



# PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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## MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Thursday, Thirtieth 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.

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 Wednesday, 29 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.

He informed all Honourable Members that Hon. Jovesa Vocea, Hon. Alvick Maharaj and Hon. Hem Chand were now also Members of the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC).

Hon. Speaker reminded the Honourable Members that the provisions of the Standing Orders relating to proper conduct and behaviour should be observed so as to ensure order and decorum in the Chambers and gallery.

He also wished everyone a happy and prosperous Ram Naumi.

## 6. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

### Standing Committee on Social Affairs

- (a) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu tabled the annual review of the Land Transport Authority annual reports from 2014 to 2017.

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) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu tabled the annual review of the iTaukei Trust Fund Board 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.

## 7. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

- (a) The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Jone Usamate subsequently responded.
- (b) The Minister for Education the Hon. Aseri Radrodro delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Premila Kumar subsequently responded.
- (c) The Minister for Agriculture and Waterways the Hon. Vatimi Rayalu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Inia Seruiratu subsequently responded.

## 8. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that there were no Bills for consideration.

9. MOTION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Esrom Immanuel moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Performance Audit on the Licensing and Monitoring of River Gravel and Sand Extractions' which was tabled on 30 August 2022.

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. 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.

11. MOTION BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Housing Authority 2016 and 2017 Annual Report' which was tabled on 31 August 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

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

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Public Rental Board 2018 Annual Report' which was tabled on 31 August 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

13. 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 Ministry of Agriculture Consolidated Annual Reports 1st August 2016–31 July 2017 and 1st August 2017–31 July 2018' which was tabled on 31 August 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

14. QUESTIONS

**Oral Questions**

21/2023 Hon. Shalen Kumar asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament whether TSLS Board will continue to receive application for Toppers and TELS and issue scholarships.

22/2023 Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Minister for iTaukei Affairs and Culture, Heritage and Arts – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Ministry's plans to ensure vacant chiefly titles are filled promptly.

23/2023 Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva to ask the Minister for Agriculture and Waterways – With the closure of the green ginger market, can the Minister inform Parliament whether the Ministry can assist farmers with unsold and unharvested ginger.

- 24/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua to ask the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament if TVET is the answer to skill shortage in Fiji and abroad, and what is the current direction of the Ministry in regards to the TVET programme.
- 25/2023 Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu asked the Minister for Public Works and Meteorological Services, and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament what system does the Ministry intend to utilise that will be more transparent than the existing taxi permit lottery system.
- 26/2023 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the Domestic Air Services Subsidy Scheme.
- 27/2023 Hon. Penioni Ravunawa asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament if Fiji is really out of the woods in terms of combating COVID-19.
- 28/2023 Hon. Esrom Emanuel to ask the Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation – Can the Minister update Parliament on the meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women held earlier this month.

### **Written Question**

- 29/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua to ask the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration –
- (a) how many holders of Fiji Passport who are overseas are prohibited to enter Fiji as of 23 December 2022;
  - (b) how many former Fiji citizens with Passport of other countries are prohibited from entering Fiji as of 23 December 2022;
  - (c) how many holders of Fiji Passports in Fiji are prohibited to leave the country as of 23 December 2022; and
  - (d) how many foreign Nationals with Passports other than Fiji Passport are prohibited to leave Fiji as of 23 December 2022.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Deputy Speaker informed all Honourable Members of the following –

- (a) Oral Question 23/2023 had been withdrawn as the Hon. Minister for Agriculture and Waterways had delivered a Ministerial Statement earlier in the day;
- (b) Oral Question 28/2023 had been withdrawn by the Hon. Esrom Immanuel;
- (c) The Hon. Speaker had allowed the Hon. Sashi Kiran to ask Oral Question 24/2023 and Written Question 29/2023; and

(d) The Hon. Speaker had allowed the Hon. Minister Sakiasi Ditoka to respond to Written Question 29/2023.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. Deputy Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Friday, 31 March 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 8.30 p.m.

**Speaker of Parliament**

**Secretary-General to Parliament**

30<sup>th</sup> March, 2023.