Bills 19 and 20 for the Sugar Industry, one of the ideas that has come up from the farmers and from the stakeholders is to train young farmers, and people remember there was a Sugar Training School called 'Drasa' (DTF) some years ago. So, if we have these models from Tutu and Navuso, we should develop these models properly and have

them transplanted in areas in the West where people can be trained on cane farming. So, I would really urge Government to continue to strengthen these institution, Tutu.

I was in Tutu and I met Father McQuerie, a wonderful guy, and I am quite impressed with what is happening at Navuso because the way forward for sugar would be to train young people to take up sugarcane farming, and this model can be transferred o the West and in Labasa, Macuata to help the young people train for sugar. So, let us support strengthening Navuso, and there can be a number of them around the country, Madam Chair, to help us in our objectives for agriculture. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPESON.- Thank you. Honourable Ratu Kiliraki to speak on reply.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. I acknowledge the correction from the Honourable Prime Minister, and it is probably the fruit of the prayers of the Church.

(Laughter)

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. 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	:	16
Noes	:	29
Not Voted	:	5

(There being 16 ayes, 29 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I now give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Kiniviliame Kiliraki to move that Head 30 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 5 with respect to Dalo Rehabilitation.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, Madam Chair, I move the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I second the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Kiliraki, would you like to speak on the motion?

HON. RATU K KILIRAKI.- Dalo, Madam Chair, is one of the major exports for agriculture and as we know in Taveuni the production has gone down because of the soil fertility acidity in the soil. So the areas in Viti Levu and Vanua Levu are the potential areas to maintain this lucrative market the overseas for dalo and this motion is relevant because it will enhance that market that is already available, especially

if we lose it will be very hard to retain that one because Samoa and other Pacific Islands too are exporters of dalo. So, that is gist of my motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone have an input to the motion? Now we will put the motion to the vote, does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	12
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	11

(There being 12 ayes, 27 noes and 11 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

I now give the floor to the Honourable Aseri Radrodro to move that Head.30 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8 with respect 2, Cocoa Revitalisation Programme. I give the floor to the Honourable Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I vote for the increase in the allocation for Cocoa Revitalisation Programme,

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have a seconder?

HON. RATU S. MATONITABUA.- Madam Chair, I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I give the floor the Honourable Radrodro to speak on his motion.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair, first of all I thank the ministry for providing this allocation and I think there is a lot of sentiment that goes with this product, the cocoa, and it has been there for a while. It has been a product that has been left aside for a long time in terms of the production and one of the importance of this product as you can see in the flags that are around us, even what the lion is holding, that is the cocoa pod. That is the importance of that product and therefore the allocation should be increased to ensure that the revitalisation programme do come out so that the product can spin off into a chocolate and chocolate drinks, chocolate shampoos, that is the reason for the revitalisation proposal.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, does anyone else would like to have input. Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chairperson I rise to support the motion. Cocoa has been planted in Tailevu especially in Wainibuka and Naivicula and they still have a big plantation there. But with the allocation it will revive the industry. It is one of the industries or crops that the farmers really appreciate having because there is not much work in cocoa planting. Unfortunately, the Government did not continue to promote this cocoa plantation.

The cocoa plantation there Madam Chair are very old, they are over grown, even the shady trees have become a problem too in the area because they are not pruned because the plantation are abundant. So, we need to revitalise the industry. It is very good, there is a big demand for cocoa. Fiji cocoa they

reckon is one of the best beans in the world, it can be mixed with other beans. There have been a lot of research in this area. I support this motion that we increase our cocoa production.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have any other input? Thank you Honourable Radrodro would you like to speak in reply? Parliament will now vote on this motion, does any member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

I now invite the Honourable Bulitavu to move that Head 30 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 5, SEG 8 with respect to Coconut Cyclone Rehabilitation. I give the floor to the Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I think the motion appraise that there should be an increase in regards to the cyclone rehabilitation of coconut. I think due to the cyclone that has just gone through our nation, I think most of the coastal areas were affected: Taveuni, Lomaiviti, Coastal area of Ra and other coastal area that depend on the copra industry and the other one is for consumption at home and the other one is for as source of income.

For them to support their basic livelihood and other investments and also in education, they rely on this but it takes time for this particular crop to grow but I think there is a programme for a million coconut tree programme that was initiated by the Government and there has to be a move to push for replanting in this area because these are the only product in the coastal areas apart from the sea that the coastal people they rely on it.

And given that even some of the coastal seas they do not have much resources like fish in those areas and rely on this particular industry to be their only sources of income and I ask everyone to support this particular allocation because it is for the rehabilitation of our people who were affected by the cyclone.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I invite an input to this motion, if any. Does anyone second the motion? There being no input the Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	5

(There being 16 ayes, 29 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I now give the floor to Honourable Ratu Kiliraki to move that Head 30 be increased by \$400,000 in – Programme Crops, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8 with respect to Yaqona Rehabilitation. I now give the floor to the Honourable Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I move the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do you have a seconder?

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

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

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yaqona is very important, Madam Chair. Before TC Winston there was a 498.8 million stock of yaqona. That was the standing crop before TC Winston. After the cyclone, 160 million of crop was damaged and 160 million has to be replaced and the only way we can replace this one is by increasing the output through increase of allocation so that the recovery programme in Taveuni, Bua, Koro, Ovalau, Naitasiri North and Ra the growers of *yaqona* should be refinanced so that we can recapture this very important commodity that is there on the market. Madam Chair, in spite of all that, the figures that I alluded to, we are still short of *yaqona* and we are import 74 tonnes of *yaqona* from Vanuatu last year which was worth \$2.2 million that is taken out of the country for that 74 tonnes but we exported 160 tonnes worth \$8.8 million. So, the potential is there, everything is there, except to revitalise this industry by increasing the allocation for *yaqona*. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. Thank you. Do we have any other input to this motion? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I would like to contribute to the motion. Madam Chair, *yaqona* is a very important export commodity. At present, the *yaqona* growers cannot even satisfy the local market. The huge potential for export is there. We have not really utilised or found out the true overseas market for the demand for *yaqona*. After *Cyclone Winston* as been alluded to by Honourable Kiliraki, the damage done to the traditional *yaqona* planting areas is quite huge and it takes about four years, at least, for the *yaqona* to mature. So, if we do not rehabilitate the crops now we can lose out this export potential to our competitors which is Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu.

Madam Chair, the *yaqona* grown in Fiji is of the high quality. The *yaqona* that are grown in Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea is a very substandard qualities. In Papua New Guinea, *yaqona* grows wild and if that crop comes to Fiji during this period, it could spoil the local market because the *yaqona* that are imported especially from Vanuatu for package here and rebranded as Fiji product which goes out from Fiji, can spoil the industry. So, this is why we need to quickly revitalise this industry to capture this shortfall and do not allow our competitors to take our portion of the market.

With that Madam Chair, I support the motion that we should increase the allocation for this y aqona planting.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have any other input? Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Madam Chair, I rise to also support the motion on hand because I know by now, we cannot really say the total potential output of this crop at this moment because many of the yaqona farmers at the moment are still doing it on subsistence level. We are fortunate that tonight, we have heard that there are so many incentives provided by the Agricultural Department to ensure that the potential of our farming can be fully realised.

One is the mechanisation. Second, is the provision of that working capital to pro-land clearing. Once this is done and is put into place, then commercial farming of yaqona will take off and by that, it will mean more acreage will be planted, more yaqona will be produced, there will be more export, more people will be employed and more foreign exchange will be earned, so we need more research into this area because we already know this is a million dollar industry. Once research is done through assistance of mechanisation, Yaqona will just surely grow. On that Madam Chair, I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. Thank you. Any other input? Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chair, I will just make one very very quick response, covering probably all the issues that have been raised because I know this is the last before we vote for the Head, Madam Chair. I will cover land clearing and mechanisation very quickly. I appreciate the positive response from the other side but it is good that all the Honourable Members of the House understand where the industries are and where the programmes are.

On land clearing and mechanisation, Madam Chair, it does not mean that that allocation is just for that. Because there is allocation for land development, flat land, drainage, and all that contribute to the mechanisation. Not only that, Madam Chair, we should appreciate the fact that with our partners, private sector and other bilateral partners as well, some sectors we can say have really advanced and is quite well-off now. Dairy, with the assistance of the New Zealand Government, they have brought machines, improving on pasture and now, we are looking at the animals, so the mechanisation component and the land clearing for dairy sector is through the New Zealand Government.

Rice, we could say through Grace Road, a private company based in Viti Levu, in Deuba and of course, the \$12 million aid package from China and the Rice Revitalisation Programme where we have 1 million, as well. Rice is sort of taken care of as well right now.

Government has been purchasing machines and at the same time, we have issued instructions or directive that they can also utilise the machines from the Government stations. Previously, Madam Chair, the machine in Dobuilevu is just for the agriculture station. Likewise, the machine in Koronivia. We have given instructions, if the machines are idle and if the farmers from Lokia want the machine, they can make use of the machine. Likewise in Dobuilevu, if the machines are available and Government is not utilising is, farmers can use it. So, this speeds up the process particularly.

Of course, we keep continuing to receive donations as well, Madam Chair. Indonesia is part of that package for *Cyclone Winston*. They are shipping over some particularly small farm machines which will be good for horticulture, particularly vegetable farmers in the Sigatoka and Saivou in Ra and we will distribute that as they come.

Last week again we are thankful to the Indian Government. I received two four-wheel drive and likewise, two tractors as well, Mahindra Tractors which will add to the fleet that we have.

Tutu and Navuso, again, we acknowledge the progress but we must understand that these institutes they have MOU's with the Ministry of Agriculture. They have programmes and expansion in the

allocation goes with the expansion of that programme as well. We can say that Tutu is well in advance. They have continued to expand programmes. We acknowledge the contribution of Father McBerry and likewise in Navuso as well, *Talatala* Mala and his staff. We have agreements with Navuso. First, they have to operate as a technical institute and I think their academic students probably have been re-assigned to other nearby schools.

Let me just assure the House, that Government provides support to both institutes but further allocation goes with the developments according to the programmes they have. And the other crops, dalo, coconut and *yaqona*, they are all important but we must understand the fact that right now one of the key problems that we are facing is planting material.

For coconut, we are sourcing now from Rotuma. We have just off loaded about 42,000 nuts, if I am correct, last week and we hope if Rotuma can still provide, we will go and source nuts again from there because most of the Eastern Division, just follow the cyclone path, the nut sources are quite limited.

The same thing with *yaqona*, I mentioned the other day about tissue culture.

This is how we are going to speed up and with the *Taki Mai* based in Ovalau, we are doing the selection now and hopefully, we will have the best quality seeds. However, above all, Madam Chair, I did mention too yesterday, that the European Union grant has got 23 million and based on the allocation, the guidance we were given, agriculture non-sugar has applied for about \$15 million, about three-quarters of that allocation but because the garden seeds, as long as it is aligned to the PDNA.

The PDNA has described very, very clearly the areas that were affected and the crops that were affected. So, most of these cocoa, *yaqona*, *dalo*, coconuts, the bulk of the funding from the European Union, hopefully \$15 million will go towards this and that is why the figures are and as we improve, hopefully, for this financial year and may be this august House can look at further allocations.

We also have the stabilisation fund for coconut as well. Now, the price is \$1,000 a tonne so that farmers can continue to harvest the nuts and likewise, for rice, as well, we sent a quick team to Vanua Levu to sort out the rice pricing. The Honourable Biman would know the complaints by the farmers and we have received emails that the rice pricing has been sorted, and they are working on the dries as well. So, that is the programme, as they stand, Madam Chair. Thank you.

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

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Vote Cast

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	28
Not voted	:	7

(There being 15 ayes, 28 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Because no amendment was approved, Parliament will now vote on Head 30, the question is, that the amount of Head No. 30 – Ministry of Agriculture be approved, does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	31
Noes	:	14
Not Voted	:	5

There being 31 Ayes, 14 Noes and 5 Not Voted, the Motion is agreed to.

Head 30 agreed to.

Head 32 – Ministry of Fisheries and Forests.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments on the Ministry of Fisheries and Forests.

HON. M. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, just on the Personal Emoluments, there is a reduction there. Page 211, SEG 1. Can we have some clarification from the Honourable Minister?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which one are you talking about, Honourable Leawere – Page 211?

HON. M. LEAWERE.- SEG 1, Madam Chair. If you look at page 210, can we have some explanations?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chair, this is due to the movement of the Permanent Secretary's salary to Head 50.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

Thank you, we will turn to page 213.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- 213?

HON.V.R. GAVOKA.- Yeah, Page 213 - Madam Chair, 32-2-1, SEG 6, Fiji Pine Trust Extension - \$560,000. Can the Honourable Minister explain that, please?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chair, this is especially for private plantations for pine schemes throughout Fiji for raising nursery for plantation and also for monitoring the utilisation of the matured pine plantation that was initiated by Government in early 1970s. Thank you.

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

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Honourable Chair, could the Minister just clarify SEG 7 and that is to do with Sustainable Management of the Rewa Delta Vulnerable Forests.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chair, there is a Government support towards ITTO project on the sustainable management of mangroves in the Rewa Delta.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will now move on to page 215.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, page 213, Programme 2, Activity 2, SEG 8 in regards to REDD Plus. Can we have some clarification on that?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chair, the Fiji REDD Plus policy was endorsed by Government in December 2010. This project started in 2012 with the objective to ensure Fiji participates in the carbon financing mechanism under REDD Plus before December 2015. The aim of REDD Plus is to provide developing countries with a financial incentive to reduce the levels of deforestation and forest degradation and to increase the forest carbon stock. The REDD Plus readiness is being followed in a phase approach to its current national REDD Plus Programme. About 7,347 hectare of primary forest belong to *Mataqali Emalu* of Navosa as the pilot site for demonstrating REDD Plus intervention activities. Thank you, Madam.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, the *Mataqali* that was sighted, what is the allocation from the figure that is here? What formula has been used?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chair, the figure, it is best to speak to iTLTB as a preparatory for financing carbon...

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I wanted to move a motion but this figure is decided by TLTB or the Ministry or is it from the carbon, the pledges coming from overseas in regards to this REDD Plus funding.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- It is the Ministry and the iTLTB that will negotiate.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, when it comes to REDD Plus, the landowners normally when they enter into this, there is a certain kind of a conservation lease and that is the basis. And TLTB will have to give out a formula on how that the rates on the conservation lease will be paid out, the rentals. From this particular allocation, how much negotiations and understanding between your Ministry and iTLTB that will benefit a particular landowning unit, what is the share like. For land, it is like 6 percent UCV and 4 percent from CBUL, that is land but when you talk about CBUL on conservation lease what is the breakdown?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Bulitavu, the fact of the matter is that the estimated actually sets aside that amount of money which obviously is adequate enough as determined by the officials of the Ministry of Forests to cater for this particular programme.

In respect of the exact breakdowns as to how much it goes exactly where the Minister obviously can provide that to you through the officials at a later date.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, we will move on to Pages 215, 217. Honourable Viliame Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Head 32-2-5(8) - Sandalwood Development Programme (\$100,000), can the Honourable Minister explain how that works?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- The Sandalwood programme. This project intends to revive the sandalwood plantation forest in Fiji and maximising potential economic opportunities to farmers and villagers. Targetted areas include Nausori Highlands and parts of Navosa, Bua, Macuata and Cakaudrove, Kadavu, Lakeba, Ono and Oneata in the Lau Group.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I would like to move a motion that we double that.

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

Page 219, Honourable Ro Kiniviliame Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- I have a motion an increase, Madam Chair, Head 32-2-8(8). 8.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Would you like to fill the form please? Page 220? Same page?

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- On Page 219, Madam Chair, Head 32-2-7(9) – Purchase of Equipment – Lakeba Pine Scheme (\$200,000), first of all, I would like to thank the Government for providing that this year because they had provided \$250,000 last year and also again, an allocation of \$200,000 will be given this year. Perhaps, if I could ask the Honourable Minister to outline the plan of assistance that is there for Lakeba Pine Scheme, if there is any because there was an assistance last year. If there is a plan for continuing until the harvesting is being carried out fully?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- Madam Chair, this project is a means to supply Value Adding Machines to the Lakeba Pine Scheme, so as to improve quality of finished products with the main objective of improving housing standards in the maritime islands of Lau, as well as ensuring that surplus production that can be traded commercially is compatible with the market demands and standards. Lakeba Island has the largest pine scheme in Fiji.

The Lakeba Pine Scheme covers an area of 1,573 hectares. There are approximately 2 million pine trees have been planted under this scheme. There is currently approximately 300,000 cubic metres of pine for Lakeba due to the damages caused by *TC Winston*. The pressing rehabilitation needs for the forestry sector meant that the purchase of equipment 2016 had to be put on hold. Divisional Commissioner Eastern will properly commence this project in 2016 to complete key value adding work needed on Lakeba, so that is the continuation, for your information.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, we will move on Page 221 – Programme 3, Activity 1 and Activity 2 (Page 223) Programme 3, Activity 3.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- 221, Madam Chair, may I request the Honourable Minister, there is a new item on 32-3-2(7) - Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Forum (\$300,000); can you kindly explain that new item beginning in the new estimate now?

HON. O. NAIQAMU.- It is a meeting which will be organised by the Fijian Government that will be held in Fiji this year.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Pages 223, 225.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chair, Head 32-3-5(8), I move a motion for an increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Please fill the form.

Thank you, Honourable Members, we have a few amendments and the Honourable Ratu Kiniviliame Kiliraki to move that Head 32 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 3, Activity 5, SEG 8 with respect to Coastal Fisheries Development. Honourable Kiliraki, would you like to move a motion?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chair, I move a motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any seconder?

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

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

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, this motion is very relevant, Madam Chair. If you read the *Fiji Times* today, it reads; ...

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- This is a scientific from the SPC Consultant, Robert Gillis. It reads, and I quote:

“So, the production of fish from coastal fisheries in Fiji decreased at rate of 6 percent from 2007 to 2014. The coastal subsistence sector is worth \$58 million. This is consistent with the thesis that the fisheries officers that support coastal fisheries in the region are fully or over exploited.”

So that is the gist of the motion, the decrease of 6 percent so that we can arrest this decrease to sustain the coastal fisheries that is very important Madam Chair. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone would like to have an input to the motion.

There being none and the motion will be debated. 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	:	14
Noes	:	29
Not voted	:	7

(There being 14 ayes, 29 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

The next one is again by the Honourable Ro Kiniviliame Kiliraki, to move that Head 32 be increased by \$200,000 in Programme 2, Activity 8, SEG 8, with respect to upgrade of Colo-i-Suva Forest Park. Honourable Kiliraki; would you like to move your motion?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- I move the motion, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I second the motion.

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

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chair, this is a very relevant motion because the Standing Committee on Natural Resources have gone to Colo-i-Suva Park and that was where we had our first experience. The developers wish for the park are as follows: Colo-i-Suva Park is very popular now where all generation of people from Suva use the park; tourists come to the park when the liner berths at the wharf, the tourists come to enjoy the park. But Colo-i-Suva Forest Park is deteriorating which brings in to focus the safety of the park. As you go down the slope to the pool, there are about more than 10 pools as you go down the pools.

For the tourists, it will be very unsafe because the steps are lined with timber and it is alright for us locals but for tourists, it can cause accidents due to damaged crane or accidents for OHS purposes..

The second one for that amount is the facilities in the park such as rest place, rest room, security room where they can be provided the security of their belongings when they come to enjoy the facilities in the park. They also wish to put security cameras so that the safety of those who patronise the pools are safeguarded by those security cameras and that park too is used by bird watches and they enjoy the birds that are coming in there so that is very important, Madam Chair, for the safety, the security in terms of the security cameras and the physical presence of the security guards there. The upgrading of the pools and you know this is a very lucrative engagement in terms of eco-friendly adventures and developments in regards to Colo-i-Suva Forest Park. So I move the motion of an increase by \$200,000 to \$300,000. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to support the motion. Suva, being the capital of Fiji does not have much tourism attractions, apart from the very limited foreshore that we have. For people to enjoy the beach, they have to travel to Pacific Harbour and the only the other tourist attraction here is Colo-i-Suva Forest Park.

As my colleague had already said, this is a big attraction but the problem here is the fees. It can be a very lucrative business, Madam Chair, it can be self-sustaining if the fees are improved or increased. Right now they are paying about \$1 or \$2 to use the pool, and even with that, they still can collect about \$20,000 a year. Even tourists, we feel sorry for them that they have to pay and some pay more because for \$1, you can never see any place like that in the world where you can walk to the natural park and you pay only \$1 and 50 cents for children.

The forest park officials said that because of the Government's bureaucracy and red tapes in trying to increase the fees they have to go to the Ministry of Finance to approve the proposal, so that is one of the

things that is stopping them from charging more fees. So I support the motion that we should increase this thing to realise the potential of this park, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does any other Honourable Member would like to contribute? Thank you, Honourable Ro Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- I need to make an addition, Madam Chair. In regards to the facilities it is in their plan to provide IT facilities for those who come, especially the internet service to add into the services provided in Colo-i-Suva to make it a complete tourist attraction. I would also like to mention to strengthen the security aspect. You know the history of Colo-i-Suva, it is accessible too, from the other side from Makoi, Veikoba as well as from Wainibuku and even towards the Princess Road. So the need for security is very important, so the current allocation of \$100,000 is not enough so \$300,000 by an increase of \$200,000 is just fine as I move this motion. That is all, Madam Chair.

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

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	6

(There being 14 ayes, 30 noes and 6 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

I will now call on the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to move that Head 32 be increased to \$100,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 7 with respect to Sustainable Management of Vulnerable Forests. I give the floor to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, this motion is in regard to the *dogo* in the Rewa Delta, Madam Chair, to increase this allocation that every provincial council, the *tikina* representatives complained about the *dogo* that has been cut day and night by people who come in from Suva in fast boats and they also have fly by night operators who come and cut many times the very matured *dogo* and when you look around Suva and you see the *dogo* that is tied up there and sold as firewood, a lot of that is from the Rewa Delta area, Madam Chair.

What we are concerned about here is that it interferes with the sustainable livelihood of the people in Rewa who depend on the mangroves for their livelihood in terms of crabs, *mana* and *moci*. So that is really making it difficult for them to provide a balanced diet for their families. So, we would like this increase, and may be the Honourable Minister might be able to also offer some policing of these mangrove areas.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Madam Chair, I second the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The motion is now open for any input from other Honourable Members? Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, I did support the motion, especially from the mangrove perspective, apart from actually the *mana*, *moci* and *kuka* and all those sorts of marine organisms and also holding the foreshore because of the rising of water, the climate change. It is actually providing protection to the village that is surrounded by mangrove. Hence, I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have any other input to the motion? Honourable Leader of the Opposition would you like to make concluding remarks or shall we put it a vote.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, that is quite correct what the Honourable Member has said in terms of the climate change, and we really need to protect the mangroves around those areas. So, I hope that the Honourable Minister is keeping that in mind and doing something about it.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, we will now vote on the motion. Does any member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	6

(There being 14 ayes, 30 noes and 6 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I give the floor to the Honourable Viliame Gavoka to move that Head 32 be increased by \$100,000 in Programme 2, Activity 5, SEG 8 with respect to Sandalwood Development Programme. I give the floor to the Honourable Gavoka to move his motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I move that we increase the allocation for Sandalwood Development by \$100,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Gavoka would you like to speak on your motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you Madam Chair. I am just trying to remember my history today and I confirmed this with Honourable Nawaikula, that sandalwood was what brought people to Fiji and then followed by bechedemer. So, it is something that is unique to Fiji and a very important part of our history. Personally for me, I thought it had died down and that it no longer had any value, but one day in my village, one of my friends from Ono came to visit. He saw the foreshore in my village and he said, you can grow sandalwood here. I did not know and he said, we have done it in Ono in a big way, and it was unknown to us in that area.

Then another friend from Natuicake gave me six seedlings, which I planted near my house. When you come to my house in my village, you will see six sandalwood trees, and I just planted it there.

(Laughter)

I planted them and forgot about them but people who come to visit me, when they see the shoots would ask for them, and I would say, “Yes, pick them”. I just begin to discover the value they put on sandalwood.

Madam Chair, to me, that is a tragedy that most of us in my area do not know the value of sandalwood but it is ideally suited in that area. I would plead with my colleague, the Honourable Minister to increase the allocation for this. I believe it applies in every coastal terrain in Fiji suitable for sandalwood.

Madam Chair, when you asked about it, the gestation period is about 15 or 20 years and I think for most of us *iTaukei*, we are always afraid to raise huge sums of money to buy or take on a mortgage or things like that. The gestation period to pay up a mortgage is the gestation period when a tree grows and that to us is, at the end of it, the value would be equal to when you pay off a house. So, I would urge most of us to consider growing more sandalwood. I was even thinking that for every home whenever a child is born, you must plant 50 of this because when the child turns 15 years or 16 years, the value of that would be quite high for universities and all that.

So, I asked my colleague if he can increase this and just raise the awareness for sandalwood. I think it is very lucrative tree product for us and as you know, it is part of our history from the beginning. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does any other Member would like to have an input to this motion. Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you Madam Chair. I would like to support the motion. I think the Ministry of Forestry should do a lot of research on this issue because if you see all the trees that we have been investing on, like mahogany and pine, when you look at the area that they cover and what we get out of it and the cost, it is enormous but when you talk about sandalwood which you can plan around your home like Honourable Gavoka, say for 15 years’ time if everyone in this House plant 100 plants each, in 15 years’ time, we will all be millionaires, simple as that. So, if you promote this idea and sell it to all the people of Fiji, this country will be very prosperous and with that I support the motion. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, by the way Honourable Members, good morning.

(Laughter)

HON. MEMBERS.- Good morning .

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Gavoka would you like to speak in reply.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I have said my piece.

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.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Honourable Members, because no amendment was approved, we will now vote on Head No. 32 and the question is that the amount on Head Number 32 – Ministry of Fisheries and Forests be approved. Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	30
Noes	:	14
Not voted	:	6

(There being 30 ayes, 14 noes and 6 not voted, the Motion is agreed to)

Head 32 agreed to.

Head 33: Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The floor is now open for any comments on Head 33 and we will turn to page 229.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Page 231.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Page 233.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, on Page 229, Head 33-2-1(8)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Member, we have gone past that, we cannot accommodate that.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- This is very important, it affects you too, Madam Chair.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Page 233, please Honourable Members.

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Page 235?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Page 237?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You should be awake its morning. Page 239?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

HON. SPEAKER.- Yes, there is a motion, we will accommodate the motion.

(Communication across the floor)

(Laughter)

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, whilst a lot of people have actually wanted to go home, I think we still have a lot of task on behalf of the people of Fiji.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Oil and Mines Acts Administration, Head 33-2-2, can the Honourable Minister justify the drastic increase of \$100 million for the Environment?

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Motion!

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Why are you forcing a motion to me when I am asking a question. The motion will always come in after clarification.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, we have a motion before the House and it is moved by the Honourable Dulakiverata that Head 33 be increased by \$1 million in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 8 with respect to Capital Construction. Honourable Dulakiverata, I give you the floor.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, this is with regards to Ground Water Assessment and Development - Small Islands. You know, water is very important to our everyday life and it is important that we have access to clean drinking water and most of these small islands do not have good water sources so the only way they can have access to good drinking water is through drilling ground water and we have scarcity of water in all the islands, and given the climatic change that we are going through, Madam Chair, there should be an increase in the allocation for this thing to allow the Ministry

to explore ground water sources in the small islands. So with that, Madam Chair, I move that we increase this allocation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do we have a seconder?

Honourable Dulakiverata, would you like to speak further on the motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes, Madam Speaker, as I said, this is a very important issue which concerns the lives of our citizens and it is important that we support and you should be seen to be supporting all these.

HON. MEMBER.- Are you supporting it yourself?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes, I am supporting but you have to support me to support this so, Madam Chair, I look to the House to support this motion. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else would like to have any input to this?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The motion will be put to the vote. Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30
Not Voted	:	-

(There being 15 ayes and 30 noes, the vote is defeated)

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, I just ask for an explanation on one of the issues here on Programme 3, Activity 1, I just want a small clarification from the Minister and the Prime Minister.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I think we can ask that question after this, we have gone past the page.

Thank you. Parliament will now vote on Head No. 33 and the question is,

HON.RATU I.D. TIKOCA. - Madam Chair, please, we have not touched Head 33-3-5, Land Use Division, Page 235.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No, we have finished with that, we have gone past that.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- SEG 10.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I had warned Honourable Members earlier that once we have gone past a page, we will not go back.

Parliament will now vote on Head No. 33 and the question is that the amount of Head No. 33, Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources be approved, does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	29
Noes	:	17
Not Voted	:	7

(There being 29 ayes, 17 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is agreed to)

Head 33 agreed to.

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments on Head No. 34. We will turn to Page 243, Programme 1. Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Can I ask the Honourable Minister to explain Head 34-2-1, SEG 7, the Fiji China Trade Agreement Negotiation Meeting at \$200,000; and also the Micro and Small Business Grant Facility with India for \$4.7 million; can he provide edification for the House, please, on this one?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, the \$200,000 for the Fiji China Trade Arrangement Negotiation Meeting, China is one of the major global partners and has trade ties with Fiji, and has been growing steadily and because it is increasingly becoming important, not only for Fiji but the region as a whole. It is in this regard that the Chinese market provides numerous untapped potential for Fijian exporters to explore, and however, there are limitations such as biosecurity requirements and high tariffs which make Fijian products un-comparative in the Chinese market. Therefore Fiji and China, Madam Chair, are exploring options on the best possible bilateral trade arrangements that will allow for enhanced trade investment and economic relations in this connection.

MITT seeks to undertake a joint feasibility study on the proposed Fiji China Bilateral Trade Agreement and this study will guide on the most suitable arrangement that Fiji and China should consider exploring, taking into account the cost and benefit aspects and differences in the different levels of development and other related aspects.

The allocation of \$200,000 is basically for hiring of the consultant to undertake a joint feasibility study as per the MOU, and participate in the working group meetings whilst supporting key agencies to establish bilateral trade in China.

India has given a grant of \$4.7 million to Fiji to assist with the SME Sector. This grant was accommodated for after the visit of Prime Minister Modi and he made sure that that went towards the SME

Grant. So, it is of assistance to us and in addition to what the Government of Fiji has to hand out to the SME applicants.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- So it is from India to Fiji?

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

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Also, Madam Chair, SEG 10 - Micro and Small Business Grant of \$6.4 million), can that also be explained, please.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- That is the Micro and Small Business Grant that that we have.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- When you add the India contribution and the local contribution, you are talking about \$10 million, is that what you are saying?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- If I may just explain it to you. So, what it is, these funds will be used to support the recipients who have been also affected by *TC Winston*. So, the \$2 million for the new applicants, plus the additional amount is for the support of the recipients that have been affected by *TC Winston*.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- On SEG 10, Small Business Grant, this was initially only for \$1 million, now it has grown over one year to \$6 million. By the way it is going, it is going to grow to \$20 million. All I am asking is; all those people who have been given this grant, how have you been monitoring them?

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- For the benefit of the House, once again, we have had a phenomenal response to this particular programme and that is why Government undertook to put more money into this particular programme and after *TC Winston*, obviously we needed to double our efforts to ensure that those who have been affected, also get back on their feet. However, there is a monitoring system within the Ministry together with the Fiji Development Bank, so we make sure that we keep a track of what happens with them after they have been given the grant.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- From that SEG 10, \$6.4 million; can the Honourable Minister give a breakdown on how is the new application and how much for the re-bounce – the businesses that are covering from TC Winston after they did their recovery assessment report.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- I can give you a breakdown of the number of people that have been affected in terms of the recipients that were already being granted the money, it is 1,995 recipients who had received the grant but were impacted by *TC Winston*. So, they are going to be looked after also.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Still on the same SEG, Government is working in consultation with FDB, is that also inclusive of their fees from FDB that you have to pay FDB?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- I am not t sure if you heard me earlier on but I think I did explain to this House that FDB is foregoing these fees.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Head 34-2-1, on the summary on Page 242 on SEG 6, there has been a tremendous increase in terms of operating grants and transfers, and there is a list if institutions that are there. I just wanted to get clarification from the Minister, why is it that there is an increase, is there a new addition to this organisation that are receiving grants or there is an increase in allocation?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- I think that does deserve an explanation and I will go through them if you like, I know it is 12 o'clock, but I will tell you why the Consumer Council require a budget of \$1,282,425. Well, it has three offices in Suva, Lautoka and Labasa. The Council received an increase in its last budget year for job evaluation and they were given an additional responsibility of the consumer helpline.

Consumer complaints, Madam Chair, have actually increased and the Council also needs to expand its advocacy role and outreach. Also, a sum of about \$51,500 is provided to recruit two new staff for VAT and duty to assist the Council in monitoring the market practises in terms of price reduction of goods and services for the benefit of consumers.

For Investment Fiji, it is obviously Government's, vested with the responsibility to promote, stimulate, facilitate and register foreign direct investments. Investment Fiji in 2016/2017 financial year anticipates to undertake trade and investment missions and create increased interaction with domestic industries also. The increase is basically for staff trading, printing and publication, international Government initiated missions, domestic mutual development seminars, advertising, et cetera.

For Film Fiji, this is also something that is their role to develop and promote Fiji's audio visual industry, locally and internationally, and it requires an increase of about \$800,000. It will enable Fiji to effectively market and promote Fiji has an attractive location for film. Some of you may have heard we have had the Survivor Series just shot, and we should have the opening season around December. For that reason, it needs to maintain a regular presence in the overseas film markets, in order to develop a relationship necessary to bring major productions into Fiji. We will extensively advertise in India, Korea, China and the US throughout the print and promotional stuff.

For the Commerce Commission, basically an increase will be used to meet staff salaries, wages and we have also got Board allowances expenses and basically the strengthening of its Legal Department.

For the NSCMED, the Centre requires a budget to operate in two centres in order to facilitate business and technical skills and training for those wishing to engage in business.

For the Real Estate Licensing Board, it also requires for that to run its operations, maintain an updated real estate agents licensing system. Those are the ones basically for the board. That is why there is an extension.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Can we have a clarification on Head 34-2-1(7) - Integrated Human Resource Development Programme (\$800,000).

HON. F.S. KOYA.- This is now come to the Ministry and I think you all know the objective, is to empower the rural communities by providing grant funding for income generating projects for community-based groups in the rural communities. The Programme has been shifted to MITT from the Ministry of Economy as part of Government's strategy to co-ordinate its delivery of services to the MSME Sector, to allow for optimum utilisation of Government's resources and a mandate to develop SME and the MSME sector rests with the Ministry, so this will allow the Ministry to be in a better position to coordinate support services for the particular project assisted under this programme, as well as monitored their effectiveness and in impact such programmes until MSME apex body is created.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other input? We will move on to page 245.

HON. A. VADEI.- Madam, I just want a clarification on page 243, Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 7 – contribution to World Trade Organisation amounting to \$91,900. Does that include ISO contribution under APMP contribution also?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- It is simply for WTO, if you want the exact breakdown, I can give it to you later but it is WTO. That is our subscription.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We will move on to page 245; Programme 3, Activity 1, Programme 4, Activity 1. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A. VADEI.- I have a motion on Head 34, Programme 3, Activity 1 on SEG 4, an increase of \$500,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, would you like to fill the form. Page 247?

(Laughter)

HON. A. VADEI.- On page 245, Madam. On SEG 9 – Laboratory Equipment, we need an increase to the tune of \$3 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would you like to fill in the form? Pages 247?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- 249. Honourable Biman Prasad.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a small clarification, Honourable Minister. SEG 6, I suppose grant to Tourism Fiji and Tourism Marketing grant will be managed by both sides, it is a total allocation. I am just curious to know SEG 7- Tourism Research, survey expenses and hotel data collection, they are not big amounts of money but I am just wondering whether the research will be conducted by the Ministry of Tourism itself or by Tourism Fiji?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- The research basically provides us with timely and updated information about visitor preferences and spend to both Government and private sectors so we can actually make informed policy decisions. And an allocation used in data collection for international visitors survey; some of it outsourced and some of it is done through the Ministry.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Just a clarification, Madam Chair, from the Honourable Minister regarding the rent - \$97,0000. Are they renting somewhere; SEG 6. Page 249, SEG 6.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- The biggest portion of tourism in the South Pacific, we are the biggest contributor to the rent. That is the rental of office in Suva. Fiji is the largest tourism operator.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- According to the case on these two; SEG 6 – Grants to Tourism Fiji (\$8.3 million and Tourism Marketing (\$27.6) \$27,645,000). One is operation and one marketing?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Yes, it is. I think you should know that, Honourable Member.

(Laughter)

HON.V.R. GAVOKA.- I just wanted you to let everyone knows.

(Laughter)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- You can ask me a hard question.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Member, we will move on to vote.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, can I withdraw my motion on that. It is clearer now.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Anymore withdrawals?

(Laughter)

Now it is Honourable Anare Vadei to move that Head 34 be increased by \$3 million in Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 9 with respect to laboratory equipment. Honourable Vadei, would you like to move your motion.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Yes, I move a motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have a seconder?

HON. M. LEAWERE.- I second the motion.

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

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The reason why I propose that increase is the intervention in the European Union, where we are going to purchase that equipment. What happened in

Australia regarding the voting and we will be purchasing this for next year. These are the things that you need to put, to prepare for the changes. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone wants to contribute to the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote on the motion. Does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

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

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	13
Noes	:	29
Not Voted	:	8

(There being 13 ayes, 29 noes, 8 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

Next one, Honourable Bilitavu to move that Head 34 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 2, Activity 1, SEG 10 with respect to Northern Development Programme. Honourable Bilitavu, would you like to move your motion?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, I would like to move the motion to increase the NDP by \$500,000. I think this particular grant was created to assist the people in the Northern Division in conformity with the Look North Policy and I think there is plenty applications still pending in regards to this and there are other issues in regards to processes because this particular grant will be distributed by TLTB and the requirements too of the bank is a hindrance, especially when you come down to securing a lease to secure a loan, which probably a walk about for those who have a lease. However, for those who live in other rural communities and villages who reside in native reserve or settlement, do not have proper lease. They are not eligible or they do not qualify, they do not meet the requirement under the grant.

Madam Chair, to increase this will be very important if you really need to create new business ventures and new entrepreneurs in the North so that they can participate in the various industries and economics in areas that are there as suppliers or traders or in that effect and this is very important. The NDP has been there for a few years now, then these are some of the issues that normally come up during the Budget consultation where the Honourable Minister for Economy came to Labasa it was one of the issues that was highlighted, the need for this grant to increase and also the difficulties that they face at the moment. I move that this motion is to be supported for an increase in regards to this particular grant.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- De we have a seconder?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would anyone like to contribute to the motion?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Chair, just for the purposes of the House, if I may just spell out some facts and figures for my Honourable friend until March 2016, a total of about 1,943 projects have been assisted with the value grant of about \$7,129,638.96 and a loan component of about \$8,180,558.02; through the support 5,829 jobs have been created, impacting the livelihood of about 29,145 people. So, we understand the importance of this programme. However, what you must understand is that up till now to 2016 the programme has a success rate of 83 percent. So, the current budget that we have is quite sufficient to ensure that the programmes runs successfully.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any more input to this motion? Honourable Bilitavu would you like to speak in regards?

HON. M. D. BULITAVU.- That does not change the motion, Madam Speaker. The motion is to increase, given the statistic revealed by the Honourable Minister that they have a success rate of 83 percent from what the applications that have gone through and those businesses that have started off the ground. But I am talking about the applications that are still pending and those who are trying to meet the requirements on the ground. That is another lot that is there, so we really need to have the funds as well for those who have been pending for the last two years. I think you can only assess that by those existing grants that you are monitoring, any existing businesses, but those who have not come through, I think you have to have a proper assessment too on that because there will be a need to increase this particular grant, given the need that is there from the applications that are flooding the Northern Development Office and also probably those that have reached the bank. However, the bank, after analysing their application and all risks management processes that they have to follow, I think there is a need to increase this particular grant.

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 now vote.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	4

(There being 16 ayes, 30 noes and 4 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, we have Honourable Anare Vadei to move that Head 34 be increased by \$500,000 in Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 4 with respect to Maintenance of Laboratory and Equipment.

Honourable Vadei would you like to move your motion?

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

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder?

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- I second the motion.

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

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chair, I just want to inform the House that our laboratory is a member of APMP that international organisation and also participate in the World Trade Measures So, we need to have that capacity to maintain the compliance so that our products can have free access within nationally, regionally and internationally.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone else would like to have an input to this motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no opposition, Parliament will vote on this motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30
Not voted	:	5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, no amendments were approved, we will therefore vote on Head .34 and the question is that the amount of Head No.34 Ministry of Industry Trade and Tourism be approved. Does any Member oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	30
Noes	:	15
Not voted	:	5

(There being 30 ayes, 15 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is agreed to)

Head 34 agreed to.

Head No. 35 – Ministry of Sugar

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The floor is now open for any comments on Head No. 35 and we are looking at Page 251.

(Laughter)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, I want to move a motion under SEG 10 – Sugar Development and Farmers Assitance Programme to be increased by \$50,000,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Yes, you can fill up the form. Any other input? Increase by what?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- \$50,000,000.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Can you also identify the source of that \$50,000,000, please?

Can you also identify that \$50,000,000, please?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Road Authority.

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- He has forgotten that the TV is off and people aren't watching him.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Wait, wait, wait!

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- (Inaudible)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- I'll tell you why! I'll tell you why!

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Fiji Sun will pick it up too, do not worry.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have any other input to this?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, Head 35-1-1-(8) - Upgrade of Cane Access Roads from \$3 million to \$6 million.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Fill up the form.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I know the cane access road very well.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are there any other input to the debate? Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, I just want some clarifications on SEG 7 - Sugar GIS Cadastre Development, what do you mean by that?

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- Do you know what is GIS?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Yes, I know about GIS but I do not now about the Sugar GIS.

(Laughter)

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Madam Chair, it is an ongoing development of the industries Geographical Information System.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I would like to move a motion that this allocation be increased from \$645,000 to \$800,000.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would you like to fill the form, please? Are there any other input to this debate? Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Good morning Madam Chair, I am just seeking a clarification, SEG 10 – Capital Grants, there is an increase there from \$14 million to \$20 million, just an explanation of that increase by \$6 million.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- SEG 10, page 250.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No , the Farmers Assistance. Increasing the Farmers Assistance.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other input. We will debate on the motion as presented and I now give the floor to the Honourable Prof. Biman Prasad to move that Head 35 be increased by \$50 million in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10 with respect to Sugarcane Development. Honourable Biman Prasad, you have the floor to move your motion.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you. Madam Chair. It is Thursday 7th July probably a very important morning. Madam Chair, if you look at what is in narrative under the Ministry of Sugar which says that two Sugar Cane Industry Bills are currently with the Parliament Standing Committee on Economic Affairs. If they pass in Parliament the Bill should also contribute to the long-term viability and sustainability of the industry.

Let me say, Madam Chair. I hope that the Bills do not see the light of the day in Parliament because if those Bills are passed, given what we have heard from the farmers, that will be the beginning of the total death of the industry.

Let me come back to the substantive motion. It is very important, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair, the sugarcane production since 2006 we all know has been declining. There have been periods where it went up. One of the things that we have seen over the last eight or nine years is Government has actually poured money or supported FSC in terms of guarantees of loans and we have concentrated on the milling efficiency. There has been some gains in terms of improvement on TCTS that is acknowledged and I think that is important but what is more important, Madam Chair, to rescue the Sugar Industry is a shock therapy. I think we need a shock therapy for the industry. That shock therapy, Madam Chair, has to be at the farm level because what we have seen over the years is that the farmers have been losing confidence. The farmers have been exiting the industry, and if you want to save the sugar industry at all, Madam Chair.

We know it is only 5 percent of GDP, but the multiplier effect of the industry is very, very significant. The reason why I am saying that we increase it to \$50 million because we lost a significant amount of EU funds which at that time if it was available it was designed to help and support the restructuring at the Mill level and at the farm level. The idea was to increase the efficiency of the farm so

that when we come to 2017 when the price of sugar was not going to be what the farmers used to in terms of the preferential prices then the efficiency, the cost of production would have gone done and even at the world market price, farmers would have made enough money.

Madam Chair, that is not the case we have not improved the efficiency on the farms and the cost of production is somewhere around \$45 to \$50, depending on where you are. You know for example farmers in Seaqqa would have the cost of about \$45 to \$50 per tonne. If the forecast price for 2016 is about \$70, then that is not the price on which farmers are going to survive and is not going to be the price which is going to inspire confidence in the farmers, Madam Chair.

So what we are saying is, out of the \$15 million, and this is what we had promised the farmers. I think this would be good for Government to consider this even if this motion is defeated today they may want to consider this in the future. I think what we need is a guaranteed minimum price for the farmers at least for the next four years. If you do the back of the envelope calculation, Madam Chair, with the forecast price is \$70 and if the Government provides between \$15 to \$20 price subsidies so that we can get the minimum guaranteed price to somewhere around \$85 to \$90 per tonne, we probably need about \$22.5 million per year. And if you can guarantee this price for two or three or four years, I would imagine at least for three years, we would get the confidence back into the industry. We would increase farmers incentive to remain on the farms and the other \$25 million to \$30 million, we still have problems with the leasers, Madam Chair. Landowners are still reluctant, landowners are still questioning the returns they are getting by giving out the land I have got history of this.

We have had negotiation of this and I know, Madam Chair, after the 1999 General *Election*, I remember there is very important conversation I had with the General Manager of the NLTB at that time. I was trying to convince him not to take away the leases from the farmers because the areas where he was trying to get the leases away from the farmers, the economy was very, very interlinked. You know you have the fisherman, you have the *dalo* farmers, you have the cassava farmers, you have roads, you have little shops, the whole economy was interlinked and unfortunately in those areas, the leases were not renewed. They were not renewed because the landowners did not have any incentive. In fact, there was an incentive for farmers to leave because the Government at that time was trying to give \$28,000.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Please tell the whole story.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- To move out from the farmers...

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

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- No, it is not passing partial story because the farmers were also having difficulties, having their leases renewed. So it was a twin problem of giving the farmers incentive to actually lead, I can tell you Honourable Attorney-General that farmers were leaving even when they had 15 years leases left because of the incentive. So it is not a partial story.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It is a partial story.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- What we are saying, Madam Chair, is that if we put in \$15 million per year for the next three years we are looking at about \$150 million. In fact we have more than that from 2007 if you had the European Union Grant. So if we want to rescue this industry, Madam Chair, we need to put this amount into the industry now. So that we can have a very, very careful negotiation, discussion, building of confidence and making sure that we bring back the confidence of the farmers because the farmers have lost their confidence in the industry. With these two Bills in front of them and I know that the farmers are actually quite angry. I would suggest to the Government leave those Bills aside.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- It is going to be a good incentive for the farmers because the farmers will know that if they interest they acreage, if they plant more cane, they know that this is the price they are going to get for the next three or four years. Without that, we are going to see the death of sugar industry in this country, Madam Chair, thank you.

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to contribute to the motion and what has been alluded to by Honourable Biman Prasad is ACRP. This allocation will form a total crop rehabilitation programme and Madam Chair, we can have 3.5 million tonnes of cane in 18 months if you adapt what is being proposed. Almost 24,000 hectares are under ratoon cane and these ratoon canes, Madam Chair, are from 10 to 40 years old. Therefore, the yield is reduced to 40 tonnes per hectare. Madam Chair, we need to increase the yield of sugarcane. Unless we increase the yield, we cannot talk about the byproduct, leave alone sugar.

Madam Chair, 24,000 hectares of ratoon and if we have a programme spread over three years to replant this, ratoons are short fallow and these short fallow crops, the growers who are producing, they are active growers and they are non-active growers. Active growers are the people who should be assisted to replant because they have the interest there, so they have the means to do it. If they are producing 200 tonnes, if they are encouraged they can raise their yield to 300 tonnes.

Madam Chair, the replanting of these ratoon and if we can get an average of 80 tonnes per hectare, we would not need any other new land. With the existing land available for cane, this would be enough to produce around 3.5 million tonnes of sugar in the first three years. The bottom line here is that, FSC needs to be revamped. It is the ills in FSC which have been contributing to the decline of the sugar industry. They have become top heavy, they always have cash flow problems, and the cost of doing business for FSC is ever increasing.

Madam Chair, the stakeholders that we talked about in the industry, there must be two representatives of the growers because to get the confidence of the growers, we need their representation. Further, Madam Chair, when we start closing the Mills without notice, unannounced, then it has social and economic implications around those towns and cities.

Madam Chair, the sugar industry has the multiplier effect to the social economic component, probably as you would have heard in Rakiraki, would have far reaching implications. A lot of people are dependent on this industry and to get the confidence of people around these town and cities, we must first get confidence of the growers at the farm level.

Madam Chair, just to add, due to the shortage of labour in cane belt areas, cane cutters, it is recommended that most of the harvesting and delivery be converted to mechanisation, and you will note that railway transport is a cheapest form of transport. If we can get 40 percent of cane through the railway mode, that would complementing the housing and delivery of cane.

So, Madam Chair, I support this motion and I say that it is in the interest of the industry and Fiji that we look at it very seriously.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input to the motion. Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, I support the motion by my colleague, the Honourable Professor Biman Prasad. As an update, we are part of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs Committee and we have had more than 150 submissions. I believe the average in any Bill in Parliament here, is about 15 and under 20. I mean, that is the extent of the interest or the desire of the farmers to see that the industry survives.

Madam Chair, what it is, is a lack of confidence. Some are almost just growing cane just for the sake of holding on to that land so that they can keep their home on that land. Their enthusiasm for cane is virtually dead, and I think we need an injection like this to show to them that there is hope, that it can be done, and get them to start growing cane again. It is on the growers hand, the growers are the ones who need to be motivated to start growing cane again. I have mentioned this over and over again during the Committee meetings, there is a disconnect between FSC and the farmers (the growers). Everyone is there blaming each other and both, the FSC appeared to think that the farmers are not applying themselves to increase the yield and the farmers are saying that FSC is a problem because of the inefficiencies of the processing.

So, by creating the enthusiasm or confidence, the tillage will go up. The farmers keep telling us that during a drought in the late 1990s, they were given \$43 million for crop rehabilitation, and immediately within 18 months the production virtually doubled or tripled. That was the kind of injection that it had at that time, and that is the kind of intervention that we need right now. Otherwise, we are looking at an industry that has to watch its spirit. That is the best way I can describe it, and this kind of injection, I believe, can save the industry in the immediate future. What I need, Madam Chair, I just want to put on record how impressed we were with the Labasa Mill. There is a General Manager there and his team and it was a delightful day, looking at the Mill, know it operated, cleanliness, the equipment, the way they interface, the new system to the old system, and that is the standard we can all achieve in all the Mills, but the major part of the equation of the growers. They need this Madam Chair, I fully support this. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you Honourable Professor Biman Prasad, would you like to speak in reply.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, I think I have said what I had to say. This is a very important increase that we are looking at, and I hope that the Government will consider this, even if they both are against it today.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will now vote on this motion. Does any member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	28
Not voted	:	7

(There being 15 ayes, 28 noes and 7 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

(Laughter)

The next motion is by the Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca to move:

That Head 35-1-1(8) - Upgrade of Cane Access Roads (\$3 million) be increased by \$3 million..

I give the floor to Ratu Isoa Tikoca to move his motion.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, Cane Access Road, I think it is very familiar to former Commissioner Western, my colleague on the other side and likewise those who have a lot of knowledge in terms of providing maintenance facilities to Cane Access Roads in the sugar area. The cane access road have been provided to us since 2004 have been \$3 million and still \$3 million up till today, no change after 12 to 14 years, but the cane access roads that we have now need a lot of maintenance, \$3 million – cannot do anything; . \$3 million, if you look at all the cane access roads in Lautoka, in the Western Division, it is just one truck load of gravel, dump it on the road, that is it. You cannot even afford a grader to grade it. That is it, that is how small this money is. You have lost all the bigger and volumes of sugarcane that used to provide sugarcane to Lautoka from the nearby flat area within Nadi, Nadroga and Ba. Now, it is all being commercialised on all different types of commercial buildings and development, so the effort must now go to the farms inland and the only access to that is good cane access roads.

As I said, 12 to 14 years ago, still the same and then you divide that amount of \$3 million to the Northern Division and to the Western Division and then you allocate that again from Nadroga to Rakiraki, and then with all those areas, just one truck load of river gravels, that is it, so you have bridges that you need to maintain all the time and the trucks design that is coming now is used. Those bridges were designed in the sixties and fifties are smaller and there is a lot of accidents happening and losing all the tonnages of sugarcane that have been harvested from the whole year so, Madam Chair, the amount of \$3million must change. That has been stagnant for almost 10 to 12 years so I am requesting that these increases should be from \$3 million to \$6 million to cater for what I have just said. Thank you very much.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do we have a seconder to that motion? Thank you, any input to the motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, if we need to increase our cane production, if we need to bring to the mills all the canes that have been planted, if the farmers are to benefit from what they plant, then we need good cane access roads to transport all the canes to the mill and for that, I support the motion.

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.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30
Not Voted	:	5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated)

MADAM. CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, I will now invite the Honourable. Dulakiverata to move that Head 35 be increased by \$55,000 in Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 7 with respect to Sugar GIS Cadastre Development - Sugar Industry Tribunal. Honourable Dulakiverata you have the floor to move your motion?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, I move that we should increase this allocation.

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

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I see that this GIS Programme is very important in the sugar industry and as we have heard in this House, Madam Speaker, that there is a lot of movement or development in the sugarcane areas. Land have been used for other purposes like industrial, commercial and residential subdivisions, new areas have been developed, maybe these new areas have not been surveyed so that will be required to be plotted in this GIS, so there is actually more work to be done, taking into consideration of all the variables that have happened in the sugar industry.

With that, Madam Chair, I move that this allocation be increased by \$55,000.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, the GIS is very important. It is one way to really demarcate well and it is in compliance with the economic development and the commercialisation of area that are being used for any development in sugar or any sugar by-products, so it is really important that the GIS continues because it interconnects also with the neighbouring region so it is a tool that actually can provide an increase in production because of good management of land. I support the increase.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other input to the motion, Parliament will vote on this motion, does any Member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of ayes and noes)

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	30
Not Voted	:	5

(There being 15 ayes, 30 noes and 5 not voted, the Motion is defeated.)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Hon. Members, there being no amendment that was approved, Parliament will now vote on Head No. 35, and the question is, that the amount of Head No. 35 – Ministry of Sugar 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

There being 30 Ayes, 16 Noes and 4 Not Voted, the Motion is agreed to.

MADAM. CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, that brings to a close this sitting. We have now concluded voting on Heads 21 to 35, as had been agreed to by the Whips. We will now adjourn the Committee of Supply until later this morning.

Honourable. Members, the House is now adjourned until 9.30 tomorrow morning. Have a very good morning.

The Parliament adjourned at 1.14 a.m.

