



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Wednesday, Twenty-ninth 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. ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

The Hon. Alvick Maharaj moved that the Hon. Inia Seruiratu be elected as Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Aliko Bia seconded the nomination.

There being only one nomination, the Hon. Inia Seruiratu was declared elected as the Leader of the Opposition.

5. 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 Monday, 27 March 2023 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

6. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Hon. Speaker welcomed all Honourable Members to the sitting of Parliament. He also welcomed those in the gallery and all those watching the live broadcast and the live-streaming of the proceedings.

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that Hon. Esrom Immanuel and Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna were now Members of the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC).

7. 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 review of the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji 2020 Annual Report.

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 Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management annual reports for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.

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.

8. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

- (a) Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises and Veteran Affairs the Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Inia Seruiratu subsequently responded.
- (b) Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation the Hon. Lynda Tabuya delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Mosese Bulitavu subsequently responded.

The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that the Ministerial Statement by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives and Small and Medium Enterprises, and Communications the Hon. Manoa Kamikamica was withdrawn.

9. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

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

10. 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 'Review of the Fiji Corrections Service Annual Report 2017–2018' which was tabled on 30 August 2022.

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 Report of the iTaukei Trust Fund Board 2019 Annual Report' which was tabled on 30 August 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

12. 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 Rice 2013 – 2017 Annual Report' which was tabled on 30 August 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

13. 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.

14. 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 Fiji National University 2020 Annual Report' which was tabled on 30 August 2022.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

15. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

11/2023 Hon. Vijay Nath asked the Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations – Can the Minister update Parliament if the Minister supports the PALM and RSE schemes.

12/2023 Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the development of the National Sustainable Tourism Framework.

13/2023 Hon. Jone Usamate 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 why is there inconsistency in the retirement age in the Civil Service.

- 14/2023 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on the First Home Ownership Initiative Assistance Programme.
- 15/2023 Hon. Premila Kumar 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 how much money was spent in the re-branding of the FBC logo and explain how it came back to using the original logo.
- 16/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua asked the Minister for Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry – Can the Minister inform Parliament of the total amount of shortchange to cane growers from the guaranteed price of \$85 per tonne of sugarcane in the last three seasons from 2019 to 2021.
- 17/2023 Hon. Shalen Kumar asked the Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation – Can the Minister inform Parliament if the social welfare assistance put in place by the previous Government will be reduced.
- 18/2023 Hon. Jovesa Vocea to ask the Minister for Public Works and Meteorological Services, and Transport – Can the Minister update Parliament on the maintenance and administration of Government Quarters in the Rural and Maritime areas.

Written Questions

- 19/2023 Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna asked the Minister for Youth and Sports – Can the Minister inform Parliament –
- (a) the dollar value of every boat, farming and sports equipment handed out by the Ministry – by date, locality (village or rural community centre), division, ethnicity and gender for the period of January 2018 to 23 December 2022; and
 - (b) the progress to date of every one of those community development assistance programmes for young people.
- 20/2023 Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the annual pay and other entitlements for all the past and current Councillors, Special Administrators and senior executives for each Municipal Council for the period January 2007 to 23 December 2022.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Speaker allowed the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad to respond to Oral Questions 13/2023 and 15/2023. Oral Question 18/2023 was withdrawn by the Hon. Jovesa Vocea.

The Minister for Youth and Sports the Hon. Jese Saukuru tabled his response to Written Question 19/2023. The Minister for Housing and Local Government the Hon. Maciu Nalumisa tabled his response to Written Question 20/2023.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Thursday, 30 March 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 9.34 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

29th March, 2023.