



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Thursday, Nineteenth 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.

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 Wednesday, 18 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.

6. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

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

(a) Standing Committee on Economic Affairs

(i) Energy Fiji Limited 2020 Annual Report.

(b) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

- (i) Nausori Town Council annual reports for the years 2005 to 2014;
- (ii) Rakiraki Town Council annual reports for the years 2011 to 2018;
- (iii) Nadi Town Council annual reports for the years 2011 to 2015;
- (iv) Lautoka City Council annual reports for the years 2006 to 2010;
- (v) Sigatoka Town Council annual reports for the years 2005 to 2018; and
- (vi) Savusavu Town Council annual reports for the years 2005 to 2010.

(c) Hon. Speaker informed that the Hon. Minister for Agriculture had tabled the 2020 Fiji Agriculture Census Report and would be circulated for the information of Honourable Members only. Hon. Speaker advised that the 2020 Fiji Agriculture Census Report provided general statistics on the structure of Fiji's agriculture sector which could be utilised by Honourable Members in the course of Parliamentary business.

7. 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 of the Investment Fiji 2016 to 2019 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.

8. MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau and the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad responded respectively.

9. MOTION BY THE 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 a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (A) That the Climate Change Bill 2021 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 September 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 September 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.

10. INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 2021 (BILL NO. 30 OF 2021)

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 Tuesday, 17 August 2021, that the Income Tax (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2021 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Income Tax Act 2015 (Bill No. 30 of 2021), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

11. TRADEMARKS BILL 2020 (BILL NO. 45 OF 2020)

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolutions of Parliament on Friday, 11 December 2020 and Monday, 16 August 2021, that the Trademarks 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 the registration of trademarks in Fiji and for related matters (Bill No. 45 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

12. 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.

13. PATENTS BILL 2020 (BILL NO. 46 OF 2020)

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolutions of Parliament on Friday, 11 December 2020 and Monday, 16 August 2021, that the Patents 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 patents of inventions and for related matters (Bill No. 46 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

14. DESIGNS BILL 2020 (BILL NO. 47 OF 2020)

The Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications the Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum moved a motion pursuant to the resolutions of Parliament on Friday, 11 December 2020 and Monday, 16 August 2021, that the Designs 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 the registration of designs in Fiji and for related matters (Bill No. 47 of 2020), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

15. QUESTIONS

- 173/2021 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister inform Parliament how the one-off payment of \$10,000.00 for MBBS students enrolled privately due to non-availability of Toppers Scholarship is appropriate.
- 174/2021 Hon. Rohit Sharma asked the Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament how the Open Taxi Rank System will benefit members of the public and taxi operators and drivers.
- 175/2021 Hon. Lynda Tabuya asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on support available for expectant mothers and mothers with new born infants who have tested positive for COVID and placed in isolation.
- 176/2021 Hon. Alipate Nagata asked the Minister for Defence, National Security and Policing, Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management – Can the Minister update Parliament on how the Ministry is using the Self-Help Programme and Community Access Roads, Footpaths and Footbridges for the development in rural and maritime areas.
- 177/2021 Hon. Salote Radrodoro asked the Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation – Can the Minister update Parliament on the progress of the National Action Plan to prevent Violence against women and girls.
- 178/2021 Hon. George Vegnathan asked the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Community Development – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the informal settlement upgrades that will be covered using the \$2 million allocated for the programme in the new financial year.
- 179/2021 Hon. Viliame Gavoka asked the Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport – Can the Minister update Parliament on the activities of Tourism Fiji during this lull period.
- 180/2021 Hon. Selai Adimaitoga asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service and Communications – Can the Minister update Parliament on the \$200 million Credit Guarantee Scheme announced in the 2021-2022 budget.

Written Question

181/2021 Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau asked the Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport – Can the Minister update Parliament on the progress of negotiations with Rules of Origin for the following trade agreements currently being negotiated –

- (a) EU-Pacific States Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA);
- (b) Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus;
- (c) Melanesian Spearhead Group Trade Agreement (MSG TA); and
- (d) Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA).

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were given by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Speaker allowed the Hon. Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts to respond to Oral Question 177/2021. The Hon. Speaker informed that he had received the response to Written Question 181/2021 from the Minister for Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport the Hon. Faiyaz Koya and that it would be provided to Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau and a copy uploaded on the Parliament website.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Friday, 20 August 2021 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 7.29 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

19th August, 2021.