



# PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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## MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Tuesday, Twelfth day of September, 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. Parveen Bala and Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu.

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 Monday, 11 September 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, those seated in the gallery and those watching the live proceedings on television and the internet.

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that the following back-to-office reports were available in the Library for perusal and reference –

- (a) Seventh Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentarians Forum on Global Health in Mongolia; and
- (b) Tuakana Teina Whenua Talanoa Wananga at the New Zealand Parliament.

## 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 Levuka Town Council Annual Report for the year 2012 and 2013.

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 review of the Tavua Town Council Annual Report for the year ended 2015.

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

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation the Hon. Viliame Gavoka delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Faiyaz Koya subsequently responded.

## 8. QUESTIONS

### **Oral Questions**

- 102/2023 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister update Parliament on the number of teachers who have resigned in the first half of this year and what plans does the Ministry have to address the high turnover of its teaching staff.
- 103/2023 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament on the total cost of renovating the Prime Minister’s residence at Muanikau.
- 104/2023 Hon. Penioni Ravunawa asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on mitigation plans to alleviate the mass resignation of nurses, especially the zone nurses who usually provide Primary Health Care awareness activities.

- 105/2023 Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister update Parliament on the work programme for the installation of solar around the country in this financial year.
- 106/2023 Hon. Aliko Bia asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – With the enactment of the Media Industry Development (Repeal) Act 2023 which also removed the Code of Conduct, Standards and Advertising Guidelines, can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament on the protection in place and the avenue for restitution.
- 107/2023 Hon. Sashi Kiran asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament on what measures are in place to ensure that imported food items meet the required standard so as to avert the rising cases of non-communicable diseases in the country.
- 108/2023 Hon. Alipate Tuicolo asked the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration – With the rise in the number of teenagers found on our streets, loitering, glue sniffing and involved in criminal activities, can the Minister explain how will section 8 of the Minor Offences Act 1971 be enforced so as to address these issues.
- 109/2023 Hon. Alitia Bainivalu asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry and the YWAM Ships Aotearoa Limited.

### **Written Questions**

- 110/2023 Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) how many International Golf Tournaments have been organised by the Government in Fiji in the past;
  - (b) how much money was involved in each tournament; and
  - (c) what were the economic benefits to the country if any.
- 111/2023 Hon. Penioni Ravunawa asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the amount spent on the Ministry's Ambulance Services in the last 6 months for each Health Centre around the country.
- 112/2023 Hon. Penioni Ravunawa asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister provide data on the resignation of Doctors, Nursing staff and Allied Health workers who resigned from the Ministry in the past 6 months.

- 113/2023 Hon. Sanjay Kirpal asked the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration – Can the Minister provide the following information on Fijians that went abroad since 1 January 2023 to 31 August 2023 in the following categories –
- (a) data on the number of Fijians that have migrated to Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA from 1 January 2023 to 31 August 2023 both on skilled migration and on Visitor's Visa;
  - (b) data on the number of Fijians who were on Visitor's Visa and have still not returned from 1 January to 31 August 2023; and
  - (c) data on the number of Fijians who went to a foreign country in each month from January to August 2023 under skilled migration.
- 114/2023 Hon. Jone Usamate asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister provide the following –
- (a) a detailed breakdown of the list of projects and programmes that will be implemented by the Fiji Roads Authority budget for 2023 to 2024; and
  - (b) the targeted cost of each programme and project, together with planned completion dates.

The responses to the Oral Questions and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers.

The responses to the Written Questions would be submitted by the respective Ministers in accordance with Standing Order 45(3). The Hon. Minister for Health and Medical Services tabled his response to Written Questions 111/2023 and 112/2023. The Hon. Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration tabled his response to Written Question 113/2023.

## 9. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

The Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (a) That the Heritage Bill 2023 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (b) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (c) That the Bill must not be referred to a Standing Committee or other Committee of Parliament; and
- (d) That the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament on Thursday, 14 September 2023, but that 1 hour be given to debate the Bill, with the right of reply given to him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

The Heritage Bill 2023 was subsequently withdrawn by the Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga.

10. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

- (i) The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Lynda Tabuya moved that under Standing Order 6 that so much of Standing Order 130(2) to (4) is suspended so as to allow the Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Justice to move his motions on the approval of Treaties without referring them to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (ii) The Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved that Parliament approves that Fiji ratifies the World Trade Organisation Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (iii) The Hon. Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved that Parliament approves that Fiji signs and ratifies the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework Supply Chain Agreement.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

11. 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 so as 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.

12. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

- (iv) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management 2016–2017 and 2017–2018 Annual Report' which was tabled on 29 March 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (v) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Land Transport Authority 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2016–2017 Annual Reports' which was tabled on 30 March 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Wednesday, 13 September 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 6.35 p.m.

**Speaker of Parliament**

**Secretary-General to Parliament**

12<sup>th</sup> September, 2023.