



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Wednesday, Eighteenth Day of August, 2021

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. Mosese Bulitavu.

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 Tuesday, 17 August 2021 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 and all those watching the live broadcast and the live streaming of the proceedings.

Hon. Speaker informed the Honourable Members that the Patents Bill 2020 and Designs Bill 2020 will be debated and voted upon on Thursday, 19 August 2021.

Hon. Speaker addressed the House on the issue of Hon. Niko Nawaikula's seat in Parliament.

6. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(a) Standing Committee on Economic Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Vijay Nath tabled the Committee's Consolidated Review Report on the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (MITT) 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 Annual Reports.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report is initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

(b) Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Alvick Maharaj tabled the Committee's Review Report on the 2017-2018 Audit Report on Statutory Authorities.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report is initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

(c) Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Alvick Maharaj tabled the Committee's review report on the Trademarks Bill 2020 (Bill No. 45 of 2020).

Hon. Speaker informed that pursuant to the resolutions of Parliament on 11 December 2020 and 16 August 2021, the Standing Committee had tabled its report accordingly. The debate and vote on the Bill would take place on Thursday, 19 August 2021.

7. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

(a) The Minister for Local Government, Housing and Community Development the Hon. Premila Kumar delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Lynda Tabuya and the Hon. Pio Tikoduadua responded respectively.

(b) The Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport the Hon. Faiyaz Koya delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Viliame Gavoka and the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad responded respectively.

8. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

The Hon. Speaker informed that there were no Bills for consideration.

9. MOTION BY THE HON. ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR ECONOMY, CIVIL SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved that Parliament approve that Fiji ratify the 2005 Agreement Establishing the Pacific Islands Forum.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

10. 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 4.30 p.m. to complete the remaining items listed on the Order Paper.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

11. QUESTIONS

164/2021 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament if contact tracing and swabbing of people suspected of COVID-19 has stopped.

165/2021 Hon. Viam Pillay to ask the Minister for Defence, National Security and Policing, Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management – Can the Minister inform Parliament how the operations of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces has been affected by COVID-19.

166/2021 Hon. Jese Saukuru asked the Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Land Bank initiative.

167/2021 Hon. Virendra Lal asked the Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the salaries upgrade for teachers who have completed their relevant qualifications.

- 168/2021 Hon. Tanya Waqanika asked the Minister for Fisheries – Can the Minister update Parliament on the reason for the reduction in budgetary allocation for the Electronic Monitoring System (EMS) from \$600,000 in 2020-2021 to \$380,000 in the current financial year.
- 169/2021 Hon. Sanjay Kirpal asked the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister update Parliament on how has the Ministry assisted farmers in purchasing fertiliser during lockdown.
- 170/2021 Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau asked the Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister update Parliament on the construction of the Nasali and Toga Bridges.
- 171/2021 Hon. Joseph Nand asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister update Parliament on the engagement of private general practitioners initiative.

Written Question

- 172/2021 Hon. Inosi Kuridrani asked the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of the distribution of F1 Sheep Cross Breed to farmers in 2019, in particular –
- (a) how many were distributed per Division;
 - (b) how many farmers received this breed of sheep; and
 - (c) what improvement in output was recorded from 2019 to date in the domestic sheep industry as a result of this activity.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were given by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Speaker allowed the Hon. Alvick Maharaj to ask Oral Question 165/2021. The response to the Written Question would be tabled at a later sitting date as permitted under Standing Order 45(3).

12. ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Thursday, 19 August 2021 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 6.12 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

18th August, 2021.