

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

DAILY HANSARD

FRIDAY, 9TH MARCH, 2018

[CORRECTED COPY]

CONTENTS

	<u>Pages</u>
Minutes	568
Communications from the Chair	568-570
Questions	570-597
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>FNPF Pensioners (Q. No. 46/18)</i> ▪ <i>Update – Flooding Budget - \$24.2 million (Q. No. 47/18)</i> ▪ <i>Dual Payment System Alternative to E-Ticketing System (Q. No.48/18)</i> ▪ <i>Police Brutalities (Q. No. 49/18)</i> ▪ <i>Strategic Direction – Service Delivery for Older Persons (Q. No.50/18)</i> ▪ <i>SMEs Integration – International Trade & Global Value Chains (Q. No. 51/18)</i> ▪ <i>Stray Farm Animals (Q. No.52/18)</i> ▪ <i>Mechanisms to measure productivity (Q. No.53/18)</i> ▪ <i>No. of Recruited Doctors who work in Fiji’s Health Institutions (Q. No. 54/18)</i> ▪ <i>No. of School Managements Dissolved and Overtaken – Ministry of Education (Q. No. 57/18)</i> 	
Motion	597-612
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of bipartisan committee for inquiry into public health and medical system to improve delivery of health care and medical services 	
End of Week’s Statements	612-623
Suspension of Standing Orders	622
Adjournment	623

FRIDAY, 9TH MARCH, 2018

The Parliament met at 9.32 a.m., pursuant to adjournment.

HONOURABLE SPEAKER took the Chair and read the Prayer.

PRESENT

All Honourable Members were present, except the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister for iTaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry and Foreign Affairs; the Honourable Minister for Local Government, Housing, Environment, Infrastructure and Transport; and the Honourable Assistant Minister for Agriculture.

MINUTES

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

That the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Thursday, 8th March, 2018 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

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

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome

HON. SPEAKER.- I welcome all Honourable Members to today's sitting of Parliament.

I also welcome members of the public joining us in the gallery and those watching proceedings on television and the internet and listening on the radio. Thank you for taking interest in your Parliament.

Appointment of Committee Members

Honourable Members, in accordance with Standing Order 115(4), I wish to advise Parliament that the following Honourable Members have been appointed to fill in the vacancies in the respective Standing Committees.

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

1. Hon. Howard Politini; and
2. Hon. Jilila Kumar

Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights

Hon. Dr Brij Lal

Standing Committee on Social Affairs

Hon. Ruveni Nadalo

Standing Committee on Economic Affairs

Hon. Alvick Maharaj

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Hon. Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu

Acknowledgment

At this juncture, I would like to thank the Committees and Secretariat for their hard work and efforts in presenting and ensuring that a large number of Review Reports have been tabled.

Birthday Wish

And finally, let me acknowledge and wish the Honourable Mataiasi Niumataiwalu a Happy Birthday and many Happy Returns of the day!

(Applause)

A lot of births going on this week. Thank you, Honourable Members.

Ruling - Matter of Privilege

For the information of Honourable Members, I received a matter of privilege from the Honourable Mosese Bulitavu against the Honourable Prime Minister. I will now give my ruling on this matter of privilege raised by Honourable Bulitavu.

I have read the material submitted by the Honourable Mosese Bulitavu concerning an incident in the Big Committee Room during the lunch break in the precincts of Parliament on 8th March 2018. Honourable Bulitavu quotes Section 62(4) of the Standing Orders which makes it clear that: "It is out of order for a member, when speaking, to use –

(a) offensive words against Parliament or another member.”

In the case in question, it is important to note that the use of the words, ‘when speaking’ refers to a Member speaking either in Parliament or a Committee of Parliament. These are the proceedings in Parliament to which various protections apply and in which a Member, if he is judged guilty of transgressing the Standing Order, could possibly be guilty of a contempt or breach of privilege. This could potentially be a matter for the Privileges Committee to consider.

In this case, however, the allegation relates to comments made at a function during the lunch break in the precincts. As I understand it, they do not relate to comments made either in Parliament or a Committee of Parliament. In my opinion, therefore, the comments do not constitute grounds for referral to the Privileges Committee for consideration.

The comments made against the Speaker previously which led to the Member being suspended on the grounds of breaching privilege are, in my opinion, not relevant to this case because the protections that apply to the Speaker as an Officer and Chair of the Parliament do not extend to individual Members for comments made outside Parliament. These are usually matters for political debate or individual redress.

I, therefore, rule that this matter will not be referred to the Privileges Committee.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Point of order.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- In respect to your ruling, Madam Speaker, in terms of Standing Order 133 which is on Privilege, you had already made a ruling on the first Member who was suspended....

HON. SPEAKER.- Order! Order!

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- ... and he was....

HON. SPEAKER.- There is no provision for any comments on the ruling of the Speaker, and I have made my ruling. I will not accommodate any comments on the ruling that I had made.

QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

FNPF Pensioners
(Question No. 46/2018)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA asked the Government, upon notice:

FNPF has been reporting healthy profits over the last few years. Can the Honourable Minister advise this House the likelihood of FNPF making up to those pensioners who suffered reductions to their pensions?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM (Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Public

Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications).- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for this question and to answer the question, obviously we need to contextualise on what actually happened with the FNPF.

Madam Speaker, as you know, there are various reforms that have taken place in the FNPF, first, under the Bainimarama-led Government and of course the FijiFirst Government. The success of these reforms have been validated independently by the IMF in collaboration with the Financial Sector Assessment Programme, and the regulator which is the Reserve Bank of Fiji (RBF).

Consequently FNPF also, Madam Speaker, has received international recognition by International Social Security Association (ISSA) for three good practice awards – Reforming the Pension Scheme, Financial Literacy and Information Technology.

Madam Speaker, also two independent actuarial valuations have now confirmed that there is a surplus in the Retirement Income Fund (RIF). Part of the restructure of the Pension Fund, Madam Speaker, was to review the performance of the RIF after five years and to consider further distribution. At this stage, Madam Speaker, the Fund's Actuary is considering a formula for distribution of any surpluses, including the necessary legal provisions and approvals required, it is over and above what is legally required.

Madam Speaker, the 2017 Annual Report table Monday of FNPF continues to confirm that the Fund is now in a much stronger financial position, as a result of the reforms instituted by Government. Let me highlight some of the key achievements, Madam Speaker, for 2017.

The net profit increased to \$359 million from \$331 million in 2016, attributable to better investment terms. For this profit, Madam Speaker, \$217 million was credited to the members' accounts in 2017, equivalent to 6.34 percent in interest paid.

The Fund has credited over \$1 billion to its members in the last five years. Record contribution of \$46 million to \$480 million in 2016 is a result of better compliance through automation. Total assets of the Fund now stands at \$5.7 billion, which is more than sufficient to cover its liabilities of \$4.8 billion.

Net assets, Madam Speaker, is now \$836 million. After applying the solvency requirement of 10 percent, there is still a surplus of \$276 million. This is a major achievement and improvement from the negative \$337 million in 2010, prior to the reform. So in 2010 prior to that, we had \$337 million in the negative. The Fund also completed all, of course its major investments as far as the various hotels are concerned. Madam Speaker, today, FNPF is in a much stronger position and sound financial footing.

Madam Speaker, just to let you know, as we mentioned in this House before, continuously independent assessments prior to the reforms had indicated that the way that the FNPF is continuing its operations and indeed the payment of pensions where there is a disequilibrium in respect of the percentages paid to various pensioners, some people are getting as high as 25 percent rate of return. So within four years, they would have been getting 100 percent. Some were getting 19 percent, some were getting 17 percent.

What the Mercer Report then said, Madam Speaker, that FNPF's funds would have all finished by 2056. So, in other words, the young people of Fiji today who are contributing to FNPF, by the time

they would have retired in 2056, there would have been absolutely no funds left in FNPF.

So all their contributions, Madam Speaker, would have actually gone into the high payment of those who were already receiving pension or would have just retired or would have retired prior to that, Madam Speaker. What this means, Madam Speaker, that the Fund would have not been able to meet its obligations and promise its members and pay FNPF members when they retire. It should have been, of course, a financial disaster for Fiji because FNPF, Madam Speaker, as we all know holds the largest cash reserves in Fiji.

Madam Speaker, in 2009, \$327 million worth of investments were repaid by the Fund. What it means, Madam Speaker, is that the actual value of the investment assets were overstated in FNPF's books. That was the situation in FNPF. There were overstated accounts, there were understating on expenses and as a result of which, some people continued to benefit grossly at the expense of the ordinary FNPF members.

Madam Speaker, of course, there were lots of other shenanigans that went on with the former directors, executives, et cetera, and I have got a whole list of things which I do not want to read out here because we all have been through that, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, as part of the reforms, all pensioners who were receiving below \$100 per month were moved to \$100 per month. Prior to the reforms, Madam Speaker, the Honourable Members in the Opposition need to know this, some members were only receiving \$7 per month, because as you know some people were lowly paid. And therefore, at the end of them retiring and getting their pension fund, they were getting as low as \$7 a month.

Under these reforms, Madam Speaker, all those people who are in fact, were supposed to be technically receiving less than \$100 are now getting paid at least a \$100 a month, notwithstanding the very small contribution they make to the Fund. So, Madam Speaker, as we have said in this House, if all of us, for example, individually try and save our money, it may not be much, but if we all pool our money together, then we can buy assets, build assets and from that return, that return needs to be shared equally and this is what we are trying to achieve as far as the FNPF is concerned.

Madam Speaker, these reforms have been made to protect the long-term sustainability of the Fund, and to ensure that FNPF remains relevant to its 417,000 members into the future and protect the important role that FNPF plays as a social and economic anchor for Fiji, Madam Speaker.

So, Madam Speaker, the reality is that, there were some members, yes, who did receive a reduction and they are only (from what we were told) about 1,800 of those pensioners who had a reduction, and everyone else is in the same position or if not, better off. But more importantly are those people whose voices are generally not heard. These are the people who have lowly paid wages, who work as carpenters, joiners in those days, Madam Speaker, who work maybe you know as assistant cook hands, et cetera, who were paid low wages and now when they have retired in the past 20 years or so, past 10 years or so, past seven years ago, before the reforms they received about \$7 a month. Today, they at least receive \$100 a month, and that is what the reform does actually, Madam Speaker, picks up.

Madam Speaker, the other point, of course, is that we now have sustainability of the funds and FNPF will have enough funds now to go beyond 2056. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- The floor is open for any supplementary questions, if any. Honourable Members, we have got a lot in our Order Paper today, I will limit supplementary questions to only one, so that all the motions can be all taken care off.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- We can do without the motions. Can we have two questions?

HON. SPEAKER.- If that is fine with you, then I will limit it to two supplementary questions?

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Three.

HON. SPEAKER.- Three supplementary questions, fine.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, it was quite drastic to reduce the benefits of those, even the single, I know there are 1,800, but can we trust FNPF not to reduce their benefits in the future, unilaterally, without consulting the people who own it?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, the fact of the matter is, the reforms were there to correct a particular financial position; the reforms were there to also make it very transparent in respect of what the future will hold, so I would urge the Honourable Member to read the new FNPF Act and the Act will give you all the answers you are looking for because it does not in any way

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Because we do not trust you now.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, the Act obviously governs the functions of the FNPF Board. The Act governs the rules and the premise within which the FNPF Board can make those decisions.

Previously, Madam Speaker, it was left to the FNPF Board, where different people received 25 percent. You go to Australia and New Zealand and you look at their superannuation funds, they are paid 2 percent, 3 percent, 4 percent maximum, one would be lucky to get 3 percent. In fact, Madam Speaker, some of those countries the actual total number of funds actually depletes, depending on the market rates. At least, in the Fijian system, we have a guaranteed rate of return and that, Madam Speaker, was the reform that actually fixed that.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Leader of the Opposition?

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Madam Speaker, I thank the Honourable Attorney-General for his response, where he said that there are healthy FNPF profits and their surpluses amounting to millions of dollars. Now my question is, in regards to a petition that was written by over 3,600 pensioners and presented to the Honourable Prime Minister in March 2012, and some young people have heard about this petition that was forwarded, where these older people had to relocate because they could not keep up with their standards of living in relying on their FNPF savings. So, the young people are asking, whether they can trust FNPF to look after their savings when they retire?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Minister?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, they can trust FNPF more than ever before because you can be assured – you can be assured. There is no point shaking your hand, Honourable

Leader of the Opposition. The facts speak for themselves; ...

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- ...the books are transparent, read the accounts, read the Annual Reports of the FNPF prior to the reforms! Sheer shenanigans that took place, Madam Speaker!

Madam Speaker, the unfortunate thing about the Opposition is that they grab on to a particular issue and they think it will get them some votes and they want to go along with that. Madam Speaker, the reality is that the facts speak differently.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- If you look at the financial position of FNPF, if you look at the level of transparency that exists in FNPF, it is far more than ever before, Madam Speaker, and that obviously is giving a lot of guarantee and a lot of confidence, to not just investors but to our members today. And today we are seeing, Madam Speaker, the solvency rate in FNPF is a lot better than what it ever was.

And this is why, Madam Speaker, these international recognitions that FNPF receive, they are not given by someone walking the down the streets and will give you an award, they actually been given by internationally accredited organisations and these awards are hard to come by, and they only do so if there is proper actuarial studies done. There are lots of pension funds in the world, both public and private that actually compete for these awards. And here is little Fiji, FNPF, winning this international award. That is something that should be taken some level of solace from, some level of comfort and indeed, they should be very proud of it but unfortunately that pride about our Fiji does not exist within the other side.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Madam Speaker, I thank the Honourable Minister for his replies.

Can the Honourable Minister explain, with the coming into effect of the reforms whether the FNPF Act is still superior than the policies of the FNPF? What I am trying to say here, and I must declare my interest, Madam Speaker, that by the coming into effect of the reforms to drop the interest from 15 percent to 8 percent, that has been deemed by the FNPF as a second withdrawal and most of us are not getting deductions as required by the FNPF. The question is, is the FNPF Act still superior than the policies or what is going on now because some of us are not having deductions?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, can the Honourable Ratu Lalabalavu please correct me, what you are essentially asking is that, those Members of Parliament who are over the age of 55 will not get any FNPF deductions? That is the question.

HON. RATU N.T. LALABALAVU.- Yes.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, as you know that the Remuneration Act pertaining to the Parliamentarians, that is a matter for Parliament to decide, whether they should be paid or not because as you know in the FNPF Act, if you are 55 and below, then you get deductions as compulsory. Over the age of 55, it is not compulsory.

HON. SPEAKER.- Can I just disrupt at the moment? Honourable Nawaikula, please, observe the protocol of the House when you leave or enter.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- I bowed at the door.

HON. SPEAKER.- No, I did not see that. Thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- So, Madam Speaker, that is for this Parliament to decide through the respective Committee in respect of whether those Members of this House or the Members of Parliament who are over the age of 55 should have their deductions or not, done by the employer in this case, which is Parliament. That is something for them to decide.

HON. SPEAKER.- You have agreed to only three supplementary questions and we have had three supplementary questions.

I will now give the floor to the Honourable Salote Radrodro to ask her question.

Update – Flooding Budget (\$24.2m)
(Question No. 47/2018)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Waterways provide an update on how the \$24.2 million in the current budget is being used to address the continuous flooding when there is heavy rain?

HON. DR. M. REDDY (Minister for Waterways).- Madam Speaker, I want to thank the Honourable Member for asking the question I tried my best the whole of this week to explain but despite that the Honourable Member has asked this question and I will explain again.

Before I start, Madam Speaker, I want to refer the Honourable Member to this budget details of the expenditure in the Budget Estimate, the three documents that were submitted when the budget was tabled; the three documents, one is the Budget Address, one is the Budget Supplement and the third one ...

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Wait, let me set the foundation.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. SPEAKER.- Order, Order!

Do we want to hear the response to the question or not, otherwise I will ask the Minister to sit down.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Withdraw the question. The question is now asked, I will answer.

Madam Speaker, this is the Budget Estimate for our Ministry, Ministry of Waterways, Page 276 - Head 42. Of the total \$24 million, \$3.7 million is Operating Grant. As you know Operating

Grant consists of Established Staff, Government Wage Earners, Travel and Communications, Maintenance and Operations, Purchase of Goods and Services, Operating Grants and Transfers and Special Expenditure. Then \$19.2 million is allocated for Capital Expenditure and then we have got VAT component of \$1.2 million.

Madam Speaker, the next page provides some gist of what the Ministry is about, then going on to Page 277, we have got the decomposition of the total amount into various components. Policy and administration - \$1.1 million, Watershed Management - \$0.5 million; Irrigation Services - \$2.4 million, then we have Land Drainage and Flood Protection - \$20 million, Madam Speaker. Let me now provide details of how we are implementing the provisions in that budgetary allocation, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, the \$3 million that has been allocated for dredging of the rivers for the Sigatoka River Dredging Phase 2, we are looking at excavating 450,000 cubic metres of silt material. Tender has been advertised and had just closed. The tender evaluations are progressing and will be submitted to the Government Tender Board (GTB) for approval.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, I had mentioned earlier this week, Penang River Mouth Dredging, we are looking at excavating 140,000 cubic metres of silt material. The tender again closed last week. The tender evaluations are progressing and will be submitted to GTB for approval.

Madam Speaker, we then have the Nakauvadra Creek Cleaning and De-silting Works, we are looking at 3.5 kilometres of river work, both cleaning of debris as well as de-silting. The survey of the creek has been completed by the engineers and we are finalising the tender documents.

Madam Speaker, the fourth one that we are undertaking in dredging works are the Labasa, Qawa and Wailevu Rivers. Work is continuing now. We are looking at in another two weeks' time, completing the Qawa River, then moving to the Labasa Navigational Channel, and then we want to move Dalega River. This is our own dredger that we are using. Madam Speaker, then again, we are looking at a total of 80,000 cubic metres of silt material that we will be extracting.

Madam Speaker, then we are looking at doing the dredging works at the Rewa River. We are looking at excavating 14,000 cubic metres of silt material. Unfortunately, at the moment, the Dredger is under repair and we are awaiting the arrival of the parts, so we will be starting work soon.

Madam Speaker, you may have travelled past the Navua Bridge and if you look on the left and right of the River, it is in a bad shape. There are massive amount of silt material loaded on that particular stream, as well as debris and the River is pretty much clogged up. So we have completed the survey of the creek by the engineers and we are now preparing the conceptual design for dredging and we will be undertaking calling for tender for EIA.

Madam Speaker, as you know, this river works it takes time because we also need to take permission from the users of the river, as well as from the related Ministries.

Vunivau Village River this is in Navua, some of you who would have gone upstream using a small boat, you would have noted how the river bank is eroding off, massive mountain erosion. This is not the only river, there are other rivers, for example, in Ba, Votua Village, the settlement there is in trouble as well.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- A Point of order, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Point of order.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Under Standing Order 40 on Ministerial Statements, I would suggest to the Honourable Minister if he takes up his time in a Ministerial Statement to just confine his response to a very short one and to the point. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. SPEAKER.- Order! Order!

When there is a point of order, it is only the Speaker who makes the ruling. The Honourable Minister for Waterways is actually responding to the Question that has been asked and he has to explain on the \$24.2 million, that was the question and this is why he is taking much time. Please, continue, Honourable Minister.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. A lesson that we can learn from this, Madam Speaker, they should think about asking a question again. Please, do not just ask a question for the sake of asking questions, and now take it!

Madam Speaker, so I am talking about how we are going to utilise that \$3 million for dredging out of the \$24 million. Out of the \$24 million, I am talking about the \$3 million, how are we going to utilise that \$3 million?

Nasisivia River, Madam Speaker, this is in Navua. The survey of the creek has been completed and plans are being produced. Engineers will prepare a conceptual design for dredging and the tender for EIA study will be advertised soon.

Then, Vunivau River, Madam Speaker, we have submitted to GTB for approval. Madam Speaker, now, we have got \$1.4 million allocated for Watershed Management. Yesterday I explained, but now you have asked again, it really takes time to explain again because I think it is a technical area and you have difficulty in understanding that.

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- She has asked again, respect your Member! Respect your colleague! She has asked a question and we need to answer.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, please, do not repeat what you had mentioned yesterday and just continue from where you left off.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, we are constructing a Namosi River Instream Flood Retention Dam No. 3. I explained that there are two rivers in Nadi and we are supposed to construct 12 Retention Dams upstream. We have done two each in the two rivers and the third one for Nadi Watershed, tender has been advertised and will be closing on 14th March, 2018. Whilst the tender bids will be evaluated, we will be submitting to the GTB for approval.

Madam Speaker, we are undertaking the EIA Study for the Namosi River Instream Flood

Retention Dam No. 4 for Nadi Watershed. The survey of the proposed site has been completed. The conceptual design of the proposed dam is also completed, tender documents have been prepared and tender for EIA Study will be advertised.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Madam Speaker, there is no Namosi River, it is the Navua River.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. SPEAKER.- Order! You are taking time, we have very limited time today.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Your point is noted, thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Yes, please, correct the name.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, then out of the \$24 million, we have got \$3 million allocated for the Drainage Boards. As you know, Madam Speaker, we have got the Western Division Drainage Board, the Central Division Drainage Board, and the Northern Division Drainage Board.

The Drainage Board is responsible for undertaking drainage works in these respective divisions. So grants, we provide grants. There are 92 drainage schemes, Madam Speaker. We provide grants on a quarterly basis to the Drainage Board and the drainage board is undertaking drainage works in their respective Divisions.

A lot of drainage works is currently being undertaken, Madam Speaker, if you go to Olosara in Sigatoka, you will see machines there, cleaning up the drains, de-silting and also doing new drains, Madam Speaker. Similarly the entire Western Division up-to Rakiraki, there are machines now which have been outsourced, we have outsourced drainage work, we do not have the capacity, we do not have the machines to do it. Similarly, we have got drainage works being undertaken in Navuci in the Central Division.

Navua, we will be undertaking some drainage works there, Madam Speaker, very soon once we have worked that out, we have got the quotations. We have got drainage works being undertaken in Vanua Levu. The Honourable Parmod Chand raised an issue earlier this week about Siberia Road. If you go there today, you will see machines working to do a new drainage so that no longer the Siberia Road will be blocked during heavy rain.

HON. MEMBER.- (Inaudible interjection)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Absolutely. There is work at Soasoa in Vuniika. Currently there is work in Dalega. Dalega, we have just completed, there is work in Dreketi and there will be work in Korokadi as well, Madam Speaker.

So, Madam Speaker, we have got an allocation of \$1 million out of the \$24 million for waterlogged farms, this is non-sugar, outside the drainage schemes and outside the Drainage Board.

As you know, Madam Speaker, before, the mandate of the Land and Water Resource Management LAWARM Division (LAWARM) was only on the agricultural area and the designated drainage schemes. For the first time, we have got a million dollar outside the areas defined by

LAWRM and the drainage schemes, Madam Speaker. So we are taking submissions, we are addressing this but what we are going to do, week after next, we will go throughout Fiji and undertake detailed submissions and then we will do a plan to address these non-sugar areas, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, we have got \$1.3 million for grant maintenance for drainage in municipal councils. So, if the Honourable Member wants, I can provide a detail about the municipal councils drainage works.

Madam Speaker, we have got a grant for in-field drainage of sugarcane farms - \$2 million. We have already disbursed this money to FSC. Both, FSC Field Officers as well as our officers, got submissions from farmers and the submissions that we receive, we pass them on to FSC that these are the farmers that need assistance. So, we have suggested to FSC that they go ahead and assist the farmers out of this \$2 million. We have also spoken to the Cane Producers Association, who used to assist farmers on a 50:50 basis; cost sharing basis.

HON. DR. M.T. SAMISONI.- Point of order, please, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Point of order!

HON. DR. M.T. SAMISONI.- We heard this yesterday but the question was just very short, we asked about the drainage and this is a petition, Madam Speaker, ...

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Then you should have withdrawn the question!

HON. DR. M.T. SAMISONI.- ... we are wasting time and as far as I am concerned, it is very inefficient. Thank you, Madam Speaker, and the process is just, he is stretching the question. Ridiculous, ridiculous, thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you.

The Point of Order is relevant because he is repeating what has been said yesterday and is taking a lot of time. At this time, can I ask the Honourable Radrodro, are you satisfied with the answer that you have been given?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- A supplementary question.

HON. SPEAKER.- We will now open for supplementary questions. Honourable Radrodro?

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Speaker, the Honourable Minister should be ashamed of himself, to stand up there and have the audacity to say all that, and all the time there is flooding around the country, which means your policies and programmes are not working. So it is a waste of the taxpayers money, so you do new policies to be able to effectively implement those programmes.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Speaker, the question is on the Budgetary Supplementary Address, what is the progress on the establishment of new regulations to manage urban drainage

systems and carry out specific tasks, such as hydrological forecasting rural irrigation?

HON. MEMBER.- On what?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- So the question is, what is the progress on your new regulations? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, if the Honourable Member had listened to my Ministerial Statement, I have answered there that first, we want to develop a National Waterways Policy, leading to a Waterways Legislation. We just yesterday our PS had offered a contract to Director of Policy and Research under whose domain this particular aspect will be. We have drafted a Cabinet Paper to get approval from Cabinet to develop that National Waterways Policy, once Cabinet approves that, we will then undertake consultation with not only relevant Ministries, but also Fiji-wide about developing the policy and the legislation. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Speaker, my question is in relation to the diversion in Wainawaqa, Waidina River. The bridge is in danger of being isolated which connects two villages. The work has been ongoing but there is no funding, whether you can allocate that \$24 million for the completion of that part of the Waidina River in Wainawaqa?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, I had explained to Honourable Nabulivou, who had raised that issue with us, that we are looking at pegging the money in the next budget to address that particular issue.

HON. SPEAKER.- We will now move on to the next question and I will give the floor to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to ask her question.

Dual Payment System Alternative to E-Ticketing System
(Question No. 48/2018)

HON. RO T.V. KEPA asked the Government, upon notice:

Would the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications explain briefly and to the point, what plans Government has to introduce a dual payment system that is common in many other countries for the bus services here in Fiji as an alternative to the current e-ticketing system?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM (Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications).- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has changed the question somewhat slightly but we will still accept that.

Madam Speaker, the short answer. Madam Speaker, the reality is that, we did have a dual

system actually. When the law was passed, and we did have a two months of dual system and, in fact, even prior to that, those companies that did implement e-ticketing did have a dual system. Then there was a cut-off period, after which the dual system would end, and we now have a full-on e-ticketing system without cash being received for the payment of bus fares. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- A supplementary question.

HON. SPEAKER.- Supplementary question.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- The issue that the passengers have is in terms of the top up of the cards, where the passengers are running around from pillar to post, trying to find which machine is working in which shop. So the question is, instead of having the long queues and missing the last bus where they have to walk home and cross the river, et cetera, how can they improve on their system where the machines are not breaking down, so that they can easily access the topping up of these cards? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, it would be nicer if the Honourable Leader of Opposition did provide some empirical evidence as to how many machines are actually breaking down. Madam Speaker, the reality is that, e-ticketing is actually working well and the reality is that, whenever you do implement any new system, there are always cobwebs within the system or there are practical issues that may arise.

We have, at the moment, we have been working very closely with all the key stakeholders in respect of the regulators, including LTA and Vodafone, to ensure that people have access to actually topping up their cards. There have been, of course, now we have independent kiosks that are being run. Vodafone is currently looking at having people you know who use to be formally conductors, now starting off their own businesses.

As a result of e-ticketing, Madam Speaker, we are informed about 400 new jobs have, in fact, been created, where people now become small entrepreneurs themselves, selling top-ups and selling the cards. We also have people who are now software developers, there are repairs technicians, top up agents, in fact, LTA has just put out a press release yesterday where they have hired about 90 people, Madam Speaker, to go out and regulate and see that everyone is actually abiding by the law.

We will very soon in the next few weeks, Madam Speaker, Vodafone is also being looking at using the technology of topping up the phones using M-PAiSA, as you know a lot of people are used to M-PAiSA, so now they will also make it easier.

We are also looking at using Near-field Communications (NFC). Some smartphones, the latest ones, you actually simply tap your phone against the machine and it deducts the funds, so we are looking at NFC also. Of course, not everyone has the latest smartphones but those people who do, they will be able to use that and those people who do not have it will be able to use M-PAiSA to do the top up.

It makes it easier, the Honourable Parmod Chand will also confirm. The bus operators are actually happy, Madam Speaker, it does provide a huge level of transparency, as everyone knows whose enormous amounts of pilfering that went on when we had our cash system.

In any sector, if you have cash system, there will be a lot of pilfering that will go on. This brings about a lot more accountability, increase in revenue collection for bus operators, increase in revenue collection for Fiji Revenue and Customs Services and it provides the ease of transportation travel for those people who are using public transportation.

Madam Speaker, we had a system, for example, where (as you know) we spent approximately in excess of \$15 million, giving to bus operators and, of course, there are associated costs with it when we had the bus vouchers, the physical bus vouchers. We had at one stage the scam that was going on, where some teachers together with some senior students in some schools, were actually photocopying the vouchers and selling it at half the price. So that system, Madam Speaker, obviously does not work. When you have electronic transactions, they provide a lot better accountability.

The bus companies, LTA know exactly now real time what bus is where, how many passengers, for example, have got on the bus at CWM Hospital, how many people get off at the next bus stand, where is a huge demand for buses, for example, in Narere at 6.00 a.m., and as you know people falling out of the windows, then obviously LTA can talk to the bus company and say, "Let us put on another route."

This technology gives us that level of ability to be able to plan a lot better. So, I think as you know as policy-makers and indeed, as Members of this Parliament, we need to be able to look at, not just up to our nose, but look at into the future. Of course, no one is denying there have not been some teething issues, teething issues will always be there, but we need to be able to resolve it in the same way. When ATM machines were introduced in Fiji, people were complaining, "Aw, I cannot go and queue up anymore, I have to use the machine", but people got over that. Now, people cannot do without ATM machines.

So, Madam Speaker, this is the reality and, of course, the e-ticketing. In fact, Madam Speaker, there were consultation widespread consultations and Honourable Parmod Chand can confirm this, he was also the President of the Fiji Bus Operators Association and it was going for three years, three years in fact prior to 2014. And we were the ones who actually delayed it because we said we wanted to be in a situation where the ordinary consumer does not in any way lose out. So we have also introduced the cards that are not the permanent cards, the temporary cards or the disposable cards.

You know there were all these rumours about it that any of the credit in the disposable card gets eaten up by Government, no! The law or regulation actually provides. should there be even five cents left on it, disposable cards are for those people who temporarily use it, even this five cents on it, you can go and redeem it within 30 days. You will get that back too.

So, for all angles, we have actually tried to help the consumers. In fact, for the bus companies even it is a bit of a difficulty because of the fact that by law at the moment, they are required under regulation to carry disposable cards. So, we need to actually engender the sense of all the bus users and e-ticketing users to get the permanent cards, it gives a lot of benefits. Vodafone has been holding various competitions to encourage people to use the e-ticketing cards and it is actually better accountability for them.

This is a matter of information, Madam Speaker, there are currently the e-ticketing system has registered 856,235 users. These are the registered number of e-ticketing users that we have got at the moment, Madam Speaker. The average top up card value is \$10 per month, and an average total fare

transaction value at the moment is \$9.5 million per month. At the same time as a matter of interest, we need to note also that currently, there are 1.26 million registered mobile phone users, with 952,921 active SIM cards in Fiji. In other words, there are more SIM cards in operation at the moment, than the actual people in Fiji, including people who are three months old.

Obviously, some people use SIM cards for legitimate reasons, some for more illegitimate reasons, they would like to keep two phone numbers but the fact of the matter is that, Madam Speaker, that it is working, we need to work towards it, we need to encourage our people to adopt the technology and will make their life a lot easier in the long run, Madam Speaker.

And we then also, Madam Speaker, a country like Singapore, as we have highlighted before, they no longer carry out the census anymore, they get real live data on a daily basis. That is where we would like to be. We do not have to have an exercise every 10 years, just how many people use phones and how many people have bank accounts. We need to be able to access that information on a more regular basis, to be able to make decisions on a more focussed manner and also to make the correct decisions as far as planning is concerned. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- There being no supplementary questions. I will now give the floor to the Honourable Mosese Bulitavu.

Police Brutalities
(Question No. 49/2018)

HON. M.D. BULITAVU asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Defence and National Security inform the House the reason why Police brutalities continue in the country and the actions taken to curb and control the same?

HON. RATU I. KUBUABOLA (Minister for Defence and National Security).- Madam Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for the question.

Under the Police Act (Cap. 85), the Fiji Police has the powers to make arrest, interrogate and detain any individual suspected of committing an offence. In circumstances where the Fiji Police are faced with the strong resistance and violent actions from drunkards, drug peddlers, violent robbers, et cetera, they would institute reasonable force, as a means of self-defence to counter and deflate the situation.

Madam Speaker, we should not forget that there are cases where police officers are being brutally assaulted and seriously injured in the exercise of their duties. There is a total of 118 cases of resisting arrest in 2017 and 2018 alone.

Madam Speaker, let me highlight the proactive actions currently taken by the Fiji Police Force to curb police brutality, which includes the strengthening of the Fiji Police Force Internal Affairs Unit which has ensured the swift, fair and transparent investigations, enabling the Unit to adopt a strong concept of monitoring the system wide advocacy and improvement concept. Also, in doing so, a total of 1,082 activities such as, training, awareness and lectures to the personnel of the Fiji Police Force was conducted last year.

Stringent guidelines are in place to steer police operations and minimise brutality by the police. The recent introduction of video recording and first hour interview procedures has contributed to the reduction of complaints against police officers.

The Fiji Police Force intends to modify all interview rooms nationwide under their Tier Modelling concept and the budgetary implications will be reflected in the Budget for 2017-2018.

As a means of streamlining the reporting and investigation process, the Fiji Police Call Centre, along with the Daily Bad Briefs on any incident purportedly of brutality or excessive use of force is attended within the first 24 hours.

Madam Speaker, the Fiji Police Force is also obliged by legislation to seek the sanctions of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in the establishment of a *prima facie* before charges are being laid. In addition to this, the internal tribunal processes are activated where the purported officers are placed on immediate suspension from active service until the case is resolved.

Madam Speaker, let me assure this House and all Fijians that the Fiji Police Force will not condone police brutality of using excessive force will be thoroughly investigated, to ensure that justice is served. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Supplementary question, Honourable Bulitavu?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Speaker, given that most of these police brutality case do not happen in police stations, they happen in isolated places. If you look at the facts of those current cases that come out of the media, they happen in roadsides. The strike-back team takes them to a site where the victim cannot be noticed.

It shows, Madam Speaker, that all systems and measures in place have failed. What other programmes that are available in the police institution that can help police officers to understand reasonable force, to understand that brutality is wrong and to understand human rights, rather than the Honourable Minister telling us with deterrent and taking us to other internal mechanisms in place to refer to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP)? What are the measures that are in place to allow our police officers to understand the law, how to abide by the law and that they are not above the law?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister?

HON. RATU I. KUBUABOLA.- Madam Speaker, I think I have explained what the Fiji Police Force is doing to try and curb the cases of brutality by the Police. But let me just say here, Madam Speaker, that in 2017, there were 18,153 cases registered, only nine cases, Madam Speaker are cases of police brutality, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Nawaikula?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, we have ratified the Convention against Torture and within that are recommendations that internal processes within the Police and the Army to discipline those who are in brutality. Could you inform the House, how are you setting up this procedure where police officers in brutality can be disciplined and whether anyone had been found guilty in relation to that?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister?

HON. RATU I. KUBUABOLA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker, some of the cases are going through the court right now, some, for example, the Nadarivatu case that has the investigation has just been completed and is in the process of being sent to the DPP's Office.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Jilila Kumar to ask her question.

Strategic Direction - Service Delivery for Older Persons
(Question No. 50/ 2018)

HON. J.N. KUMAR asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation inform the House on the strategic directions for service delivery for older persons in Fiji?

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA (Honourable Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation).- Thank you, Madam Speaker. The strategic direction for the care of the elderly in Fiji is set by the National Council of Older Persons Act of 2013, Madam Speaker. And of course, this has been boosted by our five-year and 20-year National Development Plan which also deals with the strategic direction for the carefree elderly.

Internally, Madam Speaker, the priority within the Ministry right now is in relation to the maintenance and administration and also the setting of standards for the carefree elderly in our three State Homes who look after the elderly around the country.

The three state homes, Madam Speaker, and we have in that regard signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) for capacity building within the homes for the caregivers therein.

Apart from that, Madam Speaker, keeping in mind the 2017 Census data which shows that right now, about nine percent of our national population are above 60 years of age, while 70 percent of the population are below 40 years of age. And looking long-term strategically, that 70 percent, in about 20 to 30 years' time, will be our elderly population, and that is quite a big number to deal with.

So long-term strategically, the focus for the Ministry is to set proper standards right now to ensure that when we do hit that demographic change in a decade, two decades and three decades, we will be ready nationally to deal with that in relation to the care of the elderly in Fiji.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Salote Radrodro?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Speaker, these three State Homes have been in existence for decades. In regards to the three State Homes for the elderly persons, does the Ministry have any plans to increase the number of State Homes?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister?

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker, as you would know, there are three

State Homes at the moment and as I stated, long-term, we are looking at the demographic changes we are expecting as a nation in a decade, two decades and three decades time, and of course, Government will take that into account in dealing with the needs of the nation when that happens. At this time, we do have a budget for the maintenance of existing State Homes but have set up a long-term strategic direction for the Ministry. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Viliame Gavoka?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Can I ask the Honourable Minister, relative to all the countries, how do we stack up in terms of the percentage of the age? How many in Fiji are in the 60-70 age category? This would be critical when we consider the way we provide for the aged through Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF).

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA.- If I understand correctly, Madam Speaker, I think the question was in relation to the demographic makeup?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- No, I mean, all over the world now in the mature countries, the percentage of the aged is much greater than the young. How does Fiji stack up, globally?

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA.- Madam Speaker, I think our Census data in 2017 is pretty clear in that regards on the demographic makeup for Fiji. I had stated that about nine percent right now are above the age of 60 years. For that, it also shows that women live six to eight years longer than men and, therefore, the issues of wellbeing and support for women widows when that happens. And of course, after 60 years, women outnumber men in all age groups: 65-69, 70-74 and 75 plus. The Census data is quite indicative of where we stand as a nation in relation to the aged population. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Nawaikula?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- The Honourable Minister mentioned the training. Fiji is very well known in caregiving and there is a high demand for that speciality overseas and because it is demand-driven, there are private institutions being set up. Can the Honourable Minister enlighten us whether there are any plans to set up a caregiving school or institute in Fiji, where those who qualify can be given formal certificates?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister?

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have just stated in my answer that there are institutions in Fiji that are already providing this particular area of study. And with the Ministry has actually signed an MOU with APTC just this month, to capacity-build our staff within the Homes around Fiji. But I am also aware that FNU and USP, if I am correct on this, does provide services for caregiving.

I think the issue, Madam Speaker, is that, it is not widely known. So, there are a lot of caregivers leaving Fiji to go overseas to do private caregiving in overseas countries but nationally, looking at our demography, it is time for us to also highlight this as an area that our people can go into, to study in light of what we are expecting as a nation in a decade, two decades and three decades time.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Dr. Brij Lal to ask his question.

SMEs Integration - International Trade and Global Value Chains
(Question No. 51/2018)

HON. DR. B. LAL asked the Government, upon notice:

Fiji needs to leverage trade and investment to foster SMEs integration into international trade and global value chains. Can the Honourable Minister for Industry, Trade, Tourism, Lands and Mineral Resources elaborate more on this in the House?

HON. F.S. KOYA (Minister for Industry, Trade, Tourism, Lands and Mineral Resources).- Madam Speaker, firstly, I would like to thank the Honourable Dr. Brij Lal for this question.

It is common knowledge that Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are the backbone of an economy. Madam Speaker, MSMEs actually constitute about approximately 97 percent of established businesses in Fiji and their contribution to the GDP is conservatively estimated to be about 12 percent. The majority of the MSMEs are concentrated in the sectors - primary retail sectors and service sectors.

There are efforts already underway to foster their integration of MSMEs into international trade. A very good example is in the tourism sector where a number of primary MSMEs are supplying their produce to our international hotel chains, and tourism as our large foreign exchange earner and having our Fijian grown produce regularly on the menus at our resorts and hotels and further promote our Fijian grown brand internationally.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry has also facilitated Fijian crafted products in our major tourist retail outlet such as Tappoo, Jack's and Prouds and a large number of visitors also place their orders for Fijian crafted products prior to their departure. This arrangement has provided an opportunity for our Fijian crafted products to be visible in overseas markets and further raising the profile of our local MSMEs.

Madam Speaker, there are number of Government programmes specifically designed also to enhance the support in terms of export competitiveness of our MSMEs and one of these national programmes is the National Export Strategy (NES) which is administered by the Ministry.

The NES, Madam Speaker, has assisted close to 93 projects to the tune of about \$12.8 million for the last 11 years. This assistance has benefited MSMEs, operators in the forestry sector, agriculture sector and the fisheries sector, to name a few. The types of NES support that have contributed to the integration of these MSMEs into the international trade and global value chains include the procurement of value adding equipment.

Madam Speaker, machines and upgrading of processing facilities need internationally recognised standards. For instance one of the MSME recipients in fact Sheer Industries, engages in manufacturing of custom made doors and these manufactured doors are now being exported to Japan and to be included as the final product. This overseas firm through restructuring its operations has outsourced the production of custom made doors and has identified this particular Fiji based company as a missing puzzle in the value chain. Our local MSME provides the raw materials and manufactures the intermediate product in this global value chain activity.

More importantly, Madam Speaker, is the impact targeted assistance through the National Export Strategy (NES) which has resulted in an increase in exports, current markets and new export markets and job creation by these MSMEs.

The Honourable Members may recall on Wednesday, I provided an overview of the Ministry where the Ministry is undertaking with regard to the review of our current investment policy and the law and the outcome of this, Madam Speaker, is also critical that will allow us to guide and influence foreign and direct investment inflows into specialised areas of the economy. Therefore, it is essential to have a modern forward looking investment policy and regulatory framework and once this is in place, Madam Speaker, we would be able to attract and secure the FTIs into sectors that have strong backward linkages to our domestic MSMEs.

Therefore, we would be in a better position, we foster further investigation of our domestic MSME into international trade. To complement Madam Speaker, our efforts in modernising our current investment policy and regulatory framework we have already commenced the preparatory work for the establishment of the necessary infrastructure to stimulate global value chain activities. I am also referring here, Madam Speaker, to the Wairabetia Economic Zone (WEZ) which I have stated in the House. The WEZ is actually intended to attract and stimulate private sector investment in the number of exciting areas such as luxury shopping, light industry manufacturing, ICT, supply chain management and other services. These integrated development, Madam Speaker, approach will take advantage of the synergies that are created and establish linkages between our MSMEs and foreign firms established in the WEZ. These synergies and linkages will obviously accelerate the technology transfer, the spill overs and economic development as well as the overall lower cost of doing business.

In addition, Madam Speaker, the opportunities will open up for our local MSMEs to be suppliers and provide support and logistic services for these foreign firms. Our local MSMEs will also be exposed to a higher level of expertise and advance technology and quality services delivered by these foreign firms and these attributes, Madam Speaker, will certainly inspire our MSMEs to enhance and raise their level of operations.

Madam Speaker, MSMEs are an integral part of our economy because of their resilience and resourcefulness, their innovativeness and their adaptability and the Government will continue to ensure that all concerted efforts are taken to prioritise and mainstream these MSMEs into the global value chain through our national development agenda. Thank you Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Dr. Mere Samisoni.

HON. DR. M. SAMISONI.- Thank you Honourable Minister for your explanation on the moving into the new world order and upgrading your policies, it is good to hear that. But I come back to a very basic question.

Yesterday, we had a group of women from the Flea Market who had some problems with the \$1000 SME starting of the project, they are still having problems. The feedback is this: they are still having problems. While we can have the bigger picture, it is great to see the bigger picture but locally, we are still having some very basic problems. How can those be addressed? You did say you are going to look into it and I thank you, but these are the basic things, that we are dealing with are human values and human urgency.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, the case in point that has been talked about, I did actually

go back and check. I know it is not related directly to the question but I will answer it.

I have been informed by my staff, Madam Speaker, that they did not qualify in the first place so they are looking at it again to see what they can do. Sometimes they do not quite provide all the necessary materials, they need to conform all the things that are required to actually qualify. But they are looking at it, I did give my assurance that we would and the team is actually working at it again already as of yesterday. I do understand what you are saying but that is not really directly related to that but one of these days one of these ladies can become part of the whole valuable chain..

You must remember something, Madam Speaker, we do not actually leave anyone behind. Just because someone does not qualify, we do not dump them, we try and nurture them that is the whole idea and this Government is actually living by what it says. We do not leave any Fijian behind.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Anare Vadei.

HON. A.T.VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Honourable Minister for moving our products towards world order, but my question is regarding the protection of the intellectual property rights in regards to tangible and intangible art and craft that we are going to sell to the international market.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, I do remember and recall that the Honourable Member actually asked this question a little while ago and I think it is relative to the law regarding this particular situation. This question needs to be addressed to the Honourable Attorney-General, who is responsible for the law.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Netani Rika.

HON. LT. COL. N. RIKA.- Madam Speaker, supplementary question. Honourable Minister, the new Wairabetia Economic Zone (I believe in Lautoka), how will this contribute to the integration of SMEs into the global value chain?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I think everyone is quite familiar with the area of Wairabetia. Wairabetia is actually strategically located within the two ports, the international airport and an international seaport and this will obviously result in convenient accessibility and reduce the transportation cost for businesses operating at that zone. The WEZ will attract investments from leading ICT and logistics and supply chain management service providers, this will mostly create synergies and linkages with the objective of this and also attract leading manufacturing companies to setup within the zone.

The Government, Madam Speaker, recognises whilst it is important to attract international firms to the zone, it is also equally important to give our MSMEs the opportunity to participate in activities in that particular economic hub created. As such, there are plans to establish business incubation and training hubs to provide world class facilities and business support services to the MSMEs at an affordable rate.

The combination of having leading manufacturing in ICT Companies as well as MSMEs in a single location Madam Speaker, will lead to technology and knowledge transfers, and provide opportunities for new and alternative products and services to be delivered by the MSMEs. Thank you Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Samuela Vunivalu to ask his question.

Stray farm animals
(Question No. 52 of 2018)

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, and Disaster Management and Meteorological Services inform the House as to what plans the Ministry has to control farm animals from straying onto the Queen's and Kings Highways?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU (Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, and Disaster Management and Meteorological Services).- Thank you Madam Speaker. First let me clarify before answering the question that this stray animal campaign is not only restricted to the Queens and Kings Highway, it is a campaign throughout Fiji. However, the focus is on the two main islands, particularly, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu for obvious reasons.

Madam Speaker, our future lies in agriculture, I have shared this time and again in this Honourable House. Apart from natural calamities, we have disasters, cyclones, *El-Nino*, floods, of course pests and diseases and market constraints, but the two that are really worrying us the most is on criminal activities and the other one is stray animals.

This morning, I thank the Honourable Member for the question on stray animals. Stray animals is bound under the two main Acts, the Pounds Act of Cap. 165 and of course the Trespass of Animals Act and Brands Act, Cap. 163. Madam Speaker, the unfortunate thing is, when our farmers, not only our farmers but when our communities do not look after the animals, this is when the Acts that I have stated come into play. We have to enforce it because complaints are not only coming from our farming communities but also in the Tikina and Provincial Council meetings as well.

Allocation every year, Madam Speaker is usually around \$50,000-\$60,000 at the most but for the current budget, Madam Speaker, because of the concerns raised, the Ministry was summoned a few times to the Honourable Prime Minister because of the consultations that he has been conducting all over Fiji and the complaints from the people, we are given \$13.37 million in this year's budget. I will not take up time like the \$24.2 million unless the other side of the House wants me to, Honourable Nawaikula!

(Laughter)

Basically, how are we going to use the \$13.37 million, we need to get extra staff because this is additional load to the Ministry. We are looking at hiring 15 people, eight have already been recruited, Madam Speaker. Of course, we are looking at another seven, Madam Speaker.

On Construction of Animal Pounds, there are 11 existing pounds in Fiji and unfortunately some of these pounds have been neglected over the years. I will not go into the details. First, we have to fix these pounds so that we bring them back to standard. Of course, we need to construct another 12 pounds as well all over Fiji. I will mention the 12 pounds, we have just completed three, Madam Speaker, one in Viti Levu, in Vitawa in Rakiraki and of course two in Vanua Levu - Wainigata in Savusavu and Seaqaqa in Cakaudrove. For the Central Division, we have to construct one in Dawasamu, one in Natovi and one Navua in Namosi. In Vanua Levu, I have mentioned Wainigata and Seaqaqa. We will also construct one in Taveuni and one in Labasa in Macuata as well. Western Division, Vitawa has already been constructed, one in Lautoka, one in Narata and two in Ba and Komaiwai in Nadi and Namarai.

Madam Speaker, we will also have to find additional equipment, particularly trucks because that is consistent with the Act. From where we confiscate the animals we will have to take them to where the pounds are. Part of that money will be for the procurement of trucks and that is going through the normal process. That is my short answer to the question, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Mikaele Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Speaker, when we travel along the coast these stray animals are a nuisance. I would like to ask the Honourable Minister if we could impose some sort of penalties on the owners of these stray animals. These animals stay on the highways and it is very dangerous for the motorists when they use the roads. I know that the pounds are there, it is a penalty, but what about the owners of these stray animals?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Yes, Madam Speaker, there is a penalty under the Act. They are penalised, part of the penalty is for the owners to pay for the transportation cost. At the moment, I must say, Madam Speaker, we are a bit flexible on that because Government has the responsibility to construct the pounds. In some instances, we are taking animals all the way from Sigatoka to Suva because the pound is in Suva. That is extra added unnecessary cost to the farmers, we are flexible on that. But there is a penalty clause, during the discussions in the week, most of these Acts, because the penalties are supposed to be deterrence as well, but penalties are quiet low. But definitely there is a penalty clause. I go again to emphasise the fact that this is the responsibility of the animal owners because we will only enforce this Act when the animal owners are neglecting their responsibility.

HON. MEMBER.- (inaudible)

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Namosi very bad..

(Laughter)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- This is a very old problem, it goes back 20 years. Could the Honourable Minister explain what measures were in place before, and why is it that those measures did not work, considering you have been there for 12 years; and will this one work?

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, I will talk about cattle alone. We have the Uluisaivou Beef Scheme, Verata Beef Scheme from where I come from, and the Yalavou Beef Scheme but none of this is in existence. So, a lot of farmers now keep their animals at their own backyard. They do not have proper ranches or cattle farm so to speak. This is why we are having this huge problem of stray animals. But then the Act is clear, Madam Speaker, all they have to do is get ear tags so that the animals are marked and brand as well. Those are the very simple things they need to do. Of course, there is assistance in the Ministry, if they want fencing, it is available but they have to take responsibility.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now give the floor to the Honourable Alivereti Nabulivou to ask his question.

Mechanisms to measure productivity
(Question No. 53 of 2018)

HON. A. NABULIVOU asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations inform the House on the mechanisms in place that Government is using in measuring or achieving productivity and how effective this has been?

HON. J. USAMATE (Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations).- Thank you Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Honourable Member for his question. In terms of the first part of that question, how we are trying to measure productivity?

Fiji is a member of the Asian Productivity Organisation (APO) and the Permanent Secretary in my Ministry is the APO Director for Fiji. Being part of the APO, we get to utilise their programmes and every year, they do a survey of productivity levels in the different member countries and they produce this APO Productivity Data Book. That is how we try to keep track of our productivity levels here in Fiji at the national level.

Our data from the Bureau of Statistics is fed into the APO computers and they come up with this report. On the base of that report we have some findings on our national productivity levels, and that includes labour productivity, capital productivity and total factor productivity.

In terms of the sectoral, looking at the different sectors that we have, the reports that are produced by the Asian Productivity Organisation also produces statistics on productivity in various sectors. These include:

- i) agricultural sector;
- ii) mining sector;
- iii) manufacturing sector;
- iv) electricity, gas and water supply;
- v) construction sector;
- vi) wholesale, retail trade, hotels and restaurants;
- vii) transport, storage and communications;
- viii) finance, real estate and business activities; and

- ix) communities, social and personal services.

Within these sectors you get the national statistics for Fiji as a whole then you get the productivity statistics for these different sectors. Once again, you can get labour productivity statistics, total factor productivity and capital productivity.

The labour productivity statistics for these sectors are the ones that we use when we come up with our Wage Regulation Orders for the ten different sectors in which we set wages. Now, we have the National Minimum Wage and above that we have the Wage Regulation Orders for the 10 different sectors. It is this data from the APO that we use to guide us in doing that.

In terms of our corporate level at the different firms, there are no statistics provided in Fiji but what we do have, the Ministry works very closely with our National Productivity Organisation (NPO). The NPO at the moment is the National Training and Productivity Centre (NPTC) of the Fiji National University (FNU). They have taken out the responsibilities of the Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji that was then merged into the Fiji National University. Through the programmes that are provided at NPTC, firms can learn how to measure their own productivity, measure their own value adding. This is basically sales minus cost of goods sold, that is the basic formula to calculate value adding.

How do we do it? How do we try to grow productivity from what we are doing within the Ministry? Internationally, as I mentioned, we have access to the Asian Productivity Organisation (APO) we have access to all of their training, we have access to all the policy advisory service that we have. We have had a lot of our people that have been going to their training programmes; from Government, employers and also from the unions. They are participating and they are getting this growth of knowledge. We also have access to technical expertise that come to Fiji and runs the programmes, they run the whole range of different exercises within Fiji. We have access to the research so these are something that we have access to internationally.

Nationally, here in Fiji we would like to say that productivity is not something that you can do within the purview of one ministry. It really has to be everyone's responsibility. It has to be the responsibility of Government, the private sector or even non-government organisations, communities and so forth.

But in terms of what Government is doing within the confines of the National Development Plan that has already been launched in Bonn, all of those activities if you look at their design to try to enhance productivity. If you look at the work of each ministry, Ministry of Education, obviously has the important role of up-skilling and training people so that they can become more productive. Ministry of Infrastructure has to put in place the infrastructure so that you can create an environment in which growth can take place and which productivity can take this. Every statutory body, every government ministry, every corporation in the public or private sector have a key role to try to enhance productivity.

My Ministry in particular has a policy role and what we do is we push this concept of the Labour Management Consultation and Cooperation Committee (LMCCC) which is a requirement in all workplaces. You must have this committee that is bipartite, it has representatives of workers and employers and one of the key roles is to look at how they can enhance productivity within that particular workplace. They come up with these measures and they are also expected to report on what are the productivity enhancing tools and techniques and productivity measurement that they have seen

within each individual employer. That information is supposed to feedback to my Ministry. Unfortunately that is not happening as it should be. It is something that I have stressed to the civil servants in my Ministry that need to be strengthened. As part of this LMCCC they also encourage firms to use this productivity enhancing techniques, ISO 9000, Total Quality Management, ISO5S housekeeping and so forth.

I think the other key body that is there is the National Training and Productivity Centre. They have a very strong role to play and we encourage everyone in Fiji to make use of their services. They are a very good service, they have been promoting 5S, which is housekeeping, quality circles, green productivity, very important for us given our Green Growth Framework such an important part of our National Development Plan, Benchmarking ISO 9000, Lean Management, the Fiji Business Excellence Award, which is now in its 20th year. I understand that later on this year they will be producing a report on the impact assessment of organisations that have been using the Fiji Business Excellence Award. That framework is based on the Malcom Broadbridge Framework or Business Excellence which is used in the United States and globally and is a benchmark for organisations trying to improve their productivity.

From the beginning of this year, the National Training and Productivity Centre is running that Productivity Awareness Campaign in which they invite all parties including firms, private sector organisation to come on board. As part of that productivity awareness campaign they have more than 70 programmes that have been running.

How effective has all these been? To do that, we go back to the data that we see in this APO productivity data book. I just had a quick look at some of the figures that they have for labour productivity. When you look at the GDP of Fiji and look at the workforce and try to see how productive has their labour been, from 1970 the GDP using 2011 as a base, looking at purchasing power parity, from 1970 it was \$US14,900, 1980, it went up to \$17,400, 1990, it went down to \$16,900, 2000 went up to \$17,800, 2010, it went up to \$18,900 and listen to this in 2015, this is when the FijiFirst Bainimarama Government was there, it rose to \$22,100.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. J. USAMATE.- During this period, we have seen a rise in labour productivity within this country as a result of the efforts of the FijiFirst Government. We also looked at the total factor productivity growth levels, 1970 to 2015 is around 0.3 percent but between 1990 to 2015, it rose up to 0.7 percent. I am sorry, I made a mistake in the figures that I quoted. The figures that I quoted was for labour productivity.

Let me go back to growth rates, this is very important, 1990 to 1995, the growth rates in labour productivity was -0.2 percent; from 1995 to 2000 it was 1.2 percent, growth is how fast you are improving. From 2000 to 2005, it was 0.7 percent, so it declined. Did you get it? Did you hear the figure? From 1995 to 2000 was 1.2 percent then 2000 to 2005 it dropped to 0.7 percent, 2005 to 2010, it dropped to 0.4 percent. Now, you listen to this, FijiFirst time it rose from 2010 to 2015 from 0.4 percent to 3.1 percent.

(Applause)

(Chorus of interjections)

That is the truth. Read the Book, Honourable Prasad.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. J. USAMATE.- This data is here. You can come and check. I have brought this so that you can have a look it. Again, but this is the trend. The trend of productivity has been declining, our GDP per capita has been fairly high, but what has happened over the past few years from 1970, our growth rate has been declining.

HON. OPP. MEMBER.- Produce the report.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Asian Productivity Organisation, after this you can borrow it.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. J. USAMATE.- The productivity growth rate has been constantly declining from 2008, there has been a steady increase. From this period of 2008 we know which party has been in power, it is from the Bainimarama-led Government, it has being the steady increase in productivity from 2008, onwards. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

(Applause)

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, Honourable Members. Just before we get into supplementary question, I ask the Leader of the House to agree that we forego morning tea, given that we have a short time.

(Honourable Members interject)

Since this is your day, I will listen to you. Honourable Samisoni, your supplementary question.

HON. DR. M.T. SAMISONI.- Supplementary question, Madam Speaker. Thank you, that was well described but for me a local person I have been looking for this since 2006. I have not been able to find it. I get Bureau of Statistics, and as I said before, I am just new here and I am learning the ropes and getting the feel of the place. I would like to get the local information from Bureau of Statistics and for me, I have to answer a lot of questions to our people but again, thank you for your well-described productivity definition. For me personally, we did get the Reserve Bank figures, the Bureau of Statistics to get those, it is not there.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- So, where did you get it from?

HON. DR. M.T. SAMISONI.- I am sorry.

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Speaker, looking at the list of people that compiled this book, the person from Fiji is Ms. Navelini Singh, Senior Statistician, Economic Statistics, Fiji, Bureau of Statistics, Ratu Sukuna House, Suva, so the statistics are obviously from the Bureau of Statistics.

I thought I would just like to add also that the National Training Productivity Centre, even though we have the sectoral analysis that is done by the APO, the NTPC is currently doing a sectoral analysis of productivity also. I think they are looking at eight different sectors and the results of that exercise

should be coming out later this year. I encourage everyone who is interested in productivity, if you want to learn how to measure productivity in your own organisation, because the data that I have been talking about is GDP-type data, big data, but when you come down to an individual organisation, the way that you will calculate it will be slightly different.

You can get assistance from the National Training and Productivity Centre of the Fiji National University and encourage people to get in touch with them. They have a lot of good programmes they have been running since they have joined FNU and they continue to do this.

HON. SPEAKER.- We will now move on to the Written Question, and I will call on the Honourable Parmod Chand to ask his written question.

Written Questions

Number of Recruited Doctors who Work in Fiji's Health Institutions (Question No. 54/2018)

HON. P. CHAND asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications inform Parliament of the number of doctors recruited both locally and overseas to work in our public hospitals and health centres since the enactment of the Medical and Dental Practitioner Act 2010?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM (Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications).- Madam Speaker, I will provide written answers as provided for under the Standing Orders.

Number of Vehicles Issued with Permits by Land Transport Authority (LTA) (Question No. 55/2018)

HON. A.M. RADRODRO asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Local Government, Housing, Environment, Infrastructure and Transport confirm the number of taxi, mini bus and carrier permits issued by the Land Transport Authority until to-date after the freeze on the issuance of PSV Permits was lifted from January 2018, and how many permits are still pending with the LTA?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM (Acting Minister for Local Government, Housing, Environment, Infrastructure and Transport).- Madam Speaker, I will provide written answers as provided for under the Standing Orders.

HON. SPEAKER.- The next question is by the Honourable Semesa Karavaki who is not present. Standing Order 45(6) does not allow anyone else to ask his question and it states that if a Member is not present to ask the question in the allocated time, the question lapses, and therefore I will now move on to the next three questions and give the floor to the Honourable Mikaele Leawere.

Number of School Managements Dissolved and Overtaken – Ministry of Education
(Question No. 57/2018)

HON. M.R. LEAWERE asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications inform this House on the number of school managements dissolved and overtaken by the Ministry of Education since October 2014, and the reasons for such actions.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM (Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications).- Madam Speaker, I will provide written answers as provided for under the Standing Orders.

HON. SPEAKER.- Question time is over and before I call on the Honourable Professor Biman Prasad, I wish to advise the House that pursuant to Standing Order 35(2), we will have to commence with the End-Of-Week Statements at 11.50 a.m., therefore the vote on the motion will be taken before that.

I now call on the Honourable Professor Biman Prasad to move his motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, just a point of clarification, so we have three motions here before us. Does that mean that if we have the debate on the first motion going on to 11.50, the other two motions will not be heard?

HON. SPEAKER.- Absolutely.

**MOTION - FORMATION OF A BIPARTISAN COMMITTEE FOR INQUIRY INTO
PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL SYSTEM TO IMPROVE DELIVERY
OF HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES**

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Speaker, I move:

That this Parliament approves the formation of a bipartisan Committee to conduct an inquiry into the public health and medical system and for the Report of such an inquiry to be tabled, debated and adopted by Parliament, and to form the basis of formulation of policies and strategies by Government to improve the delivery of health care and medical services.

HON. P. CHAND.- Madam Speaker, I second the motion.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Speaker, I move this motion with very good intentions. I know that both the Government side and the Opposition side want good health services in this country, however, Madam Speaker, it is said that the unmistakable reality is that there is a serious deterioration of our health services and medical care. An extremely poor health service, Madam Speaker, is a blight on our nation and there is no other way to put it. Go to any hospital in the country and you will see the pathetic conditions.

I have personally, Madam Speaker, visited a number of hospitals and health centres since the resumption of Parliamentary democracy. I visited them before the Elections. My latest visits have shown no improvement in service delivery or very little improvement; patients, especially women and children, wait for a much longer time than what we used to have and to see a doctor.

The physical condition, Madam Speaker, in many hospitals is very shameful. A hospital should never run out of essential medicines or basic equipment such as syringes for blood tests. I need not go into examples because there is an endless list of grievances that we receive daily in our offices. Perhaps the Honourable Prime Minister, Madam Speaker, should visit the hospitals without notice to see for himself the conditions of the hospitals around the country and maybe other Ministers should do the same. Maybe they should start in our own backyard, which is the CWM Hospital.

Madam Speaker, even the expectation of clean and hygienic conditions at our hospitals is just too high an expectation from this Government. Just recently, we had to go to CWM and see for ourselves the reality. Madam Speaker, in the Accident and Emergency Unit, there is lack of beds. The lack of beds and linen in wards is another matter. Patients are told to get off their beds and sit on chairs with oxygen mask on, while new cases are transferred on to the beds.

In one of the wards, here is a single shower and washroom. It was full of mosquitoes with patients using vape mats. Yesterday, the Honourable Minister for Health and Medical Services told Parliament that there are only two types of mosquitoes that spread dengue. How are our people expected to know which type of mosquitoes will or will not spread dengue? The biggest hypocrisy was that while posters carrying the Ministry's message called "fight the bite" were displayed on the walls, patients and visitors to the ward were trying their best not to be bitten by mosquitoes, this is no exaggeration.

Madam Speaker, the Paying Ward is another story. Taps and showers were not running in one room despite being a Paying Ward, where you have to pay \$100 a night for a room. I went to see a patient, Madam Speaker, and I saw it with my own eyes what was the situation in the Paying Ward. The examples that I have given, Madam Speaker, are totally unacceptable. Despite major reforms, the health care systems, the services have not improved, and this is the painful reality.

I am not blaming the Honourable Minister for Health, she has just come on board for a year now, I think, and a lot of these things that we are seeing, Madam Speaker, is actually the result of long neglect.

Whilst Fiji has the largest population of the small States in the Pacific, its health budget spending is unfortunately, Madam Speaker, under 5 percent held to GDP ratio under the World Health Organisation recommendations. This figure is also less than our neighbours, Tonga, Samoa, even Solomon Islands have budget allocations. Although, Fiji is the most developed as far as manpower numbers are concerned, technology and a centralised pharmaceutical supply line originally intended for the neighbouring State also, we continue to fail in areas of research, policy and practice.

Madam Speaker, despite the partial success of the Millennium Development Goals, we are falling behind with planning and commissioning the Sustainable Development Strategy Goal up-to 2030. The Health System now, in my view, is at a chaos, with little control of the spiralling standards. The Health and Medical Services, I am sorry to say, has become subservient to the Ministry of Civil Service for recruitment and addressing staff issues. The political leaders in health have left health administration to run day-to-day affairs at their whim.

The national programmes remain unmonitored and running grants will fizzle out if monitoring and evaluation of funding grants are not collated as part of the international partnerships. Madam Speaker, infrastructural development programmes have also been stalled and held back. For example, the development of a Radio Therapy facility that we know was on the radar has actually gone off the radar.

The International Atomic Energy Commission promised a turnkey handover if a Cabinet Parliamentary endorsement to all the preparatory studies is endorsed by 2020. One wonders whether the Health Ministry actually presented a Cabinet Paper to facilitate this critically important development.

The Cardiology services, Madam Speaker, is facing major self-imposed challenges by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services. The services of the Indian Group, *Sahyadri* was terminated controversially on completion of five years of their Memorandum of Agreement.

Madam Speaker, after that, no cross over in the interim was considered so no ongoing or residual analysis was undertaken to forecast the deadly impact this would have on the health and wellbeing of common Fijians. We were told that instead WHO was instructed to mount a study of the Angiogram, Capita Laboratory Services and the open heart component in this gap.

Madam Speaker, we need to know whether the report has been completed, and if yes, why no action is forthcoming? Instead at a much greater cost today, the patients are forced to seek treatment at private hospitals and the cost is escalating, when this could have been done at a much cheaper price at CWM, Lautoka and possibly Labasa Hospital as well.

Madam Speaker, the kidney dialysis services has not been improved and we have talked about this before despite mention in the last budget that we had, and the Opposition motion during the last two National Budgets, you would remember we had moved two motions on kidney dialysis allocation and that still has not been forthcoming. Madam Speaker, yet, the Government has seen fit to allocate large amounts to things like golf, and I am not going to go into that. I have mentioned that many times in this Parliament.

Madam Speaker, it is also legitimate to ask how many doctors have been recruited by the Ministry following the passage of the Medical and then Dental Practitioners (Amendment) Act about 11 months ago. We were told by the Honourable Minister then, that that will facilitate the recruitment of doctors and make it easier. So we are not sure whether that has actually been facilitated and whether we have recruited more doctors.

Now Madam Speaker, the Honourable Attorney General announced the privatising health care and medical services at Lautoka and Ba Hospitals ...

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

HON. PROF .B.C. PRASAD .- Listen!, listen, listen! The Honourable Attorney-General talks about privatising health care and medical services in Lautoka and Ba Hospitals under private...

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. PROF .B.C. PRASAD .- ...you listen man, I have not completed, hang on! I have not completed. The Ba Hospital under Public Private Partnership. It confirms Government's inability to provide decent and affordable health care.

Madam Speaker, this Government has paid little attention to our major hospitals and medical facilities. It did not lack resources but it did not make improving medical health care a priority. That is why we need a bipartisan approach for an inquiry into all aspects of health care and medical services. This is not about casting aspersions on the ability and what the Government did. Only a bipartisan inquiry will succeed and the Bipartisan Committee can look at and develop recommendations for a decent and affordable public care system.

There are many things that we can do. There is a need to introduce a comprehensive health care modernisation programme. Any health care modernisation programme must place our citizens at the heart of rebuilding health care . We had to ensure medical care that is focused on compassion, respect and dignity of life for all our citizens, regardless of age and place of residents, citizens must have access to decent health care.

To achieve this, a personalised health care framework may be needed. There is a need to ensure clinical, which is hospital based care, is delegated to empower health specialist groups, TINS for standard practice, equal care levels throughout Fiji.

Madam Speaker, funding will have to be committed to ensure that Fiji is well-placed, well-funded team of medical workers. Our citizens should know that in hospitals, they will be seen by doctors with a specified time and not wait endlessly.

Madam Speaker, public provision of health care in Fiji is a foundation on which this country has been built. We need to invest in order to enhance and sustain delivery of care especially in specialised areas such as cancer treatment, renal transplant and cardiology. We need our medical professionals to be able to work with the most modern equipment and technical support. Fiji needs joined up private public sector solutions to modernise medical facilities and equipment, to use new technologies including tally medicines to extend services to island communities and reduce cost of private and public sector drugs through bulk purchasing.

Madam Speaker, we have to ensure that facilities are restored and maintained to international health quality standards. We should not put up with the idea that because we are poor and a small country, our standards can be lower because we hear comparisons with what is happening in other countries. There is a need to realign review policy for equitable health services outcomes in environmental and ecological health in sustaining life and welfare, disaster and humanitarian crisis health response.

Madam Speaker, health should be a big priority. Health is a fundamental human right and investing in health is investing our future, but at the moment, there is no foresight when it comes to health and medicine. We have to cure this illness, and together in a bipartisan manner, we can collectively look at what needs to be done and then the future will be much brighter.

I commend the motion to the House.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you the motion is now open for debate and now I invite the Honourable Minister for Health.

HON. R.S. AKBAR .- Thank you Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the motion raised in this House. At the outset, I can see that the motion has no merit and I sort of question the intention of bringing the motion to Parliament at this particular stage, when the Government has been in motion for the last four years or so.

This motion could have been brought in 2014, could have been brought in 2015, could have been brought in 2016 ...

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- We tried – twice.

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- ... and suddenly they bring this motion to the House. Really, I think we, on this side of the House, would like to question the intent behind the motion. It is very easy, Madam Speaker, to play with the emotions of the people, very easy. I have heard Honourable Prasad say that the hospital services are a blight to the nation

I urge him to go and speak to the hundreds and thousands of people who go to the hospitals and health centres every day and by saying that, I think he has disrespected the work that is done by our medical professionals. They are in the business of saving lives.

(Honourable Members interject.)

HON. R.S. AKBAR .- Madam Speaker.

HON. PROF .B.C. PRASAD.- Point of order, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Point of order!

HON. PROF .B.C. PRASAD .- I have never said anything about the personnel, about doctors and nurses, I talked about the system, Madam Speaker, so I think she should withdraw that.

(Honourable Members interject)

HON. R.S. AKBAR .- I would like to justify that, Madam Speaker. When you say that the hospitals services are a blight, you are basically implying that the service provided by the medical staff indeed is there and I stand here to defend my...

HON. PROF .B.C. PRASAD .- (Inaudible)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- You are insinuating.

HON. PROF .B.C. PRASAD .- She is insinuating.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- You are insinuating!

HON. PROF .B.C. PRASAD .- No!.

HON. R.S. AKBAR .- Madam Speaker, I think Honourable Prasad earlier on said that this is because of decades and decades and decades of neglect, and I agree to that. Thank you for saying that

Honourable Professor Biman Prasad. But we really need to appreciate the work of our doctors, our nurses, our allied health workers, our drivers, our cleaners in this House, we need to appreciate that. They are in the business of saving lives, Madam Speaker, and they do save lives in whatever circumstances and situations they are presented with. So, Madam Speaker, again for the information of the House. Sorry Madam Speaker?

HON. SPEAKER.- Did you say “lies”?

HON. R.S AKBAR.- No, no I said “lives”, Madam Speaker.

Since I took up this portfolio in September 2016, I have heard concerns raised by the Opposition side. It has come to me directly, and those issues have been addressed. What Honourable Professor Biman Prasad is saying, the way he is putting it, as if a flood of concerns are coming to them. But I do not know where the concerns have gone? Have they gone to the right authorities or they have come to my staff to look into it?

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Keep asking.

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Yes and we attend to it but it could have been a handful, maybe ten incidents have come to me, so making this statement probably is almost generalised and I question the intent behind this motion, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Health and Medical Services have already invested in developing a National Health Strategic Plan and reviewed the Public Health and Medical Services through collaboration with our stakeholders. The comprehensive plan covers the targeted areas to provide a robust service delivery to enhance our public system and programme. Honourable Professor Biman Prasad talks about CWM, the structures are very old. Madam Speaker, he talked about cleanliness, we are negotiating our cleaning contracts.

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

Madam Speaker, he talked about *Sahyadri*, I know *Sahyadri*, the target services were very much politicised, Madam Speaker. For the information of the House, I would like to correct that. The *Sahyadri* Services were not terminated it had expired and after expiration of that we called for an Expression of Interest and ...

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

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Madam Speaker, we are negotiating with overseas service providers to ensure that we get the best package for our Fijians to have targeted services available to them in Fiji.

Madam Speaker, in terms of kidney dialysis, again, it becomes a very political issue. I would like to inform the House, actually two weeks ago we advertised for the Expression of Interest for dialysis for our Fijians on a cost sharing basis, Madam Speaker. At the Government level, we are working to ensure that we share the cost of dialysis treatment with our people and that is ongoing.

Madam Speaker, he spoke about the worsening condition of the paying ward. This paying ward was not renovated for too many decades, we have started renovations we have actually renovated two rooms at the moment and it is ongoing.

Madam Speaker, he talked about bulk purchase of drugs. Bulk purchase of drugs is only a possibility for us if we have storage capabilities. At the moment, our FBBS is struggling in storing drugs it is not that easy to bring bulk drugs into the country because of expiration dates. WHO predicts that we have a 3 percent wastage rate. Should we bulk purchase and the drugs are not utilised, then we will be accused of wasting. So, Madam Speaker, we are trying to strike a balance between what we have and what needs to be done.

Madam Speaker, the health plans and programmes are well captured in the National Development Plan for the next 20 years, and it clearly articulates Governments' mandates for the health sector development. These strategies have been derived through wider consultations and stakeholder engagements in the developing healthy nations.

Our Health Budget has increased over the years, Madam Speaker, the overall Health Budget amounts to \$387.7 million. I know when I talk about health care, we only focus on the work about doctors and nurses and hospital health centres but we must not overlook the vital contribution that the staff also make in keeping people well out of the hospitals.

Madam Speaker, Fiji, in fact is known that the child immunisation coverage rates that are among the best in the world. No one talks about that - as high as 98 percent according to a survey. That means our children are protected against deadly and disabling diseases.

On maternal mortality rate, mothers dying during childbirth. That was an issue for us, but was lower in 2016 than at any other time during the current century.

HON. GOVT. MEMBERS.- Hear! hear!

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Amputation rates for diabetic foot ulcers reduced by more than two-third between 2016 and 2011. That is the reflection of better care and support for people affected by diabetes. Five out of every six girls, Madam Speaker, in year 8 are now immunised against the *Human Papilloma Virus*, which is a major cause for cervical cancer, it is one of the major killers of women, no one talks about that.

Our smoking rate, amongst both males and females, is lower than most other Pacific countries. Madam Speaker, no one talks about that. We have introduced more services than ever: orthopaedic, neurology, surgical internal medicine, physio-rehab, and no one talks about the successful brain surgery that was done in Labasa last year, Madam Speaker, *kudos* to our doctors, no one talks about that!

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. R.S AKBAR.- We have invested in modern state-of-the-art operating theatres, unfortunately Lautoka one is closed, because of the fire and we are trying to see if we can open it up. We have progressed, Madam Speaker, but I believe that there is selective syndrome on the other side. I do not know, there is something selective about them. They want to see what they want to see, you want to hear what you want to hear, please be positive at least, for once. Do not play with the emotions of the people.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Madam Speaker, yesterday someone talked about why I do not pick rubbish. I think everyone just want to get Fiji clean, all right. If we have attitudes like that, always blaming Government for everything, I do not know, and you are talking about bipartisan approach, Madam Speaker, No.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. SPEAKER.- Order, Honourable Members I think the Parliament *Talanoa* session is getting out of hand. Let us listen up.

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Madam Speaker, the Ministry provides a wide range of complex clinical and public health services. This demands an equally professional corporate and administrative service.

We talk about pharmaceutical and bio-medical support services. The notion of conducting an enquiry into public health and medical system for the purpose of formulating a Parliamentary recommendation, first to understand the complexity of the duties and responsibilities and services provided to the Ministry.

We have policies for different service provisions. We have different strategies for different needs, different work areas require different expertise, tools, equipment and infrastructure, different quality assessment methods and different capacity building programmes and varying legislations to comply with. A one-off enquiry, Madam Speaker, will never be able to do justice to the scope of services that the Ministry provide. Most likely, it will be done in a very superficial way and an obvious waste of money and resources. This Ministry have already undertaken a lot of services such as the review of child health services, adolescent health services, maternal health services review is currently being conducted.

Madam Speaker, we know that the population in some parts of the country is growing rapidly and with that grows rapid demand for health services especially, if I can give an example, for the Suva-Nausori corridor. In other places, Madam Speaker, again I go back, older facilities that have been neglected for decades and decades are no longer fit for service, thus, the Government has taken the initiative to build new extended hospitals and health centres.

I was in Ba last week, Madam Speaker, the Ba Mission Hospital was built in 1942. It has taken 76 years for any other government to look into that, and now we have a state of the art facilities which will be done for the new Ba Hospital, after 76 years, Madam Speaker. Unfortunately, the Opposition seems only goes back to 2006.

We have built extended hospitals and health centres in Makoi, Navosa, Nakasi, the new Waimara Health Centre, Rotuma Hospital has been built with the extension of the Maternity Unit in Suva CWM. We are going to start building the new Keiyasi sub-division hospitals, the ground breaking is to be done later this month

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Nausori, yes, Madam Speaker. Nausori Hospital was initially in the budget, unfortunately the land that was identified for the new hospital did not fit in with the modern design for a modern hospital.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- What were you doing?

HON. R.S AKBAR.- We want to build a hospitals, not doll houses, Opposition Members. We want to build hospitals and they take time for planning. It takes planning.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- The Government promised that.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- When you come back, then we will tell what is happening.

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Madam Speaker, yes, the Government promised to build a new hospital for the Nausori residents and we will, when we come back next year, we will definitely do that, Madam Speaker.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. R.S AKBAR.- And in the meantime for the services in the new Nakasi....

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

HON. R.S AKBAR.- Madam Speaker, the new Nakasi Health Centre will be opening probably this month or early next month, we are ready for equipments. In the absence of a new hospital in Nausori, the Makoi Maternity Unit, the new Nakasi, Wainibokasi, all these are providing service, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, 2017-2018 Budget provides for additional funding of 150 doctors and 200 nurses. Of course, this will improve our doctor/nurse population ratios. This will result in the nurse population of 38 nurses for 10,000. With this all in review, Madam Speaker, we have engaged in a paradigm shift with nurse specialisation where we have identified 412 specialist positions. These specialist nurses take up their post, we will see a greater range of services becoming available in our small island rural communities.

Madam Speaker, the public health service has made significant achievements and again while we talk about building infrastructures, we talk about getting more doctors and nurses, again I have not heard any Honourable Member from the other side talking about creating awareness within the public about NCD preventions. We need that mind-set, we need to keep people away from our hospitals but I have not heard that thought processed from the other side.

Madam Speaker, we continue to review our existing policies with the current demands through greater consultations, collaborations with partners in health and expanding public health like building more facilities for greater accessibility of health care delivery.

I would like to reiterate on the medicine issue, Madam Speaker, globally medicine availability is a complex problem and in Fiji we are not excluded from this complex challenges. There is therefore no single solution to this complex problem and importantly it cannot be fixed in a short time. However, we have made it an important priority goal for the Ministry and we are working to reduce incidents and the number of items out of stock to an acceptable level.

Madam Speaker, when I joined in 2016, there was a shortage of *Flucloxacillin* after *TC Winston* ...

HON. MEMBER.- Still?

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- No it is not. Madam Speaker, that was due.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- Madam Speaker, *Flucloxacillin* is an antibiotic and after *TC Winston* there was a surge of cases where our people needed that but to address that we have alternatives available.

Madam Speaker, so sometimes medicines out of stock is sort of related to global production and at that time we found out that the global market had a shortage of that. And like I said, it is not a problem

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. R.S. AKBAR.- So, Madam Speaker, allow me to conclude and I reiterate that in the last few years in Parliament we have not heard the Opposition acknowledge the efforts of our officers that serve. If I may also say to the Honourable Members, Madam Speaker, at times our service delivery our officers are attacked on social media and I think that is where you drive the flavour from and this has a huge impact.

Madam Speaker, we have our feedback line 157, where we welcome people to register their complaints and that is the first time we have actually opened up an avenue where people who have problems, we understand that. We understand gaps exists, we understand that and I am not going to stand here and lie that I have a perfect health system, no we all know but we have given an avenue to our people to raise issues with us and help us address the gaps and I readily welcome people to raise those issues with us those issues with us because we are the only ones that can provide you answers to your queries.

Madam Speaker, again an enquiry would be a repeat of work that has already been done, investments that have already been done, waste of resources that we can put to it to better use in achieving the outcomes and the implementation of the National Strategic Plan and the National Development Plan.

So much being said, Madam Speaker, I do not support the motion by the Honourable Prasad.

HON. A. SAIYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I will be very brief as we have got the End of Weeks Statements in about 10 minutes' time. Madam Speaker, the motion actually talks about bi-partisan Committee to form the basis of formulation of policies and strategies by Government.

Madam Speaker, anyone that knows about governance knows that the policies and strategies are put by the Government of the day. That is why people elect a particular government into power. Madam Speaker, the Government has obviously various policies and strategies to be able to address this issue about health management and provision of health services in Fiji.

Madam Speaker, the reality as the Honourable Minister for Health and Medical Services

highlighted, there are enormous systematic issues and I completely agree with her and I am sure everyone in this House agrees that like a number of other ministries, a lot of things can be improved and the fact is we all have to recognise that. We also have to at the same time recognise what are the strengths and what are the weaknesses in order to be able to have some intellectual debate and some concerted effort, Madam Speaker, is to be able to recognise the strengths and weaknesses and what are the reasons for those strengths and weaknesses.

So, just to give you a quick example the Honourable Minister talked about the fire in Lautoka. One of the reasons, even though that fire did not actually take place in the new operating theatre, it is across the hallway where the fire took place but because its internal damage caused, they have also discovered asbestos.

Now, that asbestos was not put in by this Government, it was not put in by the SDL Government, it was actually put in when Lautoka Hospital was built in the 1970s. At that time that was the material that was being used, so obviously we have now since then discovered that asbestos is not good for our health. It actually causes cancer. So, how can we then operate the theatre if there is asbestos dust floating around? How can we operate the theatre if there is various other infections that can be caused because of the fire that has been caused through that accident that took place?

So, Madam Speaker, to then suddenly say, “oh the Government is not doing anything because of the theatre is being closed”, is also absolutely nonsense. We need to be able to be responsible in our analysis and assessment. We need to be honest about it but what I wanted to speak about, Madam Speaker, also is about the number of doctors and nurses within the system and I agree with the Honourable Minister for Health. There are many doctors, many nurses are doing their utmost notwithstanding the fact that there has been enormous lack of investment in the personnel for decades. Doctor Birribo who carried out the neurological surgery in Labasa has also carried out in Suva since then.

Madam Speaker, he has been trained recently in New Zealand since then. The level of exposure given to our doctors previously was not very good. We have doctors who are good doctors who are leaving for off shore, because the career paths were not very good in Fiji, because the level of salaries were not good, it was not attractive. They either went to the private sector or they went overseas. This Government, Madam Speaker, gave doctors salary increments up to about 80 percent, 85 percent, they are again being reviewed, they have received another 15 percent to 16 percent increment.

Our nurses today, Madam Speaker, registered nurses have got increments, 70.67 percent; team leaders, 49.52 percent; nurse practitioners, mid-wives; 76.25 percent and others have received a higher pay rise and similarly high pay rise, Madam Speaker, and of course there is going to be a review now done in terms of their performance assessment. They have the opportunity to get more salary increments. Obviously, salary is not everything but it is a huge enticement. It also gives specific career paths. We need to be able recognise that.

Madam Speaker, when the Ministry of Civil Service started looking after the doctors in terms of the career paths, there were 550 doctors in 1st August 2016, Madam Speaker. Today, we have 690 doctors. We absorb all the doctors that come out of the Fijian universities, in particular the Fiji School of Medicine; that has increased also, Madam Speaker. The number of doctors recruited has increased from 14 in 2010 to 84 in 2018 with an average of 81 each year over the last five years.

We cannot produce doctors overnight like that, Madam Speaker, and even more difficult is to

produce specialists. In order to have specialists as I have said it is a blight on our health system that today we do not have a single Fijian doctor based in Fiji that can carry out open-heart surgery. One of the reasons why that is Madam Speaker, is because our doctors have not been given the level of exposure to go overseas and get that level of training. Just because I have done an MBBS it does not mean I can cut open your chest and play around with your heart. We need to get that level of exposure. We need 10 to 15 years of experience. We need to invest in our personnel; that is what we are doing.

Today, doctors go and do postgraduate studies at the Fiji School of Medicine, we pay for them to go and do the postgraduate studies. The Government is doing that, before they had to pay. We know that some anomalies have been found, we need to ensure that everyone gets paid, Madam Speaker. So, Madam Speaker, these are challenges that were there previously and they are actually being addressed.

The other point of course, Madam Speaker, is this: The Civil Service Reform is not only about pay rises. It is also about getting structured career paths in the system too. We have also had issues, Madam Speaker, in the health system where doctors were made managers of hospitals, where doctors were put into administrative positions to get a career path. Just because someone may be a good doctor, does not make him or her a good manager. So, we need to be able to ensure that we get the right type of administrative skills sets to be able to manage hospitals, to be able to manage administrative systems, to be able to manage for example chain of supply of drugs. Very simple issues. If there is a diarrhoea outbreak in Nadi and you need whatever tablets you need to stop diarrhoea, there may be a stockpile in Sigatoka; very simple. The people who are in charge of the pharmaceutical area should be able to know what stock levels are where and to be able to move those stock to where it is required. It is not because of lack of funding, it is because these people are not necessarily doing their job to be able to move the stocks. Now if because someone is not doing a job, it does not mean that the Minister is going to be held responsible or the Permanent Secretary. Of course, the Permanent Secretary is the ultimate person who appoints the staff. So, Madam Speaker, the point about it is that we need to appoint the right people. I will be very brief Madam Speaker, I know my time is nearly up.

Madam Speaker, the other point of course is, very quickly, this public private partnership does not mean privatisation. Privatisation is a very different thing. We have unequivocally stated, Madam Speaker, we went and met the nurses and doctors in Lautoka and Ba before we made it public because we felt that it was necessary to tell the staff. They welcomed it with open arms. The Lautoka nurses and doctors were overjoyed by the fact that we are going to have this PPP. They also knew that we are not going to in any way put any additional burden on any citizen that currently comes to Lautoka Hospital - nothing will change for them.

They are not going to pay an additional single cent. I have seen social media, saw the provisional candidates of NFP making all sorts of claims saying, "Oh, now, all the poor people of Fiji will have to pay." No. We have unequivocally stated that but the idea is that we are going to bring the right personnel, Madam Speaker, to provide the services. If it is going to take 10 or 15 years to get these doctors to be specialised, why do we not bring the specialists now?

One doctor said to me in Lautoka, "many of our young people are dying like flies because of cardiovascular problems, we have a huge rate of heart diseases in Fiji because of the life style and what have you." So he was very glad that we were going to bring in people. We need a 24-hour service for open heart surgeries, that needs to be made available and the reason why, Madam Speaker, we are also going this because we are going to introduce a National Health Insurance Scheme. That is what he said. Everyone will be part of the National Health Insurance Scheme.

Madam Speaker, you cannot have a National Health Insurance Scheme unless and until you have the basic services like open heart surgeries and various other procedures available in country otherwise the scheme is not going to work. So that is the end game.

The main concession in this will be FNPF, which is owned by the Fijian people. They are going to bring in an international certified hospital and we going through independent EOIs through that. So Madam Speaker, this is reality.

I agree with the Honourable Prasad when he says that some hospitals there is lack of sheets, there is lack of towels, it is not because they have not procured it. You see some of the towels and sheets are in people's homes, some of the nurses, you go to their homes, it is there, that is pilfering. Enormous levels of pilfering have been taking place.

We have found, Madam Speaker, for example, when you buy cutlery, people are taking off with them to their homes, some patients too. The reality is that the system, I agree that the system needs to be changed and we are doing that to the system. We are changing the right personnel. No point changing the system when the right people are not there to implement it. It goes hand in hand, Madam Speaker. This is why we talk about Civil Service Reforms in a holistic manner.

Madam Speaker, there has been a lot of talk about these other hospitals coming in. MIOT today, Madam Speaker, is in Fiji because of the various tax incentives we have given, they have got a 10-year tax holiday. Today, they are providing various services there. The Minister for Health, she has now got another avenue, should for example some of the facilities are not being able to be provided services from the public health system, she can pay them to provide the services too.

So, I would urge all the Honourable Members, the policies are in place, there are many health centres previously that were not in the right places, they were not equipped well, they did not even have basic things like blood pressure gadgets, the various things like to do basic diabetes test. All of those facilities that are being provided to the outreach areas, the health centres and nursing stations.

Madam Speaker, I would say that this motion, given the time, it is actually misplaced. There are enough policies and strategies in place. We all agree that there needs to be an improvement, the budgetary allocation, Madam Speaker, just by comparison, in 2004, the funding allocated to the Ministry of Health was \$132 million. Today, the budgetary allocation is \$387.8 million. Madam Speaker, it includes salaries, building of health centres, building of hospitals like in Keiyasi, people do not have to come down, we have got Makoi Maternity Hospital. They have grabbed on to, Nausori, Nausori will be done, Madam Speaker. In the meantime, we are looking at how do we remove the pressure from these main hospitals. So the idea is to be able to provide the services throughout Fiji and the idea is to be able to bring in specialists.

When we went to India, Madam Speaker, getting specialists, there is a worldwide shortage of doctors. When you go to India and you say, "can you send some specialist to Vanua Levu?" Honourable Chand, you need to know this. The specialist will ask you "what is the night life in Labasa?" Is there an international school in Labasa because I have got children? So these are challenges. Anyway, I am finished now. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER. - Thank you. I beg your indulgence Honourable Members but time has caught up on us, we do not even have time for right of reply. We will now go straight away into End

of Week Statements.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA. - Point of Order.

HON. SPEAKER. - I am yet to complete this particular motion, by the way, what is the point of order?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA. - I feel that according to the Standing Orders, you just have the right to go on and if you do not have time for the one that comes later, then that one can be cut off at 12.30 p.m.

HON. SPEAKER.- What do you want?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- We proceed as we are and up -o 12.30 p.m. whatever that cannot be covered goes out, so we can finish with this motion, with those who want to contribute and his right of reply.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. SPEAKER.- We will have the right of reply, please keep it very brief.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. The treatment of this motion by Government is really disappointing, but not unexpected. Madam Speaker, in my academic life, I have observed and critiqued many governments in the past and this is one Government that is so sensitive to criticism, Madam Speaker, it is unbelievable. They need to understand that in a democracy, the Opposition is as important as the Government and the Opposition, when it brings a motion, they need to see it in that light. And when you have a Government which thinks that they can never do anything wrong, Madam Speaker, this is the result we will have. No single government has a monopoly on ideas, they do not have a monopoly on ideas and this Government is no exception.

Madam Speaker, we know this Government does not believe in bipartisanship and the opposition to the motion is understandable. The Honourable Minister and Attorney-General said that they both insinuated that the health professionals and workers were to be blamed.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. SPEAKER.- Order! Order! Interjections are getting disruptive, please let us hear the Honourable Prasad speak.

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Speaker, both the Honourable Attorney-General and the Minister insinuated that I was blaming the health professionals, I think that is preposterous; I never did. They are doing their best under the circumstances with the bare minimum of resources.

There are many issues, Madam Speaker. I was looking at the development plan, five-year and 20-year and the targets that the Government has set will not be achieved with the current system that we have.

If we cannot repair simple things in a hospital, it should not take a long time to do that. There is no problem with the resources but week after week, months after months when you go there you see

the condition of the hospital. These are simple things, Madam Speaker. We understand there are things that are working, we are not saying that everything is bad, everything is not working. We have never said that. What we are saying, Madam Speaker, is what is happening in terms of basic services?

If you go to a hospital, Madam Speaker, it should be a place for respect for patients. When patients end there, when they get into a bed, they need to have all the facilities, the families should not be burdened to go and bring stuff from home. This is the kind of issues that we are talking about. It is not about 10 people. Not everyone goes to the hospital. If you do a survey, Madam Speaker, tomorrow and say, what about health services? A lot of people would say, "it is probably good" because they have never been to a hospital. But when you talk to those people who actually go to the hospitals, they experience the difficulties, then you understand what is going on and this is why I am saying that we must not rubbish the criticism and the complaints that people make whether in social media, whether it is through us the Opposition or other Government Members; it is a matter for Government to take this into account.

And this is why I am saying, Madam Speaker, the Honourable Attorney-General talked about intellectual debate and discussion. You know, Madam Speaker, this is why Parliament Committees are very important because outside of the camera, outside of this Chamber, the Opposition and Government Members can sit together, discuss and have that debate as to what needs to be done by spending a lot of time; we cannot do this in this Chamber. That is why there is always an acceptance by Government and Opposition to form bipartisan committees. That is the idea, Madam Speaker and so this motion from me was all about working together to improve things. Government talks about it all the time but they never are willing to actually create any environment, even set up a committee. They talk about *talanoa* all over the world but they do not want to have the *talanoa* here. They go around the world talking about *talanoa* but there is no *talanoa* here.

HON. MEMBER.- They do not want to.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- We need some *talanoa* here in this Parliament, in the Committees. That is what we need, Madam Speaker. I am absolutely disappointed with the response to the motion from the Government side. I hope that someday when they are in Opposition, we will treat them better.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. PROF. B.C. PRASAD.- We will form bipartisan committees because in a democracy the Government's performance and the acceptance of what the Opposition says determines whether we have a democracy or not. It is very important for Government to understand that. When we get into Government, we will make sure that we will restore that decorum and understanding. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, Honourable Members. We will not allow the right of reply at the request of the Opposition and because it is your day I will accommodate that at the cost of End of Week Statement if that has to come to that.

The Parliament will now vote on the motion.

The question is, that this Parliament approves the formation of a bipartisan committee to conduct an enquiry into the public health and medical system and for the report of such an enquiry to be tabled, debated and adopted by Parliament and to form the basis of formulation of policies and strategies by Government to improve the delivery of health care and medical services.

Does Member oppose the Motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- (Chorus of "Ayes" and "Noes")

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

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	28
Not voted	:	7

HON. SPEAKER.- There being 15 Ayes, 28 Noes and 7 Not Voted, the motion is defeated. We will now move on to item number 6.

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA.- Madam Speaker, I would like to seek your leave under Standing Order 20 for your indulgence to allow me to clarify a statement I made yesterday.

HON. SPEAKER.- I am afraid I will not be able to accommodate that merely because today is Opposition day and that will take up some time of their time which is already short.

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker, in that case because I will not be here next week, I seek your indulgence to write to you formally and advice you of the same.

HON. SPEAKER.- I can announce it during my communication time next week.

HON. M.R. VUNIWAQA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker.

END OF WEEK'S STATEMENTS

HON. SPEAKER.- I now invite the Honourable Viliame Gavoka and Honourable Niko Nawaikula. You have given notice to the make End of Week Statement under Standing Order 35. Each Member may speak up-to 10 minutes with a 10-minute response by the relevant Minister responsible. There will be no other debate. Please note that 12.30 p.m., sharp we are ending this sitting.

I now call on the Honourable Viliame Gavoka to deliver his statement.

Foreign Investors Taskforce

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.-.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to make a statement to highlight the need to set up a Taskforce within the Investment Fiji mechanism to advise, guide and monitor foreign investors creating an investment friendly atmosphere between the investors and the people of Fiji.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for allowing me to make a statement on this and I am particularly concerned about our relationship or the way we accommodate our investors from China.

As you know, Madam Speaker, globally, today China is looking outwards when you consider two superpowers whereas the US are looking inwards. As we see today and in the future, we will see a lot of Chinese investors coming to Fiji and it is already happening in the country. This is the continuation of the relationship established by the SDL Government with China back in those days and we are beginning to see that coming to fruition in a very big way.

Madam Speaker, we have to be careful that we do not stereotype our Chinese investors. We have to embrace them and we have to make them feel welcome in our country, given the opportunities that are there for the Chinese to invest in our country.

Too often, Madam Speaker, there is a disconnect between our agencies and what the Chinese investors expect. I think there are many instances where they have been seen to take things into their own hands and thereby gain the opposition from people within Fiji, especially with the resource owners. I was quoting a situation here lately where an investor was given a piece of land. He bought a piece of land and he did not realise that he had to go through the processes to clear out the mangroves fronting that particular piece of land. The landowners were concerned, as can be expected and called on the investor to cease, and that creates tension that we should not have. There have been other cases where they were given a preliminary permit to do something and they have gone in taking their provisional permit as the approval to proceed with their project.

That behoves us, Madam Speaker, to look at a structure that can understand what they want and they can understand what we also expect.

I come here, Madam Speaker, to the issue of our people learning the Mandarin dialect. I think in Investment Fiji and also in iTLTB, we must have people either from China or those of us from here who can learn the language and start liaising with them.

As you know, Madam Speaker, this is not new. I come from tourism. When the Japanese first started coming to Fiji, we trained a lot of our locals to speak Japanese and it worked very well. I believe what is in tourism today, quite a number of our youths are learning Mandarin to liaise with the Chinese tourists.

We must bring it down also, Madam Speaker, to the level of the agencies of Government and I name Investment Fiji, iTLTB, not only to speak the language but also to fully understand how things work in China.

Who is there? Where is the money from? Is he just a middle person or middle man who is trying to set up a deal and then go and sell it in China? China is a very complex economy, but there is lot of money there and lots of opportunities for Fiji to benefit from. That is why, Madam Speaker, I feel that we need to setup a taskforce, that we must focus on this and take it on to help improve that

relationship.

I believe, Madam Speaker, there will be no other country in the world like China in terms of helping a developing country. It is already happening, Madam Speaker. You talk about the Silk Road, the way they are putting money all over the world, into Europe, Africa, Asia and Fiji should benefit from that if we are smart. So I would urge the Government to set this up, include this in the way we deal with them, the range of what we can do with them, Madam Speaker, is almost limitless, but it is up to us to do it properly. I think if you do this, there will be a sense of comfort and confidence with the Chinese investors. Already, some of them have felt that you cannot really get far in Fiji. We know them, yes and yes, no is, no, but in Fiji, we tend to have a lot of grey areas on how we relate to people

Madam Speaker, that is in brief is what I would urge the Government to do and at the end of the day, Madam Speaker, improve relationship with the Chinese and in terms of growing our economy. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now call on the Minister for Industry, Trade, Tourism, Lands and Mineral Resources to give his right of reply.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, once again, I think the Honourable Gavoka is actually totally out of touch with reality. What is happening in Fiji, he has made no attempts to research what the Investment Promotion (IP) agencies actually do and what their roles are.

As a matter of fact, Madam Speaker, right now, Fiji is probably in a state of where we have been the most facilitative. If he is specifically referring to China, at this particular time, we are the most facilitative as we have ever been, and I will just elaborate a little bit, Madam Speaker.

The agencies that were involved, specifically with respect to China, we have got Investment Fiji, we have actually got the Ministry and one of the most important cogs-in-the-machine is the Trade Commissioner or Consulate General that we have located in China. This is a Fijian who speaks Chinese, Madam Speaker, so we are facilitative right from China, not just from here, and apart from the facilitation which is done through our Embassy based in Beijing.

Madam Speaker, from the outset, let me make this clear. There is absolutely no need to create another taskforce or an additional layer of bureaucracy to actually advise, guide and monitor investors. One of the things that everyone should take heed of and must be aware of is that, the largest Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) that come into Fiji is from China, but he chooses one case that may have gone wrong. He has not given a huge amount of examples where Chinese investors are actually not being able to comply, et cetera, he has chosen one case, very selective. They have been selective the whole week, Madam Speaker.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- (Inaudible)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- There are more, you never came up with more.

Madam Speaker, by the creation of what he is asking for is quite simply a duplication and a wastage of valuable resources. I will explain what we need to do, we strengthen and utilise the existing institutional mechanisms and competent agencies.

Madam Speaker, support, guidance and advice to foreign investments and foreign investors is

a multi-agency responsibility. He is correct, iTLTB is involved and involves the engagement with all stakeholders and not just Investment Fiji. All the agencies related to Investment Fiji and businesses are required by law, Madam Speaker, to provide the relevant approvals, operating licences and their support. For example, iTaukei Lands Trust Board is the agency that provides the relevant support and guidance and advice to investors in terms of leasing. Fiji Revenue and Customs Services provide information on investment incentives and tax laws, whilst agencies such as the Department of Town and Country Planning and the Department of Environment guide the investors in relation to processes that need to be followed to obtain final approvals. Another good example, Madam Speaker, where their approvals are required are in the areas of health and food in which the Ministry of Health is actually involved.

Madam Speaker, notwithstanding the role that the other agencies play, Investment Fiji has an important role to work with the competent agencies to co-ordinate these particular Investment approval processes and facilitate the requirements of the investment.

Investment Fiji operates as a facilitation arm of the Fijian Government, we all know that, providing the services and the assistance to promote and stimulate investments and exports. They have transformed from a process-orientated agency towards the results-orientated agency, basically focused, Madam Speaker, on performance. They have adopted a seamless customer-relationship model. This is the kind of stuff that he needs to know, Madam Speaker, and that focusses on improving the quality and effectiveness of their services and actually aims to assist investors throughout the business lifecycle.

As I did highlight in my Ministerial Statement, Madam Speaker, Investment Fiji, again, also does not discriminate between foreign investors, local investors and domestic investors and provides the same level of support. The support for foreign and local is done through establishment of after-care facilitation services, in terms of regulatory processes and business facilitation services. This, Madam Speaker, is done with the aim obviously to strengthen investor-confidence and obviously to encourage reinvestments and to maintain the current growth that we have.

In addition, Madam Speaker, in order to effectively support the investors, Investment Fiji has actually developed an engagement model approach. This allows the organisation to better understand the needs of the businesses, outline its approach towards resolving any issues raised by the investors and set definitive goals for strengthening dialogue and engagement with the private sector. This is just the summary, Madam Speaker.

This particular model provides all the services that they need. If they need to know whether something is unlawful or lawful, apart from having the private sector providing advice, the lawyers, accountants, et cetera, they still have Investment Fiji. This engagement approach allows the officers of Investment Fiji to coordinate with the other Government agencies and investors to ensure also that the issues that are affecting the project are resolved and in parallel, investors are given the right advice and guidance with respect to their project.

Madam Speaker, in addition to all of that, again, a little bit of research might have helped, Investment Fiji has implemented a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System, which went live last month, Madam Speaker. The CRM is designed to capture information on investors and their particular projects, and that allows Investment Fiji to better coordinate and manage their relationships with their clients. The main objective of establishing the CRM is to accurately record and report data on investments, employment, re-investments and compliance of the registered projects, a very

important point. This information also assists Investment Fiji to provide policy advice and better decision-making.

The CRM, Madam Speaker, also enables Investment Fiji to improve enforcement and regulation by working with the relevant competent agency.

Madam Speaker, Investment Fiji has sector-based facilitation advisors also, who regularly liaise with investors and these advisor's roles, include:

- undertaking follow-up of the projects;
- conducting site visits;
- monitoring project compliance;
- engaging with visitors who find difficulty in establishing their projects (exactly what he had just raised);
- assisting foreign and local investors in finding new markets;
- conducting capacity-building initiatives;
- identifying joint-venture opportunities for both, foreign and domestic investors.

Investment Fiji, Madam Speaker, strengthens their working relationships with a number of Government agencies through their signing of a Memorandum of Agreement, which enables better data-sharing and strengthening compliance and provides assistance towards streamlining business facilitation.

Madam Speaker, in addition to its facilitation and co-ordination and actual monitoring role, Investment Fiji has commenced Inter-Agency Committee Meetings in the Northern Division. The purpose of these meetings is to stimulate these investments.

So, Madam Speaker, the role of Investment Fiji is that of an investment promotion agency and they need to focus obviously on their core competency, et cetera. But I think it is wrong to actually say that they were not doing enough for these investors and we should come up with a separate institution within that to try and facilitate this because Investment Fiji currently is doing all of that and themselves.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I do not support the End of Week Statement.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now call on the Honourable Niko Nawaikula to deliver his statement, please be mindful of the time, we have about six minutes.

Bauxite Mining in Vanua Levu

HON. N. NAWAIKULA .- Thank you, Madam Speaker. In this statement, I wish to highlight the need for a Geo-Political and Socio-Economic Assessment and these needs to be drawn up in by way of a National Development Policy to control the effects and to enable resource owners to attain a fair share of their resources, specifically on Nawailevu. Nawailevu has stopped. The mining is now happening in Dreketi and the problem that we have now in Dreketi is the spill-over of the material onto the roadside that is causing a lot of environmental problems.

I hope that at the end of this, I will be able to convince this House that before you do an operation such as this, you need to have a social impact assessment. You have an Environmental

Impact Assessment, and that impact assessment guides you on how you conduct your operation to preserve the environment. But understand, of course, that native communities are very, very vulnerable and they now have a right under the UN Conventions to maintain their way of life, and unless you have a social impact assessment, you are leaving them to the mercy of whatever comes, and that has happened.

To illustrate that perhaps, I returned to Nawailevu in March last year. We had lunch with the Chief in a steel and house building and we had a simple meal. We had fish that he had caught from the river and there is no evidence of the millions and millions of dollars.

There are two trucks that are parked outside that cannot be repaired but the millions have been taken away by the Chinese. Everyone else had made their fair share of profit from them, and they are left in the way that they were before they came. That is the sad thing that is happening to the native communities.

To illustrate further perhaps the effects, the influx, even in my own village, at a time we had \$70,000 cash that was brought in because there was a timber concession. The first social effect of that was that, before the distribution of \$70,000 we have had two disputes, two people disputed the title of the head of *mataqali* so that happened automatically. And after that when they brought in this money whereas before we used to have our simple meals, now for about two weeks we had bread and a corned beef each for each person. Before in my house, we would have a tin of tuna put in *rourou*. Now with that \$70,000, we had a tinned corned beef each in the family.

Going to Savusavu, coming back, whereas before there would be four in a taxi, now each person will take a taxi back to the village. And that happened, now this is sad, you might want to laugh at it, it is sad. It is sad because they have a right to maintain their way of life but because our past leaders not having policy and this is causing the effect and I consider the native community an endangered species. We may not be endangered but our custom, our culture and our way of life is endangered all because of these developments because we are not mature in the way we make our decisions. We need to have the social impact.

And Madam Speaker, if you go to the West, you know the effect of tourism. What has the effect of this done to the villages? Those villages are no different from the squatters that you have here - no planning, no health, and in terms of their culture, they are totally lost. Even for us here, I am not sure who? Even I can admit that at home, I spend more time talking to my children in English than Fijian. Why? Because we do not have the normal curriculum in our education system. My children do not learn that language in school and same as your children too. They learn what they call communicative Fijian. What about literature? What about indigenous literature? What about indigenous right? We do not have that.

So the point that I wish to make here is that, before we make any kind of development, we must have a social impact assessment and I would like the Honourable Minister when he replies to tell this House whether before the project in Nawailevu and now that has taken place, whether there was any Social Impact Assessment carried out?

Sure, you had the Environmental Impact Assessment to guide you in the way you affect the environment. Sure, you have your Financial Impact Assessment and that is how they made their millions and millions of dollars and they took them all out and they are left with these "sorry people", in their sorry kind of state.

In Wailevu Madam Speaker, and elsewhere natives consider their natural resources a gift from the Almighty God. It is a *mana* within which we are blessed to use for our development and advancement in a sustainable manner, and we want that *mana* to be transmitted to our generations.

However, Madam Speaker, this *mana* has been preserved and protected by the previous Government by way of entrenched legislation and customary rights have now been taken away from us and are bequeathed to the elites who come to make their money. After making their money, they walk away, leaving this in the same place that they were.

It is not only the loss of this *mana* but the socio-economic and geo-political issues that has created the lasting effect of these mining activities will have upon the lives of the resource owners and the people living in the region has let me and the people on their behalf, whom I speak here to raise this matter of discussion in this House. It is a serious, serious, serious concern. And I hope you will agree with me, that before you do any such thing, you must conduct a social impact assessment and you put in place measures to make sure that indigenous communities are not adversely affected.

Madam Speaker, in November 2009, the Fiji Islands investment opportunities, this bauxite exploration and mining published in the then Fiji Islands Trade and Investment Board stated that there were six licences issued for the purpose of exploration of bauxite in Vanua Levu, covering an area of 117,000 hectares. The areas under exploration were Nawaikula and

Because of the time, let me just go to the recommendation and ask the Honourable Minister to reply on that. The first recommendation by that Committee which was sent from this House, that the legislation for determining a fair share of royalty is from the mining under Section 70 of the Constitution, be done expediently. What is happening to this? What is happening to the Constitutional provisions for royalty for the native owners? What have you done? It is four years, we are now at the eve of the election.

The sixth recommendation says that the existing Mining Act should be amended to capture international best practices and to protect the local environment, as well as the way of life for the native people. Have you done this or have you not done that? Madam Speaker, I would like the Honourable Minister to reply on that.

Madam Speaker, Recommendation 9: The royalty rate imposed by the Government should be reviewed to ensure that the benefit for the mining industries. This is to be reflected in the fair share payment to the landowners. So far as I know, that has not been done. Could you inform the House, could inform the people of Wailevu, why you have not done this?

And to sum up, I hope I can convince this House and everyone here that native communities are clearly vulnerable, their social way of life and their custom, and there is an urgent need that before you conduct operations such as this, that you make a social impact assessment.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now call on the Honourable Minister for Industry, Trade, Tourism, Lands and Mineral Resources to give the Right of Reply. You have five minutes.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- I think I will spend five minutes correcting the Honourable Member, but thank you, Honourable Nawaikula for your End of the Week Statement. Madam Speaker, I wish to correct some things that he actually stated with respect to Nawailevu. I have been informed by the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, who was at that time based in Vanua Levu as the Commissioner,

investment advice and development advice was given at that particular time and when the money was received, they chose to ignore it.

HON. OPP. MEMBER.- (Inaudible)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Please, please, I think you need to explain that to the public and you do not make sweeping statements like that.

HON. OPP. MEMBERS.- (Inaudible)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Apart from that, Madam Speaker, they had legal advice that was given to them by two lawyers, I think the lawyers are actually based in Suva at the moment. But they had two lawyers on board to give them legal advice. So, please stop blaming the Government. They had the opportunity and it is a choice, Madam Speaker, of the resource owners when they receive their money as to what they do. Please, do not blame the Government and say that we did not do anything. They had received the advice and they got that from the Honourable Minister at the moment.

Madam Speaker, with respect to the issues that were being raised on his End of the Week Statement

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- (Inaudible)

HON. SPEAKER.- Please carry on the Honourable Minister. Do not respond to interjections. You have only about four minutes left. Honourable Minister?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you. Madam Speaker, I think this is a very important issue that he should actually listen, this is good for the general public. In fact, the *qoliqoli* owners from that area, they invested their money and they are getting good returns.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Who is the *qoliqoli* owner?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Check your facts before you come to the Ministry.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, in response to the Honourable Member's remarks on the Mining Activities Act in Nawailevu and Naibulu, this I would like to enlighten the House on the significant effects of mining activities, not only on the contribution it makes to the economy and the State but the surrounding communities as well. Obviously, we all know that bauxite has been mined in that particular area, basically at the two sites of bauxite ore is mined from about 408 hectares of prospective zones in Nawailevu area in Bua and part of the Naibulu Eastern area in Macuata.

This production has earned the Government about \$1.4 million in revenue on royalty and payments of about \$1.7 million revenue were paid to the landowning units in Nawailevu, Bua and for the Naibulu area, Madam Speaker, \$781,800 was paid to Government. This, Madam Speaker, is in addition to the salary and wages of the locals that have been employed by the company.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- The project, Madam Speaker, has also listed the local communities with

the provision of donation to the Bua Scholarship Fund, assisted with site levelling for 10 housing projects for the *Mataqali* Nalutu Church and road maintenance for Nawailevu and Lovonidalo Villages, provision of 24 computers, 12 printer copiers to Bua and Macuata schools with about 500 school bags.

To date, Madam Speaker, again, there is a whole lot attached to it. The drastic changes in the bauxite prices also did not affect the company's input in the economy. The assistance towards these communities as financial models used were well evaluated by the Ministry before the approval of that mining lease.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry in terms of monitoring, monitors regularly the activities through all phases of this exploration, if he is talking about runoffs et cetera, exploration, extraction, beneficiation and shipment of ore for optimum production which are environmentally friendly and socially acceptable for the surrounding communities who are benefitting from this activity.

Madam Speaker, last month, I actually went and visited these mines myself. I went to the North with the mining team from MRD. Nawailevu, Madam Speaker, has ceased operations and the site is undergoing progressive rehabilitation with the reforestation programme.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Please hear me out! Please hear me out! It is not just you, the public need to hear this.

The reforestation programme on the mine site over 160,000 pines seedlings, Madam Speaker, which will belong to them, not to us. This programme is an on-going programme until the site is fully rehabilitated.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Ask the trustees!.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, how much money do the lawyers make?

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. SPEAKER.- You have extra time, there is just too much disruption. I will give him extra time.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Billions of dollars.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- After the rehabilitation, Madam Speaker, the site is to be handed back to the landowning units of Nawailevu, Bua for the benefit of the landowners. Further to all of this, the mining company is currently exploring other species to plant on the area for the benefit of the resource owners.

Madam Speaker, this is actually one of the conditions listed in the mining lease prior to the mine closure proper, Madam Speaker. So we do take care of them. It is unfair and actually it is untrue to come up with the stuff that they are actually saying. It was a measure which was put in place by the

Ministry to ensure that the land is returned with added value of benefit to the landowners.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Point of order, Madam Speaker. He is wrong. The lease has been leased back to the company.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- What is the point of order?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- And what about the lease? What about the pine? I am sorry clarification or correction.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister, please carry on.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, I got very little time.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- It is wrong. You got your information wrong.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Maybe you should come and see me one day.

(Laughter)

Seriously. Come see me. Madam Speaker, I got very limited time but there is also the Future Generation Fund. Let me break it down.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Fair share.

HON.F. S. KOYA.- I will give it to you right at the end, like this.

(Laughter)

The Nawailevu Bauxite Mining lease (Madam Speaker, I hope he does not take offence to that, I am being playful) was issued in 2011.

Madam Speaker, four landowning units had designated their land for Nawailevu lease. On the 3rd November, 2014, a payment of \$600,000 was received from the mining company as payment for the Future Generation Fund. A payment obligation under the special conditions of their mining Lease.

MATAQALI	MEMBERS	HECTARES	TERM OF LEASE	FUTURE GENERATION FUND (\$)	AMOUNT UTILISED (\$)	BALANCE TO DATE (\$)
Mataqali Naicobo	109	150	20	500,000	4,000	488,000
Mataqali Nalutu	45	26	20	70,000	47,334.98	22,665.02

You do not like the truth, Honourable Nawaikula, but let me tell you today, you going to get it from me.

(Chorus of interjections)

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

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- ... in the Standing Order for you to go past 12.30 p.m., even your time is up.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Now they are breaching their Standing Orders, Madam Speaker. Time is up, stop.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT.- Madam Speaker, I move under Standing Order 6:

That so much of the Standing Order 23(1) is suspended so as to allow the House to sit beyond 12.30 p.m. today to complete all the items listen in today's Order Paper.

(Laughter)

HON. SPEAKER.- I am allowing the Honourable Minister ember to finish concluding statement.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON END OF WEEK'S STATEMENTS

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, how much time do I have left? Two minutes? Madam Speaker, this is important so the public should know at the end of the day. I refer to some comments that were made by Honourable Nawaikula with respect to the royalty issue.

Madam Speaker, with respect to the royalty issue, we are about to take it to Cabinet. It is almost done and we had to go through a whole lot of process to do this. There is a lot of consultation that needed to take place with respect to the royalty fund but we are about to, as a matter of fact, very shortly take it to Cabinet. It is done from our part, it just needs to be taken to Cabinet. The entire processes have been finished, consultation has been finished and we are taking it to Cabinet.

Just in closing, Madam Speaker, I think the entire Opposition this whole week, there is a word that says it - mono-corpses. They actually suffer from mono-corpses and that is a slow but subtle and persistent sinking feeling, Madam Speaker, I think they all suffer from it. With that thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I do not support this End of the Week Statement.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. SPEAKER.- It is Parliament *talanoa* session. Thank you, we will move on to the last item on the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

HON. SPEAKER.- I now call on the Leader of the Government in Parliament to have the floor.

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT.- Thank you, Madam Speaker, time to end the *talanoa*.

Madam Speaker, I move that Parliament adjourns until Monday, 12th March, 2018 at 9.30 a.m. Thank you, Honourable Members.

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

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

HON. SPEAKER.- I thank all Honourable Members for a very productive week and for your contributions to the debates.

Members of the Business Committee are kindly reminded to make their way to the Small Committee Room for our meeting.

Parliament will now adjourn until Monday, 12th March, 2018 at 9.30 a.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 12.36 p.m.