



Major-General (Ret'd) The Honourable Sitiveni Rabuka,  
CF, OBE (Mil), OSt.J, MSD, Legion D' Honneur (FR), Order of Tahiti Nui,  
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**Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change and  
Environment, Civil Service, Information and Public Enterprises**

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**Oral Question 74/2023 by Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu  
on the engagement of Vatis Communications by  
the Ministry of Information**

Parliament of the Republic of Fiji  
Government Buildings, Suva

Wed. 05 Apr. 2023  
9.30am

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74/2023

Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu 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 of the following –

(a) How long was the firm Vatis Communications managing the social media platforms of various ministries through the Department of Information;

**Response: From September 2019 to January 2023, Vatis had been engaged by the Department of Information to provide social media management services for the Fiji Government social media platforms. Please note that the Department of Information does not have the specifics for the engagement of Vatis by other Ministries.**

(b) What was the duration of every contract between the Department of Information and Vatis Communications;

**Response: The Department of Information entered into two one-year contracts with Vatis, commencing on September 24th, 2019, and October 1st, 2022, respectively, which also included provision for extensions.**

(c) What was the monetary value of every contract between the Department of Information and Vatis Communications;

**Response: The first contract between the Department of Information and Vatis commenced on September 24th, 2019 and was valued at \$280,000 VIP. The second contract which commenced on October 1st, 2020 was valued at \$295,412 VIP**

(d) Was the company Vatis Communications awarded the contract and formed before or after the publication of the first tender advertisement or expression of interest published (but not before the Tender or Expression of Interest officially closed);

**Response: According to the Registrar of Companies records, Vatis was established on January 22nd, 2018, while the advertisement for the initial expression of interest for a social media management firm was posted on August 17th 2019.**

(e) Whether or not the company complied with the Expression of Interest or Tender provision of being “highly experienced and motivated;

**Response: It was noted that Vatis had previous experience working with multiple and diverse range of stakeholders, including government ministries, statutory organisations, independent agencies, and private organisations. Their experience included crisis management and strategic communication services on social media platforms, among other things.**

(f) Whether or not the two main personnel of Vatis Communications were closely connected to a political party and in charge of the party’s social media platforms;

**Response: The Department of Information is unable to provide any comments regarding this matter as it was not privy to this information.**

(g) The total amount of public funds paid to Vatis Communications by the Department of Information until the termination of their contract earlier this year.

**Response: To date, the Department of Information has spent \$889,234.84 on social media management services offered by Vatis.**

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ENDS

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