



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Friday, Thirty-first Day of March, 2023

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. Sanjay Kirpal and Hon. Aliko Bia.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Lynda Tabuya, moved that the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Thursday, 30 March 2023 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 the LLB students from the Fiji National University and those in the gallery and all those watching the live broadcast and the live-streaming of the proceedings.

The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members of their official photo shoot session on Tuesday, 4 April 2023.

6. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

- 30/2023 Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva asked the Minister for Public Works and Meteorological Services, and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament on how and when will the Government address the deteriorating road condition experienced around the country in place such as Natewa West Roads, Natewa East Roads, Buca Bay and Natewa / Tunuloa Road, Nabalebale to Kubulau Road, Naikawaga Road, the Hibiscus Highway from Labasa to Savusavu and the Nadi to Lautoka highway.
- 31/2023 Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu to ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the Business Performance of Fiji Airways Limited post COVID.
- 32/2023 Hon. Jone Usamate asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament how is Government funding the new ministries for which there was no specific budget allocation.
- 33/2023 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister update Parliament on the bus fare subsidy scheme.
- 34/2023 Hon. Vijay Nath asked the Minister for Public Works and Meteorological Services, and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament which responsibilities will be shifted from the FRA to PWD and how this will be financed.
- 35/2023 Hon. Esrom Immanuel asked the Minister for Rural and Maritime Development, and Disaster Management – Can the Minister update Parliament on Government's intention to revamp the Rural Housing Assistance Programme.
- 36/2023 Hon. Alvick Maharaj asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice – Can the Minister inform Parliament whether the Government is still committed to the Yellow Ribbon Programme.
- 37/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua asked the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration – Can the Minister inform Parliament of the current Border Management Information System (BMIS).

Written Questions

38/2023 Hon. Sashi Kiran asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Rates are an important source of revenue for Municipal Councils, however over the past years the collections by Councils have been in dire arrears, as reported by the previous Auditor-General's reports – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –

- (a) The arrears of annual situation for each Municipal Council spanning the period January 2007 to 23 December 2022; and
- (b) Current strategies being put in place by the Ministry to improve rates collections, and when the Ministry anticipates seeing some turnaround.

39/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua asked the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration – Can the Minister inform Parliament of the following –

- (a) How many applications were received by former Fiji citizens to obtain Fiji Passports pursuant to section 5 of the 2013 Constitution from the period January 2007 to December 2022;
- (b) How many Fiji Passport applications have been processed and issued to former Fiji citizens who made such an application under section 5 of the 2013 Constitution;
- (c) Can the Ministry list the graduation of fees for the issuance of Fiji Passport to former Fiji citizens as per the prescriptions of section 5 of the 2013 Constitution, from the period January 2007 to December 2022;
- (d) What is the approximate time taken to process an application by a former Fiji citizen in order to obtain a Fiji Passport as provided for by section 5 of the 2013 Constitution; and
- (e) How many Fiji citizens living in Fiji with a Fiji Passport also possess a second Passport to another country.

Pursuant to Standing Order 45(6), Oral Question 31/2022 had lapsed. The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were given by the respective Ministers. The responses to the Written Questions would be tabled at a later sitting date as permitted under Standing Order 45(3).

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

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Lynda Tabuya 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 listed on the Order Paper.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

8. END OF WEEK STATEMENTS

(a) Hon. Sashi Kiran delivered her End of Week Statement and the Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation the Hon. Lynda Tabuya subsequently responded.

(b) Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu delivered his End of Week Statement and the Minister for iTaukei Affairs and Culture, Heritage and Arts the Hon. Ifereimi Vasu subsequently responded.

(c) Hon. Viliame Naupoto delivered his End of Week Statement and the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises and Veteran Affairs the Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka subsequently responded.

(d) Hon. Jone Usamate delivered his End of Week Statement. The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that the Minister for Public Works and Meteorological Services, and Transport the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau would not respond to the statement.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Lynda Tabuya moved that Parliament stands adjourned until Monday, 3 April 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions during the week, and declared Parliament adjourned until Monday, 3 April 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 1.06 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

31st March, 2023.