



# PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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## MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Friday, Thirtieth day of June, 2023

1. The House met at 10.00 a.m. pursuant to the decision of the Business Committee.

2. Hon. Speaker took the Chair and read the Prayer.

3. MEMBERS PRESENT

All Members were present except for the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu, Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua, Hon. Parveen Bala, Hon. Sanjay Kirpal and Hon. Rinesh Sharma.

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, 6 April 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, all invited guests seated in the gallery and all those watching the live proceedings on television and the internet.

The Hon. Speaker advised that the National Budget Address and the subsequent Budget Debates were significant events in the Parliament calendar and were essential and vital for Parliament to fulfil its constitutional obligation.

The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members of the unanimous decision of the Business Committee to exempt the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics from the ordinary speaking time limitations for the delivery of the National Budget Address.

6. FIRST READING OF THE 2023–2024 APPROPRIATION BILL 2023 (BILL NO. 3 OF 2023)

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad moved pursuant to Standing Orders 99 and 84(1), that the 2023–2024 Appropriation Bill 2023 (Bill No. 3 of 2023) be read a first time. The motion was subsequently seconded.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad delivered the National Budget Address.

A Bill to appropriate a sum of three billion, seven hundred sixty one million, nine hundred seventy nine thousand four hundred four dollars for the ordinary services of Government for the year ending 31 July 2024 (Bill No. 3 of 2023).

The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that in accordance with Standing Order 84(1), the 2023–2024 Appropriation Bill 2023 had been read for the first time and in accordance with Standing Order 99(3), the Bill would be listed on the Order Paper for second reading on Monday, 10 July 2023.

7. CONSEQUENTIAL BILLS

Pursuant to Standing Order 51, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad moved that the following consequential Bills for the 2023–2024 National Budget be considered by Parliament without delay –

1. Tax Administration (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 4 of 2023);
2. Income Tax (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 5 of 2023);
3. Value Added Tax (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 6 of 2023);
4. Customs (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 7 of 2023);
5. Customs Tariff (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 8 of 2023);
6. Excise (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 9 of 2023);
7. Airport Departure Tax (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 10 of 2023);
8. Water Resource Tax (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 11 of 2023);
9. Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 12 of 2023);
10. Fiji National Provident Fund (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 13 of 2023);

11. Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 14 of 2023); and
12. Land Sales (Budget Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 15 of 2023).

Pursuant to Standing Order 51, that the Consequential Bills –

- (a) must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (b) must not be referred to a Standing Committee or other Committees of Parliament;
- (c) must be debated and voted upon by Parliament immediately after the vote on the 2023–2024 Appropriation Bill 2022; and
- (d) that one hour be given to debate the Consequential Bills tabled today and be voted upon in the sitting of Parliament beginning on Monday, 10 July 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

## 8. UPDATE ON THE FIJIAN PARLIAMENT'S CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVES

The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that the Fijian Parliament was accelerating its green Parliamentary initiatives by phasing out the use of single-use plastic bottles in the Chambers during all Parliament sittings – replaced by reusable water bottles. This marks the Fijian Parliament's concrete step in joining the '*Parliaments for the Planet campaign*' to reduce its carbon footprint and become greener.

The Hon. Speaker also informed the Honourable Members that June 30 was International Day of Parliamentarism and Parliament would continue to adopt new technologies and means of communication to make Parliament more accessible to the public. Parliament would continue looking for ways to innovate and boost public participation in this new term of Parliament. The Parliament would engage in actions that would increase public understanding of its functions, processes and practices. And that Parliament would continue to ensure that Parliament '*adopts greener policies and embrace a culture of sustainability so as to help address the climate crisis and pave the way for stronger climate action*'.

9. MOTION IN THE NAME OF THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Lynda Tabuya moved that Parliament adopts the amended Sitting Calendar as previously circulated.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

10. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Standing Orders Committee

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Lynda Tabuya tabled the report of the Standing Orders Committee pertaining to the review of the Standing Orders.

The Leader of the Government moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 128(3), that a debate on the content of the report be initiated on Wednesday, 12 July 2023.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Lynda Tabuya moved that Parliament adjourns until Monday, 10 July 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

Hon. Speaker urged all Honourable Members to utilise the coming week to prepare well for the Budget debates week.

Hon. Speaker thanked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad for delivering the 2023–2024 National Budget Address and also thanked all Honourable Members and all those watching the live proceedings.

The Hon. Speaker adjourned Parliament until Monday, 10 July 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 1.07 p.m.

**Speaker of Parliament**

**Secretary-General to Parliament**

30th June 2023.