



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Wednesday, Thirteenth 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.

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 Tuesday, 12 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.

6. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Social Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu tabled the Committee's review of the Ba Town Council Annual Report for the year 2019.

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

- (a) The Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection the Hon. Lynda Tabuya delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Jone Usamate subsequently responded.
- (b) The Minister for Agriculture and Waterways the Hon. Vatimi Rayalu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Inia Seruiratu subsequently responded.
- (c) The Minister for Youth and Sports the Hon. Jese Saukuru delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Ioane Naivalurua subsequently responded.

8. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

- 115/2023 Hon. Parveen Bala to ask the Minister for Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry – Can the Minister inform Parliament as to when the Sugar Cane Growers election will be conducted as promised to our cane sector by the Government.
- 116/2023 Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister update Parliament on the EFL Grid Extension work programme for the current financial year.
- 117/2023 Hon. Faiyaz Koya asked the Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection – Can the Minister explain what specific provisions or support systems the Government intends to implement to assist single mothers who might be financially impacted by the recent tax adjustments, especially given their increased responsibility as sole breadwinners.
- 118/2023 Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Deputy Prime Minister provide an update

on the 4th Review of Fiji's Trade Policy at the World Trade Organisation that took place from 19 to 21 July 2023 in Geneva.

- 119/2023 Hon. Taito Rokomatu asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the Ministry's plans for the construction and extension of Nayavu Health Centre.
- 120/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the status of the land development works in progress to formalise the informal settlements.
- 121/2023 Hon. Sanjay Kirpal to ask the Minister for Agriculture and Waterways – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the plans in place to provide breeders to sheep, goat and cattle farmers.
- 122/2023 Hon. Sashi Kiran asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the initiatives that the Ministry has undertaken to promote digital literacy and ensure that students have access to technology for remote learning, especially in light of recent disruptions to traditional education due to the pandemic.

Written Questions

- 123/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua to ask the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) the number of overseas labour recruitment firms registered and operating in Fiji in respect of recruiting seasonal or long term labour for Fiji or overseas;
 - (b) the number of seasonal or long term labourers who went away from Fiji to work overseas in the last 12 months and their respective country destinations;
 - (c) the number of seasonal or long term labourers who came to work in Fiji in the last 12 months and their nationalities; and
 - (d) the number of work permits declined for seasonal or long term labour in Fiji.
- 124/2023 Hon. Jone Usamate to ask 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 to utilise the budget of the Land Transport Authority for 2023 to 2024; and
 - (b) the targeted cost of each programme and project, together with planned completion dates.

125/2023 Hon. Jone Usamate to ask 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 to utilise the budget of the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji 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 Hon. Speaker allowed the Hon. Aliki Bia to ask Oral Question 115/2023. The Hon. Speaker ruled that Oral Question 121/2023 had been omitted given that the Hon. Minister for Agriculture and Waterways had delivered a Ministerial Statement on the same subject matter. The responses to the Written Questions would be submitted by the respective Ministers in accordance with Standing Order 45(3).

9. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

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

10. 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.

11. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

- (i) The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Lynda Tabuya moved that Parliament approves the amended Sitting Calendar as previously circulated.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (ii) The Hon. Sashi Kiran moved that Parliament agrees to the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission by the Government, to facilitate open and free engagement in truth telling and confront fears in view of conflicting statements and utterances regarding motives behind the political upheavals so that closure and healing for Fiji is achieved and permanently put to rest this unfortunate and turbulent chapter of our independent history.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes Cast –

Yes	–	28
No	–	23
Not Voted	–	4

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that upon the agreement of both sides of the House, both the Committee reports on Wednesday's and Thursday's Order Papers would be deferred for debate at the November sitting, and that the amended Order Paper for Thursday would be circulated by the secretariat.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Thursday, 14 September 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 8.23 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

13th September, 2023.