



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Monday, Third day of April, 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. Semi Koroilavesau.

Virtual Attendance – Hon. Jovesa Vocea.

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 Friday, 31 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 PL 100 students from the University of the South Pacific, those in the gallery and all those watching the live broadcast and the live-streaming of the proceedings.

The Hon. Speaker reminded all Honourable Members of their official photo shoot on Tuesday, 4 April 2023 during the morning refreshments break.

6. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(a) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu tabled the annual review of the Fiji Airports Annual Report for 2020.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social 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 Justice, Law and Human Rights

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure tabled the review of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji Annual Report 2017-2018.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights 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.

7. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

(a) The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Faiyaz Koya subsequently responded.

(b) The Minister for Works and Meteorological Services, and Transport the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Jone Usamate subsequently responded.

(c) The Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Kalaveti Ravu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Viliame Naupoto subsequently responded.

(d) The Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations the Hon. Agni Singh delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Parveen Bala subsequently responded.

8. MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE

The Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (a) That the Media Industry Development (Repeal) Bill 2023 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 not be referred to a Standing Committee or other Committee of Parliament; and

- (d) That the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Thursday (6 April 2023), 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.

Votes Cast –

Yes	–	28
No	–	22
Not Voted	–	3

Motion agreed to.

9. MOTION BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE

The Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (a) That the iTaukei Land Trust (Amendment) Bill 2023 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 not be referred to a Standing Committee or other Committee of Parliament; and
- (d) That the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Thursday (6 April 2023), 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.

Votes Cast –

Yes	–	29
No	–	22
Not Voted	–	2

Motion agreed to.

10. MOTION BY THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources the Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu moved that Parliament debates the ‘Review Report of

the Water Authority of Fiji Annual Report 2017' which was tabled on 31 August 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

11. MOTION BY THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources the Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Consolidated Annual Reports for the Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources 2014 and 2015' which was tabled on 31 August 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

12. 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 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. MOTION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report of the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service August 2017 to July 2018 Annual Report' which was tabled on 31 August 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

14. MOTION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE, LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure moved that Parliament debates the following reports –

- (a) 'Review of the Electoral Commission Annual Report 2018' which was tabled on 31 August 2022; and
- (b) 'Review of the Electoral Commission Annual Report 2019' which was tabled on 1 September 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

15. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

- 40/2023 Hon. Viliame Naupoto to ask the Minister for Rural and Maritime Development, and Disaster Management – Can the Minister inform Parliament as to what assistance was given by the Government to those affected by the recent floods.
- 41/2023 Hon. Alitia Bainivalu to ask the Minister for Fisheries and Forestry – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Strategic Framework for Sandalwood Research and Development.
- 42/2023 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament on what basis were new teachers recruited in the school calendar year of 2023 and how many.
- 43/2023 Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna asked the Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister update Parliament on the upgrade of the Geodetic Datum.

- 44/2023 Hon. Alipate Tuicolo asked the Minister for Youth and Sports – Can the Minister inform Parliament what types of travel are included in the Ministry’s Budget allocation for the Minister and Ministry staff to undertake overseas sport tours.
- 45/2023 Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the progress and benefits Fiji will derive from hosting the SPARTAN Event.
- 46/2023 Hon. Ketan Lal asked the Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation – Can the Minister update Parliament on the trends of Domestic Violence up to the present day.
- 47/2023 Hon. Esrom Immanuel asked the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the status of the National Security Strategy.

Written Questions

- 48/2023 Hon. Esrom Immanuel asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives and Small and Medium Enterprises, and Communications –
- (a) can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the specific grant information for each recipient of the “Young Entrepreneurship Scheme” (YES) launched in 2018, and data on the tax dollar value per annum, by quarter, as disbursed by the Ministry – by name, date, locality (village or rural community centre), division, ethnicity and gender for the period January 2018 to 23 December 2022; and
 - (b) the current status of every grantee to-date.
- 49/2023 Hon. Jone Usamate asked the Minister for Public Works and Meteorological Services, and Transport – Can the Minister please provide the list of individual projects under each of the following categories of Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) Expenditure, their budgeted amounts, the forecasted amount committed or spent, and reasons for any underspend as per the end of Quarter 3 Financial Year 2022/2023 –
- (a) Road / Corridor Maintenance
 - (i) Sealed Road Maintenance – Potholes Repairs
 - (ii) Footpaths
 - (iii) Traffic Services (Signs, Railings, Lining, etc.)
 - (iv) Unsealed
 - (v) Drainage
 - (vi) Vegetation Control
 - (b) Street Lights Maintenance –
 - (i) Electricity

- (ii) Electrical Maintenance (Street Light/Traffic Lights)
 - (c) Structures Maintenance –
 - (i) Bridges
 - (ii) Crossings
 - (iii) Jetties
 - (d) Emergency Maintenance
 - (e) Sealed Roads Rehabilitation
 - (f) Unsealed renewal
 - (g) Renewal bridges, crossings, jetties
- 50/2023 Hon. Alvick Maharaj to ask the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises and Veteran Affairs – Can the Prime Minister inform Parliament on the list of villages and communities that were relocated to higher grounds, since 2018 to 31 December 2022, due to climate change, and also provide the relocation cost per project.
- 51/2023 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Education – As a result of increasing the retirement age from 55 to 60 years, can the Minister update Parliament on –
- (a) how many retired teachers have been recruited and in which field in secondary schools or which class in Primary school in 2023;
 - (b) how many new graduates have been recruited in the teaching workforce in 2023;
 - (c) provide a breakdown of the number of teachers and their area of expertise in the waiting pool; and
 - (d) how many surplus teachers are there in the system and provide a breakdown of the number of teachers and the subject they teach.

The Hon. Viliame Naupoto withdrew his Oral Question 40/2023. The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that Oral Question 41/2023 had been withdrawn since the Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Kalaveti Ravu had delivered a Ministerial Statement earlier in the day. The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers.

The Hon. Speaker allowed the Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga to respond to Written Question 50/2023. The responses to the Written Questions would be tabled by the respective Ministers pursuant to Standing Order 45(3).

16. ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Tuesday, 4 April 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 9.18 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

3rd April, 2023.