



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Friday, Eleventh Day of December, 2020

1. The House met at 9.30 a.m. pursuant to adjournment.

2. Hon. Speaker took the Chair and read the Prayer.

3. MEMBERS PRESENT

All Honourable Members were present except for the Hon. Faiyaz Koya.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Inia Seruiratu, moved that the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Thursday, 10 December 2020, as previously circulated be taken as read and be confirmed.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Hon. Speaker welcomed all Honourable Members to the sitting of Parliament. He also welcomed all those watching the live broadcast and the live-streaming of the proceedings from the comfort of their home, offices and mobile phones.

6. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

The following reports were tabled in Parliament and referred by the Hon. Speaker to the respective Standing Committees for their deliberation –

(a) Standing Committee on Economic Affairs

1. Accident Compensation Commission Fiji – 2018 Annual Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 253 of 2020*);
2. Reserve Bank of Fiji – Annual Report August 2019 – July 2020 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 55 of 2020*); and
3. Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission – Annual Report 2017-2018 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 70 of 2019*).

(b) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

4. 2020 Fiji National Provident Fund Annual Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 73 of 2020*);
5. 2018 to 2019 Fiji Airports Annual Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 265 of 2020*);
6. Nadi Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2004 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 91 of 2020*);
7. Nadi Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2005 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 92 of 2020*);
8. Nadi Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2006 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 93 of 2020*);
9. Nadi Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2007 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 94 of 2020*);
10. Nadi Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2008 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 95 of 2020*);
11. Nadi Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2009 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 96 of 2020*);
12. Nadi Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2010 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 97 of 2020*);
13. Tavua Town Council – Annual Report for the Year Ended 2006 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 132 of 2020*);
14. Tavua Town Council – Annual Report for the Year Ended 2007 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 133 of 2020*);

15. Tavua Town Council – Annual Report for the Year Ended 2008 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 134 of 2020*);
 16. Tavua Town Council – Annual Report for the Year Ended 2009 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 135 of 2020*);
 17. Tavua Town Council – Annual Report for the Year Ended 2010 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 136 of 2020*);
 18. Ba Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2006 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 115 of 2020*);
 19. Ba Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2007 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 116 of 2020*);
 20. Ba Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2008 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 117 of 2020*);
 21. Ba Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2009 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 118 of 2020*);
 22. Ba Town Council – Annual Report for the Year 2010 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 119 of 2020*);
 23. Suva City Council – 2006 Annual Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 74 of 2020*);
 24. Suva City Council – 2007 Annual Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 75 of 2020*);
 25. Suva City Council – 2008 Annual Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 76 of 2020*);
 26. Suva City Council – 2009 Annual Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 77 of 2020*);
 27. Suva City Council – 2010 Annual Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 78 of 2020*);
 28. Ministry of Youth and Sports – Annual Report 2018-2019 (*Parliamentary Paper No. 20 of 2020*);
 29. Fiji National Sports Commission – August 2018 – July 2019 Annual Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 149 of 2020*); and
 30. Fiji National University – Annual Report 2019 (Parliamentary Paper No. 63 of 2020).
- (c) Standing Committee on Public Accounts
31. Fourth Quarter Appropriation Statement – Actual Expenditure from 1 May 2020 – 31 July 2020;

32. Report of the Auditor-General of the Republic of Fiji – 2017-2018 Financial Statements of Government and 2017-2018 Agency Financial Statements of Ministry of Economy (*Parliamentary Paper No. 186 of 2020*);
33. Report of the Auditor-General of the Republic of Fiji – Performance Audit on the Access for Persons with Disabilities to Public Offices and Public Transport (*Parliamentary Paper No. 268 of 2020*);
34. Report of the Auditor-General of the Republic of Fiji – Compliance Audit Report (*Parliamentary Paper No. 269 of 2020*);
35. Report of the Auditor-General of the Republic of Fiji – Audit Report on Compliance Audits Relating to COVID-19 Response (*Parliamentary Paper No. 270 of 2020*);
36. Report of the Auditor-General of the Republic of Fiji – Audit Report on Follow Up of High Risk Ministries/Departments (*Parliamentary Paper No. 271 of 2020*); and
37. Report of the Auditor-General of the Republic of Fiji – Performance Audit on the Management of Environment Impact Assessment (*Parliamentary Paper No. 273 of 2020*);

7. RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON THE MOTION BY THE HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER

Parliament resumed debate on the motion that the Parliament thanks His Excellency the President for His most gracious speech.

The Prime Minister and Minister for iTaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry and Foreign Affairs the Hon. Josaia Bainimarama delivered his right of reply.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

8. SUSPENSION MOTION BY THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Inia Seruiratu, moved under Standing Order 6 that so much of Standing Order 23(1) be suspended to allow the House to sit beyond 12.30 p.m. to complete the remaining items on the Order Paper.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

9. MAIDEN SPEECHES

The Hon. Tanya Waqanika and the Hon. Virendra Lal delivered their maiden speeches.

10. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

(a) MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (A) That the Trademarks Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (B) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (C) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (D) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill at the April sitting of Parliament; and
- (E) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament at the April sitting of Parliament, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(b) MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (A) That the Patents Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (B) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (C) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (D) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill at the April sitting of Parliament; and
- (E) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament at the April sitting of Parliament, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(c) MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (A) That the Designs Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (B) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (C) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (D) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill at the April sitting of Parliament; and
- (E) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament at the April sitting of Parliament, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(d) MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (A) That the National Payment System Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (B) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (C) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (D) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill at the February sitting of Parliament; and
- (E) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament at the February sitting of Parliament, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(e) MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (A) That the Investment Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (B) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (C) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (D) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill at the April sitting of Parliament; and
- (E) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament at the April sitting of Parliament, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(f) MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (A) That the Electoral (Amendment) Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (B) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (C) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (D) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill at the March sitting of Parliament; and
- (E) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament at the March sitting of Parliament, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(g) MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (A) That the Electoral (Registration of Voters) (Amendment) Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (B) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (C) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (D) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill at the March sitting of Parliament; and
- (E) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament at the March sitting of Parliament, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(h) MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (A) That the Political Parties (Registration, Conduct, Funding and Disclosures) (Amendment) Bill 2020 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (B) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (C) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (D) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill at the March sitting of Parliament; and
- (E) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament at the

March sitting of Parliament, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

11. INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 2020

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Wednesday, 9th December 2020 that the Income Tax (Amendment) (No. 3) Bill 2020 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Income Tax Act 2015 (Bill No. 38 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

12. FIJI REVENUE AND CUSTOMS SERVICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2020

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Wednesday, 9th December 2020 that the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (Amendment) Bill 2020 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service Act 1998 (Bill No. 39 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

13. OZONE DEPLETING SUBSTANCES (AMENDMENT) BILL 2020

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Wednesday, 9th December 2020 that the Ozone Depleting Substances (Amendment) Bill 2020 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Ozone Depleting Substances Act 1998 (Bill No. 40 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

14. TELECOMMUNICATIONS (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 2020

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Wednesday, 9th December 2020 that the Telecommunications (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2020 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Telecommunications Act 2008 (Bill No. 41 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

15. ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 2020

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Wednesday, 9th December 2020 that the Environment Management (Amendment) Bill 2020 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Environment Management Act 2005 (Bill No. 42 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

16. COVID-19 RESPONSE (HOME LOAN ASSISTANCE) BILL 2020

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Wednesday, 9th December 2020 that the COVID-19 Response (Home Loan Assistance) Bill 2020 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

A Bill for an Act to provide for home loan assistance for the payment of mortgage monies and for related matters (Bill No. 43 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

17. CUSTOMS TARIFF (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 2020

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Wednesday, 9th December 2020 that the Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 3) Bill 2020 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Customs Tariff Act 1986 (Bill No. 44 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

18. ADJOURNMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Inia Seruiratu moved that Parliament stands adjourned until Monday, 8 February 2021 at 9.30 a.m.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

Hon. Speaker thanked all the Honourable Members for their participation and contributions during the Parliamentary proceedings in the course of the final sitting period for the year.

Hon. Speaker reiterated to all Honourable Members the need to adhere to advisories with respect to the nation-wide COVID-safe restrictions and protocols, and he encouraged all Honourable Members and all those watching the live broadcast and the live streaming of proceedings to take heed and adhere accordingly as it is crucial for the health and safety of everyone in our country.

On behalf of the Secretary-General and Parliamentary Staff, the Hon. Speaker wished all Honourable Members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Hon. Speaker declared Parliament adjourned until Monday, 8 February 2021 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 2.24 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

11th December, 2020.