

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTION 171/2023

TUESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2023

171/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua to ask the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following—

- (a) the total number of High Court Judges required by the Judiciary of Fiji and the breakdown of the same by locations;**
 - (b) the total number of positions which are filled as of 30 September 2023 with respect to the vacancies in the High Court of Fiji; and**
 - (c) the total number of Judge (High Court of Fiji) positions which were vacant as of 30 September 2023.**
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RESPONSE BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE

In response to written question 171/2023, the following is a breakdown of the status of the judicial positions in Fiji—

A. Supreme Court

Currently there are 16 appointed sitting Judges in the Supreme Court panel who are appointed on an-ad hoc basis.

B. Court of Appeal

In the Court of Appeal, Hon. Mr Justice Filimoni Jitoko is the President Justice of Appeal while Hon. Mr Justice Prematilaka and Hon. Mr Justice Mataitoga each hold the position of Resident Justice of Appeal.

There are 12 appointed ad-hoc sitting Judges in the Court of Appeal panel.

C. High Court

As of date, there are 25 approved Judges positions, inclusive of the position of the Chief Justice. Of these 25 positions, 23 have been filled and 2 positions remain vacant.

Prior to September 2023, 21 Judges positions were vacant. In 2023, 8 local Judges were appointed with 4 of the appointees currently holding acting positions. As of date, 3 Judges have either resigned or completed the duration of their contracts.

The Western Division comprises 3 Civil Judges namely, Hon. Mr Justice Lyone Seneviratne, Hon. Mr Justice Anare Tuilevuka and Hon. Mr Justice Mohammed Mackie. There are 3 Criminal Judges in the Western Division, namely, Hon. Mr Justice Riyaz Hamza, Hon. Mr Justice Sunil Sharma and Hon. Mr Justice Aruna Aluthge. There is also 1 Master of the High Court who is based in Lautoka.

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