

## **THURSDAY, 19<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2015**

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

MADAM SPEAKER took the Chair and read the Prayer.

### **PRESENT**

All Honourable Members were present, except the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister for *iTaukei* Affairs and Sugar; and the Honourable Ratu N.T. Lalabalavu.

### **MINUTES**

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

That the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 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**

MADAM SPEAKER.- I welcome all Honourable Members to the continuation of the Budget process.

#### Committee of Supply

Shortly, we will resolve into Committee of Supply and during today's Committee stage, we will complete debating and voting on the Estimates from where we left off early this morning and ending at Head 52. We will then vote on the Schedules and Clauses of the 2016 Appropriation Bill 2015, before resolving back into the House to complete the Third Reading.

#### Acknowledgement of Visitors

I am pleased to welcome the students and teachers of Saru MGM School from Lautoka, Nasavusavu Primary School from Vanua Levu and a special welcome to Viro Kindergarten

from Ovalau.

(Acclamation)

I wish all the students well in their studies.

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

### Blue Ribbon Campaign

Honourable Members, you would have noticed the Blue Ribbon Campaign poster in the foyer as you entered the Chamber this morning. As I said yesterday, this is a worldwide effort to recognise the collective responsibility to prevent and confront all forms of child abuse and neglect. We thank all those of us who are supporting this cause by wearing blue today.

HON. MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

### Delay – Daily Hansard

A final reminder Honourable Members is that our *Hansard* transcription is delayed and yesterday's *Daily Hansard* of the proceedings, which actually concluded after 12.30 a.m., will be circulated as soon as it is completed, later today.

## **RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON THE 2016 APPROPRIATION BILL 2015**

MADAM SPEAKER.- Parliament will now resolve into the Committee of Supply to continue consideration of the Heads in the Budget Estimates and then the Schedules and Clauses of the 2016 Appropriation Bill 2015.

As explained yesterday for the Committee stage, I will sit at the table with the Secretary-General and Members should refer to me as Madam Chair. The Mace will also be placed in the bracket under the table. The Secretary-General will announce each Head separately, Members may then stand to speak on that Head. You may speak more than once on each Head, you may also move amendments to the Estimates in that Head. If a Member does move an amendment, the Parliament may debate it and then we will have a vote on the amendment.

At the end of the debate on the Head, we will also vote. At the end of the debate on a Sub-Head, we will also vote on the Head. Please be reminded that amendments in Committee of Supply are limited to those permitted under Standing Order 100(2), this is either an increase, decrease or removal of the item or Sub-Head from the Head being debated.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Speaker, yesterday I referred to the statement made by the Honourable Tuitubou at page 439 of the *Daily Hansard* of Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2015. He says, and I quote:

“As a Government we condone the terrorists attack but we wish the victims’ family well and have comfort very soon”.

So, that was the object that I raised yesterday, it is in the Verbatim Report.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you, that is noted.

You have seven days to correct the statement in the *Daily Hansard*.

In Committee:

Head No. 40 – Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- This Head is open for debate and we will look at Programme 1, Activity 1 - General Administration. Do you have any comments?

(Inaudible Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I give the floor to the Honourable Kiniviliame Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chair, Head 40-1-1-10: Land Transport Authority - Capital Grant \$6,500,000 under “R”. KMS - where will this be installed as one is in Vanua Levu, Lautoka and Labasa? What is the actual amount that will be used for KMS, red light and speed camera, permanent weigh bridges, crucial expenditures where are these going to be implemented as there are already existing ones?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would the information help you to propose a reduction, increase or keep the allocation?

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chair, we will require the figures first before there is any amendment to the motion.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Is that a motion or clarification?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Just a clarification.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Yes, but I can say what is in the Budget for 2016 - that \$6.5 million if you want to know but I do not have the figures for last year.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chair, where will this be installed?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Chair. It will be installed in the Central Division and the idea is to take this around the country but this will depend on the allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, on the Land Transport Authority Operating Grant. Does this also involve the payment of outstanding payments that are due to the employees of LTA?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Radrodro, can you repeat your question, please.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- On Head 40-1-1-6 Operating Grant of \$18 million. Does it also include payment for outstanding dues to the employees of Land Transport Authority?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- This is for the 2016 operations, there are no such allocations in this one.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, can I move a motion? Madam Chair, pursuant to Standing Order 100 (2), I move without notice that Head 40 be increased by \$1 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, you will fill the form when you speak on it later. Do we have any other comments on Activity 1: General Administration. Activity 2: Transport, Planning Unit.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, since this is a huge Ministry and everyone wants to know more information on this, I just wish to highlight to my Honourable friend on the other side that this is the operation of LTA, LTA has its funds as well. If there is any issue on that, that can be vired within LTA but there is none.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Radrodro, do you have any comments to make on that information?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes, Madam Chair. The motion is intended because of the lack of information that is provided, whether the payment of outstanding dues to the employees is also affected in this Operating Grant. I note that the expected revenue that they will be expected to receive to generate in 2016 has also increased, that is the intention of the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, the motion remains. Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Good morning to you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Good morning.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- To the Honourable Minister, SEG 10: Land Transport Authority – Capital Grant. Can the Honourable Minister please provide some details on that before I could move an amendment?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- On the \$6.5 million allocation. Madam Chair, this sum is to cater for Operational Grant for LTA, as detailed in the LTA Operating Budget.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Capital Grant. I guess the Honourable Minister meant Capital Grant?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Yes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are there any more comments? Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. As being highlighted by the Honourable Minister that they are undergoing some restructure and the review of their legislation. In Project Management, we have to have timelines and the Budget, whether those Activities had been factored in the Operating Grant for LTA on SEG 6?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister. Activity 1 SEG 6. Is the question clear Honourable Minister? Honourable Vadei, can you please repeat your question?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Surely. My question is, he mentioned in this House that he is undergoing some restructure and the review of their legislation; whether that is factored in this grant on SEG 6?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, as I had mentioned in this Parliament that there is a Review Committee. They have started their work on the review of the LTA Act and the report is expected sometimes in mid next year.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, just on Programme 1, Activity 1, I think it would be helpful, I can see in the description of the Capital Grants so it is there, what \$6.5 million is going to be used for but I think one of the points that we need to understand is organisations like LTA raise a lot of revenue and in future, maybe the Honourable Minister can shed some light as to what they collect, what is the difference between what Government gives to them as Operating Grant, Capital Grant and how much Government collects from LTA as revenue. That information is important for us to understand whether Capital Grant and indeed, the Operating Grant because there are a lot of issues that the people of this country have with LTA and with some of the services and I know that the Honourable Minister is taking a review and I am hoping the review itself will throw out some of the things and it might be a good idea to get some more information from the Honourable Minister on this now, so that we have a better understanding of what is going on.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, let me deal with LTA sector because that is what he is interested in, the breakdown of \$6.5 million.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- I had read through the \$6.5 allocation.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- But do you want the breakdown on that?

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Yes, the revenue and ....

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- No, for Capital ....

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Please, I would like to ask a question on the ...

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.-.- Madam Chair, I think the Minister...

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Can I ask you a question, please?

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Yes, my question was ...

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The information that you are seeking, is it because you think that this allocation is in....

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Yes, exactly, exactly the point I am making, Madam Chair that the Capital Grant allocation and I am looking at the Operating Grant and Capital Grant. I want to know what LTA collects and what it is getting in return in terms of Operating Grant and Capital Grant is actually enough for them to give back to what the people want and what the people pay in fines, fees and charges because ultimately, when you run an organisation like that, some of the revenue should be earmarked to improve the services. So it is not fair on the people of this country to pay these fees, fines and charges and yet, they have no idea what is being given to them so I am trying to make a sense if, for example, \$6.5 million in our view is not enough, we might move to increase it that is what I want to know from the Honourable Minister.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would some information on that be provided to you through the Auditor General's Report in past years?

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, again that brings me to the point that we made earlier in my Budget speech, that if we do not have information prior to the Budget, detailed information, it is very difficult to discern some of the information that I am asking, but I am going to leave it there . I think the Honourable Minister is ready to make some comments on that, I am not going to pursue that too much.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, the only reason why we have asked for \$6.5 million for next year on the Capital Grant, as I have said, that there is a review going on and that will come up with some changes, so it is no use asking \$10 million or \$20 million when we only have a capacity of spending \$6.5 million. So, the review will basically detail what sort of direction the LTA will take.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does the Honourable Minister have to keep saying that the review is still ongoing? Please, for the information that you want, if it is going to come out in the review, let us leave it at that, otherwise we will spend too much time on this. Let us focus on the issue that we have at hand. The allocation that is made if you think, based on the information you have on the past performance of this, because you have the information through the Auditor-General's Report otherwise you know, let us focus on the allocation that is made, is it enough, not enough or ....

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, I am sorry, I do not want to get into a debate on that matter, I will leave it there but I think I have made the point that I wanted to make.

MADAM CHAIR.- Thank you. Honourable Minister for Education.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, the Budget Address delivered by the Honourable Minister of Finance comes with three other booklets, one is the Estimate, the second one is the Budget Estimate Supplement and the third one is the smaller booklet which provides revenue projections where the Government will get the revenue and the debt and deficit of the Budget.

Madam Speaker, in that booklet the LTA revenue, Public Enterprise revenue is provided for. In the other, it details about what Land Transport Authority (LTA) will do, et cetera and details are in their Corporate Plan. I suggest that the Honourable Member write to the Minister and request for the LTA Annual Report and Corporate Plan.

MADAM CHAIR.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to make this point very clear on what we have been discussing for the last few minutes. We have to understand LTA is making money every day and they are a company, authority and they are generating income every day.

The issue here is whether the figure that is being given to you, Operating Grant or Capital Grant been given to this entity and whether the Government should continue giving this because these same entities are making profit and when can Government stop this grant and whether LTA can be independent and run alone as an organisation that is profit driven.

Before we can give that, Honourable Minister, we can justify whether this allocation is justifiable, whether this should continue or whether it should be totally removed from the allocation that LTA should not be given anything because LTA can run on itself.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, we all know about the LTA. Most of us have spoken about LTA in this august House and as I have said that the review that I am talking about it will be in a holistic and not only on the piece-meal. Therefore, this review basically

will reveal what direction LTA has to take, whether we have to depend on Government funding or whether they are going to depend on their own.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU.K KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair, just for clarification in regards to the location or the capital grant SEG 10 in regards to the weigh bridges. I understand there is one in Lami and would the Honourable Minister enlighten us where the placement of these permanent bridges will be located, as we are witnessing the mobilisation of heavy trucks, 10 wheelers in my area in Sawani. They have been taking gravel and soapstone and you can see the road has been deformed like you riding on the waves. Can the Honourable Minister please enlighten us on that?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair for next year, we will have one for Sigatoka and one for the North.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I would like to move an amendment under Standing Order 100(2).

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We will give you the form and you will speak on it, Thank you.

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chair, just to add flavour to what the Honourable Minister has said, at this point in time, we have weighbridges, one at LTA Headquarters Valelevu, Lami and one in Lautoka. Therefore, what will happen in 2016, we will place two more, one between Nadi and Sigatoka and one in Lekutu in Bua and that will be next year.

This is a measure taken because you must have seen the deteriorating road condition because of overloading vehicles and this will be a fixed one and of course, we will have more portable scales with other six vehicles that will be fully equipped and will be moving around.

When the vehicles move around, it will definitely be fully equipped with this portable machine and they will weigh the heavy trucks on the sight and if they feel the vehicles are heavy, they will send it back to Headquarters where the confirmed weighbridges are and we will definitely give them heavy fines.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments on Activity 1, 2, Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- The roads in Tailevu are constantly damaged because of the heavy traffic coming from the North and the West. I think we should place one weighbridge there.



MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Activity 2, Madam Chair

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which ever, Activity 1 or 2, let us move around.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Activity 2, Madam Chair. I would like to move a motion pursuant to Standing Order 100(2), I now move it without notice that Head 40, SEG 6 be increased by \$40,000 in respect to the Shipping Franchise Scheme, to meet the demand for the subsidies.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Fill in the form. Any other comments? Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- On the allocation of capital grants to Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji, can the Minister enlighten us on what is going to be utilised from this \$2 million capital grant allocation?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, this will be for the Office Construction, Motor Vehicles and Aids to Navigations.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments on Activity 3, Programme 1. Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, still on Activity1, SEG 5. Transport Software Licence - \$58,000, where do you want to purchase this from?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 5, Head 14.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Activity 2, SEG 5, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, this software is already in place.

This software that he is talking about is already in place so the allocation that we have is for the backup and the maintenance services. It is already purchased so I do not know which company they purchased from ...

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- ... as well as the fee.

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- You are asking which company we will purchase from, it is already in place and that is what I am trying to say.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, the question has been answered, any more comments, please?

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Madam Chair, on Head 14, Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 9, for the Honourable Minister; what is the need for this software that is costing \$575,000 and how will it improve the transportation service in this area?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, the main objective of this project is to undertake the second phase on the travel survey for the National Transport Database. This one will be for maritime and land as well.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Madam Chair, referring to Activity 1, again on SEG 6, can the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House whether the LTA can survive on its own?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- I only wish I was God.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- I mean that because you can even see that from the operation from the past years; how much revenue you have been getting, whether you can survive on your own or not? If that is the case, even though the review is going, you can do away with this if it can survive on its own.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, I think the idea of the LTA surviving on its own is coming because they must have seen the revenue for this year but definitely the revenue for LTA will grow. Let me say also that we are not in the business of making money for LTA, we are there to deliver service as well. Government will have to partner with them and from time to time we have to assist them but if there is enough revenue, in three years, four years' time, of course, yes, why not?

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Madam Chair, since he is supervising the LTA right now, he should be shown how much revenue this organisation has been getting all these years, whether they will need additional funding from somewhere or whether they can survive on their own? That is the question.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, for now they will require funding.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 6, the amount allocated for sea route licensing; can the Honourable Minister elaborate on this allocation of \$10,000 on the sea route licensing?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, this fund is to support the implementation of the newly introduced sea route licensing and economical maritime routes.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Chair, Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 6, Shipping Franchise Scheme has a grant of \$2.317 million which is under "R". Would the Honourable Minister inform the House on the destinations where the Shipping Franchise Scheme will be utilised?

Would it be for all the maritime areas or would it be restricted to some particular maritime islands only?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, do you have any new ports for this?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, this fund caters for the payment to the contracted private shipping operators under the Government Shipping Franchise Scheme and there is a total of 168 trips scheduled annually. On which destinations - there are a lot of destinations and I can always submit it to the House. Thank you.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I thank the Honourable Minister for the explanation, just a clarification on this Shipping Franchise Scheme. Who manages this Shipping Franchise Scheme?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Would the information have an impact on the amount allocated?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- MSAF (Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji), Madam Chair.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam, I just want to bring something to your attention. Apparently the live-feed has been off since we started and people are complaining to me through the phone.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I think FBC should be fixing that up, it is beyond our control.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, on Programme 1, Activity 2, SEG 1, I see that the allocation for established staff and the unestablished staff has increased; can the Honourable Minister inform this House as to how many staff does this Unit have, and what are their jobs?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, there were a lot of vacancies and that is why it has been increased but still, there are some vacancies that will be filled in 2016.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments? We can move on to Activity 3, Programme 2 as well. Programme 2, Activity 1?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Activity 2?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Programme 1, Activity 3, Page 261, SEG 8, upgrade of the Government Shipping Vessels of \$500,000, can you just enlighten us on this allocation and also on the purchase of vessel on SEG 9 which has an allocation of \$5 million?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, this is an ongoing programme and that is why this maintenance fund has been allocated. For the new ship, as my colleague knows, Government

has decided that year in/year out we are going to have a new ship so this is for 2016 and there will be another for 2017.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I thank the Honourable Minister for the information on the upgrade of vessel. Can he be specific on what vessel is involved and also on the purchase of vessel; is this a new vessel or a second –hand vessel?

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chair, I thank the Honourable Member for the question. First, I will answer for the new vessel because it is very important. Madam Chair, this new vessel will be a unique one. It will serve a dual purpose. It will transport people as well and it will have a medical building which will have one operation theatre.

(Inaudible Interjection)

HON. V. NATH.- It is the refurbishment of the Barge *Vatulawa*.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments? Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Madam Chair, still on the vessel, we do thank the Government for the vessel that was purchased this year but we have received some complaints that the vessel cannot carry cargoes. I mean going out to the outer island, you need a vessel that can carry cargoes, otherwise it will only be useful as a tourist boat.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Honourable Member is right, that is a passenger ship so what is the issue? What complaints are you receiving?

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Please it must be suitable for the maritime provinces and should be able to carry cargoes also.

(Chorus of Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, on SEG 9, the purchase of a new vessel. Before I move a motion, I would just like to inquire with the Minister whether there is an intention to reactivate the shipbuilding industry in Fiji instead of continuing with the purchase of new vessels abroad.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, that is already in the plan. Let me say that it is not only Government who is investing on ships and boats, we have also encouraged the private shipping companies. As you all know, there is also a Bill that will come later on the aging of the ships to encourage more private investors to bring in more ships. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, I think the question is whether we are going to build our own ships locally. Are there any plans for that?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- That was the first one I said - that is in the plan.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other comments on Programme 1.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chair, if I may just clarify the question raised by the Honourable Radrodro. The refurbishment is on the Barge *Vatulawa*. Although we have brought in two new barges, that will be the refurbishment just like the naval vessels, every now and then they need to be upgraded. For a new vessel, the Hydrographic Unit needs a modern vessel and that is why the allocation for the \$5 million under SEG 9. It is for hydrographic purposes but it does not mean that it will not serve other purposes as well and ...

(Inaudible Interjection)

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- ... it will replace the *MV Raiyawa*, for those that know the Government fleet, thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any more comments? Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, Programme 2, Activity 1 – SEG 5. I see the allocations for training expenses of \$141,000 and Meteorological Meeting Seminars of \$25,000. Can I have an explanation from the Honourable Minister regarding these two training issues?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chair, these trainings will be for the meteorological seminar and workshop before the international meeting of the 68<sup>th</sup> World Meteorological Organisation Executive Council, and the other one is the 4<sup>th</sup> World Meteorological Organisation Inter-Government Board on Climate Service Management which will be held in Geneva.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments? Programme 2, Activity 2? Programme 2, Activity 3?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, on Programme 1, Activity 3, SEG 9; Installation of Beacon Piles for Navigational Aid of \$200,000. Can the Honourable Minister advise who is responsible for the installation of these beacon piles of \$200,000?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.-Do you think this amount is not enough?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, MSAF and Government Shipping agencies.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T.VADEI.- Madam Chair, Programme 1, Activity 2 – SEG 8 regarding the upgrade of Government shipping vessels. I just want to find out from the Honourable Minister, how many Government vessels are still running and how many needs upgrading or repairs? How many need changing or how many new ones do we need to buy?

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chair, we have got six vessels already and I am again repeating that the dual/multi-purpose vessel we are getting will have medical facilities as mentioned by the Honourable Minister. This will have a dual purpose and later on it will replace the Vessel *Rayawa*. This vessel is a unique one I would say, as it will have an operation theatre and a dental room. It will go on a quarterly basis to all the maritime islands, as it is our vision to take the service to the people and this is what we are going to do.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments? Programme 2, Activity 2?

HON. MEMBERS: No

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 2, Activity 3?

HON. MEMBERS: No

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 2, Activity 4?

HON. MEMBERS: No

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 2, Activity 5?

HON. MEMBERS: No

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 3, Activity 1?

HON. MEMBERS: No

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 3, Activity 2?

HON. MEMBERS: No

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Programme 3, Activity 3?

HON. MEMBERS: No

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Biman Prasad.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- When they say no, I keep my eyes on your side more so if someone stands up ....

Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, on Programme 2, Activity 3- SEG 8. Can the Honourable Minister enlighten us on the construction of the new Labasa Weather Office?  
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HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, the earthworks on that project has started but the construction will start next year in January/ February.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments? Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Still on that same SEG that has been asked lately, will that amount of \$750,000 be fully utilised next year?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, that is an ongoing project for this year and roll over to next year.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bilitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chairperson, still on SEG 8 – New Labasa Weather Office, the Honourable Minister said that work is in progress.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Construction will start next year.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Construction next year because the landowners from there are waiting, that is in Vatudova?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chairperson, if I may just clarify that. The weather station is already in Vatudova, but it is the technical officials who come every now and then. As the Honourable Minister has stated, I knew this because the weather station was built during my time as Commissioner but they need to permanently move staff to Labasa and that is a need for the office. The weather station is already in Vatudova as highlighted by the Honourable Bilitavu. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Chairperson, Programme 2–Activity 3, SEG 9, regarding the upgrade of Nadi radar antenna, is that still analogue or a digital log? I just want to find out because I believe this was carried out in the last two years.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vijay.

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chairperson, for the information of this House, these radars were placed back in 1993. We have to move with time and we are replacing it with a new one. Thank you.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- You say it is an upgrade from analogue to digital, but now you are still on the radar, so it is still analogue.

HON. V. NATH.- It is a digital antenna which will be replaced.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chairperson, the same SEG 9 refers to the installation of water level and rainfall telemetry and we see that it was installed; where was it installed last year?

HON. V. NATH.- Are you asking for 2016?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- 2016.

HON. V. NATH.- Alright sit down, I will give the answers.

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Speaker, this rainfall telemetry instrument will be installed in Naqali, Qauia, Semo and Nawaka rivers.

(Chorus of Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I want to remind the honourable Member that the way you said 'sit down' was disrespectful at that time. Please just answer your question; they know when to sit, so just be more respectful. Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you Madam Chairperson, I just wish to add one comment because it is very important, in terms of the position or the location of the installation of water level telemetry. It is sad in our case in Naqali when two years back, there was heavy rainfall that was concentrated only in Qauia (upper Waimanu), Vatuvula (upper Waidina) and Sawani and all those areas were flooded, whilst the two villages downstream from Sawani, Vuniniudrovu and Navuso were not affected. We had a disaster situation but yet it was not declared a disaster because it was confined only to a small area, so the placements of these installations is very important. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you I am sure that is noted. Are there any further comments? Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Programme 2 –Activity 3 on SEG 4, I saw that there are radar operational expenses, can the Honourable Minister brief us on which stations have these radars operational.



HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chairperson, first I should apologise to the Honourable Member. I did say 'sit down' because he was looking at me and his mike was on, so I did not want to waste time and just gave him the answer.

(Chorus of Interjections)

Going back to the question that has been asked, it will be for Nadi, Nausori and Labasa.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Programme 2 – Activity 3 – SEG 9, installation of water level and rainfall telemetry, pursuant to Standing Order 100(2), I move without notice that it be increased by \$200,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any more comments before we go on to the motion? No more comments.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Just another one, Madam Chairperson, Programme 2 – Activity 2 on SEG 8; can the Honourable Minister enlighten the House on the \$150,000 for the upgrade of outer islands stations?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- I know my good friend has an interest in there and I can assure him that it will definitely take place. Thank you

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- No more comments. Honourable Vadei

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you Madam Chairperson, I apologise for having to ask so many technical issues here.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There are no limitations, you may carry on.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Programme 2, Activity 3 - SEG 7 regarding the ISO 9001 of 2000; this is for Quality Management System - \$25,000. What is the status on this ISO qualification or certification?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, this ISO 9001 for 2008 is for classification improvement requirements to meet the certification. There are certain requirements by the ISO and this will be appropriately met.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- What I am asking is, whether they have got the assessment from those who conducted the ISO certification?

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chairperson, it is done by external audit ....

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Yes, that is correct and I understand. What is the status? Has this been completed or is this the last stage of accreditation?

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chairperson, the Honourable Member should know that this budget is for next year, 2016, so it is an ongoing process. We have already started with it and this money will definitely be able to complete the project.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any more comments? Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, Programme 2 – Activity 3 – SEG 5, can the Honourable Minister provide details on this operational cost of upper air logistics.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chairperson, this will cater for the purchase of a global positioning reporting system.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Just an observation Madam Chairperson, that amount has been consistent from this year's allocation and the next, and it has not taken into account the changes that have been announced in the Budget.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. V. NATH.- Sorry, I did not get the question, can you ....

HON. A. M. RADRODRO.- Is this payment going overseas, or is it a local payment for these operational costs?

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chair, like the Global Positioning Reporting System, you must have seen in Nadi before and in Nausori too, the balloon will be thrown into the air and you will see, for the information of the House, that you cannot buy those locally, definitely you purchase that from outside. We will have that radio stored transmission and balloons for upper and air sounding and weather for aviation services.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments? Thank you, we will now go on to the motions. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Aseri Radrodro. The question is, that Head 40-1-6 be increased by \$1 million in respect of 40-1-6 - Operating Grant.

I will ask the Honourable Radrodro to speak on his motion.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair.

The motion emanated from the response that these operating grants have not accounted for the outstanding dues that are due to the employees of the Land Transport Authority.

We should know that by reviewing the revenue expectations for 2016, for the last three years, they have been consistently producing or increasing, incrementing revenue generation. I know that most of the employees in there have worked tirelessly and given their lives to the Land Transport Authority, whilst at the same time, they have been waiting for an increase in their salaries and therefore, those were the intentions of the proposed increase in the Operating Grant for the Land Transport Authority.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does any other Honourable Member want to speak further on that motion? No. Therefore, there will be no right of reply so we will go on to the vote. Does anyone oppose this motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	24
Not voted	:	9

Proposed amendment defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- On the next motion. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Salote Radrodro. The question is, that Head 40 be increased by \$400,000 in respect of 40-1-2, SEG 6?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. First of all, in regards to that motion, we acknowledge the current services that have been carried out through this franchise scheme, particularly to the maritime islands. The motion on the increase is based on the reduced routes. I believe from last year, it was 10 and then it went down to 8 - something like that.

The reduced routes have sort of brought in unreliable services to the people in the remote islands and it also brings discomfort to their livelihood, particularly in view of their store suppliers, in the supply of kerosene, bearing in mind that most islands in the maritime group, particularly Lau are still awaiting to benefit from the solar programme assistance, and also it affects the hospital and school suppliers.

The increase is being proposed to be able to improve the frequency and reliability of these shipping services and I understand only two companies are covering the routes and the increase will also give opportunities for other new service providers to offer the same kind of services to the people in the maritime islands. Thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on the motion? There being none. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to thank the Government for the provision of this shipping franchise to the maritime islands in the Lomaiviti Group.

(Acclamation)

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Before, they used to come to Suva on a monthly basis, now they can come to Suva and those in the urban centres can go to their islands twice in a month. So, I thank the Government for those initiatives.

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

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Yes, Madam Chair, I would like to make a short contribution to the motion, and I support it.

Franchise helps the affordability of moving, especially the islands, and as we think of the Rural and Outer Island Project (ROI), most of these developments will be in the islands that have agricultural potential to be developed - you have Koro, Gau, Ovalau and for that matter, even Ono is well known for its seaweed, its seaweed is classified as one of the best in the world and also its pristine waters.

(Inaudible Interjections)

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Mostly, they find it very difficult to be accessible to Suva, which is the main centre for arrangements for their markets to sell their produce and for this to be realised, in line with ROI, the rural development, the agricultural sector, this franchise will help a lot. It is not an isolated issue about the franchise, it is the whole nation that will benefit.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Thank you Madam Chair, I will try and convince the Government to support this motion because the Government has just named it the "People's Budget" and the Government tries to improve the livelihood of people in remote and maritime areas. This initiative or this motion is simply to complement that.

As you know, the Shipping Franchise Scheme was established to maintain shipping services to areas in the Fiji maritime region, where the normal routes by commercial entrepreneurs were uneconomical. This was an initiative to subsidise these routes and this was mostly focused in parts of Lau, Kadavu, parts of Northern Vanua Levu, the Malolo group, Lomaiviti and other remote islands.

Madam, we give emphasis to Lau because Lau is a paradise of its own and which is very inaccessible with maritime services, it was in this light that this initiative was created to improve, as the mover of the motion said "this will improve services to this people and the various initiatives that are in place that is placed by the Government in this Budget, so that it can be taken to the people." Madam Chair, this is why I support this move.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other contribution?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, can I also contribute to this dialogue. I am so happy to see improvements in transportation to the maritime islands.

I manage a resort out there in the islands also, Madam Chair, and to see our people from my part of the world who are able to visit the mainland and be back at home on the same day

or sometimes even twice a day is something that gladdens my heart. It is truly heartening to see this happening also in the Lomaiviti and other parts of Fiji, and I think we should support this and make it better.

May I, Madam Chair, just congratulate the young Minister Nath in the way he answered our questions. He is very genuine and he knows that we are the custodian of the taxpayers and he is answerable to the people of Fiji. He did not tell us “to go and read”, he did not say “yes” or “no”, he took the trouble of answering, and I am proud of our own Minister Nath in the way he handles these things today.

(Acclamation)

That is the way it should be, Madam Chair: you are custodian of people’s funds and you should provide answers. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chair, let me assure the other side of the House that this is still a people’s budget and will always remain a people’s budget.

We have talked about the resources in the islands and one of the difficulties that they face, if you talk to the operators, is that they do not make a lot of money out of passengers, but it is cargo. It is the volume of cargoes that they need, and the volume comes from the bigger islands only, but even operating in these routes, they still need that subsidy, so this is on franchises.

The non-economical routes is why Government has brought in new ships. We have got three barges and additional ships in place and they do cover the gaps, even in routes covered by the franchise operators, and of course the non-economical routes.

We are servicing Rotuma, and of course the other smaller islands in Lomaiviti and there will be a significant improvement, particularly in Gau when they are shifting from Nawaikama to Qarani because previously, Madam Chair, it costs more to go to Gau than to Koro, simply because of the channels. The boat is diverted from its route into Nawaikama and then to Koro, that became an issue and that is why we have the new jetty now in Qarani. So, the non-economical routes that is serviced by the franchises (and you will see the new boats); and Government totally feels that this allocation, in the People’s Budget, is sufficient. Thank you.

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Koro, simply because of the channels. The boat is diverted from its route into Nawaikama and then to Koro, that became an issue and that is why we have the new jetty now in Qarani. So, the non-economical routes that is serviced by the franchises (and you will see the new boats and Government totally feels that in this allocation, in the People's Budget) is sufficient. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- I rise again just to support the motion that is on hand, and I complement the comments made by the Honourable Minister. Surely, with this franchise shipping to the uneconomical routes of the maritime islands will boost the economic activities on the islands, provided these ships do go there consistently and at the right time. When you schedule your trips, the people there will be ready to load their cargoes and the request only is to be consistent so the people too on the other side of the island should be ready to do that for you.

Secondly, that is a lead up again, from the shipping franchise, what we need now in the maritime islands is to open up those undeveloped areas, especially the forest areas out there in the islands, to create commercial farming in order to boost the shipping franchise. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Briefly, I would like to thank the Honourable Salote Radrodoro for bringing this motion to the floor and I also thank the Honourable Minister and the Honourable Assistant Minister for their responses.

I was just thinking, Madam Chair, of some of the questions that were being asked, they were wondering the purpose behind them, and then I thought "they are *kai vanua*" - Honourable Bala is from Ba, Honourable Nath from Nausori and like me, we are *kai vanua*. We do not know the needs and the requirements of the *kai wais* in the maritime areas. We are from the land, we do not know the purpose of the questions and we appreciate, that in terms of the shipping requirements. They need a lot of rooms for cargoes and that is where the Honourable Minister and the Honourable Assistant Minister were not really familiar with that because they can just go home in good vehicles with a truck behind them and take all their cargoes with them. However, in the maritime areas, these shipping franchise comes in very useful. They are very lucky in Lomaiviti, they can come to Suva twice a month but in remote areas like Ono-i-Lau, that is a luxury. So I am speaking on behalf of Madam Speaker and myself.

(Inaudible Interjections)

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- I believe that in terms of Women's Expo, this comes in very handy because of the quality of produce and products that they were able to bring in terms of artefacts and handicrafts. I think mention was made of *lumi* but also the *magimagi*; the stuff that you see in handicraft shops and also in the Flea Market that are brought from the islands.

So this is something that is contributing to the economy of the people, from the maritime areas, and that is why I would like to support this motion that is on the floor.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Draunidalo.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I also wish to support this motion. It is very difficult for people who are remote from markets to be engaged with the rest of the country in terms of moving forward, technologically and so forth. Having been raised mostly in my maternal side, we complain about being in the interior and it is hard to get produce from there to Sigatoka, but we are on the mainland. I can only imagine my relatives all over the Lau group and how hard they must find it, and that is why I support this motion and I make a plea to this Government.

It is about priorities, Honourable Ministers, we thank you for the good works that you claim to be doing for the people, but we ask you, there are things like (and I do not mean to make this a point of animosity between us) Madam Chair, yesterday, I think thousands and thousands of poor people would rely on dialysis treatment, and the Government would rather subsidise private and wealthy individuals who own Quantas shares by \$18 million, instead of putting 2 dialysis machines in Labasa Hospital, 2 in Lautoka and 2 in Suva. I mean in terms of priorities or putting close to \$200 million into the militarisation of the State, instead of helping the infrastructure in the Lau group and other remote areas. I ask the Government to please rethink its priorities and I support this motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.-Thank you. Honourable Nath.

HON. V. NATH.- Let me put it clearly.

Madam Chair, we have improved a number of services. We will provide 168 trips this year and this is an increase in the number of trips.

We have seen in the Estimates that probably \$83,000 is for the regularisation of the GWE forecasts from the franchises, that is the only decrease. The Budget has decreased on that, otherwise the number of services have increased, and of course all the vessels have got capabilities to carry cargoes.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I think we have got enough information to make a decision on this motion. I will now invite the Honourable Radrodro to give her right of reply.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. When I moved the motion, I had acknowledged Government's existing programmes, but the point in the motion was, it is not enough.

I also heard the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management and I believe I am more qualified to speak on the services to the maritime islands because I come from the maritime islands. I know what it is like ...

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- I travel a lot to the maritime islands.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- They travel more than you.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- ... and I speak with my people during village meetings, in the *tikina* meetings and in the provincial council meetings, this is one of their main concerns.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- In Suva?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.-Yes, because the Government brings the provincial council to Suva.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- (Chorus of Interjections)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- If you ask the people of Lau, we would rather have it in Vanua Balavu or Lakeba, but the Government has brought it to Suva.

HON. OPP. MEMBER.- There you are.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Please do not respond to interjections. Let us have your right of reply.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- The point of the motion is, the services had been rendered but it is insufficient, unreliable and the motion is to request for an increase in the amount, bearing in mind the huge amount that has been given to roads.

Sea Transport is our roads to the islands and it is very minimal. How can you justify the very minimal amount that is given for the franchise, which is our road to all the islands, compared to the huge amount that is on the roads in the mainland and we hear the Government talk about equality. Is this equality, when you treat those in the maritime with that kind of minimum budget, for the development of their roads, which is the sea?

That is why I had requested for an increase and it is not much, it is only \$400,000. It is only \$400,000, so to qualify, to justify the equality? Yes, that is giving that \$400,000 for the development of the shipping, transportation through the franchise to the maritime islands, and those who are also in arrangement right now, they falter sometimes because of the repair works. This will allow for other competitors and we also hear the Government saying that we want to promote local business. The people of Vanua Balavu and Cicia have invested, raised their own funds and bought a boat to be able to help themselves.

We are looking to the Government to further help the people in the maritime by increasing the franchise to be able to help those who they have tried to help themselves.



On that note, Madam Chair, I request and I make this plea on behalf of the people from the maritime, rather than just focusing on the roads in the mainland, also invest in the sea transportation because that is the road to the maritime. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Salote Radrodro and the question is, that Head 40 be increased by \$400,000 in respect of 40-1-2-6 – Shipping Franchise Scheme. Does anyone oppose?

(Chorus of yes and noes)

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on this motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	7

Proposed amendment defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We will move on to the next motion. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Ratu Kiliraki. The question is, that Head 40 be increased by \$200,000 in respect of 2-3-9 Installation of Water Level and Rainfall Telemetry. I will ask the Honourable Ratu Kiliraki to speak on his motion.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I move for a 100 per cent increase to this allocation simply because it is very important and we know that the weather pattern is very unpredictable, as of now we are experiencing the *El Nino* effect. It is an extreme weather, we have extreme drought on the one hand, and you can have extreme rainfall, extreme force of cyclone that we will be expecting on the other.

Also, these weather patterns will be localised patterns. as I had mentioned already. That was localised in Sawani, Qauia, even upper Waidina, and you may remember that the Honourable Prime Minister was on television saying that he came to Sawani and he suggested that we relocate Sawani for an amount of about \$1 to \$2 million for the relocation.

Madam Chair, this is very important because if you locate that rainfall telemetry in Nausori, as alluded to by the Honourable Assistant Minister, Nausori will not register the effect of the rain whilst Sawani area is being flooded.

These are local life patterns, even the tributaries of the Rewa River, you have Waimanu, Waidina, Wainimala and Wainibuka. If only Wainibuka is flooded or localised rain in that area, Wainibuka will be flooded. The whole of the Rewa River will not register any effect of that weather pattern in the upper Wainibuka area. This is very important to increase and

localise the strategic positions of this weather pattern as weather rainfall telemetry is for the people to be more prepared, to be more aware in case of heavy rain and the rising water level.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you. Would any other Honourable Member like to speak on that motion? Honourable Minister?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I wish to speak in my capacity as the Minister responsible for Disaster Management in Fiji. Let me assure the Honourable Member that of course Government has got plans concerning the safety of all citizens in Fiji.

I need to shed some light into this so that Honourable Members of the House can have a clear understanding of the warning systems. This allocation clearly is for the main rivers that we have in Fiji. The telemetry systems and the river gages that we have are mainly in the Navua River, Rewa River, Ba River, and of course the Labasa River as well.

The Ministry for Disaster Management is working with our partners, in terms of early warning systems in the tributaries so that those who are in the upper highlands, the tributaries that feed the main rivers are also in a position to be warned and evacuated, if need be when the water level rises. That, Madam Chair, is an exercise that is undertaken by my Ministry, working with the Japanese Government, of course, not only Fiji but there is a regional project in which JICA assists countries, particularly Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. We are working on this project, the Early Warning Systems, so this allocation is just for the main streams, the main rivers in Fiji, whereas my Ministry is doing the one for the early warning system and we will definitely look into Naitasiri, but I know there are warning systems up in the highlands, so let me confirm for the tributaries that feed the Rewa River.

I must also mention in this House, Madam Chair, that this is one of the changes that the Government did after the lessons we learnt from *Cyclone Thomas* and *Cyclone Evans* in 2012. Madam Chair, one of the problems that we faced in *Cyclone Thomas*, the Hydrology Unit was with Water Authority of Fiji, whereas the MET office was with the Ministry for Infrastructure. However, what happened in Nadi was, there was heavy rain, they were giving the weather information but no one was giving us the information about the water level.

Therefore, the changes that Government had done, they have shifted the Hydrology Unit from Water Authority to the MET Office so that we can receive the MET warnings and advice, and at the same time, we are also given the hydrology advice as well, and that will mean, I will act on that if the need comes for people to be evacuated. Therefore, this allocation is just for what they are doing, I am more responsible for the early warning systems in the tributaries, working together with the Japanese Government and we will look into the needs in other areas. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to contribute to it. There are being none, I will now ask the Honourable Ratu Kiliraki for his right of reply.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- No more reply, but I still move the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Parliament will then vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Ratu Kiniviliame Kiliraki, and the question is, that Head 40 be increased by \$200,000 in respect of 2-3-9 - Installation of water level and rainfall telemetry. Does anyone oppose the motion?

(Chorus of yes and noes)

There have been opposition and Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	7

Proposed amendment defeated.

We will now move on to the next motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, just before we move on to the next motion. I just want to bring up something else, in regards to Programme 3, Activity 1, still on Head 40. It is very important and it is on page 267 - SEG 7, there is a redundancy package.

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU.- Programme?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Programme 3, Activity 1, SEG 7, page 267. Head 40. Can the Honourable Minister explain to the House as who is going to be made redundant here, or what are the details of these?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Please, Honourable Minister, very briefly.

HON. V. NATH.- Madam Chair, this is just to inform the honourable and learned Member that we will be laying off probably the watchmen and the gatemen and we will outsource these duties to other relevant people.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on the amendments in the name of the Honourable Mosese Bulitavu and the question is that Head 40, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 6 be decreased by \$18,138, 449 in respect of LTA Operating Grant. I will request Honourable Bulitavu to speak on his motion. No speeches and does anyone want to speak in support of this motion?

HON. MEMBERS.-No

MADAM CHAIRPERSON. There being none.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I hope that the two motions that I find could be done concurrently because they are both related; one is for Capital Grant and the other the Operating Grant.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Because there are two different allocations, I rather you deal with them separately.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Individually. Very well then.

Madam Chair, for SEG 6, Operating Grant, the idea, Madam Chair, is very simple. When you have a host, we have our offspring and for a while, the offspring has to be independent. That is the idea, that is the concept, and that is the concept that comes with the idea when you have privatisation.

Madam Chair, LTA was called Department of Road Transport, then it went to the Land Transport Authority on a separate Act, but it has been dependent to the host which is the Ministry - still Government assets. LTA, all these years, have been making money, generating money for Government and has been a source of income too for the Government.

However, the question that we are here now to deliberate on is whether LTA (the Minister as assured us) has done a review on which direction will LTA move to; whether LTA will be independent, and after LTA's interdependence to be useful back to the source? As it is, the offspring is still relying on the host, Government, and Government is giving operating grant every year to LTA for its operation. Therefore, when will we stop the grant from LTA and LTA to run on its own, still a Government asset, and to generate itself from its own revenue that it is going to earn from whatever law that LTA runs on. Madam Chair that is the basis on why I had proposed for that operating grant of \$18,138,499 to be reduced from SEG 6.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does any other Honourable Member want to speak on the motion? Honourable Minister for Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, just to clarify to the Shadow Minister for Public Enterprises, LTA is not a Government Commercial Company. It is actually a statutory body, so it has not been privatised or even corporatized. There is a world of difference between the three of them. At the moment, it is a statutory body, the revenue they collect comes to the Government Consolidated Fund and then we give them a grant every year.

What you are proposing, Honourable Member, is something that is further down the line when you have the proper structures in place. For example, you have the Fiji Ports Corporation, AFL, FBC and all the other companies that are Government-owned, then they run their own affairs. I think it also needs to be noted that a number of statutory bodies cannot always be just revenue-generating. The problem is, if you want to make LTA completely revenue-generating, it will mean that they will, in order to pay for their operation, charge people more and they will always look to fining people. There are lots of situations, so obviously the

Honourable Minister will work together with that regarding Public Enterprise. I would urge you to reconsider your motion in that light. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Would you like to speak in reply?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- I, in that light, Madam Chair, because currently the Honourable Minister of Finance has given some points there that LTA needs to be monitored and regulated because they are service providers and the customers and our citizens will be using those services until we go down the line, whether this statutory body can become a public company then we can consider this. In view of that light, Madam Chair I withdraw the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will now move on to their next motion. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Mosese Bulitavu. The question is, that Head 40, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 10 be decreased by \$6.500,000 in respect of LTA Capital Grant. I invite the Honourable Bulitavu to speak on his motion.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- On the same token too, Madam Chair, on the same note, we will wait for the review of LTA, and from that, the directions that LTA will follow from here as a statutory body to other things that the Honourable Minister of Finance has assured the House, also I wish to withdraw that motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We will move on to Programme 4, Energy, Activity 1, still under the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- On Energy, Programme 4, Activity 1, SEG 10 - Rural Electrification. I have received some inquiries into this. There are so many villagers on the island of Kadavu who have paid their deposits towards this and they were advised that the work will be carried out this year. Again, it has not happened and if we can be advised of the progress on that Madam Chair?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR – What SEG is that?

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Programme 4, Activity 1, SEG 10, page 277.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, the only reason why Government has removed this contribution, and as I had highlighted and very well described by the Honourable Minister of Finance in his speech, that if there is a hundred households, and if 99 pays, that project will never happen, so that is why it has been removed and now there will be no contribution. The work from 2016 will begin, as far as rural electrification is concerned.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, Programme 4, Activity 1, SEG 10 on Rural Electrification Project. I need some clarifications from the Honourable Minister regarding this

project and whether people who have requested are going to be assisted this year in terms of Batinikia from Deuba? Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, this project proposal was given to me some time this year but because there were some issues with FEA, that have been sorted out and I can assure the Honourable Member that it will come in 2016.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Anare Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair. On the same SEGs, Rural Electrification Project, in regards to the villagers who have paid their one-third deposits, what happened to them in the 2016 Budget? Will they refund those deposits?

The other one is on rural electrification projects being installed, especially on my island, where they installed all the generators, Madam Chair, but none of them have been working until today. I do not know whether they are just meant to be dumping site or what. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- I will just comment on the first part, on the refund; yes, all those will be refunded. Thank you.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Madam Chair, on the same SEG, SEG 10, Namosi to Lewaiyawa, the last village, we have paid the one-third. Is this still an on-going programme for next year or not?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, it is not only for the projects that he has mentioned. Let me clarify this, that all those projects where communities have contributed, that will take priority. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- On the same SEG, this is in terms of islands that cannot be on the grid, is there any provision for one-tenth in terms of solar energy? It is just a question for islands like Beqa and maybe the Lau Group - is there any provision for that?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, the same thing will apply with that - no contribution.

HON. RO T.V. KEP A.- Contribution for solar?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- No contribution.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- I will come back to you. Thank you.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- *Areh*, every time you want to come back to me.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, just supplementary to Honourable Vadei's question and I thank the Honourable Minister for the answer. For those who have already paid (and I had raised this once in this House) for some of the projects in Ra and Wainibuka, they had already paid but you had taken a long time and some of the groups there had paid quite a handsome amount of money and in one case was more than \$100,000. When are you going to refund, will they be paid interests? Had they put this money in the bank, they would have earned interests.

(Laughter)

HON. MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- You are talking about "value for money" because they were forced to collect and then pay, and they were promised that it will be done immediately once they pay. Now, once they paid, then it was delayed for years, so are you going to pay interest?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Dulakiverata raised a very, very pertinent point. He is absolutely right about the fact that many people had made contributions and the work had not been done. In fact, many of the people, where they had made contributions, the work had not commenced because many of the other people living in that area had not also contributed.

So if you, for example, had 20 homes that were going to be connected to the grid, they all had to give \$1000 each, they will probably had like five or ten homes that gave. The other ten did not bother to give, as a result of which, that was not done. Most of the cases you will find, the Honourable Minister will probably tell you, is that precisely what happened. Yes, there could be one or two where they actually gave the full amount but their electricity was not provided.

In respect of that, I completely agree with you as a matter of principle that if I gave money to you today and you kept it for me and you earned interests on it, then obviously if I want my money back, it depends on the "you and I arrangement." We will need to look at it, but I can assure you at this point in time that the principal, of course, will be returned. Regarding the interest, that is something we have to work out.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- I note, Madam Chair, that in the 2016 Budget, there will be no contributions by the community. If the same household that contributed and the rest never contributed, what will the Government do on that project? Will they pull out all the rural electrification equipment from the village setup because the village people need to know?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Vadei, no, because this is related to finance. These projects actually have not commenced. It is not that they are halfway done.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- There was a pilot project in Somosomo, Gau so they are going to pull out all those?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, no, that is a pilot project. Pilot is different to where there may have been an undertaking given by the Department of Energy or FEA that if all the people in this area contribute “x” amount of dollars, it will actually connect you.

The project that the Honourable Minister is talking about are the projects that have not commenced, even though some people have already given their money. Those are the projects that we are talking about and they are the ones we are saying in the order of priority, they will be given priority. For example, if you have about 10 projects, where people have contributed some money and have not started and there are few other places now that have wanted that done, these people will be given priority because they have already committed and they had given some money. That is how it is going to work. Pilot projects are different, pilot projects, as the name suggests is pilot.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Still on SEG 8, Programme 4, Activity 1 - Renewable Energy Development Projects. Last year, \$3.1 million was provided for a new grid extension from Nacavanadi to Korotasere in Cakaudrove, but that has not taken place and the villagers there are still waiting. They want to know from the Honourable Minister the progress on whether that allocation will be done also this year because last year Tokaimalo was also one of the grids that was identified, it is also in this year’s Budget. Is Tokaimalo also included in this year’s Budget, 2016?

HON. MEMBER.- Phase 2 – Tokaimalo.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- However, in regards to Nacavanadi to Korotasere Grid, what is the update on that?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, right now the two projects that he has mentioned, one is on the plans to carry out next year, that is \$2.2 million, and the second one is not planned



for next year. There were some talks on it but because of some issues which I can always come back and report on, the matter is to be resolved. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- On the “no deposit policy” now being adopted by the Government, that will come into effect next year and will that also happen to the rural water supply?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Yes.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Thank you.

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

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, on the Rural Electrification Project, I note that the Government is intending to continue completing all these outstanding applications, but for those who are also intending to request Government’s assistance on the new Rural Electrification Project, it says here that “Government will not be taking any new applications until the completion of the 2016.” For those new applicants, when do they intend to expect to start coming in with their new applications for Rural Electrification Projects?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, as I have said earlier on that, the priority will be to carry out works for all those where the Committee has paid, but there is nothing stopping any community or settlement to put in their application.

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

HON. RO T.V. KEPHA.- Madam Chair, still on electrification, this is in terms of electrification of rural Government stations - Programme 3, Activity 9 and this has to do with personal emoluments.

Just to the Honourable Minister, we were in Nabouwalu, Vanua Levu last month and we met with some officials who were working on rural electrification. Just a plea to the Honourable Minister, in terms of their contracts which is three months, they have asked if you can notify them well ahead of time because sometimes they are told only one or two days before whether they are still on contract or not and that is what I am asking the Honourable Minister to do in terms of humanity. I know you have the Civil Service Reforms but if you could also ensure that they are made known well ahead of time.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, I thought the Government officials refused to meet the Honourable Leader of Opposition on her visit but I am happy that there were some she really met, but anyway yes, Madam Chair, they will be notified.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, just a point of clarification from the Honourable Minister on the provision of rural electrification. What is the basic provision that you will give into that rural electrification, is it one power point to bulb, or the other way round? On the provision of rural electrification to households, what is the basic necessity that you provide? One power point and two bulbs or ...

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chair, if I may just assist here as Minister for Rural Development. As I have already highlighted in the House, there are two programmes that is with the Minister for Infrastructure - rural electrification and rural water. There are four schemes on the rural electrification, one is the connection to the FEA grid or generator or hydro scheme if there is a water source sufficient like the one in Buca, in Vanua Levu or solar, the capacity will be dependent on the source.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you for the explanation, Honourable Minister. Just a further clarification on the Rural Electrification Project.

We noted in the last couple of weeks, the Prime Minister was in Monasavu and I see that there were a lot of queries regarding the FEA arrangements. The *Tikina* of Naimalu in the province of Naitasiri partly own Monasavu Dam, but I do not see that Government has given any priority in terms of grid extension and the rural electrification for that particular *tikina* and also for some of the outstanding ones like Nawaisomo, Waibalavu and Naitovoli are not in the list that is provided here, will that be considered for 2016?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Let me first clarify that and this one was earlier on brought in this House in response to the Honourable Minister of Finance speech, whereby it was said that they want shares. That was not the issue, actually the landowners wanted to take over and run the operation over there. That is one clarification. This one, what you have raised is part of this, and definitely all those villages will be taken care of.

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

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- During the past rural development, when they were handling that with the FEA, the provision of black wire meter, two lights one, power point. That is all we are asking, what is the condition now? Are you just providing the black wire to the house and the owner wires it, can you elaborate on that?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- The policy is the same.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Can you stand up and answer.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, I said the policy that we have, we will continue.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments?

There being no other comments and no more motions placed in, we are now ready to vote for the Head.

The Parliament will now vote on Head 14, the question is, that the amount of Head 14, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport be approved. Does any member oppose the motion?

(Chorus of yes and noes)

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

Question put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	25
Noes	:	13
Not voted	:	10

Motion agreed to.

Head No. 40 agreed to.

Head No. 41 : Water Authority of Fiji.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Head No. 41 is before the House and it is open for debate. Do you have any comments on Programmes 3, Activity 1?

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- I just want to ask the Honourable Minister, what provisions have they got in place in terms of the drought that we are going to be facing, especially for those in the rural areas, if you can just clarify that under SEG 6?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, I will speak and then after all, I will request my colleague Minister to speak on this as well because we both work on those areas.

We are very concerned and our team is already on the ground. The West is very much affected, we all are aware. We are getting daily updates on the areas but what plans that we have, you may have seen and as announced by the Honourable Minister of Finance that now we have got 2,000 water tanks and also there is a provision in the Ministry of Lands budget and also in our budget for borehole programmes. This will not be that effective, if we have continuous drought, but definitely we will have the tanks supplied to these affected areas.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- From his response, the Honourable Minister's response, does he think that there is enough allocation that would be needed, in terms of a real drought? Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- As mentioned by the Honourable Minister of Finance yesterday, it is also part of Head 50, and if need be, we will source from there as well.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments? Honourable Ratu Matanitobua.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Madam Chairperson, would the Honourable Minister responsible explain the \$74.2 million allocated for Operating Grants and Transfers. This is Head 41 – Programme 3 – Activity 1 – SEG 6, how much money have they set aside for free water incentive?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. RATU S. MATANITOBUA.- Out of this \$74.2 million, how much money have you set aside for free water incentive?

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, I do not have the actual breakdown, but definitely it is budgeted for.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The Honourable Leader of Opposition.

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- On the Honourable Minister's response to my query, can I put forward a motion that pursuant to Standing Order 100 (2), I move without notice that Head 41–SEG 6 be increased by \$3 million in respect to the Operating Grants and Transfers, to increase the number of water tanks for boreholes and other water sources that may be needed in terms of the drought that will hit the country soon.

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

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you Madam Chairperson. Can the Honourable Minister just please clarify on the provision that has been set for the replacement of water meters of \$14.1 million for 2016? How many metres that you will be replacing and what is the cost? Is there any cost to the customers, et cetera?.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, the details that the Honourable Member have asked, definitely I can submit because at the moment I do not have that breakdown but for the Divisions. I have got the sum that is allocated for the meter replacement programme:

for Western; we have \$1.2 million; for Northern, we have got \$600,000; and for Central \$1.2 million. Thank you.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, on SEGs 6 and 10, how much grant will be diverted to rural water supply, rather than the urban water supply? How much of those grants will be diverted to those rural water supply? Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, for the Rural Water Supply Programme, for next year, it is \$7 million. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? There being none, we have a motion before the House and Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Leader of Opposition. The question is, that Head 41 –3 – 1 – 6 be increased by \$3 million in respect of the Operating Grant. I will now invite the Honourable Leader of Opposition to speak on her motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have been hearing about this drought, not only from the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, but from other learned sources, so we have to be prepared for that, the allocation that is provided here will not be enough. For us, from where I come from, Madam Chair, we can always jump in the river and those from Naitasiri have good flowing streams but it is for the other parts of the country, particularly those that are in need, the maritime areas, all those areas Madam Chairperson, will need a water source. Thank you.

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

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chairperson, I just want to say that the budget that is with my Ministry on the distribution of free water tanks, 5,000 litres and 1,100 litres, that is almost \$1.3 million that has been allocated. Rain water harvesting system, as mentioned by the Honourable Minister in his speech, we have got \$4.5 million. Apart from these allocations the allocation is also with the Ministry for Rural Development, so we have really thought about this and the allocation has been budgeted for. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you Madam Chairperson, in support of the motion regarding the water supply to those areas in the Noco District where the schools are, I was really sad when I visited the Noco Secondary School, you can only have water late at night. You have to collect water at night and I fail to see water in the morning or during the day and I urge that the increase will assist in the reticulations of water supply to those that are being supplied too.

In areas of boreholes, I believe there are issues that may arise on the concern regarding the quality of water during drought that our communities are enjoying or are forced to enjoy those waters from those boreholes during the drought. I believe we need to seriously look into the affairs of our communities and rural communities and as alluded to by the Members of Parliament, we need to supply safe drinking water to our community and that is why I fully support the motion. Thank you

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, we will give the floor to Honourable Leawere

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chairperson, just in support of the motion regarding water, water is a basic necessity of life and some schools we have found out are still deprived of good source of water, especially the villages of Semo and Nabau, they have the Ratu Ilaisa School and the Honourable Minister for Education will also know about this that they need good source of drinking water, especially our school children, and I would like to support the motion in that regards, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Do you have any other input to the motion, Honourable Draunidalo.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I wish to support the motion and draw to the Honourable Minister's attention that there are parts of Nalovo and Uciwai, Momi, Nadi, Nadroga that are in dire difficulties with this. There is a couple there that runs a tyre shop in what used to be Shameen's Service Station. They complain to me all the time and to bring this to your attention, as the Honourable Minister, and that is why I am going to support this motion and of course, the Valley Road.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other input from Honourable Members? Honourable Minister for Finance.

HON A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, we all agree in this House, contrary to some statements made earlier that water, electricity and roads are very, very critical as we can hear from the discussions. However, I think we also have to be cognisant of the fact that just by simply recognising a problem and saying "let us give it another \$4 or \$5 million" does not mean that the problem will be solved within one year. When you give lots of money, you need to ensure that there is lots of capacity within that particular organisation, and indeed within the country itself to be able to utilise those funds. We need to have very good and proper projects in place and that is very, very critical.

As we have heard, some of the problems, as Honourable Draunidalo had highlighted, in Nadi, a lot of them are due to engineering problems that have been put in place over the past 10, 25 years ago. Those engineering problems are still a legacy with us today and there is some fundamental work that needs to be carried out.

I would also like to take this opportunity, Madam Chair, to tell this Honourable House that on the eve of the Budget, the Green Climate Fund actually has now approved for the first

time a \$US31 million grant to Fiji, to help us with our water problems. It is a grant that is going to be channelled through ADB.

Now primarily, the two critical reasons why we managed to do that is of course, because of the advocacy on the part of Fiji to bring it within Climate Change, but also the manner in which we have got our organisations to run. So they see a lot of capacity, they get a lot of feedback from organisations like ADB, and there are a lot of issues from the past and of course not a lot of them are resolved.

We always need to ensure that, for example, things like procurement is done properly, the sources are done properly, the manner in which the equipment and the procurement stores are handled properly that it is not lying around, for example, we use to see before all these pipes that used to be bought, to be laid underground were actually lying on top of the ground for long periods of time and thereby making it vulnerable to the climatic changes, or out in the sun, so the durability of those pipes actually wear out very quickly. These are the kinds of things that do happen.

The Honourable Prem Singh probably knows because he is living in Nadi and he has seen that and these are some of the issues we need to resolve and just by giving money, that problem is not going to go away. This is why we also talk about getting the right people in the country with engineering skill sets. We all recognise the lack of surveyors, lack of valuers and the lack of the kind of engineers that we have. They are not necessarily here, that is why we are giving scholarships in those areas. However, bringing back the point about Water Authority of Fiji, yes, it does need money and yes, we also have to recognise that just by giving it money does not mean that it gets used properly, nor does it necessarily mean that it will get used next year.

As the Honourable Minister for Rural Development highlighted that he is working very closely with the Honourable Minister for Infrastructure and so through the DO, as Assistant Minister Cawaki will tell you, the PAS, the DOs, the Advisory Councillors, they are working together to be able to address those type of issues. We will be in the next couple of days, advertising again, seeking for expressions of interest to get more trucking companies within the network. We need to outsource this work, so we are able to then put the tanks on those trucks so they are available to us 'on call', and deliver them.

One of the problems has been the limitation of the availability of trucks and this now will be resolved. It is not a question of there being a lack of funding but on the delivery systems and that is what we are looking at. In fact, if you look at this particular allocation to WAF, it has actually increased substantially compared to three years ago. The reason why we have done that is because we recognise that problem. We are now getting a number of donors who are coming on board and we also have in Head 50, which we will discuss later on, of course is the contingency funds for disaster risk, as you will see in SEG 12 of Head 50.

Madam Chair, we suggest that we stay with that particular funding because they have the capacity to use that and of course that does not in any way mean that we will not be able to mitigate or help those people who need these services as an emergency. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. There being no other input, I will now invite the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to make her right of reply.

HON. ROKO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you Madam Chair. I thank the Honourable Members who have spoken in support of this motion and I also thank the Honourable and learned Attorney General for his long explanation. However, this is not about just giving money, it is about being proactive and we are not looking at water trucks because you cannot do that all around Fiji. This is about being proactive and supplying, giving provisions where the people can have something ready by the time the drought happens and it will happen, and they will look to Government to supply them and this is a basic need, they will need water every day.

I would also request the Honourable Minister, if he can look into provisions of reduction in the cost of water tanks so that people who can put up their own water tanks will be able to do so soon. That is the motion before the House, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Ro Teimumu Kepa. The question is, that Head 41.3.1.6 be increased by \$3 million in respect of Operating Grant. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, then the Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes cast:

Ayes	:	12
Noes	:	28
Not voted	:	8

Proposed amendment defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Members Parliament will now vote on Head 41 and the question is, that the amount of Head No. 41 - Water Authority of Fiji be approved. Does any Member oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	28
Noes	:	13
Not voted	:	7



Head No. 41 agreed to.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Members.

Head No. 43 – Fiji Roads Authority

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, the Fiji Roads Authority's budget is on the House and open for debate. Does anyone have any comments to make?

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- Madam Chair, SEG 6 under Operating, with an allocation of \$4.1 million, can the Honourable Minister responsible explain how do the FRA intend to relieve the road congestion and then improve the road capacity?

Let me repeat the question; with an allocation of \$4.1 million, can the Honourable Minister responsible explain as to how the FRA intend to relieve the road congestion and improve its capacity?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This is a continuation of funding for this project and during my speech, you must have heard that I mentioned that it is not only Suva where we have traffic congestion, we also have other towns and cities where we have congestion. We have identified all the four lane roads programme that had started from Nausori to Suva and from Nadi, to Namaka, and that is the intent of FRA and we are working very closely with them in identifying the other areas as well

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else have an input? Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you Madam Chair. Could I request the Honourable Minister to a brief clarification on the allocation that has been provided, for basic ongoing maintenance, in the amount of \$79.8 million?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister? Honourable Aseri, which SEG are you referring to?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- SEG 10, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Capital Grant.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- The breakdown of the ....

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- It is a lump sum allocation that has been given for this area of work to be carried out, Madam Chair, but definitely this breakdown can always be given to the House. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have any more inputs to this debate? Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, the 2016 allocation on SEG 10, Capital Grants and Transfers was \$529,754,181. Can the Honourable Minister indicate how much has been spent, as at 30th September, 2015?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, I do not have figures for how they were utilised for 2015. I thought we are discussing the 2016 allocation, but I can always provide this figure, no worries.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca, are you wanting to question the same issue?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Yes, thank you Madam Chair, he is doing very bad this morning. I have a motion, Madam Chair, that pursuant to Standing Order 100(2), I move without notice that Head 43, SEG 10 be decreased by \$30 million with respect to Capital Grant. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes, Madam Chair. I thank the Honourable Minister for his response to my earlier questions but however, more needs to be elaborated on this particular action. I know he does not have the listing but at least give us some general terms and what are the basic ongoing maintenance that is costing this \$79.8 million. In a similar instance, Madam Chair, is the provision of \$75 million for renewal and replacements of roads that are beyond repair? Again, we need clarification on this particular allocation.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, the detail is on the Fiji Roads Authority website and my good friend is very much aware of this, and I really do not know why he wants to bring this again. However, anyway, that \$79 million that he is talking about, this is for the routine maintenance, vegetation, litter, clearance, patching, potholes repairs - these are all allocated here. As I have said, it is the lump sum that has been given but there is a lot of work that is done within that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Still on that, FRA, are they supposed to be giving you their updates every three months? They should be giving you progress every three months in order for you to monitor their projects, especially when they have been given a lump sum of money like that, and they should.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, there is a Board. FRA is run by the FRA Board and the Board is answerable to me. I do not interfere with their daily operation.

(Inaudible interjection)

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Hear me out.

I do not interfere with the daily operation of FRA, the Board reports to me and the report is also submitted to me by the Board, so I am very much aware of what is happening. Like I said, I know they are very much jumping on the breakdown, it is a lump sum figure and I will definitely submit that. Thank you.

(Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister for Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, I can understand the anxiety perhaps by the other side. I mean it is a large sum of money, no doubt. It has been large last year too. We, of course, also have our checks and balances and we are consistently improving that. For the first time in Fiji's history, you will actually find the entire road programme for next year on [www.fijiroads.org](http://www.fijiroads.org). Please go to it, it will set out all the details and we had insisted upon this.

What will FRA do from next year as the honourable Nanovo pointed out, they will also be posting updates in terms of what projects have already been completed; what roads have been sealed; and where are the rural street lighting that have already been done. As you know, we have got major projects for that and overall, Madam Chair, we have in fact reduced the budget for FRA compared to this year and it has gone down by \$18 million.

Obviously, you would have seen that there was an advertisement in the papers about six to eight weeks ago, where the FRA Board called for an Expression of Interest from lawyers who specialise in roading contracts. There is no lawyer in Fiji, who specialises in roading contracts on major infrastructure legal works. I understand, through the Minister, the Board has already appointed a law firm to come and review the existing contracts because many of the existing contracts need to be reviewed in terms of the liability clauses and as you would know, unlike what was said yesterday, even though you have the two major roading companies, which is Higgins Fiji and Fulton Hogan Highway Stabilizers, most of the outsourcing is done to local companies and many people know this. Even in Vanua Levu, even in the Western Division, you will see some different companies doing works under the supervision of these companies, and that actually goes towards capacity building in a few years' time.

The machineries that we have on the roads today, we have never had that before. We are working towards that. There is a lot of this funding that actually flows down to the local contractors, the reality though is, we all need to keep a watch on it and we are keeping a watch on it. We have some of our own internal mechanisms through which we are going to have some tighter observations from the legal and audit perspective. However, everyone knows that and therefore, I urge all Honourable Members that if you want more information on roads, please go to the website and there will be regular updates on that. *Vinaka*.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.-Thank you. Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, just this explanation about the Board and about the structure of FRA. What I have here is the Auditor-General's Report on FRA and they disqualified the books of FRA in 2014.

In a private sector, you fire the whole lot and then you do not give them more funds. In here, we are giving them around \$600 million, so really, Honourable Minister, it is wonderful to hear about all these new things that are happening, but 2014, almost \$600 million, it is very questionable the way it was done. This is why we keep to continue to come from the wastage that concerns the taxpayers of Fiji.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, of course, the Auditor-General's Report has been raised, so we need to respond to that. That is something that we need to look at and it has not gone to the Committee stage yet. That needs to be investigated, the merits of those observations need to be investigated also.

The point is this, there is a new Board. The Chairman is Dinesh Patel, who is a businessman and he comes from a corporate sector. We have an engineer on the Board too and we have someone from the Department of Lands because of the land acquisition that takes place. So these are the people who are now being put on the Board. We have Vaurasi from LTA and Serulagilagi, a lawyer, who is also on the Board.

We have the right people who have been put on the Board and therefore, this new Board will relook at a lot of these issues that have been highlighted. Of course, if there have been any misgivings about the way things have been done, those are the issues that need to be addressed. However, I can tell you, if you look at the Auditor-General's Report, when you have the Department of National Roads and PWD, it is replete with problems of variations to contracts, variation after variation to contract. The Kings Road, they never completed, there were so many variations to the Kings Road. All of those areas had never been completed, they have now been completed, but it does not mean that just because it had been completed, we take our eyes off this thing. We will continue to work with that and everyone needs to work together, to be able to ensure that we get the roads in but also have accountability. We agreed with that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I must remind Honourable Members that this debate is really not a vehicle to scrutinise past performances but to look at the 2016 Budget and

whether we have enough. Please concentrate on the objective of the task before us. Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. We thank the Honourable Minister of Finance for that assurance. Can we also ask him to confirm to this august House that the FRA Board can submit their progress of work of the FRA to this House on the first sitting of next year?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No. It is available in the website you will get the Annual Report. As all statutory bodies table their Annual Reports but you get the updates on the website which is already live.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Are there any more comments on the Fiji Roads Authority? Honourable Ratu Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- My apology, Madam Chair. The sum of \$4.1 million has been provided to relieve congestion and improve road capacity. If I can ask the Honourable Minister if he can give us an overview of the progress because we seem to have a congestion persisting.

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

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, that was the first question that was raised by the Opposition on the \$4.1 million. As I have said, this is the continuation allocation, it is not just the 2016 allocation, it is a continuation which will roll on to 2016, and as I have said, we have identified the areas of congestion and we will work towards that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any more input? There being none, we will now handle the motion that is before us and that Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca and the question is, that Head 43-1-1 SEG 10 be decreased by \$30 million in respect of Capital Grant to FRA. I invite the Honourable Ratu Tikoca to speak on his motion.

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

Head 43, SEG 10 be decreased to \$30 million in respect to Capital Grant. Madam Chair, I move that Head 43 be decreased by \$30 million in respect to Capital Grant because of \$473,743,680 for Capital Projects, Government seeks to provide \$75 million for renewal and replacement of roads that are beyond reasonable repair.

Madam Chair, an allocation of \$83 million will be utilised through a loan from the Asian Development Bank and World Bank for renewals and replacement of roads and the upgrading and replacement of bridges, rural roads and street lights.

Madam Chair, again the Nabouwalu-Dreketi Road upgrading is nearly complete and is allocated \$1 million for the final phase of construction to complement the \$53.9 million loan from the Exim Bank of China, in addition to the \$5 million loan from Exim Bank.

Madam Chair, we are being generous here. Already, \$142 million is taken as loan with interest for renewal and replacement of roads. The State does not need to spend too much for roads that are already covered. Madam Chair, saving \$50 million and allocating this to another division of service of the State is advisable.

Madam Chair, the Quarterly Appropriation Statement as at 30<sup>th</sup> of December, 2015 showed that Fiji Roads Authority had used \$236,930,101 by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter or 36 per cent of the total allocation of \$653-plus million. If the per cent utilisation of fund is low, then we need to reduce the allocation as per proposed amendment. Thank you, Madam.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone want to speak on the motion?  
Honourable Biman Prasad.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, I support the motion and also I support the arguments put forward by Honourable Ratu Tikoca in moving the motion.

Madam Chair, I heard the Honourable Acting Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance explained the steps that the Government is taking, to ensure accountability, transparency in the way in which funds have been used under Fiji Roads Authority. I also understand what he is saying that you need to have good contracts, you need to have good lawyers and you need to put out the details and information that is available. However, Madam Chair, as we all know, misuse of funds, value for money, for funds that we put out, normally it pass some of these controls and monitoring mechanism that we put in place.

Sometimes, Madam Chair, it is not the controls and the monitoring ability of the institution, I think sometimes the sheer size of the allocation that actually allows that kind of overspending or extravaganza in the process that is not easily detected by some of these controls, and I can tell you between 2014 and the allocation for 2017, we would have spent \$2.2 billion on Fiji Roads Authority. That is a huge sum of money and this is why we are calling for caution in the way in which these funds are used. We are calling for priorities to be set and we know that there are a lot of priorities, priorities involving small sums of money. For example, we moved yesterday that we should increase the funding available to support the treatment of kidney patients.

I mean this may sound a small amount but, Madam Chair, Budget is always about priority. Timeliness of those priorities, when do we do that and I think what the motion is trying to do is to say "let us reduce some of the funding, let us use it that for something else which may be better priority and so the motion's objective, I think it is a good one, Madam Chair, and I urge Government to in fact and if I were the Minister of Finance this year, I would have cut FRA's Budget by \$200 million. Madam Chair, because what it also means is that when we borrow, just looking at Head 51 which we would probably discuss.

In 2016 alone, we would end up paying on both domestic loans and extended loans, when added, it would be close to about \$267 million in interest. I mean these are costs of projects and activities that we undertake in our Budget, if we are not too careful about the priorities.

There is always an opportunity cost to this allocation, that allocation, we never have enough and economic impact, Madam Chair, always comes through better cost benefit in analysis, and I have not seen any serious cost benefit analysis information that has been put out.

Madam Chair, I hope the economists on the other side would give that advice to some of the colleagues there, but on that note Madam Chair, I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite other inputs. Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Chair, I would be very, very brief. The allocation is committed for works for 2016, so there is no issue of reduction on the allocation. Let me make it very clear, it is a committed fund for the works that has been already committed. Any country's growth depends on the infrastructure.

HON. MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- We cannot come here, just to stand up and say "Decrease here, increase there, remove milk and Weet-Bix from school children, why this road is not done and when that bridge will commence its work" and now when Government is committed, they are asking for a reduction on the allocation. What are we doing about it, I am sorry, but let us be honest. Thank you, Madam Chair.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I invite input, if any. Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, can I also contribute to this motion?

(Chorus of Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- You all stand to speak but it is only one person that is standing and he has the right to speak, please allow him to do so. Honourable Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, a sign of applause is always welcomed.

We continue to caution the scale at which we do these things. We appreciate the work on the infrastructure but at our pace; at a pace that we can carry out all this work. That is why it is better, Madam Chair, to give ourselves a period, a programme and spend a consistent amount of money to improve our infrastructure - infrastructure will never go away; whether

you are in America, in Germany or some of the most developed countries in the world, infrastructure will always be there.

Madam Chair, you already spend \$2 billion, what we are saying is, if you reduce it to something that we can handle like \$300 million or \$400 million a year, that is about \$3 billion over 10 years or \$4 billion over ten years, if done properly, we will end up with infrastructure road system that is the envy of this part of the world and equal to what we see abroad.

What I always see, Madam Chair, is this; when it rains our roads get washed away or holes come up and then I compare this with wet countries like Japan. Most of us have been to Japan and the potholes are very minimal there. What I see, Madam Chair, is that they have done it for quite some time and they have learnt to do it properly. This is my concern. I am afraid, Madam Chair, with this kind of money that we are committing; be careful of the consultants and how much they are taking out of this country.

I am an ex-hotelier and I tell you what, when you start a new project, sometimes you wake up to the fact too late, even before that project started, you have paid so much money in consultancy fees, you have got to be very careful of this.

Madam Chair, this is why we need to move at a pace that we can handle and I would urge my colleague, the Honourable Minister of Education, to add road building into the curricula. I have seen roads being built and within two weeks they break up, and I often wondered, is it wrong material, is it knowledge or what is it? Maybe at our own pace, do it properly with \$300 million or \$400 million a year and train our people to be better road builders. This is where I am coming from.

Madam Chair, I personally love driving on nice roads and I drive from Sigatoka to Suva every time I come here - I love it. However, I am also concerned about the heavy trucks and what they do to these roads already. I like the fact that we are weighing these heavy trucks and because it costs us so much money, we need to put into place a better management system.

I was even saying that, why do we not ask these trucks to drive between Nadi, Lautoka and Suva only during a certain hour during the night so that you can control them. I know you will say "well, this is another control" but no. We are spending hundreds of millions on our roads, we need to protect them. It breaks your heart when you see a beautiful road and all of a sudden, it begins to curve and it is because of the heavy trucks that are running without control. These are some of the things that we need to watch, Madam Chair, and I re-emphasise this: do it on a scale that we can handle as a young developing country. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. RO T.V. KEPÄ.- Madam Chair, can I just bring to your attention Standing Order 24 "Sittings must be in public", and if you give me leave so I can just read out what the Standing Order says (quote):

**"Sittings must be in Public**



- (1) Parliament and its committees of the whole (including the Committee of Supply) (which we are going through right now) must conduct their business in an open manner and may not exclude the public, including any media, from a sitting unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Speaker has ordered, on grounds that are reasonable and justifiable, that strangers are to withdraw from the Chamber or any gallery.”

We saw that when that loan issue came up, Madam Chair.

- “(2) For the purposes of clause 1,-
  - (a) the Speaker may make rules regulating the admission of the public and media and the Secretary- General must ensure that those rules are complied with; and
  - (b) “stranger” means any person other than the Speaker, a member in good standing and any required Parliamentary staff.”

Madam Chair, we have received word from across the country, from people that they are not getting this coverage. The Television (Cross-Carriage of Designated Events) Decree 2014 expands access to coverage of important televised events by requiring all of Fiji’s free-to-air television broadcasters to air them. The events - the National Budget Address and Parliamentary sittings.

All free-to-air television stations are not showing the televised Live Feeds, and that is my concern Madam Chair. Radio is not covering the sitting either and the people are demanding that they also watch and hear the sittings, so under your powers Madam Chair, I ask that you adjourn this sitting, you communicate with the Honourable Minister for Communication and the Minister that looks after Parliament and to decide on a way forward. We are talking about the Budget of the nation, ...

(Acclamation)

... people are calling us, wanting this Live Feed and they want to hear it also on radio. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I am extremely disappointed that this sitting is not being aired on both television and radio, but that is technology. We have just received information that the Fiji Broadcasting Commission is now requesting cameras to be installed inside the Chamber and I said “Yes, please do so immediately.” Really it is on the machines, the FBC machine that is not working and that is the cause of this. They tri-cast the machine broadcasting units and I have allowed them to put cameras in the Chamber to solve that problem.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Can we get the response from the relevant Minister as to why this is not happening? Thank you.

(Inaudible Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- It is a technical problem, really, however let us get your views on this.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This is the obtuseness of the Honourable Leader of Opposition, getting me to comment on this. It has nothing to do with us. It falls under the premise of the Parliament.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- You control everything.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I do not control everything, do not be ridiculous, that is a ridiculous proposition.

The Secretary-General and Madam Chair have just informed us that there is a problem with their machinery, they are getting it fixed. Madam Chair says she will allow cameras in Parliament. We have got nothing to do with this. What a preposterous idea! It has got nothing to do with us, it is the technology.

HON. ROKO T.T.S DRAUNIDALO.- I rise on a Point of Order under Standing Order 18, again to follow up to the Honourable Leader of Opposition's comments. Can we ask you, since it is within your power and the Secretary-General's, is it true that only FBC is allowed to take the Live Feed, why can Fiji TV not be allowed so that this does not happen and if one breaks down, the other one is working. Just allow them both in.

(Inaudible Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister, can you answer that?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, can you clarify; the machineries are owned by Parliament, the tri-caster actually is within the domain of Parliament. They have chosen a particular company in the same way you have the Live Feed for His Excellency the President's farewell. It was done through one company, and the other one also gets the Live Feed simultaneously. It does not matter, whether it is FBC or Fiji TV, that machine is not working. That machine is under the control of this House and the Honourable Chair has said, she has allowed everyone to come in here and use the cameras. They can do whatever they like in terms of the Live Feed. This is a ridiculous proposition, you are trying to turn this into a political issue when these issues are about technology.

(Chorus of Interjections)

Madam Chair, if I can also finish. This is the first time that any government has facilitated a Live Feed with cameras everywhere. This Government is the government that put this into place. This Government is the one that put the technology into place, the first Government that has ever done that, not that level of communication or technology has ever been put in any other Parliament in Fiji.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, that is not happening and people are very concerned because of the important issues that are debated here that they are not being heard.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Madam Chair, that is not happening and people are very concerned because of the important issues that are debated here that they are not being heard.

(Chorus of Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you for your information. Honourable Members, Fiji Television also takes Live Feed from Parliament and Telecommunications Fiji Limited. All of them take Live Feed from Parliament, and as we said, it is a technical problem and it is being fixed and if you like, we can adjourn Parliament right now so that we can go and have lunch and the TV people can come and setup cameras in the Chamber, and that we have allowed.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament is now adjourned and lunch is being served in the same venue so when the cameras are done and we are ready to come in, you will hear the bell and that is when we will resume. Thank you very much, Honourable Members.

The Parliament adjourned at 12.27 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 2.10 p.m.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Good afternoon, Honourable Members, I think we can start now.

First, I would like to welcome all the students that we have out there in the gallery, from Dakuivuna Village School. *Bula vinaka*, I already said “*Bula*” to you but again, *Bula vinaka* from me.

(Acclamation)

Honourable Members, we will continue from where we left off before lunch and we are yet to finish the Fiji Roads Authority Head, so should there be any other comments? If there are none, then I will have to get into the motion.

Any further comments on the FRA?

(Chorus of Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Therefore, I will now move this motion, and the Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca. The question is that, Head 43-1-1 – SEG 10 be decreased by \$30 million in respect of Capital Grant – FRA.

I will now give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Tikoca to speak on his motion.

Any other comments on this? We are ready to vote. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca. The question is that, Head 43-1-1 SEG 10 be decreased by \$30 million in respect of Capital Grant for the Fiji Roads Authority. Does anyone oppose? There being opposition, we will put this into vote. Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	12
Noes	:	25
Not voted	:	11

Proposed amendment defeated.

The Parliament will now vote on Head No. 43. The question is that, the amount on Head 43, Fiji Roads Authority be approved; does any Member oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Question put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	25
Noes	:	13
Not voted	:	10

Head No. 43 agreed to.

Head No. 49 : Peacekeeping Missions

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Head No. 49; Peacekeeping Mission, is open for debate but before that, please Honourable Members be succinct with your input. We have been going on a bit too long in the last one and a half days, going off track sometimes, that is why we are talking so long on this. Please be very focused in making your presentations so that the task at hand can be achieved successfully for today.

The Peacekeeping Missions Head is up for debate and I invite any input.

Programme 1 – Peacekeeping, Activity 1 – Support Services. Thank you Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T.VADEI.- Thank you Madam Chair, on Head 49, Programme 1, Activity 1, regarding the whole SEG.

(Chorus of Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which SEG are you referring to?

HON. A.T.VADEI.- SEG 1 to 7 – whether the total allocation is to cover the abuse for this year?

(Inaudible Interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Which SEG are you referring to?

HON. A.T. VADEI.- SEG 1 to 7 – whether the total allocation is to cover the abuse for this year?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, that input does not make sense because we have seven SEGs here and I do not know which SEG to put the education question really. I cannot place it in the Appropriation before us unless you can tell us which SEG you are talking about, only then we can progress.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Chair, the reason why I am asking this is because of the overspent this year, which will be covered in the 2016 Budget. That is what I am trying to ask.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Over spent on which SEG?

HON. A.T.VADEI.- From SEG 1 to 7. Those are some of the areas of concern in the overspent in the Auditor-General's Report.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. As I had mentioned this morning, you must not use the Auditor-General's Report which is still with the PAC Committee. That is the role of PAC to relook at the Auditor-General's Report and not to bring it to the debate on this budget. Not only that, secondly the issue that has been presented, I am not able to identify it in one of the SEGs here, so really I cannot put this for debate because it is just outside the ambit of the Budget that we have in front of us. Honourable Nawaikula.

(Inaudible Interjections)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Head 49, Programmes 1, Activity 1, SEG 7. Arrangement for rapid deployment for peace keeping missions: \$250,000. Does the Honourable Minister feel as I do that this is unnecessary, too much because rapid deployment for what? Peacekeeping is for the UN.

HON. CAPT. T.L. NATUVA.- Madam Chair, the rapid deployment for peacekeeping mission (\$250,000), there is arrangement being made between the Government of Fiji and the United Nations. If there is a requirement for medical team, engineering team, personnel security detail or increase the number of personnel at 1FIR in Lebanon, that is where the amount will be used. If there is no request, then that money will not be used.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIUDALO.- Programme 1, SEG 1, how much money will the UN give as remittance for 2016? The budget allocated by the Government of Fiji is a total of \$79 million under this Head and I have seen some other amounts for rapid deployment and some other things to do with peacekeeping in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allocation and also with the Fiji Police Force. There is an additional amount outside this Head, which are to do with peacekeeping, and this Head alone is \$79 million. I want to ask, for this \$79 million that the Fiji Government is paying, subsidising the UN, how much will the UN remit to Fiji?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, this question has already been answered. I do not think the Honourable Member was here yesterday afternoon when this came up.

The rapid deployment is not in Foreign Affairs, rapid deployment is in Prisons, it is in the Police and it is in the RFMF. From the practical side, these amounts have been given to these security agencies in the event, Honourable Nawaikula, as the Honourable Minister highlighted, there is a requirement for that, which Fiji is undertaking.

I had already answered this, Honourable Draunidalo. We had said that at this moment, with the permit, the combination of the calculation of the numbers, we are owed somewhere in the vicinity of about \$26 million, that is outstanding to us.

As to when exactly we will get it, we are not sure at this stage and that is the matter that is worked out between our Permanent Representative to the United Nations (PRUN) and of

course our Foreign Affairs and the RFMF over here, but that is approximately the number that has been given to us that is outstanding. There have been some differences in terms of how those rates need to be calculated and as we highlighted yesterday also is that, like with many other countries that contribute to peacekeeping duties, there are amounts outstanding. The UN does disburse funds upon payment by the UN members and this is why we had that slight gap but overall, we have received in excess of at least \$50 million so far in the past five years from the UN.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bilitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Just a further clarification to that Minister of Finance. I can see that SEG 7, stand-by arrangement, it is the first time it is appearing. What was the arrangement previously; is this the first time?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. CAPT. T.L. NATUVA.- Madam Chairperson, yes it is the first time.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any more comments to make on Activity 1, Activity 2, Activity 3?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, there is staffing allocation of about \$24 million for 338 plus personnel in the Sinai. Could the Honourable Minister advise if there are plans to draw down either gradually or directly? This is related to my concern on having to actually deploy when you have assessed threat analysis, both internal and external, and also to look at our commitment abroad and the needs of this country.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Sorry, which Programme, Activity and SEG are we referring to?

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Head 49, Programme 1, Activity 2 - SEG 1.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. CAPT. T.L. NATUVA.- Madam Chairperson, I am not really sure what exactly he wants me to answer. There are lots of things that he asked, can he clarify please?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson, I think I prefer by suggesting a motion.

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

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chairperson, pursuant to Standing Orders 100 (2), I move without notice that Head 49 be decreased by \$12 million in respect of SEG 1. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Draunidalo.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- I wish to move a motion to decrease the amount in all the SEGs.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Anymore input from Honourable Members? Activity 1,2,3, Honourable Ratu Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Madam Chairperson, Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 7, that \$250,000 for standby arrangement of rapid deployment, this is the first time that they are doing this, I request if you can reduce the amount to \$100,000 instead of \$250,000. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you want to put that in the motion?

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- I am moving a motion for that. Madam Chairperson, pursuant to Standing Order 100 (2), I move without notice that Head 49, Programme 1, Activity 1 - SEG 7 the amount of \$250,000 to be decreased by \$150,000 so it will only be left with \$100,000. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone else want to speak on this, Activity 2,3 Programme 2, Activity 1. Honourable Nawaikula?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Activity 1, SEG 7, again, there appears a Rapid Deployment for Peacekeeping, what is this when you already have in Programme 1, Activity 1 the same amount?

HON. CAPT. T.L. NATUVA.- Madam Chairperson, which Programme are you asking? There is a standby arrangement for Police and a standby arrangement for RFMF. Thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Are there some more motions to come? We will now vote for the first motion. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Tupou Draunidalo and the question is, that Head 49 be decreased by \$79 million in respect of Programmes 1 and 2 - Support Services Multinational Forces and Observes FIR Overseas Peacekeeping and Operations. I will give the floor to Honourable Draunidalo to speak on her motion.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As we have said for a few days now, Members on this side, we just do not believe it is a good priority for the Government to be spending hundreds of millions of dollars for something that benefits the United Nations and conflicts that have nothing to do with us, they are far away from us. If the conflict was next door and threatens us and our stability and security – yes, we should pay but not for something that has absolutely no relevance and no effect to us. The Honourable Minister has said that about \$15 million is owed to us by the UN, we have received over 50 and 26 is owed to us for a few years ...

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Within the five years.



HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- ...within the five years and yet for the Budget in one year, last year alone that could have absorbed it.

The Fiji Government already paid that amount and here we are paying another \$79 million, Madam Chairperson, and yesterday, we heard from the Government that there was not enough money and that is why they voted against the motion for dialysis machine. Other priority areas which the Opposition put up is in regards to Education, Health and Infrastructure, in terms of the service to the maritime islands to Ono-i-lau, to Moala to Vanuabalavu and all the islands in Lau. All this money can be used for these services, infrastructure and to provide stability in this country, in terms of institutional building and yet, we are paying it for this force to go and serve overseas.

What is worse, Madam Chairperson, is, apart from keeping the peace overseas, they cause havoc at home. That is well known, Madam Chairperson, this poor country and the poor taxpayers in this country, if it comes out from the Honourable Vunivalu's pocket ...

(Laughter)

... and he can pay \$79 million for the Military, fair enough, we can have a Military and if he can subsidise the billions of dollars lost through ....

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Do not personalise things!

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- No, he was personalising, I am returning it.

Madam Chairperson, if the money was ours personally, to do as we please, then we would pay it out to our own priority areas, but it is the priority of the Government and all of the services that Opposition has suggested in areas where we are trying to be helpful and help in education, infrastructure, all that has been foregone so that we can spend \$79 million overseas on something that is absolutely nothing to do with us. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does any other Honourable Member want to speak on the motion?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Yes, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, it is unfortunate that we are now talking about the United Nations after many years of participation in areas where we go to help maintain the peace - going back to 1978, I believe.

We are proud of our men in uniform, who represented Fiji and have done extremely well. But the reality of it now, Madam Chair, is that, as a developing country, our priorities need to be realigned to what the people of this country consider as important, given the present days and that is, to as much as possible, use the taxpayers money for the development of the country here in Fiji. There is so much in need for it. But if the United Nations wants us to continue to help, let us ask them to pay for it. I am proud of the fact that although a little apprehensive at the time when other countries have moved out of Golan, our people went in

there to keep the peace. I was proud of that and in many other areas, they have not hesitated to go in and do what needed to be done.

Yesterday, the Honourable Minister for Agriculture spoke about the packages on psychology from the UN. I always remember the case back in the late nineties I believe, when our troops had to go into a camp to pick up body pieces when a camp was hit by some missiles. I can remember a picture of one of our very own carrying the body of a headless child and I can just imagine the trauma and the effect on the troop of ours over the years. In Fiji, you do not see things like that. We place our people in there and they did a job.

As we said earlier in the year, if they go, make sure the preparation they go through is the best there is, well equipped and well paid. That is what we said when they go, but the time has come for this time that we communicate very strongly to the UN that we will help but the people of Fiji today would like the UN to be forthcoming with payment even if they prepay, we all run a business - prepayment is something that we do when you are running out of cash or our collection has got to be better.

I know there are rules in place that they reimburse, following an agreement that you have put in place, the time has come now if you are listening the people of Fiji go, and negotiate again with them and say "look let us review that agreement, maybe you use to pay 90 days, the people of Fiji now wants to be paid in 30 days". We all run businesses, it is our debts and the long and short of it is that, we cannot afford to be carrying these debts. It is costing us money and sometimes for quite some period of time.

Madam Speaker, the motion really is telling the Government that this money should be spent in Fiji. We have the delicate duty of where we have to balance our relationship with the outside world and the UN. All it needs to be done is to go out and express these views very strongly to the powers that be the UN and say these are the wishes of the people of Fiji, let us do it differently. Let the people of Fiji know that they are not paying for this anymore. We have been doing it since 1978, it is now 2015, 2016, let us relook at the formula, otherwise, Madam Chair, we would say "do not do it, cut back in a big way with our assistance to the UN". Thank you, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, is there any other input. The Honourable Minister for Defence.

HON. CAPT. T.L. NATUVA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. What concerns us from this side of the House is that, that side of the House are only inward looking. Looking at ourselves, looking at the ground and not looking forward. What is happening to our contribution to the peacekeeping is our contribution to the peace of the world.

(Acclamation)

Like the coalition forces, like transnational crime, how we can stop transnational crime.

We are a peacekeeping force to stop war factions on either side. Like in Israel, you have the Fiji Company in Lebanon between the side of Lebanon and Israel, between Egypt and Israel, between Syria and Israel. In order for them not to fight, we have the peacekeeping force and that is happening all around the world and that is our contribution. It is a very limited contribution, compared to the coalition of forces trying to stop the war in Syria and the bigger forces are doing that.

We have changed the mind set of how we run the FijiFirst Government - that is our contribution. You might be saying that we contributed about \$75 million, that is very limited to the amount of billions of dollars that other States and other nations use in trying to have peace in the world. So, if you can think about how we think, maybe come around and think that what we are doing is good for the peace of the whole world.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, do you have any other input from any other Member? Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Thank you Madam Chair, I think it is far more important to look at ourselves locally before we look outside. That is the whole point of this exercise and I must say that I support the motion because I feel that the UN has let us down very, very badly. We had thought from the beginning that as professional soldiers, the UN has approached us to use that experience to keep peace worldwide at the UN's cost.

Madam Chair, the return service are fighting the court case and now that they realise that what was supposed to come from the UN is not there. Here, we are being forced to pay from our own pockets to do what the UN is supposed to do and its sponsors. The core role of the UN is to keep peace, fair enough. We also want to help in that but can we afford it?

I know the US can afford it because it has a lot of money, it is also part of its foreign policy. What is our foreign policy? What is the interest that we want to protect in this side? That is the whole reason for this exercise, yes we can, yes we can but the UN must pay, the US must pay. We cannot afford to be spending our money here which would be better spent on health and better spent on agriculture, it would be better spent on education and not to take our boys and keep the peace somewhere and have them killed as well. That is why I support the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you any other input from Honourable Members.

HON LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chair, I wish to contribute to the motion before the House. There are a few things that we need to remind ourselves with. One, this is part of our obligation as a responsible global citizen. The Honourable Member in this House every now and then refers to the UN Declaration on Indigenous Rights, UN Declaration on Torture and the so many. However, just because of this budget, we do not want to be part of the UN? That is very short sighted let us be strategic in our decision making.

(Chorus of Interjections)

Secondly, Madam Chair, I wish to once again reiterate the fact that we are the UN. The UN is not a sovereign State, but we, the members, make up the UN, and of course, the United Nations, whenever the member States pay their contribution that is when they reimburse to the troop contributing countries. The United Nations, as a responsible international organisation, will pay. However, we are the United Nations, we are with the member States, we are the ones who pay for the bills. When countries do pay, then it will be reimbursed to other countries.

Let us look at the long-term implications of these and of course, I have already shared in this House, this is very much part of our foreign policies, it strongly supports our foreign policies as a responsible global citizen. Thank you, Madam Chair.

(Acclamation)

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

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, if we look at the whole United Nations and you look at our operation here and you look at Nasinu, you have recruits happening almost in a period of every eight weeks. Look at what happens in Rwanda; propaganda, Qorvis; propaganda. [INTERJECTIONS] You are pumping in propaganda to the young minds of our generation here. Remember that ...

(Chorus of Interjections)

... hold on, you have to look at it globally.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, please, we are on air now and members of the public would like to hear what has been said.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- They are going to see what is happening. Daily, you see, you are getting hundreds and hundreds of girls and boys on the training. They have been told of your propaganda, this is what happened in Rwanda. I have served there during the battle and right through until it finished, and this is what we found when government engages itself with the Military. Military must be left alone to do their charge, you are constitutionalising them to be part of you. This is wrong. They operate like you and I used to operate before, not this.

(Laughter)

Obviously, I will call on the UN inspectors to come and check your diaries, check on how you are spending money under the name UN and how you are conducting propaganda with the taxpayers' money of Fiji? Who is doing that? It is you, it is seen, we have seen that and my God, stay away from young people.

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- They voted for us.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Not you, not to run this country down with the mindset that you have right now. That is the fear, when you talk UN, let us inspect the funds that you are using, get UN inspectors which are readily available to come here and see whether the training that is conducted prior to departure, the embarkation is conducted as per the requirement or you are doing it under UN's name but for your own political purpose. That is the trend.

(Chorus of Interjections from the Government side)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- That is why...

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- It has never changed, it is still the same, in 1987.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- What?

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- It has never changed, it is still the same.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Hey, remember you were brought in from Pakistan.

(Laughter)

Do not come here, because you are pretty strange here.

What we are trying to do is that, let the UN inspectors come and justify, then that will actually satisfy the people of Fiji. Every eight weeks, you send hundreds and hundreds of people, what are you trying to do? Employment; right you just came and gave them recruits, they passed and after that they returned. Even a number of people in our villagers who went through that programme, they have been waiting, been promised to go to Sinai, nothing or something else is going under peacekeeping training. However, you are not providing them, only for eight weeks; pump them what you want and you left them there until you require them as and when you like it. So that is why we are so worried about the ballooned budget that is allocated to you, please, when I am asking you for details, you cannot say refer here, refer here. A lot of details you said, it is in lump sum, if it is in lump sum that does mean that is not itemised therefore, it is up to you where you use it and you are asking the people of Fiji to vote for that, that is wrong. Justify all your expenditures to the people of Fiji.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Member.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I do not, will not, I support the motion.

(Laughter)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Please let us bring back order into the House.

Let us here out the Honourable Member that is on the floor, let us listen, there are frivolous interjections that is happening. You will be given time to speak, there is no limitation as to how many times you will speak or who will speak. You can stand up and speak and not just sit down and make frivolous interjections and making too much noise. I now give the floor to the Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Ratu Tikoca keeps on saving himself from the cameras.

Honourable Chair, just a point of clarification, the Honourable Draunidalo said that we said there was not enough money for kidney dialysis. We never said that, all the Honourable Minister for Health said was that that money was sufficient enough, that is the point. Just because you want an allocation increase somewhere else and we do not agree with it does not mean that there is no money. Budget is all about balancing, it is about looking at the different priorities and making the right amount of money available, depending on the spend capacity of those institutions.

The other point, I think the Honourable Ministers, both the Honourable Ministers were from the Military background can have of course explain peacekeeping duties like Honourable Tikoca has spoken a lot more eloquently than I have, the two Ministers have.

One other point just to highlight what the Honourable Minister for Agriculture said, we do get a lot of assistance from the UN in other means. Some of you enjoyed your retreat at the Warwick Hotel, I know some of you spent a few days there, that was under the banner of the UN.

There have been other arrangements, there have been other aid: UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO and ILO. They are all UN agencies and they do provide assistance. That is how we also benefit from it and yes, of course, we do not like people owing money to us. The fact is, we want to get that paid. It does not mean, that in the meantime because there are some money owed therefore, we should stop all engagements. That would be very short sighted and as highlighted by the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, I think it was yesterday or the day before yesterday. Many Fijians, I am sure, that many of the former military officers who are here, they also have benefitted from the allowances they have received.

As highlighted by the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, many have been able to actually build new homes, buy new vehicles upon their return to Fiji. It does have a huge socio-economic impact on their lives too. We do not in any case, Honourable Nawaikula completely forget the fact that some of our own troops, very valiantly lost their lives in the process. It has happened ever since the 1970s, yes, but if you look at other troops, there have been huge losses too. I am not in any way justifying the loss of lives, but the reality is that, we have to balance all of these things. It will be very short-sighted of us, just because there this amount of money that is outstanding, to stop the programme entirely because it has numerous benefits, thank you Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I will now give the floor to the Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. After hearing all the contributions so far, something comes to mind, the motion that is before the House is quite simple. What we really need to do is for the RFMF to review whether its engagement into peacekeeping should be continued, reduced or to put a stop. Do a cost benefit analysis, when the Honourable Minister comes back to the House and rather than having this kind of allocation without us really assessing our involvement in trying to advocate peace. The Honourable Minister had said that Fiji has contributed to peace in the world. If the Honourable Minister had been following the trend recently and listened to the Honourable Prime Minister of Israel in the UN General Meeting last month, the Prime Minister of Israel said something that I think should echo to every leader in the world. This is what he said “ In the *Bible*, it is written pray for peace in Jerusalem”. It does not say you come and make peace in Israel, you come to Israel and bring us peace. You pray from wherever you are in all over the world and you pray but the problem here we are sending peacekeepers and we are trying to make them peaceful. We should be praying for them, the solution for peace in the Middle East is in the Middle East.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Their prayers are not answered.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- It is even written in the UN General Assembly on the door head. The formation of the UN itself in 1945 was formed because of the State of Israel, nothing else, it is written there at the door “ pray for peace in Jerusalem” and for this nation to be sending deployments to go and restore peace in Israel, you cannot change that because problem in the Middle East is a problem that can only be solved by God, no one else.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Thank you.

HON. MEMBERS.- Amen!

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- That is why we really need to review this particular allocation, whether it is really viable for us to be still sending troops when the trend itself are there to just repeat what the Prime Minister of Israel said.

The missile which Iran is currently making is not for Israel, it is for you - member countries. You people have to be prepared, so I would like the Honourable Minister for Defence at least to bring a review paper and to review whether it is really viable for us to continue with peacekeeping and I speak in support of the motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Just before we move on, I would like to welcome all the students, teachers and parents from Dilkusha Boys School that are in the gallery now. *Bula*. Thank you, I now give the floor to the Honourable Seruiratu.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I did mention yesterday when we talk about peacekeeping mission as well that the review is included in the Defence Review process and the White Paper that will follow, that is currently being

undertaken. That will be the opportunity for us to look at the future of the RFMF, the structure, the manning, the allocation and so it will come next year once the Defence Review paper is available.

HON. CAPT. T.L. NATUVA.- Madam Chair, what I wanted to say is being said by the Honourable Minister.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I now give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- I thank the Honourable Minister because the support that RFMF, the Naval and everyone else from the Defence who assisted Committee in providing the best information that we need.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I now give the floor to the Honourable Roko Tupou Draunidalo for her right of reply.

HON. ROKO T.T.S DRAUNIDALO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank everyone who contributed to the debate. It is an important one, especially to the Honourable Ministers who have assured us that the review is going to look into this and we are encouraged and we look forward to that.

Madam Chair, this is nothing personal against anyone in the Military or in fact, in listening to submissions in the Committee, I am beginning to wonder whether we should allocate more of the funds to the Naval Division for the very important work that they do in policing our EEZ and that is Fiji's interest. Giving money to the Naval Division to look after Fiji is supported but giving money to another division to go overseas and look after someone else's business is not our business and we do not support it. It is a waste of money that is all we are saying.

Madam Chair, Mauritius is talked about a lot in this Chamber, a very successful economically, politically and socially and Joseph Stiglitz is the noble laureate in economics wrote an article about why Mauritius had that success because they did not have a standing army and related article was written by the Honourable Professor Prasad and why Fiji is not a Mauritius of the Pacific, if any Honourable Member wants a copy, we will make it available to them.

Madam Chair, we just want the best for Fiji and we want the best for our children, we will not be here forever and I want to ask the Honourable Ministers and those on the other side, do you want your children to grow up in the country that is going to be increase in militarisation because our military is used as an excuse to keep this big force for the UN? Do we want what we have gone through in the last 30 years to happen to our children and our grandchildren? I do not have children, I have many nieces and nephews and I am totally understanding if they all want to go overseas and study and never come back because we do not want them to go through the same things here. The opportunity is overseas in a stable environment, a political environment, one that is not militarised is what we do want for them. We just want the best



for all the children in Fiji. We want the best for the children of the Members opposite. We do not want them to go through the last years that we have been through and that is why we make this suggestion, and that is not about not being part of the UN, Madam Chair.

Mauritius is very much part of the UN, an active member but they do not have a standing Military and all we are saying is our contribution in terms of lives and the money that we give to the UN for this is totally disproportionate for a poor country like ours. Again, I say, to end my speech on this motion, I am encouraged that the Honourable Ministers are talking about this review and I hope it is going to get us to the right place.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you very much. Parliament will now vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Roko Tupou Draunidalo, the question is, that Head 49 be decreased by \$79 million in respect of Programmes 1 and 2 - Support Services Multinational Forces and Observers 1 FIR Overseas Peacekeeping Operations. Does anyone oppose?

HON. J. USAMATE.- Madam Chair, you have to name the Head, Item and the sub-item, whereas in this one, you are just naming the Head not naming the item and sub-item, is that in accordance with the Standing Orders?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- It is with respect to Programmes 1 and 2 throughout. The whole of Programmes 1 and 2, as I have mentioned. Does anyone oppose the motion? Since, there has been opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	25
Not Voted	:	8

Proposed amendment defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Members. The next one, Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Ratu Sela Nanovo and the question is, that Head 49 be decreased by \$150,000 in respect of Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 1 – Standby Arrangement for Rapid Deployment. I now invite the Honourable Ratu Nanovo to speak on his motion.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This, again, is in relation to Standby Arrangement for Rapid Deployment. As we all know, the standby arrangement is only reserved or it is a contingency plan and that can only be used when it is needed. It is not really there to be used but it just for standby and the amount that is allocated for standby should be worked out, based on something that is already been proven, work out on a certain percentage

and in many instances, it is work out on a contingency plan up to 10 per cent, based on what has been done.

In here, we noted that this exercise has not been carried out and for us right now, we are looking at all the funds that we can get in order to carry on development in Fiji. That is why we are saying, and I am saying, holding \$250,000 on standby, maybe it is too much, it has not been proven so I thought it maybe best that we allow \$100,000 first and release the \$150,000 for something worth more which can create economic activity now rather than just holding on standby.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I invite Honourable Members if anyone wants to speak on this motion There have been none, then there will be no right of reply, so we will go straight into the vote.

Parliament will now vote an amendment in the name of the Honourable Sela Nanovo, the question is, that Head 49 be decreased by \$150,000 in respect to Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 1 – Standby Arrangement for Rapid Deployment.

Does anyone oppose the motion? Since there have been opposition, Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Question on amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	26
Not Voted	:	6

Proposed amendment defeated.

Thank you. Parliament will now vote on the last motion on the amendment in the name of Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca. The question is, that Head 49 be decreased by \$12 million in respect of Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 1, the whole SEG. I now invite the Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca to speak on his motion.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. This applies to the same contribution that we have done before. The motion is put to the floor.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on this motion? There being none, I will not ask for a right of reply therefore, Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca. The question is, that Head 49 be decreased by \$12 million in respect to Programme 1, Activity 1, SEG 1, the whole SEG. Does anyone oppose the motion? There have been opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on amendment put.

Votes Cast :

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	26
Note Voted	:	7

Proposed amendment defeated.

Thank you, Honourable Members we will now vote on Head 49 and the question is, that the amount of Head No – 49, Peacekeeping Missions be approved. Does any Honourable Member oppose the motion? There have been opposition, Parliament will vote on this motion.

Question put.

Votes Cast

Ayes	:	26
Noes	:	16
Not voted	:	6

Head 49 agreed to.

Head No. 50 - Miscellaneous Services

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, the Miscellaneous Services is up for debate and I invite comments from the Honourable Members on the appropriation that is before us. Honourable Dr Biman Prasad.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Let me start, I am sure there will be quite a few issues on this. I think this is a very important Head, and it includes contingency funding, other common pool funds, it also include funds that the Ministry of Finance would need to keep under scrutiny and monitor.

Madam Chair, in fact, if you look at the scrutiny and the monitoring role, then I would say that the Ministry of Finance should actually do that for every Ministry and I know that there are processes within the Ministry of Finance, some they are improving on to do that.

HON. A. SAYED KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, a Point of Order.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- What is your Point of Order?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, can I raise a point of clarification.

HON. DR. B. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, I am just reading from the Budget Supplement.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Can I rise on one point of clarification, Madam Chair, under Standing Order 100, this Head is like every other Head, as we have done, whenever the Honourable Members have raised an issue about the Head they go to the Programme, Activity and SEG. In this particular Head, we have the various SEGs within the Head. If you look at Head 50, the Summary of the Total Expenditure at page 290 and then you go into the Standard Expenses as SEG: Group 1, Group 3 and goes on. As per Standing Order 100, whoever wants to speak on this, obviously can, but they need to refer to the particular SEG that they are speaking on and not give an over view of the actual Head itself. We are here to look at the actual figures and amend the figures, you can propose that and amend that. But let us speak on the various SEG's, please. Thank you.

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

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, that was a very trivial point and I think the Honourable and Learned Attorney-General is wasting our time. Let me move on to SEG 1 on ....

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Member, that is not trivial because he was quoting from the Standing Orders and that is very serious but of course, please speak on a SEG activity.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- I will, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- On the salary adjustment for \$5 million, I think \$6 million was already allocated within the Ministry of Civil Service. The Budget Supplement Estimates says that the Survey Adjustment Cost of \$5 million is for one budget of salary commitments and it is to cater for the new Ministry or shortfalls in budget needing adjustment. While the Civil Service Reform Budget of \$1 million is to match World Bank assistance, those two separate relisted items, Madam Chair, are very closely related.

Under Head 17, that is supposed to cater for the new Ministry of Civil Service. There is a separate allocation that will cost \$5.8 million for the setup of this entity. I am going to speak a little bit more but before that, let me just move this motion. Pursuant to Standing Orders 100(2), I move this motion without notice that Head 50 be decreased by \$1 million in respect of civil service reform - SEG 1.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on this Head, Miscellaneous Services? Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Yes, Madam Chair, just an addition to salary adjustment in SEG 50 just a point of clarification from the Honourable Minister, does this shortfall cater only for the Public Service Commission, or does it covers a wide range of civil servants?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Honourable Member, it covers only Civil Servants.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Minister. Any other input? There have been none. We have a motion on the Table. Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I would like to move a motion in accordance with Standing Order 100(2) and I move without notice that Head 50, SEG 1 be decreased by \$5 million and that comes under salary adjustment.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Looks like you both want to decrease on the same SEG and that Honourable Radrodro, that SEG has been dealt with under the motion that is going to be proposed by Honourable Dr Biman Prasad.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I understand the Honourable Biman's motion is on the \$1 million for this Civil Service Reform. My motion is on the \$5 million under salary adjustment on SEG 1.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Then yours is SEG 2, not SEG 1.

MADAM SECRETARY-GENERAL.- SEG 1, Part 2.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, if I can provide clarification. This Head is slightly different, so you have the Head then you have SEG 1, 3, et cetera, but within the SEG, you have the different headings; it would be Head 50, SEG 1, and in the case of the Honourable Radrodro, Line Number Item 1, Honourable Prasad, it is Head 50, SEG 1, Line Number 2.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We have one motion on the Table. We will deal with it now while waiting for the other. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Dr. Biman Prasad.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- On the salary adjustment, on the amount of \$5 million. we have the Ministry of Civil Service that has been discussed earlier on yesterday or the day before and then we have the salary adjustments again, relating to that Ministry or any other new Ministry which is probably, I assume, the Ministry of Civil Service. Can the Honourable Minister enlighten us more on what are the kinds of shortfalls or budget allocation this is directed towards?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- These are unforeseen expenses relating to salary adjustments. For example, you will see, Honourable Member, in 2014, a total of \$3 million was used. In 2015, we have so far used only \$284,000, so it does not mean at all that that is

used up. That provision has been a trend, so far, we have used, for this year, out of the \$5 million, only \$284,000.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will now vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Salote Radrodoro and the question is, that Head 50 be decreased by \$5 million. We are dealing with hers first because it is a big amount.

In respect of SEG 1, Line No. 1 – Salary Adjustment, and I now invite the Honourable Salote Radrodoro to speak on her motion.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I move the motion on that already. The Ministries and Departments are already being budgeted in terms of all their personal emoluments and the fact that the numbers have not been provided that mandates them to work within that budgetary provision that has been given. Really, there is no need for the \$5 million appearing here under Head 50 to cover for salary adjustment. Good governance supports transparency and accountability, Ministries and departments should work within the amount that has been given to them and we heard from the other side that they have been given an envelope, so work within that envelope.

That \$5 million, there are other more needy areas. For example, I had raised this morning and I wish the Honourable Minister of Finance was here in terms of the shipping franchise to the maritime islands. I see this \$1 million just sitting here and as the Honourable Minister of Finance had said, it was under-utilised in 2014.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, 2015; 2014 was increased by \$3 million.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Yes, 2014, \$3.8 million, 2015 unless you give us some kind of expenditure summary on Government's expenditure then we will be able to know and reaffirm. Otherwise, Madam Chair, that is the reasoning for moving the motion to remove that from Head 50, because it is unjustified.

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

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, just to clarify once again, there are sometimes unbudgeted unforeseen commitments that can arise.

Honourable Members on the other side, for example, for the past three days, have highlighted shortages of valuers, surveyors, doctors and if the Honourable Minister for Health, assuming that he is able to fill all the new positions he has got, we obviously still need more doctors, and if he can get more doctors, we will all agree that he should get them, if he can get them and the right qualified ones, and if he then says, "Look, you've given me this money and I need more doctors" and are they available? That is where this money will come from, that is the point, that is the unbudgeted unforeseen circumstances. If the Minister for Lands, for example, gets more surveyors and maybe some we are actually thinking of getting some people from overseas, if the Ministry of Lands budget does not fit in with that, the Honourable Dulakiverata would appreciate we do need more surveyors. He highlighted

the need about the mahogany surveying being carried out and that it was too little, as he had said.

If we are able to get more surveyors and they can actually fund it, they fully utilised their funds, then you get it through here, that is what it is for, it is just common sense. It is all about good governance and transparency. There is nothing un-transparent about this. We are declaring it.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Are there any other Member that wants to speak on the motion? Honourable Nawaikula,

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- There is no justification at all on this unless you have the numbers. You do not know how many civil servants there are and the last time we heard that was in 2013; 29,364 posts, so how can you come here and budget for this adjustment without even telling us the numbers?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Anyone else who wants to speak on the motion? There being none, I will now give the floor to the Honourable Salote Radrodro to speak in reply.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair, I recognise what the Honourable Minister has said but I disagree because this could be avoided if proper planning is done, human resource planning is done and now that role is being taken away from the Central Agency of the Public Service Commission, you should have that in Ministries and Departments and whether you have the Administrative HR (Human Resource) Manual, and Financial Manual in place, I do not know. However, those planning documents should be in place to be able to substantiate the amount of money that you allocate accordingly.

If you cannot plan on your HR, that means you do not even know what you want to achieve because that should be matched, your HR requirements and the overall achievement targets of the Ministry, therefore, Madam Chair, I believe this \$5 million is unjustified and it should be given to the needy areas and we have heard there was the Kidney Dialysis issue that has been raised. There are other needy areas where money could be given to rather than it being sitting here under Head 50.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Parliament will now vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Salote Radrodro and the question is, that Head 50 be decreased by \$5 million in respect of SEG 1, Line 1, Salary Adjustment. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	14
Noes	:	25
Not Voted	:	9

Proposed amendment defeated.

The Parliament will now vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Dr. Biman Prasad and the question is, that Head 50 be decreased by \$1 million in respect of 50-1-1, Line 2 – Civil Service Reform. I now invite the Honourable Prasad to speak on his motion.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair, when I was commenting on the Attorney-General, I was also saying the same thing when I started about the need for contingency, the need for funds to be allocated. This is very simple. You have created a Ministry of Civil Service, you have an allocation for reform. The World Bank is involved. Head 50, Madam Chair, and any allocations under any of the SEG should strictly be an assessment of contingency, very clearly outlined expenditure for a particular purpose.

I mean, we have a total of \$224 million allocated under Head 50 and all these \$1 million, \$5 million adds to that. I agree with the Honourable Salote Radrodro that a lot of the expenditure could be planned. That requires proper planning from the Ministry, you could do a projection. I do not know if any of the ministries ever fill all their positions, there is always people resigning, retiring, new appointments so there is always savings in salary. All you have to do is to project, for example, if the Honourable Minister for Health is saying that he is going to have 150 doctors in 2016, he said he was going to have 150 in 2015, we only have 126, we still got 24 so there is still unspent money there. He still has the contingency within the funds that has been allocated. What we are trying to do, Madam Chair, through this exercise and through these motions and there will be more, is to ensure that we take out funds allocated in Head 50, so that next time different ministries come up with proper projections and planning. That is why we feel that some of the allocations, and this one that I am moving is a case in point. It could easily be budgeted for within the Ministry that has been responsible for doing that particular activity. So, that is why I am moving that motion to reduce the allocation by a million dollars.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does any other Honourable Member want to speak on the motion?

There being none, then there will be no right of reply. We will go straight ahead and vote on the motion.

The Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Dr. Biman Prasad. The question is that Head 50 be decreased by \$1 million in respect of Head 50-1-1-1, Line 2 - Civil Service Reform. Does anyone oppose? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on this motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes : 14



Noes : 25  
Not voted : 9

Proposed amendment defeated.

Honourable Members, we now move on to SEG 5.

HON. RO T.V. KEPAN.- On SEG 5, Madam Chair, can I move, according to Standing Order 100 (2), without notice that Head 50, SEG 5, Line 4 on Consultancy Fees for Qorvis Communications be decreased by \$1 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. The floor is still open.

Then we will look onto SEG 6.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, I think we missed out on SEG 3, they probably did not see SEG 3, if they want to comment on it or ask any questions?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- SEGs 3, 5, 6 and 7.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- SEG 3, Line 4 - Housing Allowance for Civil Servants. Could we get a clarification in relation to that? That is appearing for the first time.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you Honourable Member. This allocation is where we are meeting the rental payment to privately owned quarters rented by civil servants. So there are certain parts of Fiji where we do not have Government quarters, so we pay for their rental and that is the amount.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments? SEG 3, SEG 4 and SEG 5?

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Chair, SEG 3, there is a provision for Head 50, Standard Expenditure Group 3 – Overseas Travel Costs – Ministers, \$700,000. We are just asking why this is not factored into their individual ministries. It is being made known to us that some taxpayers would like to know which Minister is travelling, and for what? I could not care less myself but that is the question.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- By the travelling cost of Ministers being in Head 50 SEG 3, does not know - we do not know where they are going.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

SEG 3, SEG 5, SEG 6 and SEG 7.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- SEG 5, Line 6 – Rent for Office Space. Can the Honourable Minister elaborate on this, the rent for office space? It is appearing for the first time.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you Honourable Member. As I highlighted in the Budget Address, this used to sit with the PSC before. PSC used to get the allotment for the payment of rentals for Government offices. So, now that has been taken out from there and parked in Head 50.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- SEG 5, Line 5, an amount of \$500 - Litigation Fees. You would expect this to be looked after or budgeted by the Honourable and learned Attorney General as well. So could an explanation be given as to what does that refer to?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you Honourable Member. You would be glad to know what it is for. It is actually claims against Government, so if there is a compensation award against Government by one of your clients and you win your case, this is where we will pay your compensation from.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments?

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Just a related question to the Honourable and learned Attorney General, why did you not see fit to put that right into the Ministry of Public Service that you have created? Because you are saying that it was at PSC, instead of putting it in Head 50, you put it into the Ministry of Public Service.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Prasad, if you heard my speech, the role of PSC has changed. PSC Commission is now looking after permanent secretaries, they are coordinating in other matters with the Ministry of Civil Service. The Ministry of Civil Service is to do with civil service itself. When you think about it, it should be a centralised agency that knows about what is happening with Government assets and although they are not Government assets *per se*, it is about where Government offices are because it is critical to know, for example, someone raised the issue with the Honourable Minister for Youth and Sports saying why has he got \$500,000 or \$50,000 for refurbishment. So, this is where the rental comes from, this is where the money for the refurbishment now will also come from, and that has been allocated to Ministry of Finance. That unit is moving entirely there.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- Duplication.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- SEG 5, Line 4 – Consultancy Fees for Qorvis Communications. Because it is repeating itself, we would expect that this should go to the Ministry of Information. Could you please put some clarification on that and also in relation to the amount of \$1 million as to why?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It is already a motion.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any more comments?

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Chair, Head 50, Standard Expenditure Group 6, a total of \$32 million. I would like to move a motion without notice that Head 50 be decreased by \$6.7 million in respect of Public Service Broadcast [Radio].

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

We can move onto SEGs 9 and 10.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- With regards to SEG 6, Lines 5 and 6, the motion filed by the Honourable Draunidalo. Can the Honourable Minister explain whether this revised allocation can also be managed by Ministry of Communication?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Chairperson, there is a motion already on this matter.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, on SEG 6 under the Public Service Broadcast [TV]. Can the Honourable Minister advise why is there a need to increase this allocation from \$1.8 million to \$4.6 million next year?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It is because of the expansion of the Public Service Broadcast and because the amount that was there in fact was far less than approximately \$20 million worth of Public Service Broadcast that is currently being carried out.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Can I just put a notice for motion, Madam Chair, in relation to Head 50, SEG 6.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments? SEGs 6, 7, 8, 9, 10?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- On SEG 6, Line 10 – Operating Grant for Tertiary Scholarship and Loan Board. Can the Honourable Minister advise us on this allocation of \$1 million?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Member.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Member, this is for the running cost of the Board itself as you have got a full complement of staff. So far, they have not been given a specific allocation, and as you would know also with the reform of PSC, the outstanding scholarships, some of them going back to 1970s and 1980s and the administering of that and the various loans also now falls within their domain, they are supposed to now manage that, and including, of course, all the TELS and Toppers applications.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- It is the first time?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, because in the past couple of years, they have been funded by the universities, they send their own staff and all of that, so in order to get some professionalism, Government has decided to ensure that we have dedicated staff. They actually now have a CEO and they have proper staff structure and that is what it is to cater for. Because we find from now, you have got a lot of students turning up to McGregor Road and the idea is that they expand their services to the Northern Division, and also to Lautoka,, at least those areas students do not need to travel.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- I have no questions.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- SEG 6, Line 11 – Rental Subsidy for Disadvantage Persons - iTLTB Rent. Could the Honourable Minister please advise why this allocated sum of \$500,000 is included for the first time in Head 50, and what this allocation involves?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Bulitavu, you would have heard me make a comment on this earlier on, where there are a number of outstanding arrears, rent owed to iTLTB by current lessees. Some of them are quite impoverished, some of them are disabled people. If they do not pay their rental, they will actually be evicted from those lands.

Some of them are very old people and where their children have all left so they have nowhere to go. Government is setting aside to subsidise the rental or bring them up to speed so that money will go directly to iTLTB to pay for the lease so they can get a renewal of the lease or they do not get evicted and then they should take over thereafter. We have allocated a half million dollars for that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Chair, just on that subject, is there any other option for these people who cannot pay rent? These people are married, they have children, they have properties ...

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Collect the arrears.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- ... which they can transfer the property to, instead of paying money. I am sure these people have children or relatives who can take over the lease and pay the rental.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Member, as you know, not all children look after their parents, many children do abandon their parents also. Some of these people are disabled, some of the people are widows where their husband may have died. This is basically looking after the social safety network.

For some of them, if we do not, for example, renew the leases, where will they go? They will again become squatters, they will rely on the welfare assistance, so this is again to give a helping hand. Honourable Nawaikula says "collect the arrears." Arrears are being collected but this is also looking after those people who have absolutely no ability to pay their arrears. Some of them go back quite a long time ago, if Honourable Nawaikula would know, a lot of people had not paid their rentals for a number of years.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- 17 years.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- 17 years, there you go.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Any other comments?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chairperson, thank you for the information. Can we just request the Honourable Minister to advise us whether there is a cut-off date in which these arrears will be accessible too or will it just be a general assessment?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Radrodro, if your question is, if it is going to be an ongoing expense, we do not want it to be an ongoing expense. There is, as you know, the iTLTB Board has been informed that there are a number of arrears that have been outstanding for a period of time. Some people, of course, will be evicted because they have the ability to pay but they wilfully have not paid. There are others who obviously just simply do not have the ability to pay. You may recall that when we looked at Head 3, we had allocated a sum of money and in that sum of money we had also said that we will identify some of the legal issues including where some of the landowners themselves had been disadvantaged. In some cases, they are actually members of landowning units who have not been able to pay the lease. So it is not just those other people who are widows, et cetera, but in fact with this case, where some landowners themselves cannot pay.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other comments? SEGs 7, 9 and 10 - no comments?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- I wish to put on notice that I wish to move a motion on SEG 10 on two items, one on the Fiji International Golf Tournament and the Marketing Support to Fiji Airways – those are at Lines 10 and 13.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Just a quick question to the Honourable Minister of Finance, just for clarification, last year there was a \$8.8 million allocation for fuel purchase, I do not see that this year, I am assuming that that idea has now been dropped, which is probably a good thing.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It was not actually the \$8.8 million, it was \$250,000 not \$8.8 million, look at Line 5.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- I am talking about last year.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, last year was \$250,000, 2016 there is none.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- So the idea has been dropped?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Not necessarily. It is some preparatory work which does not require expenses, we thought it would, but it will not.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- We go to SEG 9 now, Madam Chair. Could the Honourable Minister advise on this \$500,000 allocation, that is in regards to vehicle replacement. It seems there is a minimum purchase for these vehicles and whether it means that there will be more vehicles leased in 2016?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, Honourable Bulitavu that is correct but there are certain vehicles that we cannot lease. Say, for example, if our Ambassador in Washington needs a new vehicle, we do not lease in USA, we actually buy it. So that money comes from there. There may be specialised vehicles we may need to buy, that comes from here.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you Honourable Biman Prasad did you stand?

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- I move without notice a motion pursuant to Standing Order 100 that Head 50 be decreased by \$5 million in respect of vehicle lease. That is under Standard Expenditure Group 9 (3).

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

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Item No. 7 SEG 7 – Parliament Renovation Works. Is this to with the old Parliament or this particular Parliament and what is it to do with in this line. Thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- That was in 2014, Honourable Leader of Opposition. It no longer exists. The reason why it has been shown because that was an expenditure in 2014. Madam Chair, 2015 is not there because it has gone to Parliament in their expenditure.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Can I ask a supplementary question to that, Madam Chair? This is in terms of the old Parliament. It has beautiful facilities, the Courts at one time, we heard was going to move there. What are the plans for those buildings because it seems a great wastage, it is going into disrepair?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No, we hope to have the Courts move in there, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, very soon. Not this year, but very soon.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you any other comments? Honourable Bulitavu

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- SEG 9, line 4, Madam Chair. Could I ask the Honourable Minister why the allocation of \$1 million for Office Fittings is now moved to Ministry of Finance as this skill set is related to fittings and renovations and is not something that Ministry of Finance currently possesses. Is this expected to fit under the Procurement Office?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Bulitavu, just because it is in Head 50 it does not mean things that need to be called for tender do not go on tender. Even vehicle leasing, you have tenders called for it. So, similarly with office fittings, it is a centralised pool of money for office fittings for all the Ministry's.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- On Line 3, Madam Chair - Vehicle Leasing. I just noted the exorbitant amount compared to the new and replacement vehicles. So what would be the better option, to buy vehicles or to lease?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I will give you an example, Honourable Member, if the Government requires 300 vehicles and you want to buy them all, it will cost you at \$80,000, \$24 million up front, just on the face of it, cash no *dinau*.

Then what it also means, you go and get the insurance separately, every time you need to do the fuel and oil change, you do that separately, you need to maintain a garage for the fleet, and your ability to then replace those vehicles very quickly is very, very limited. That is the reason why leasing is an option. This is why we have gone for it because we are able to then get a bigger fleet a lot more quickly where all of them have comprehensive insurance. Some of the leases that we have struck previously have got obviously servicing, oil, fuel et cetera and we get to return the vehicles after three or four years.

We initially had a 150,000 kilometre cap, we are now actually going to get some returns from Asco Motors because we have returned the vehicles before time and they have given us replacements. So, that is the reason why we have gone for the leasing option.

In fact, I can tell you, as highlighted by the Honourable Minister for Defence, the Police will be, by January, getting about 90 to 100 vehicles one go, and the Honourable Minister for Agriculture needs that as well and we are giving them priority too. So, this is the reason why leasing option is a lot better.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I am just thinking, if you can have a policy whereby you can sell the vehicles after three years and you do not have to go into the maintenance issue. I do not know whether you have a cost benefit analysis on the two options because you still have a return by selling the property. Now when you are leasing, after leasing you return the vehicles.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- As a valuer, Honourable Member, you would know that the depreciation rate of motor vehicles is phenomenal and in particular if you give in to a Government driver. The way that they ride and the potholes they do not avoid, in this way, the maintenance is not done by us. And as you also know, Honourable Member, having worked in the Civil Service, in some of the Ministries, if you do not allocate enough money for repairs and maintenance and you have some driver having an accident, he wipes off the front guard and they do not have enough to park to part it in the garage and guess what happens to that vehicle after three or four months? It gets cannibalised. Someone comes and takes out the radiator, someone takes out one tyre. We have some very good vehicles and that is what has happened.

So, by leasing vehicles, also you should look at the overall economics of it. A lot of companies in Fiji bring in new vehicles, stopped actually investing in our HR mechanics, et cetera. So what was actually happening, by having this leasing programme, we are having all these mechanics who have jobs within the private sector, we are also creating this opportunity for when these vehicles get returned after three or four years, guess who are the beneficiaries? Because they sell those vehicles, ordinary members of the public are able to buy this relatively good vehicles for a lot more better price rather than buying some second hand Japanese stuff.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Any other comments. We have a few motions on the table.

HON. P. SINGH.- SEG 10 - Fiji Development Bank in Line 1. A little over \$3 million has been provided for in the 2016 Budget in respect of a subsidy grant to all citizens of Fiji. We know that in 2015, the allocation was \$5.5 million and I can see in Line 1, so many beneficiaries there. Why are we reducing it?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Sorry, where?

HON. P. SINGH.- On FDB Subsidy Grant to: All Citizens of Fiji. the allocation for 2016 is a little over \$3 million and in 2015 we have \$5.5 million for specific projects.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- If I can, Honourable Member, take you through this grant, I assume that is what you want me to tell you. Take you through this specific grant?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Just the FDB one.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- There are a couple of schemes in FDB, for example, you have the Fiji Development Bank subsidiary grant to all citizens of Fiji, which was \$1.4 million in 2014, \$4.9 million in 2015 and \$3.3 million in 2016. The scheme focuses on agriculture and commercial loans to all citizens of Fiji. The focus areas - commercial agriculture and agro processing, fishery sector, pearl farming, seaweed and fresh water fish, manufacturing, mining, quarrying, transport and storage.



The interest rate ranges from 2.5 per cent to 6 per cent for this scheme. The 2016 breakdown is: the outstanding subsidy is \$150,000, subsidy on existing loan is \$2.5 million and subsidy on new loans is \$378,000. So it is just depending on the amount of loans that were taken out, with all of that is factored into the amount.

There is also, as you know, the Fiji Development Bank's Subsidy Grant which is the ERP that is listed there, where we have loan schemes for the expansion of the economy where this particular loan was given after 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2000. This was the loan for the expansion of the economy where Government has been subsidising interest rate on what they call the "Economic Rehabilitation Package", following the events of 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2000. Now, there is only about \$1,000 left to subsidise this. This is why you have a very very low amount of \$1,000 because the 2016 breakdown as outstanding subsidies is \$85 and subsidy on the existing loan is \$1,033. The interest rate on this subsidy is 5 per cent.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have any other comments?

HON. P. SINGH.- On the same SEG, Madam Chair - Sugarcane Growers Fund - Interest Payments. Is there a continuation of the grant to the fund authority in respect of the purchase of fertilizer company?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This is the interest payment to Sugarcane Growers Fund?

HON. P. SINGH.- Yes.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- In 2010, FSC borrowed \$8.403 million for Sugarcane Growers Fund to meet the fourth quarter cane payment of 2009. As per the loan agreement, Government had to fund the interest component at an agreed rate of 8 per cent per annum. The principal sum has already been cleared, except the interest rate which is paid by Government in phases. The balance to-date is \$276,000 which will be fully cleared as provided for there, next year.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. On the subsidy allocation to FEA of \$5.7 million, can the Honourable Minister inform the House whether this also covers for those that are under the cash power scheme system?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- The qualification requirement now is, as long as the household earns less than \$30,000 a year like with water, we have aligned it now.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Aseri.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I would like to get a clarification whether the system also covers cash power because cash power is like a prepaid service where customers, especially people in the rural areas buy their power upfront before they use it as compared to those customers who have a post payment bill date.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, that of course is a major challenge but there is no discrimination against people who are connected on the grid or cash power or people who pay through cash power and those people who pay on a monthly basis. So our instructions are, that anyone or any household who earns less than \$30,000 will qualify for this.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, I was just going to talk on the cash power issue too. Like many countries now, cash power is the name of the game. You do not have to wait for a monthly bill that comes in, and if that can also be targeted for next year so that it can reach out, not even only in the rural areas but all over the city, but where commercial buildings are, that may be different. If that can be done, it very useful and logistically very good.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, I agree with the Honourable Tikoca. This subsidy now has been expanded to 95 kilowatts a month. Before, as you know, it started with 75 kilowatts and this year it went up to 85 kilowatts. So now, and as you know that, I have to tell you a story that with the 85 kilowatts, it basically meant previously, if you use 85 kilowatts or less, irrespective of how much you earned, you are subsidised. I am told the CEO of FEA got subsidised too. But my point is this, we have now put it as means test. So if your household earns less than \$30,000 a year, you then qualify to get subsidised electricity up to 95 kilowatts and the cash power must fall within that. How do we do that? In particular, you would ask, if you were paying upfront, that is the logistics that FEA needs to come up with; it could be by way of a refund, if they are paying the full amount then the subsidised amount then gets refunded to them. That is the logistics that needs to be worked out but the fact is, it will apply to cash power. As long as they are on the FEA grid or FEA provides electricity to them, they will be covered under this.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Could the Honourable Minister of Finance clarify in that regards SEG 10, Line 1 the details of the Northern Division Projects (NDP).

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- SEG 10, Line 1.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- This is through the FDB. This is where, Honourable Bulitavu, the loan scheme for the expansion of the economy where Government has been subsidising interest rate on the Northern Package with the NDP. The 2016 breakdown: subsidy outstanding is \$19,000, subsidy on existing loans is \$210,000 and subsidy on new loans is

\$50,000. The interest rate subsidy is 8 per cent under this scheme. We subsidise by way of paying for the interest, we subsidise the interest rate.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. First I would like to commend the Government for now realising that they need to put a benchmark on FEA subsidies as I had highlighted in my contribution to the Presidential Address last year. So now it has been activated and I would like to commend them for that.

The other one is, Fiji Sports Council Grant of \$4.3 million. I would like to move a motion, Madam Chair, pursuant to Standing Order 100 (2) without notice that Head 50, SEG 10, Line 1 be decreased by \$4.3 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. We have a number of motions on the table, so we will now move to a vote on these motions. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name ....

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Chair, just a last one. Still on SEG 10, Line 1, that is to the Rice Development Programme. Can the Honourable Minister please provide more information on this \$8 million allocation which is a new inclusion under Head 50?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you. The \$800,000 is Government's contribution towards the two-year plan which is 2015 and 2016, our technical co-operation programme between the People's Republic of China and Fiji on improving the rice industry. As you know, they are probably the greatest rice eaters in the world, they obviously have an interest in producing good quality rice. Chinese Government provides assistance with the introduction of new varieties, demonstration of technology, knowledge transfer and provision of farming assistance. The 2016 provision is based on the projected funding that was requested by the Chinese Government in 2016 for this particular programme, predominantly as you know, in Vanua Levu and some other parts of Viti Levu.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I move on to the motions yet again. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Roko Tupou Draunidalo.

The question is that Head 50 be decreased by \$6.7 million in respect of 50-1-1-6 Line 5 - Public Service Broadcast [Radio]. I now give the floor to the Honourable Draunidalo to speak on her motion.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I move this motion because of the amount being given, of \$6.7 million in respect of Public Service Broadcast [Radio]. We do not have information on the process for tenders for this public broadcast now that FBC is on a commercial footing. Therefore there is no need for any Government subsidy, if that is what it is. If it is to go to subsidise a commercial radio, one of them that is operating now, the process of tenders and all that has not been made publically available and that is why I move the motion that that SEG be reduced by that amount.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Does anyone want to speak for or against the motion?

Parliament will now vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Roko Tupou Draunidalo. The question is, that Head 50 be decreased by \$6.7 million in respect of Head 50-1-1-6 - Public Service Broadcast, Line 5. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	25
Not voted	:	7

Proposed amendment defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Second, Parliament will vote on an amendment in the name of Honourable Dr. Biman Prasad. The question is that Head 50 be decreased by \$5 million in respect of 50-1-1-9, Line 3 – Vehicle Leasing Scheme. Could I invite Honourable Dr. Biman Prasad to speak on his motion.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you, Madam Chair. The reason why I am moving this motion is, we have not had a very clear indication, I think the question that was asked is whether we have a very clear cost benefit analysis which shows that leasing of vehicles in the end is going to be the best option.

The second point that I want to make is, different ministries ought to have a very clear idea of roughly the number of vehicles they would need in a particular year, even if they were going to be leasing those vehicles, that budget should clearly be within the individual ministries. So, there are two reasons why we are concerned about this huge allocation, one is, we have not seen any clear cost benefit analysis and whether there is enough time already (I know that some vehicles are being leased) to assess whether taking this option in the end is going to save taxpayers money or not. So on that basis, I move that motion, Madam Chair.

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

There being none, there will be no right of reply. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Dr. Biman Prasad and the question is that Head 50 be decreased by \$5 million in respect of 50-1-1-9, Line 3 – Vehicle Leasing Scheme. Does anyone oppose the motion?

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	13
Noes	:	26
Not Voted	:	9

Proposed amendment defeated.

On the next motion, Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Aseri Radrodro and the question is that Head 50 be decreased by \$4.3 million in respect of 50-1-1-10, Line 1 – Fiji Sports Council Grant. I invite the Honourable Radrodro to speak on his motion.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. Fiji Sports Council is a commercial statutory authority and for a long time, it has been running on its own. It has had previous loans even though it has been delayed but only guaranteed by past governments that used to operate. Funding its own operation, making its repayment of loan and in this particular instance, it is good and we commend the improvement that has been made to the ANZ Stadium to the standard that it is now. However, why do the taxpayers of this nation have to pay for an institution's borrowing to improve its facilities? Of course, there are other ways in which the facility can generate its own services, as has been the case. You might be aware, Madam Chair, that there are other means of generation of revenue to allow the Sports Council to repay its loan.

With the facility, there is a revenue line, like the Naming Rights of the facilities, that is one way where the Sports Council could generate its own activity. We can see as we drive along Laucala, there are other different facilities there that are being named according to their respective sponsors, so where is the money from the sponsors which has been paid to Fiji Sports Councils, for naming rights to those buildings?

We have the Damodar City, Aquatic Centre, FMF Dome and ANZ Stadium. The question is, where is all the money and why not the Fiji Sports Council utilise this money to start repaying its loan, rather than leaving it to Government to pay the \$4.3 million annually and then the Fiji Sports Council to just pay the interest?

That questions the integrity of the management whether they are able to operate this organisation in terms of its capacity and capability. It also brings to question the capability and staffing at the Fiji Sports Council. This is nothing new, it has been there and this particular arrangement whereby the taxpayers of this nation have to pay for the loan taken by Fiji Sports Council for its own generation of activities, it calls for this particular loan payment by the taxpayers to be removed.

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

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, just to clarify, the Honourable Radrodro rightfully actually acknowledges the facility which will actually host the first Crusaders versus Chiefs game of 1st July next year. The Maori games is very different to have in a Super 15 as you know, and as was highlighted yesterday about the broadcast people, they will be there and you will see the funding for that is catered for within the \$2.6 odd million that has been allocated for that.

Now, just for your information, Honourable Radrodro, this payment of \$4.2 million next year will be the last year. So you know it ends next year, so you want to finish it off too. The point is, as you know, Honourable Radrodro, you know a bit about FSC, to-date FSC had never been able to put up such a structure without Government assistance and have that world class facility that is there, that is now giving us the opportunity to host such games as the one next year on 1st July and also then put in our bid to be part of the HSBC World Sevens Series around the world. This is what we are setting ourselves up for, so the facilities overall, whilst you have ANZ naming rights, Damodar City or Vodafone, they are not going to pay \$4 million or \$10 million for naming rights. As you know the advertising dollar in Fiji is a lot more limited than that, but it does supplement and as you would also note, next year is the only year that we are giving for the first time an operating grant of \$0.5 million; you missed that.

However, I am telling you now, it is already there in the Honourable Minister for Sport's allocation. It is primarily because we need to upgrade the facilities, work has been done on Lawaqa also, so this is an investment, it is a one-off now as far as next year is concerned, it will be done. However, the whole idea was to leap-frog us, leap-frog Fiji in terms of sporting facilities.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, any other Member would like to speak on the motion?

There being a response to the motion, I will now give the right of reply the Honourable Radrodro. Would you like to speak?

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- You have said my piece, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Aseri Radrodro. The question is, that Head 50 be decreased by \$4.3 million in respect of Head 50, SEG 10, Line 1 - Fiji Sports Council Grant. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	27
Not Voted	:	6

Proposed amendment defeated.

Before we move on, I have been informed that the Honourable Draunidalo would like to propose another motion. Is that another new one?

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Chair, I withdraw, thank you.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Bultavu.

HON. M.D BULITAVU.- Before we move into the other motions that have already been filed, just another question in regards to SEG 10, Line 12 - Contingency Funds for Disaster Risk.

Madam Chair, it is positive that the Contingency Fund for Disaster Risk is a new inclusion which is very difficult for this side of the House to be convinced by \$5 million; could this be supported by details from the Honourable Minister? Line 12, SEG 10, that is on page 299.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- We are being very prudent and we are also being very forward looking. Obviously these funds will be utilised in the event that we do have a disaster and because what normally happens, if we do not have this type of contingency funds then everyone starts saying, "well, give us 200 per cent tax write off, or give it to Prime Ministers Relief Fund" and then we start viring, stealing a little bit from Defence, stealing from everyone else to be able to then pay for any emergency work that needs to be carried out. This is why this fund is there, whether it be rations, whether it be clearing of roads, whether it be supply of water, which is outside of normal budgetary allocation.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Is \$5 million enough?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- We believe so and then obviously if there is a need to vire from other Heads, we will do that, but at least we do not want to touch other Heads.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Clarification on SEG 10, Line 9 - *iTaukei* Land Development. So this fund, is it sitting here or it is with a certain ministry?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Do you want to sit down then I speak?

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Okay.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- It sits in Head 50, as I have highlighted to this House before and I have already spoken to Honourable Bultavu about this previously on a number of occasions. In fact, he knows people who are interested in making applications under this. The

utilisation rate obviously has been very minimal this year to say the least, primarily because we have been vetting, as I have mentioned to this House earlier on, over 30 applications. The one that looks very good, and we have actually got some engineers going up next week, is Yadua.

We have already visited the site, in fact the people of Yadua already have a scheme plan. They have already, in fact, sold one lot but they need to develop the rest. There are one or two others, there is a couple in Tailevu that looks very promising but we need to get the engineers out and the scoping people, these are outside and not within government, the outside people will be looking at the assessment. We are also going to have some discussions with Fiji Development Bank (FDB) to be able to see how we can partner up with them so the landowners are not simply left in the lurch, you know just because we come along and may say, “build the roads and the drains and connect them with water”, if they want to do their reticulation within the subdivision itself that they have got a partner. It will take a little bit of time, I think, but once we get one or two in, it will actually take off like hot fire.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Would you like to move your motion?

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Chair, Standing Orders 100 (2) I move without notice that the amount for National Toppers Scholarship Scheme be increased by \$10 million.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, pursuant to Standing Order 100 (2), I move without notice that Head 50 be decreased by \$9 million in respect of Fiji International Golf Tournament in SEG 10.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, on the same SEG - Commercial Agriculture Scholarship Programme of \$500,000. I would like to raise a motion but can I please request the Honourable Minister to give us the details of this allocation, especially with a similar amount allocated last year and the same amount again for this year and next year.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I think I mentioned to Honourable Dr. Prasad yesterday, this is the Commercial Agriculture Scholarship Scheme or the Commercial Agriculture – Interest Payment and Cash Grant?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Agriculture Scholarship

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Commercial Agriculture Scholarship, by way of background, these are scholarships given up to 50 Form 6 or Form 7 graduates each year to attend a 12 month’s Certificate Course that trains them in various areas. However, one of the issues that has happened is that the uptake after the course has been done, the whole idea was that they become farmers. Then in fact only about two students have been interested in it.



What we found, many of them have done the course, they wanted to go off and do other jobs. So, there is a review that is currently being carried out by National Planning and FNU as to how we will need to meet the objectives of this particular scheme, because the whole idea was, we give them the scholarships, we pay for everything, they become modern, educated with the technical expertise and we then under the Agriculture Interest Payment Scheme give them a loan from FDB. We arrange for the land, they are able to buy tractors, et cetera, but so far only two have been interested or have qualified for that and the loan repayment for that will start in 2016 under that Scheme.

However, the Commercial Agriculture Scholarship Scheme is still there, but we need to attract more people to it, obviously, who will stay within the farming sector.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Chair, I think yesterday we were discussing about Navuso and Tutu Schemes and I think the interest in this particular area was of people who were residing in the villages. Therefore, FNU becomes a stumbling block in terms of meeting the minimum entry requirement, so is there any possibility since we have only two to increase the numbers or remove the entry requirement from FNU, to also accommodate those who have trained in Tutu and Navuso, for example?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Chair, if I can assist. It is about providing options for our youths because particularly for Tutu and of course Navuso as well, they bring in most of the youths from rural areas but for the programme under FNU, it is mostly school leavers (Form 6 or Form 7) and even those people who have already been employed. I will quote, one of the pioneer students was one Antonio who has got a Degree in Accounting and he worked for Telecommunications Fiji and opted to go for a farm. But the issue that we find with them, as highlighted by the Honourable Minister of Finance, not only in terms of them opting for jobs after the training, but they are quite selective in where to be resided for their farming because when Government gives them land in Waibau, they told them, "no, I want it elsewhere". And this is where we are facing the problems, but mostly it is people from within the towns, municipal areas and of course school leavers and the young youths who are in the formal and informal sector of employment but it provides options for our youths.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you.

Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Tupou Draunidalo and the question is that Head 50 be increased by \$10 million in respect of 50-1-1-10, Line 8 – National Toppers Scheme. I give the floor to the Honourable Tupou Draunidalo to speak on her motion.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I move this motion because very many of our students do not qualify for the Toppers Scholarship proper, and I was hoping if we could increase the budget by \$10 million to go there. Many more students who qualify to get into university programmes, but do not meet the cut off for Toppers will be able to be funded under the \$10 million extra, if it is be given under this Head. We propose if

\$10 million is added to this scholarship fund, that it be Means Test so that children whose parents, with a combined income of less than \$30,000 a year, a lot of *iTaukei* students, students from rural schools and from various communities will qualify under this proposal. Everyone now in this House and outside of this House knows, Madam Chair, where I would rather take the money away from; \$10 million is a small amount to decrease from some other areas to help our children, give them a better start in life instead of sending them into a scheme that may saddle them with a debt of about \$30,000 when they graduate if they had to take the loan scheme.

I think it is a very worthy thing to give our children this money, we should give more and it is also a good thing if we could send more of our children to universities outside of Fiji because Madam Chair, I have benefitted from the experience of having being exposed to foreign cultures at a very young age, where if you want to be part of the world, we have got to know them at a better level, exposed to how they are, we know how they think, we bring their culture back to our own, because if we are just mixing here, all of our thinking is confined in the way we have always been taught here.

There are a lot of things about the way we do things in this country; the culture and the way we think is very foreign to me in fact to the extent that my friends think I am a foreigner and an alien but that is another matter, Madam Chair. But exposing our children and giving them the opportunity by giving them this amount of money, another \$10 million as I say, if we could take it away from another programme and give more, we should, so that we can give the children of Fiji this opportunity to go to higher studies and higher study overseas. It is very good for the country as a whole.

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

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Madam Chair, I just want to support this motion because what Honourable Draunidalo is proposing makes a lot of sense because if you look at the Toppers Scheme and the Honourable Minister for Education is on record, out of the 600, we have not been able to offer all of them.

What has happened is a lot of students who come from poor families, for example, a student of a poor cane farmer in Ba gets 290 marks, it is a good mark from a school say in Nukuloa College. That student would not be eligible for Toppers Scheme. That student will be eligible for the TELS loan scheme, that is fine, but you are burdening a poor family with another \$30,000 to \$35,000 given the quantum of the fees right now, if one has to do a degree in three years.

What we are saying is that there should be an additional allocation for students purely based on Means Test, in other words, based on income (like the Minister's set of criteria that are there for other things), and if we can accommodate those very poor students to also be eligible for scholarships under a Means Test Scheme - it will make sense. It will not burden those parents, those children with another \$30,000 or \$35,000 debt then it could be more in subsequent years. So in that way, and I hope that Government will think about this seriously

because, I mean given the household debt that is increasing, we could be putting these very poor students and poor families in a situation of what I call “debt slavery” in the future. We should avoid that, Madam Chair, and I think this motion is a good one to allocate another \$10 million into the scheme to look at Means Test.

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

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I was somewhat compelled, Madam Chair, I wish Honourable Draunidalo would stop reverting to ethnic references, and her leader actually has talked about Means Test which is the way to go.

(Inaudible Interjection)

Subsequently, but she mentioned ethnicity.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- What is wrong with that?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- There is nothing wrong with it, but not as a means of judging criteria.

(Chorus of Interjections)

The reason why Fiji has so many problems is because like yourselves always just fall back on that. That is the problem.

(Chorus of Interjections)

We need to have Means Testing and I completely agree with Honourable Prasad that we, of course, need to get more Fijians educated. That is very critical, but let me also tell you, Madam Chair, that prior to this scheme, when we had those schemes broken down along ethnicity, the overall number of students who benefitted from any form of assistance was only about 6,000 to 7,000. Today, we have 7,000 more, who are benefitting. Their assuming is based on ethnicity, that is what they are assuming.

(Chorus of Interjections)

People like you, Honourable Nawaikula, you look at the names, you go, “Indian, Fijian, Others” that is what you will do. Fiji will never progress unless you stop thinking like that. You need to think about the poor people, we had many people when we had the scholarships based on ethnicity, students from different ethnic groups coming along and saying, “I had a higher mark but someone even from my own ethnic group has got it because they have got connections, because they know the right people.” That is the type of things that used to happen. If it is Means Tested, then people get qualified based on Means and their ability.

(Chorus of Interjections)

So, the point is this, speaking on the SEG, Madam Chair, we agree with the fact that of course education needs to be made as widely available as possible, [INTERJECTIONS] no doubt about that and we have progressively expanded the scope of the people who are receiving benefits from it. Many of these poor children, who are now getting assistance, if this scheme had not been in place, Madam Chair, they would not have gone to university at all. So we now have progressively moved along, we have got 7,000 more people and we, of course, will look at ways of improving the efficiencies [INTERJECTIONS] and the Honourable Minister for Education, from Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Board (TSLB), will obviously be able to highlight more on that. But the point is, we all agree that education must be made available as widely as possible. We now have primary and secondary education, free tuition, we also have now early childhood education where we are being subsidised. We have now moved onto the Toppers Scheme, where we identify scholars based on the areas of studies that are important to Fiji. We do not, for example, give a Toppers Scholarship for lawyers, as you have said previously, there are too many lawyers and some of them are not necessarily performing very well at all, some of them get suspended.

Whatever the case maybe, Madam Chair, the point is that we are progressively moving along, we are at the same time assisting our country and various people within our country at various sectors. Whether it is infrastructure, whether it is education, water, roads, electricity, in terms of improving our Bio-security, agriculture, health, all of these areas have received a particular type of assistance and it is a balancing act. And of course, we will work towards ensuring that more and more people get caught under the scheme where they will be assisted in the education assistance.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister for Education.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, I want to respond to Honourable Biman Prasad's response. There are some factual errors there.

(Inaudible Interjections)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- *Wawa mada.*

Madam Chair, unfortunately Honourable Dr. Prasad does not understand about what a 'Topper' is. His talking about someone from Nukuloa or in the interior with 220 marks ....

(Inaudible Interjections)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Wait, wait, listen, it is my turn now.

It is not a Topper. The intention of a Topper is to identify the brightest minds in selected areas ...

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- ... to go and push the frontier. These are the people who will push the frontier in the country, these are the people who are the critical thinkers.

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Wait, wait.

(Chorus of interjections)

Madam Chair, wait for next year, we are raw marks. A student with 280 marks will be eligible for Topper.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Chair, Honourable Dr. Prasad is talking about someone from Nukulau, Nukuloa, et cetera, we are talking about anywhere in Fiji that the brightest minds will get a Toppers Scholarship or they can still study in a university as long as they get an admission letter. Never before this used to happen - you get an admission letter to a university, you will be paid by the TELS scheme.

Number two, Honourable Dr. Biman Prasad was talking about 280 marks, not able to get Toppers.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Give the name.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Wait, wait.

Madam Chair, wait for next year, we are raw marks. A student with 280 marks will be eligible for Topper.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Just to correct the Honourable Minister for Education, first of all I did not say Nukulau, I said Nukuloa Secondary College in Ba. He is obviously not listening properly but let me also say that he totally, deliberately and ridiculously misinterpreted what I said.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- And intentionally.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- And intentionally, probably.

Madam Chair, I understand what a Toppers Scheme is. You look at the top 600 students regardless of where they come from, who they are and give them the scholarship based on marks and on the category that Government has identified and there are other criterion.

What I said, Madam Chair, was what Honourable Draunidalo was proposing, that is, there are students who get marks which are less than what they would be eligible for Toppers and I gave an example of a student who would get, let us say 280 marks. In a normal scheme of things, looking at the number of students who would get over 300, in fact, in the previous

system anyone who had less than 300 marks would not qualify because there were so many of them who would be over 300.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- So they are not a Topper.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- You still do not understand what I am saying, that a student who has 280 marks, studying at Nukuloa College in Ba, coming from a very poor family and that 280 mark qualifies him or her to come to the university. That student will not be eligible for any scholarship, that student and their parents are forced to go and take loan under TELS because they have no other option and no other income. Therefore, what that means is that they will come and borrow for three years, study and accumulate a loan of more than \$30,000. That is what we are saying, and I think the Honourable and learned Attorney General understood that better when I was talking about Means Test. What that meant was that if you have a Means Tested scholarship then that student would be able to get a scholarship based on the income criteria because they come from a poor family.

The Honourable Minister for Education has completely missed the point and he has been missing the point for a long time. I am making a very simple point and he has totally and deliberately misled the House.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank You. Parliament will now vote on the amendment.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair....

(Chorus of interjections)

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I think we have enough information now to decide.

Parliament will now vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Roko Tupou Draunidalo.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- I have a right of reply, Madam Chair.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I am sorry.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- But the Honourable Gavoka wanted to say something.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- I am giving you the right of reply.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Thank you Madam Chair. I am disappointed that the Honourable Minister started off by making this a race issue. I do not know why he got sensitive by the use of the *iTaukei*, that is an official term that they have brought in to our national dialogue.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- You are sensitive about that, don't take it out of context.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- I mean that is what I heard, you accused me of being a racist, I am not.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I did not say you are racist.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Making this a race issue.

Anyway, it is beside the point, Madam Chair, Means Testing as the Honourable Dr. Prasad has said, that will benefit all families in Fiji from whatever communities we come from, whether it be the Chinese community, *iTaukei* community, Indo-Fijian community or Rotuman community, but they do not get saddled with a debt upon graduation, and all of these great revolutionising ideas that the FijiFirst Government wants Fiji to move ahead with all these great ideas like, equality, fraternity, democracy and being equal under the law all, we can only get there, Madam Chair, if we increase funding to higher education to our young people. That is the reason why I support this motion, I brought this motion so that another \$10 million be given so that it benefits these students without being saddled with a debt of about \$30,000 upon graduation. That is why I said in my speech too about exposing them to the outside world because when we get stuck in Fiji, and the way we do things here, in the context of the last 30 years, I am afraid of what our children are learning from us and in institutions here. It would be better if they had this extra funding to learn how the democracies in Australia and New Zealand do it, for example, the closest ones, and then they come back here with an open mind and minds that are more receptive to all of these great things and ideas that we talk about, well FijiFirst likes to talk about a lot, which I believe in a lot. We are just on different paths on how to achieve it and I actually think that taking us backwards but that is another issue.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Honourable Members because I am the Chair of the Community of Supply, I do not have the authority to stop interjections as I would have, if I was sitting up there with that authority. And this is why the onus is on you Honourable Members to be more responsible in your interjections so that the Honourable Member speaking can be heard.

Thank you for the right of reply, Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Tupou Draunidalo and the question is that Head 50 be increased by \$10 million in respect of 50-1-10, Line 8 - National Toppers Scholarship Scheme. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Casts:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	5

Proposed amendment defeated.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- We move on to the next motion, Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the question is that Head 50 SEG 5 be decreased by \$1 million in respect of Consultancy Fees for Qorvis Communications and this is in Line 4. I now invite the Honourable Leader of Opposition to speak on her motion.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- Thank you Madam Chairperson. This is in terms of Line 4 – Consultancy Fees for Qorvis Communications and what they say about figures telling a story and I am looking at these figures, for this year there is \$1 million allocation and next year, there is also a \$1 million. In 2014, it was \$1.15 million and very interestingly that was General Elections year.

So, I am just wondering what part Qorvis had to play in terms of the General Elections and some of the propaganda that was coming out at that time. My question here, Madam Chair, is in terms of the staff that are there in the Ministry of Communications in terms of training and upskilling them because Qorvis is a foreign company and their experts, what is happening to the local people who are supposed to be trained and upskilled in this particular area of work?

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, does anyone else want to speak on the motion. There being none and there will be no right of reply, so Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. The question is that Head 50 SEG 5 be decreased by \$1 million in respect of Consultancy Fees for Qorvis Communications, Line 4. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	13
Noes	:	23
Not voted	:	12

Proposed amendment defeated.

Thank you. The next motion, Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Nawaikula and the question is that Line 6 of SEG 6 be left out of 50 and that is under the Public Service Broadcast [TV]. I now invite the Honourable Nawaikula to speak on his motion.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- May I ask for an amendment, it is Head 50, Expenditure 6 Line 11 which is the removal of the Rental Subsidy for Disadvantaged Persons – iTLTB Rent.



MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you line 11 it is. Please speak on your motion.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- So the intention of my motion is to remove the rental subsidy to iTLTB. Some will feel that this is rather awkward and we should give money to iTLTB, to the contrary I feel that the Government should give money to iTLTB in recognition of iTLTB's subsidy of the development of this country. In relation to that, I say that, if you look at it this way, in terms of rental paid to NLTB, the amount that actually goes to the landowners for every \$100 is \$2. If for anyone who challenges that can make their own research, but that is the assessment that I am familiar with - \$2 out of every \$100.

So, in that way we can see how much iTLTB is subsidising development for this nation. So if money is to be paid to it, it has to be in recognition of that, not for subsidy. The reason why I am asking for this to be removed is to protect the integrity of the iTLTB and its independence. It is important that it is not dependant on the Government.

I can tell this House that at about 1999 we celebrated when finally this was removed. The Government used to subsidise iTLTB for a long time, when finally we became independent, we were so happy and we should continue in that path. If the Government says tomorrow that they will move away from iTLTB as they should and give back their organisation to us to independently look after it, I will be the happiest and I will also say that the Government will be fulfilling in its obligation. It is a signature to ILO Convention (No. 169) where it promised the international community that we will protect the integrity and the independence of native institutions. So, that is basically the reason why I am moving this motion, there is a lot of money that is there with iTLTB and a lot of this is wasted on the big bureaucracy; it is not being used to benefit who they are supposed to and if you look at the rental that I referred to this morning, the amount of rental the Honourable Acting Prime Minister can confirm to us by the time our state was at the level of \$14 million. If he says today it has gone up to \$20million, I will not be surprised. So there is a lot of money there, it should be independent, its integrity should be protected as such and that is the reason for that motion.

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

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Just to clarify Honourable Nawaikula, I do not know whether you were here Honourable Nawaikula when I mentioned about this half a million dollars, it is got nothing to do with taking away the independence. It is Government stepping in to pay the rent for people who cannot pay their arrears to iTLTB. That is all. Not creating iTLTB to be independent, it could well be a one-off situation as we have said. Honourable Nawaikula, I highlighted this to you previously and I did not even say it is going to be an ongoing expenditure. We are going to ascertain, it is a very small amount, iTLTB is not going to be dependent. As you also know there are no amendments being made to the legal structures that were there, when you were there, as opposed to what it is now. Madam Speaker, just given the clarification, I hope Honourable Nawaikula understands that.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Does anyone else want to speak on the motion? Honourable Nawaikula would you like to take your right of reply.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Chairperson, I was talking about independence, that is one aspect the other aspect is, I am sincerely asking the Government to please get out of that institution which belongs to us, which should be independent.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Parliament will vote on the amendment on the amendment in the name of Honourable Nawaikula and the question is that Line 11 of SEG 6 be left out of Head 50, and that is the removal of Rental Subsidy for Disadvantaged Persons. Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	15
Noes	:	27
Not voted	:	6

Proposed amendment defeated.

On the next motion, Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Viliame Gavoka. The question is that the SEG 10 - Fiji International Golf Tournament be left out of Head 50. I now invite the Honourable Gavoka to speak on his motion.

HON V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, this topic has had a profile over the last few days, given our very serious reservation about whether this event is of benefit to tourism in the way it is proclaimed to be. Madam Chair, golf as a sport is actually struggling.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- I didn't know that.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Golf is looking for another Tiger Woods. Since the time Tiger Woods disappeared or struggling, it was actually struggling a bit when Tiger Woods came into the picture. But if you look at all the golf businesses today in the purchase of equipment and all that, it has been going down. Now that Tiger Wood is out of circulation, golf is not what it used to be, Madam Chair. I know we all play a round but compared to rugby, rugby is a growing sport. About 160 nations now play rugby, that is why we feel that our money is better placed in rugby than in golf.

Having said that, Madam Chair, the notion of putting \$9 million into one event for a country like Fiji, given our size, is very hard to justify. I think if a genuine ROI is carried out on this, and I ask my buddy, the Honourable Minister for Tourism, to get a few of the experienced people in tourism to have a look at this closely, they would agree with me. What

I would propose, Madam Chair, if we want to continue with golf is to grow our own Vijay Singh. It can be done.

This is how you do it. Three times a year, I hold a tournament at Denarau, three in Natadola and three in Pacific Harbour and put a price money of \$250,000 at each event. That is nine events at \$250,000 each, it comes to a figure of \$3 million. If done properly, Madam Chair, a lot of our local people will start playing golf again. They already are, but you are giving them the profile and the prize money that will generate the kind of interest that gives us a Vijay Singh.

Let me tell you about Vijay Singh, Madam Chair. I spent a lot of time in Nadi and his father used to run the bar at the Nadi Airport Golf Course and I used to go there a few times. I saw this young guy back in the 1980s tee off from hole number two to hole number three. He would hit the ball, and Madam Chair, it was always closer to the hole. And someone pointed out to me and said, "you know that young kid there" and I said, "yes", "he does that every day". I am sure the Honourable Prem Singh can also relate to that. That is what he did every day at Nadi Airport Golf Course - our own Vijay Singh. He just hit that ball every day at Nadi Airport and by the time he hit the big time, I knew that that young kid was applying himself and that is how he became a world champion. We have a lot of Vijay Singhs in this country.

I say this Madam Chair, I work in hotels that have golf courses and I organise golf tournaments and I know they are good, but they just do not have that exposure to play at a top level regularly. If we do this three times a year - three in Denarau, three in Natadola and three in Pacific Harbour, paying that kind of money, even overseas people can plan their holidays to coincide with those tournaments in those three areas.

When you market tourism, Madam Chair, you market to incentive groups, you market to a lot of common interest groups. Those common interest groups can tailor their itineraries around the golf tournaments that we have in Fiji. In no time, Madam Chair, the profile of these local tournaments will have international profile and can help with the bookings from overseas. And in the process, Madam Chair, the quality of the greens of the golf courses will improve. If these hotels know that there are three major events every year, with that money provided by the Government, they would keep their golf courses at a high standard.

We hear that Government is going to put some money into Natadola to improve the golf course. I was a bit saddened about that. Whoever is managing that golf course should maintain the golf course at that level if they are catering for international players.

So, this Madam Chair, is a better way of developing golf as opposed to a \$9 million one shot, three or four days event. I hate to be critical in this manner but even the quality, the names that are coming to these golf tournaments, I remember when I used to host this thing, a lot of those people who were serving their apprenticeship and a lot of them did not really have money in their pockets, they even had their own biscuits, this was something that I saw during my time. But it could be that the big names that we wanted are not really coming. It could be a people who are serving their apprenticeship who are here.

Madam Chair, let me urge my fellow Honourable colleague there to relook at this and I believe with professionals in Fiji, within the tourism industry, looking at this closely, there is a better way of doing it and I believe doing three at Denarau, three at Natadola and three at Pacific Harbour is a better option, costing less but giving us the result as opposed to a one shot \$9 million deal. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to make a contribution in regards to golf. Although I am not a golf player but I know much about the business of golf. I have a business in the hotel and I know what golf is all about. I want to mention here, Madam Chair, that any Tom, Dick and Harry can play golf. [LAUGHTER] For those who are coming from overseas and bringing money into the country, even a young kid could pay for his cart, pay for his stick and ball and pay for the caddy. So, money is coming to Fiji.

Rugby is already in Fiji, we already are champions in 7s rugby (women's and men). What we are doing now is we are wanting to promote golf too. The Honourable Member mentioned that the young boy from Nasoso ended up playing golf in America (Mr. Vijay Singh) and we hope that he will be representing Fiji at the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. Everyone in Fiji cannot play rugby, only some can. This is another sport which brings money and we can earn money from golf. Why not play golf too? As I had mentioned in my speech yesterday that people from Nadi and Nadroga they can play golf and could end up like Vijay Singh. Vijay Singh is a millionaire, a young boy from maybe Navisabasa, Vusama, Batiri or Nalele which is close to Natadola can become a great player and represent Fiji in the world, that is why I support golf. After church on Sundays, I drive to Denarau as part of my job of taking people to the golf course.

(Laughter)

Most of them say that they cannot play rugby and that is why I am promoting golf. Thank you, Madam Chair.

(Acclamation)

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

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. I feel the urge to say something. There is an International Visitors Surveys Report that came out in 2014 and this basically indicates that the niche markets such as golf being one of the main ones, scuba diving, surfing and wedding, to name a few, will be the biggest drivers of the actual tourism sector. This partnership with the PGA of Australia is not limited to just staging the Fiji International but is also the beginning of raising awareness of golf amongst Fijians and the various initiatives include golf clinics in schools and the purchase of junior equipment and hitting bag will probably be kept in Fiji. So one of these days we might get another Vijay Singh out of Fiji.

Madam Chair, in 2014/2015 the Government invested in golf. Now the gross global marketing value that actually came out of this particular investment was \$20 million. You are not going to be able to get that for that amount of money, that is the gross global marketing value.

The broadcast reach showcasing Fiji and the best that we have which is Natadola went to 380 million viewers and I will spell out the 27 different countries: Australia, New Zealand, China, Korea, Indonesia, USA, the Pan-Indian Region (there are about eight countries) and Pan-Asia which is about 14-odd countries and of course the Pacific. The number of players who actually have been through this are professional golfers, amount to 130 well-known professional golfers from Australia, New Zealand, China, Chinese Taipei, Germany, Indonesia, Korea, Thailand and USA and obviously including Vijay Singh and Matt Kuchar who happen to be one of the best known golf players in the world. And of course the last golfer who won it in the tournament previous to this one, Steven Jeffress.

The local suppliers alone who were engaged in that tournament amounted to 50 local suppliers who were engaged to provide services such a construction, catering, banking services just to name a few. It is actually a little industry, it is not something like you just threw away \$9 million. Madam Chair, 750 Fijians were employed whilst 300 participated as volunteers - there is nothing wrong with that. The visitor arrivals reached a record high of 69,126 and a large number of them are attributable to that golf tournament.

Madam Chair, something else that needs to be said, we have not left rugby, we also support rugby. We have got a Super 15 game happening here. We actually just got another area to look at which is golf and we have done quite well out of it. Apart from all of that, we will get more tourists, the additional flights to Singapore, we will get more and more people coming to enjoy Natadola Bay because we have now showcased Fiji to all the different areas around the world. It is not just Singapore, it is around Asia. The fact that the Marriott will be up soon, that is another property that will benefit from that particular golf tournament showcasing itself around the world. So, Madam Speaker, I do not support the fact that we should take the money away from golf.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I will now give the floor to the Honourable Gavoka for his right of reply.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair. To my colleague from Nadi, yes, everyone should learn how to play golf or to take a swing occasionally. It is a wonderful sport, as I said, I worked in a hotel with a golf course and when you say that there could be a local Vijay Singh in the local village, in our course at the Shangri-la Fijian, when they hit off, the *kai valagi* is hitting off and the caddy, a local boy from Rukurukulevu is carrying the bag. When they come back, as they finish the course, the *kai valagi* is carrying the bag, the caddy is hitting because the caddy plays better golf than the visitor. That is the kind of people that we have managed to grow with golf.

With the application and the opportunity given to them, we can grow a lot of good golfers in this country. I remember the days of Veramu, some names who really were good

players back in those days but there was no proper platform for them to redevelop their skills, except for a few corporate golf tournaments that were held around the country, did not really help lift the standard of golf. In this way

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- They are two different things.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- He spoke about developing a young golfer, so I am just saying the opportunity is there, as I have seen.

Now Madam Speaker, figures about viewership and all that, rugby also has that.

(Inaudible Interjection)

I know marketing but it is very hard to justify spending \$9 million on an event when the total marketing for....

(Inaudible Interjection)

You cannot convince me, you cannot convince marketing people to spend \$9 million on a tourism event (one event) when the whole tourism budget is \$23 million.

(Inaudible Interjection)

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBER.- It is \$30 million.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Okay, now \$30 million next year, but I am talking about this year.

There is just no way you can justify that with people who understand marketing. It is almost 30 per cent of the entire budget, relative to what you spend on total marketing. You see Tourism Fiji has offices in Europe, London, North America, Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- All those offices of Tourism Fiji are funded from \$23.5 million, doing marketing globally, that is year in, year out. And here, we are spending \$9 million on one event, you just cannot convince me that that makes sense. Every day our people out in the field are marketing Fiji, whether in Sydney, Los Angeles, Seoul, London or Berlin they are doing marketing and they all come out of the \$23 million. Here we are, over three or four days, again that is next year, I am not talking about this year ...

(Inaudible Interjection)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- ... on one event we are going to spend \$9 million in Fiji. So, you cannot convince me that that is the best way of doing these things. There are roadshows,

all those sorts of things are happening everyday out of that budget, \$9 million for one event is not justified, Madam Chair. I would urge my good friend the Honourable Minister to relook at this properly, get a few heads together and really see whether there are better options available to us to develop golf in the tourism area.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you very much. Parliament will now vote on the amendment in the name of the Honourable Viliame Gavoka and the question is that SEG 10, Line 10 - Fiji International Golf Tournament be left out of the Head 50? Does anyone oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	16
Noes	:	25
Not voted	:	7

Proposed amendment defeated.

We will just go onto the very last motion before we break for tea. Parliament will vote on the amendments in the name of Honourable Viliame Gavoka and the question is that SEG 10, Line 13 - Marketing Support to Fiji Airways be left out of Head 50. I now give the floor to the Honourable Gavoka to speak on his motion.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, at the outset, I believe this is the first time in Fiji that Government is putting money into the marketing of our national airline. I do not think it has ever happened in the past. It is a company that is able to do its own thing, pay all its bills and for Government to give that kind of money to develop a new route is unprecedented, it is a first time. As we indicated in our Budget Address, where is our partner, Qantas?

Madam Chair, 51 per cent of shares within Fiji Airways is owned by the Government of Fiji, the people of Fiji and I believe Qantas owns 46 per cent. Is Qantas going to sit on the sideline and say "okay thank you Fiji Airways, go and do this, people of Fiji put this money and it will be profitable" they get 46 per cent and smile all the way to the bank without putting any money in?

What worries me, Madam Chair, is that our relationship with Qantas needs to be repaired. Something happened between the Government of Fiji and Qantas. Qantas saved Fiji Airways (then Air Pacific) back in the 1980s when Air Pacific was technically bankrupt. Ratu Mara at that time, his Government look for an overseas partner, considered Qantas, considered Ansett and gave it to Qantas and they turned Fiji around. Sure, because of what they put into the arrangement, they virtually absorbed the losses, guaranteed lots of things, insisted on a number of rights, they had to have a say in the purchase of equipment and they had to have a say in any new routes that Air Pacific would fly to; those were the conditions they put in the

agreement to save Air Pacific, at that time. They trained our pilots, they gave maintenance to our planes - that was the relationship with Qantas.

Something happened, we do not know the whole story, they are now sitting as passive shareholders and we ask if the Government of the day could repair that relationship with Qantas. You know who they are, they were the first major airline to be based in Fiji, they managed Nadi Airport, they virtually grew a tourism industry from day one, it is now a very profitable airline and I know at one time they were going through some rough patches but they are back. It is such a global name and I would urge the Government to repair that relationship and, Madam Chair, there are very little bit details about this \$18 million. How are they going to spend, is it to subsidise airfares?

In the Caribbean, the Caribbean Government actually guarantee seats for airlines flying to the Caribbean, but you have the huge American market only two hours away, so they can afford to do that. Fiji cannot afford to guarantee any seats for anyone. It is too risky for this country to guarantee any seats. I do not know how they are going to do it, and if they are going to do it, we welcome the introduction of the service to Singapore, but put it through Tourism Fiji, let them pull in all the partners which is, Tourism Fiji, the airlines, the hotels, the inbound operators and even the people in Singapore who interested in the route. That is how you do it in a corporative basis and partnership basis.

Madam Chair, we are very concerned about it. We would rather they do not do it, hence the motion to take this out of the Budget next year.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. I invite anyone else that would like to speak on the motion?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, I feel compelled to make a statement because it is a new item and it is a substantial item. Madam Chair, we are not here to debate our relationship with Qantas, we are here to look at the Estimates which is the \$18 million which is a marketing support to Fiji Airways. But I also feel compelled now seeing the issues of Qantas has been raised.

The other side has on numerous occasions said that we need to localise and that we need to build local capacity. It was under the SVT Government, and I stand to be corrected, when certain people were appointed to management positions in Air Pacific then, who did not know how to run an airline properly, and as a result of which, as the Honourable Member has highlighted, Air Pacific became pathetically, financially in a very dangerous situation. Qantas, which is a smaller shareholder, was then asked to take a more active role and its shareholding increased to around about 47 per cent, but Qantas put conditions in, rather than have a management agreement which would have an end of life and they get paid for it, they actually changed the Articles of Association in which a minority shareholder like Qantas had veto powers over nearly 12 to 15 areas of operation. They told us who would be the CEO, they told us which destinations to fly to, they told us what would be the capital expenditure, and the list goes on.



So here it is, built into the Articles of Association as opposed to a three or five-year management agreement. That is the way to do things when you bring in someone to manage you. When you are in doldrums, you bring in someone to manage you and after a while then they go away, but it continued and here we were, going off and negotiating all these air services agreements throughout the world and saying, “this is Fiji’s national carrier.” Under the Chicago Convention, you could not really call yourself a national carrier because you are not even controlled by the nation, you are controlled by Qantas, by an Australian company. That is the reality and that is what we changed through a law in abiding to the Chicago Convention, as a result of which Qantas people said, “we are not going to participate in the company”, even though they stopped attending meetings, they are still the shareholders and even though Fiji Airways now (it has changed from Air Pacific to Fiji Airways) is doing very well and making a lots of money compared to what they used to, they are reaping the benefits but they are not attending the meetings because it is a very neo- colonial attitude.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- That is exactly how you run this country.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- A very neo-colonial attitude. You cannot be neo-colonialist in your own country.

(Laughter)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- By your very definition, Honourable Karavaki, you cannot be a neo-colonialist in your own country. Madam Chair, that is the story with Qantas.

Let me put it into perspective. To fly to a new destination, even to fly to Hong Kong, Qantas was objecting Fiji Airways to fly to Hong Kong because Qantas wanted Fiji Airways to be the poorer cousin of Qantas and just fly around the islands, maybe one to LA. That is what they wanted. It took Air Pacific (now Fiji Airways) three years to start breaking even on the Hong Kong route, they are making losses. Qantas is most welcome to come and attend all meetings, nothing is stopping them, they are choosing not to attend.

They are choosing not to attend and we have in fact, Madam Chair, Qantas under the shareholders agreement, because it was so skewered you could not even make an offer to buy, but you could make an offer to sell and they did not even make an offer to sell, they said “we were proposing to sell” at a point in time when Fiji Airways was not making money.

They wanted us to buy it for about \$70 million or \$80 million, and we said as provided for under the shareholder’s agreement, “if you make a proper offer to sell, let us go to an independent third party” and under the shareholder’s agreement as provided for, if you go to an independent third party, they carry out the valuation then the person offering to sell must sell it at that price and the person offering to buy must buy it at that price.

We were prepared to do that, but they did not want to sell at that price and they got around it by saying “it is a proposal, it is not an offer” because they knew they wanted us to pay too much. Now we are quite keen to buy them off and get a very good strategic partner also.

That, Madam Chair, is the story of Qantas.

As far as this Estimates is concerned, yes, it is a new thing, and the reason is, Madam Chair, once we start flying to Singapore, Fiji would be connected to every single continent in the South Pacific rim, except South America.

We will be going to North America, Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, and of course Korean Airways flies to Korea. This is the level of connectivity that we will get, making Fiji a hub; a potential for people from Singapore to fly to LA via Fiji. All sorts of connectivity can be developed and this is why we have given this \$18 million as a marketing strategy, what we call, “tactical sales campaign” from Fiji to Singapore and Singapore to Fiji.

You have already seen tickets sales advertised at \$999 return. This is to increase the level of traffic. The first flight (from memory) goes on 5th April, I think it is a few days before the 7s Series which will now not go to Tokyo but go to Singapore. It will also help bring about partners to come to Fiji and also help us get some good special cargo rates.

Madam Chair, the Honourable Minister for Agriculture was talking about some very niche products that our agricultural sector has. Singapore and the countries surrounding that are middle to upper middle class income earning countries. We are able to then market our products. The Honourable Minister for Agriculture talks about the chain supply, this is the kind of chain supply we are setting and by providing this assistance, we will be giving a particular trajectory as far as this new route is concerned. It is not something that is set on stone, we will not forever give them \$18 million.

We have an agreement with Fiji Airways that we will see how it pans out. It may well be, we may not use the \$18 million dollars, we need to look at the audited accounts, how much money they are making, at the moment the proposal is that they fly twice a week to Singapore, but anyone running an airline would tell you, the magic numbers are 3, 5 or 7. Ideally, you should do 3, or 5 or 7 times in a week, so we hope to get up to 3.

Madam Chair, this money is there to accelerate and give a lot more impetus to this route, once it is up and running, they start making money, we get out of the scene, but it is good for Fiji and that is what we want.

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

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- Thank you Madam Chair. I think there are several questions that remain. One, of course is Qantas remains the shareholder and the Honourable Minister has alluded to the fact that they are ready to buy or we are ready to buy Qantas; when and how that happens we do not know, that is an uncertainty that is there.

The other point that I want to make, Madam Chair is, which Honourable Gavoka alluded to, of course we had \$9 million for golf that we are told is also marketing. We have

\$30 million for Tourism Fiji. Tourism Fiji as rightly pointed out by Honourable Gavoka always worked with Air Pacific or now Fiji Airways to market Fiji and my issue with running an airline and I have said this before, our real objective in this country is to bring tourists and our target has been more than a million tourists. We are still a long way to getting a million tourists.

I was looking at the recent data, and we all know that the largest source of tourists to Fiji still are from Australia, I know they are growing from other destinations, but I was looking at the figures for Australia the proportion. In other words, if you look at the total number of tourists that go out of Australia to every destination, the proportion of that total coming to Fiji has actually declined. The absolute numbers might have gone up but the proportion of outbound tourists from Australia to Fiji has been declining over the last two decades.

It is important for us to understand our market, our product and as I said, Fiji is still a very good product. We already have cost to the tourism industry with the new increase in STT and the environmental levy, a bit of cushioning in terms of marketing budget, increased from \$23 million to \$30 million. And so the point that Honourable Gavoka made that if we really have to look at Fiji/Singapore route, and if it is really about marketing, I think it is more subsidy rather than marketing from the way it appears to be at the moment. I have not looked at the actual detailed Financial Report of Fiji Airways, but we were told that the airline is now making money. I am not sure whether these sorts of costs that they need to incur can come from the profits that they have made already.

Madam Chair, if we really have to upscale the marketing, it is not always just marketing, we can market our products, there are other factors that determine whether we are able to sell our products. In other words, whether we are able to get more tourists to Fiji. There are many variables to that and I think in the absence of a very detailed serious analysis of what is going on, I would tend to support Honourable Gavoka's motion that we take this out and look at this, after a while until we are sure that this investment that we are going to make through Fiji Airways is the right way to go. Thank you.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, I feel compelled to respond to that. Honourable Dr. Prasad would know that when you give statistics, you do not give half-baked statistics. If you are saying that the percentage of Australians outbound has dropped to Fiji, obviously the numbers can be growing ...

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- I said that.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- ... and the numbers coming into Fiji could be growing too. So let us not try and obfuscate that. The fact is that the numbers to Fiji has increased ...

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- (Inaudible Interjection)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- ... no but you said that it has been declining to Fiji.

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. DR. B.C PRASAD.- Madam Chair, please let me explain it again to the Honourable and learned Attorney General.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Please do.

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- What I said, Madam Chair, was if you look at the total number of tourists who go out of Australia, what I am saying is, in the last decade, the proportion of the total that were going out of Australia has actually declined in terms of those who are coming to Fiji. The absolute number has gone up. That is what I said.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- You said that?

HON. DR. B.C. PRASAD.- I said that.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Wonderful, thank you. That is great.

It does not mean that the number of Australians coming to Fiji has decreased. That is what it means. To put it into perspective, if you have 1,000 Australian travelling and 100 of them come to Fiji, that is 10 per cent of them. But if 5,000 of Australians are travelling and 250 come to Fiji, that means 5 per cent of them are coming to Fiji but our numbers have increased. The other issue is, and I completely agree with the Honourable Dr. Biman Prasad is that, yes there are many other factors in terms of success of the route. Code-sharing is very critical and Singapore is not the destination, Singapore is merely the means to access other markets, because it is a major hub. Singapore has accessibility to China, Singapore has accessibility to India, Singapore has accessibility to the Middle-East, it also has accessibility to European countries, numerous direct flights come to Singapore from all those destinations.

Singapore Airlines alone flies 23 times a day to different Indian destinations. The Indians are the second largest out-bound market in the world. They will surpass China in about 5 to 10 years' time – growing middle class. These are the people from there, from Europe and from China we want to capture and this, Madam Chair, is very important. West Indies, as mentioned.

Madam Chair, for a country that is very heavily independent on tourism we have to ensure that we have a strong national carrier, a lot of people talk about open skies, the moment you do open skies, airlines like the Emirates, United Airlines, Etihad, Singapore, they will kill us. They will run our national airline down to the ground. Yes, maybe great, they can bring tourists for \$200 or \$300, but guess what will happen, when they want to leave, they can leave. If there is a flood or disaster in Fiji, they decide not to fly, you cannot force them to fly, and that is precisely what happened in the West Indies. When they had the open skies policy, their national carrier went under, the other airlines came in, the American Airlines came in. Guess, what that does?

It means the percentage of the tourist spend goes out of the country again even more. With the national carrier, the airline ticket fares come to Fiji, so this is why it is very critical for us to ensure that for a country where nearly 95 per cent to 98 per cent of all tourism arrivals

come by air, and of which 70 per cent come by a national carrier that our national carrier is strong. It must be viable and we are able to connect to new routes and ensure that it becomes viable very quickly and there is nothing wrong in giving a helping hand to our national carrier.

(Acclamation)

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, just for some clarification. Spending \$18 million next year, how many years would you be able to recover that cost in terms of your marketing? Simply a cost benefit analysis and all those other things, you must have done that and can you ....

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, as I highlighted earlier on, that the return for us is not for Government only, it is for the country.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- It is, we know that.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- So, if for example you are talking about what will be the cost benefit analysis, the benefits we are going to get from it by spending \$18 million is that we are opening up our country to a new destination, we are able to say to more people, “You can come to Fiji, we are able to build up that market and we will have the credibility in that market, in Singapore, which is our major hub.” That is the benefit we will get from it.

So in terms of what is the multiplier-effect or the spill-over effect from that, it means you get more tourists, obviously more jobs, it creates more of an industry within Fiji. That really, at the end of the day, is what we are looking for and as you mentioned, I know some of you did laugh at that, when I talked about creating Fiji into a little Geneva of the Pacific. From the perspective of that, as you know Honourable Member that a lot of the overseas missions for the region are based in Fiji, whether it is the European Union, the Americans, the British, ILO, WHO, I understand the International Food Organisation want to set up a shop here too, so by having that connectivity, we are able to say to the rest of the world, “Come here, we have good infrastructure, good airline connectivity, have more of your UN regional meetings in Fiji because people can fly over a lot more easily,” so overall that is the overall strategy for that.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Chair, from a technical perspective, there must be a sum of money that is spent, \$8 million and when you peg a cost on what you have just explained, you would have a rough idea on what sort of return, whether it can be done next year or in five years to six years’ time. Technically, that is what they do, only through that, that you will be able to say “aye” or “nay” or any project because it is to do with money. I am just trying to find out if that calculation is available.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, I now give the floor to the Honourable Gavoka for his right of reply.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Chair, the exchange of ideas here, I believe has been very useful to everyone so that we will fully understand what is behind this subsidy

to Fiji Airways to Singapore. Let me just go back to Qantas, Madam Chair. Let us just understand where we are, so that we are in the clear about this.

In 1980 Air Pacific launched what was called “Project America” but they went about it the wrong way. They went through Honolulu and expecting someone else to fling into Honolulu and they were flying a DC-10; that was very problematic. By the end of the year, by 18 months or so, Air Pacific was in the hole to the tune of \$30 million.

For our economy at that time in 1980, that was a huge hit on the Fijian economy and we owned the airline, so the people ran around. The leadership then with the then Prime Minister, the *Turaga Na Tui Nayau* went around looking for someone to save the Air Pacific. Qantas came into the party and there were other bidders, and I think a few other airlines wanted to run Air Pacific. They chose Qantas because Qantas under-wrote the \$30 million loss. Try to understand this colleagues, you come to a business that is virtually falling apart and you are going to inject money into it to save it. Are you not going to ask for some conditions? That is what they did.

They said Air Pacific will manage, we will plug the hole here, we will under-write the \$30 million loss, but on the purchase of any equipment, we want to have a say in it, any new routes you want to fly to, we want to have a say in it, and a few other conditions, and it has to be understandable. You need to pull yourself back into history at the time on what they did to save us.

Madam Chair, this notion that Qantas is a colonialist, they trained our locals to run Air Pacific. Andrew Drysdale, a Suva boy, became CEO of Air Pacific. Is that colonialism? Went to Suva Grammar and right here from Suva - trained by Qantas, sent to Harvard, all over the world, to qualify to run Air Pacific, and he is the one who built and understood that there was an imbalance between the airline seats and the hotel rooms. He is the one who put together the deal for Sofitel, Air Pacific owned that, that was Andrew Drysdale; a Suva boy. And a lot of our own people were trained by Qantas. I could give you some names. Today, most of our pilots, trained by Qantas are flying in the Middle East.

HON. A.A. MAHARAJ.- Can we come back to the budget?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- He spoke about Qantas, my friend. Give me the right to speak about Qantas.

Madam Chair, today a Qantas-trained pilot who went to QVS is flying A380 in the Middle East on the busy European skies. I am sure most of us have seen what A380 is, it is the biggest aeroplane ever made, one of our very own trained by Qantas flies A380.

That was a Qantas-trained pilot, Qantas engineers; all these Colonial things that appears to be ....

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- We are talking about now, we are not talking about the past.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, a lot of things were said about Qantas, a lot of us hold that company in very high esteem. We have to defend their honour here and they did that very well for us, Madam Chair. It is just so sad that we cannot repair the relationship and put the leadership back on a proper pedestal.

You talk about a hub. Qantas management had put out a plan for Fiji and Air Pacific to buy the Dreamliner-787, instead of the Airbus. A Dreamliner, the hub we are talking about here, would have lifted the hub concept to a different level. The Dreamliner would have flown from here to mid-Western cities of America. That was a Qantas initiative. [INTERJECTIONS] Let us put that on balance, all we want is the relationship to be repaired, they have 46 per cent of the air and now, Madam Chair, I am hearing now that the Indian market with 23 flights from Singapore is a huge motivator and I love to hear that. I would love to put this money, part of it, into marketing the Fiji product in the Indian market. I love that money to be spent on marketing, Fiji and India because of that feed of 23 flights a day and where we feed off from. That to me is where the problem is. I even put subsidising of the airfare into marketing to develop the market.

Madam Chair, we obviously have views here that are very different, but I just think we are missing out on a huge opportunity by not repairing some of these issues. Here we are glorifying our visitor arrivals, let me just share with everyone in the room, in 2006 Fiji and the Maldives were very similar in visitor arrivals – just 600,000 or 700,000 in 2006. In 2014, Maldives 1.2 million, Fiji 692,000.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- Oh! Tell them.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- So do not tell us about record arrivals. Do benchmarking and tell us where we stand. If you look back at the Maldives from 600,000 to 1.2 million and Fiji from 549,000 to 692,000 you are talking about a growth rate of about 2 percent every year and I tell you 2 percent growth every year, you can stand on your head with that. Madam Chair, that is why we feel very strongly that \$18 million is very unwise.

(Acclamation)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chair, that is why we feel very strongly that \$18 million is very unwise.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Parliament will vote on the amendment in the name of Honourable Viliame Gavoka. The question is that SEG 10 Line 13 – Marketing Support to Fiji Airways be left out of Head 50. Does any oppose? There being opposition, Parliament will vote.

Question on proposed amendment put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	17
Noes	:	25
Not Voted	:	6

Proposed amendment defeated.

Honourable Members, we will now vote on Head No. 50 and the question is that the amount of Head No. 50 – Miscellaneous Services be approved. Does any Member oppose the motion? There being opposition, Parliament will vote on the motion.

Question put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	24
Noes	:	17
Not Voted	:	7

Head No. 50 agreed to.

Honourable Members, I thank you very much. I think we are in for a break, so we can go have some refreshments at the same place. We will resume at 6.15 p.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 5.49 p.m.



The Parliament resumed at 6.48 p.m.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you and welcome back Honourable Members. The last session brought us to the end of the Estimates - Heads 1 to 50 that are being appropriated by the 2016 Appropriation Bill 2015.

Heads 51 and 52 are Standing Appropriations specified in the Constitution that are not voted upon, that is why they are usually called Below the Line Appropriations. For an explanation on how the figures are arrived at, perhaps the Honourable Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Finance can elaborate.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Chair, as you rightly pointed out that if you look at the back of the Estimates, although it is not the Estimates *per se*, Head 51 is all the pensions that is payable and that is all listed and that has a charge of the Government Finances, you cannot deviate nor can you change it.

Head 52 is listed out in those numerous pages, you will see that it sets out the Government payments on interest on loans. If I can take the Honourable Members, it starts on page 302 of your Estimates. Like I said it is not your Estimates *per se*. It sets out the loans and how much interests we pay on that, then on page 303, that is the currency exchange estimates. Some of these loans are obviously borrowed in US or Chinese Yuan or Japanese, some of them are in US dollars.

Then over the page on page 304 is the principal payments that would be due on these loans. For example, some of them go back like 1993, so that is all set out - the principal payments. For example, I wanted to point out that there is a first line item on page 304, that is a loan we discovered that did not appear in the books before. This was a loan taken out by the then Government in 1989 and 1990 which was the People's Republic of China interest free loan. So we tracked down the documentation, we have now shown it but as you can see, it is at zero because they had given then the Government a grace period so the payment for that commences in 2019.

Then the next page 306 is the domestic loans and the interest payments that is due on the domestic loans. So if you see, we have now, if you look down the line, up to item number 19, the interest payments are no longer applicable because they have been paid off. So, if you go down from 20, these are all the loans where they have interest payable. On the opposite page, that explains what has been fully paid, so in 2014, from 1 to 19, those loans have been fully paid in 2014.

Over the page on 308, again that is more domestic loans. I mean when you talk about domestic loans, we are talking about domestic bonds. Domestic bonds can be taken at 3, 5, 7 and 9-year intervals. Over the page again, these are all domestic loans that we have right from the 1990's, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005 and 2006, then of course, 2007 it goes over the page on page 312. Again the domestic loans interest payments, it is all set out there and explains. Page 316 and then of course the domestic loans interest payments that ends on page 318.

You will see that we have right at the bottom, Pages 326 and 327, these are anticipated payments that are due, because when you issue bonds in the first half of the year, then you have to make the first interest payment in the second half of the year.

Page 320 are the domestic loans principal payments. So, for example, you have got some loans there that is shown as all zero, zero, zero because they have actually been paid off in 2014. Then the others, of course, all continue with the various loans. So you will see on page 321, numbers 1 to 17, you have the final redemption that was due, some of them were in 2014 and 2015.

Page 322, is again the principal payments for all those loans that were taken out, that is from 2003 to 2005. Page 324 is from 2005 to 2008. Page 326 is from 2008 to 2010. Page 328 from 2010 to 2012. Page 330 is 2012 to 2015 and then of course the last one is 2015 to the Sugarcane Growers Council loan which, as we have stated, is no longer applicable. So that is what we have.

Then again on page 334, we have the provisions, the charges on the account of public debt. I wanted to highlight to the Honourable Members, if you look at the small book (the Supplement), we have for the first time following World Bank's recommendation on page 55, you will see that Government debt maturity profile.

When do these debts all mature, in particular the bonds? So that sets out the pace at which these bonds become due and payable. That is on this particular Figure 5.3 here and then on Page 56 on Table 5.11 that essentially sets out the breakdown as we had mentioned throughout the debate of what the external domestic debt loan portfolio, how is that broken down, the debt in millions of dollars. The debt as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), cost of debt, the weighted average interest rate, the refinancing risk. This is a new one that we put together since we need to profile our debts a lot better, and we again have, for example, these are the types of funding allocations that had been made. You will see again the summary of Head 52 on page 334 at the bottom. That sets out the overseas loans, the domestic loans and interest payments and then, of course, we have the principal payments on overseas loans and domestic loans. So the total debt servicing is that amount that is being set out. So, that Madam Chairperson, essentially is what we have in Heads 51 and 52.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you very much. We shall now move to considering the Schedules and Clauses of the Appropriation Bill as required by Standing Order 101. I advise Honourable Members that as we have not amended the Estimates, Standing Order 101 prevents any amendments being moved and made at this stage.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Madam Chairperson, can I just get some clarification in regards to Head 51, Line 11, Page 301 – Pensions. Probably it is all in our interest if the Honourable Minister of Finance can clarify that in our position. Pension Gratuities - Details of Expenditure and the second one is on the same page, Line 13 in regards to compensation to female pensioners. If I can explain that, some ladies were given compensation towards the end of last year. These were the women who were working under the Pension Scheme of Civil

Servants and when the Fiji National Provident Fund commenced in early 1970, they then had to resign then start all over again and joined the FNPF. Some were compensated, but there is a list of those who are still waiting. Could that be enlightened to us for our information? There is no allocation for 2016.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Minister of Finance

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you Honourable Ratu Kiliraki, Line 11, SEG 11, Head 51 – that is for those people who were Ex-Parliamentarians. At the moment there are 232 Ex-Parliamentarians who are being paid from this fund which includes the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs.

So, there are 232 of them at the moment. We then have, of course, the compensation of female pensioners unfortunately you are incorrect. It is not for those women. This is an issue that has been lingering for decades. Under the old Colonial system, if you were a spinster, as they called you, if you are unmarried and then for example you started working in 1961. If you then got married in 1965, the years that you were a spinster was not taken into consideration as your pension. So, your pension then started in 1965.

We, in fact had a number of people who came and saw us, we dug up the files, the file actually went back as late during the Alliance Government days and as SVT Government days where legal opinion was given that perhaps they need to be paid at least an *ex gratia* payment because the law was such. So women basically, if you are a spinster, your worth was not as much until you are married. So, that is what it was.

It is not with those who switched over. It is to do with those women who were not given pension for the period that they were spinsters. So, some women for example may have joined the Civil Service in say 1962 at the beginning of the year and got married at the end of 1962. So it is for those 11 months that they were not paid the pension. But there may have been women who joined in 1959 and got married in 1968. So they have to be paid for a longer period. This is why some women got paid more money and others did not get paid as much but we had a minimum sum, I cannot remember what the minimum sum was, but that was what it was for. So, all those that was advertised and quite a few hundred women were paid and that is why it is no longer there.

HON V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Chairperson, just a point of clarification. The former parliamentarians, the criteria here because we have had representation from those who won the Elections in May 2006 but were out of Parliament by December 2006. A number of them are saying, “we campaigned, we spent a lot of money on our campaign and we were in Parliament from that period”. Are they also considered for some sort of consideration?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Chairperson, this particular Head and SEG basically caters for whatever is legally provided for in the law and that is what it caters for at this point in time.

HON. RO T.V. KEPA.- In terms of Number 13 - Compensation to Female Pensioners that the Honourable and learned Attorney General just spoken on, it is just as well I did not line up with the other women, otherwise he would be pointing to me and saying, “she’s got the pension too”.

For the other line, Madam Chair, for the ex-Prime Minister’s pensions, I know I did speak to the Honourable and learned Attorney General about this twice already and I would like to thank him for looking into a previous Prime Minister’s pension.

In terms of the telephone, his arrears, his gratuity, you did come up to line with that, thank you Honourable and learned Attorney-General, and the telephone and the medical treatment. I think in terms of the other two, I would also look at the previous Prime Ministers in terms of the ministerial-type vehicle which is outstanding and the budgetary allocation of \$30,000 per annum.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Honourable Chairperson, this is to do with pensions. The benefits that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is talking about are the other benefits, as you may recall, Honourable Kepa, there is an allocation of \$100,000 under the Secretary to Cabinet. That is where they have to provide documentation, for example, telephone bills and that is where that money comes from.

This is to do with pensions, for the pension that they are entitled to. At the moment there is Sitiveni Rabuka, the widow of the former Vice-President (Ratu Iloilo), Mahendra Chaudhary, Laisenia Qarase and of course now the recently former President. His pension will also come from here.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- There being no other questions. Thank you very much. We shall now move to considering the Schedules and Clauses of the Appropriation Bill as required by Standing Order 101. I advise Honourable Members that as we have not amended the Estimates, Standing Order 101 prevents any amendments being moved and made at this stage. Standing Order 101 (3) also prevents any debate on these questions.

Schedule 1:

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is that Schedule 1 as amended stands part of the Bill. Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Since there is no opposition, the Schedule is therefore agreed to.

Schedule 1 agreed to.

Schedule 2:

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is that Schedule 2 stands part of the Bill. Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Do you have Schedule 1? It just reflects what we have been doing in the last few days.

Schedule 2 agreed to.

Clause 1:

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill. Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill. Does any Member oppose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS.- No.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3:

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- The question is that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill. Does any Member oppose the motion?

I hear opposition therefore Parliament will have to vote on this.

Motion put.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	25
Noes	:	17
Not voted	:	6

Motion agreed to

That brings us to the end of Committee of Supply. Parliament shall now resume its sitting and I shall resume the Chair.

The House resumed:

SECRETARY GENERAL.- Committee of Supply has agreed to the 2016 Appropriation Bill 2015 (Bill No. 23 of 2015) with amendment.

MADAM SPEAKER.- I now call upon the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to move the Third Reading.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move that the 2016 Appropriation Bill 2015 which is (Bill No. 23 of 2015) be read a third time and do pass.

MADAM SPEAKER.- Parliament will now vote on the Third Reading. The question is that the 2016 Appropriation Bill 2015 (Bill No. 23 of 2015) be read a third time and do pass.

Does any Member oppose the motion?

There being opposition, Parliament will vote on this motion.

Votes Cast:

Ayes	:	25
Noes	:	17
Not voted	:	6

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

SECRETARY GENERAL.- A Bill for an Act to appropriate a sum of Three Billion, Ninety Million, Eight Hundred and Forty Thousand, Three Hundred and Twenty Dollars for ordinary services of Government for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2016 (Bill No. 23 of 2015) enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

(Acclamation)

MADAM SPEAKER.- Parliament has now passed the 2016 Budget. I congratulate all Honourable Members on their contribution to this very important process.

(Acclamation)

Honourable Members, I have been advised that amendments have been made to four of the Consequential Bills including the Income Tax Bill. Whilst Parliament will deal with this

procedurally tomorrow, copies of the amended Bills will be distributed to all Honourable Members now for your necessary reading.

I wish to remind Honourable Members that these will be dealt with procedurally tomorrow.

That brings us to the end of our sitting. I wish to take this opportunity to thank Honourable Members for your contributions to the Budget process. It has been a very healthy debate that we have had and I am sure we all enjoyed it. Great experience, thank you.

Parliament is now adjourned until tomorrow at 9.30 a.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 7.13 p.m.