



# PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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## MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Thursday, Twenty-third day of November, 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. Viliame Gavoka, Hon. Faiyaz Koya, Hon. Aliko Bia and Hon. Shalen Kumar.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau moved that the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Wednesday, 22 November 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 also welcomed the students and teachers from Wai District School in Nadroga.

## 6. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

### (a) Standing Committee on Economic Affairs

- (i) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna tabled the review report of the Energy Fiji Limited 2021 Annual Report.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report would be initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

- (ii) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna tabled the review report of the Energy Fiji Limited 2022 Annual Report.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report would be initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

### (b) Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure tabled the consolidated review of the Fiji Corrections Service 2018-2019 and Fiji Corrections Service 2019-2020 annual reports.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights moved a motion without notice pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) that a debate on the content of the report would be initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

## 7. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

- (a) The Minister for Health and Medical Services the Hon. Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Penioni Ravunawa subsequently responded.
- (b) The Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management the Hon. Sakiasi Ditoka delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Inia Seruiratu subsequently responded.
- (c) The Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations the Hon. Agni Singh delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Parveen Bala subsequently responded.
- (d) The Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Kalaveti Ravu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Semi Koroilavesau subsequently responded.

## 8. QUESTIONS

### **Oral Questions**

- 183/2023 Hon. Rinesh Sharma to ask the Minister for Fisheries and Forestry – Can the Minister inform Parliament if the Ministry has undertaken a stock assessment of beach-de-mer to ensure the viability of the resource.
- 184/2023 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises and Veteran Affairs – Can the Prime Minister update Parliament on the Project Cooperation Agreement for the Initiative for Climate Action Transparency Phase II Project.
- 185/2023 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the steps being undertaken by the Ministry to address the ECE sector, particularly the ECE curriculum and salary of teachers.
- 186/2023 Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Memorandum of Understanding to Enhance Risk Communication Capacity for the Ministry.
- 187/2023 Hon. Alvick Maharaj asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Given that the market fees review for market vendors and farmers was announced in the 2023-2024 budget. Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of the review.
- 188/2023 Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Minister update Parliament on the establishment of the Scam Taskforce on online fraudulent activities and its future plans.
- 189/2023 Hon. Ketan Lal asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on the current state of waste management and disposal practices in our communities that used to be covered by Rural Local Authorities.
- 190/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua to ask the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the steps been undertaken in partnership with World Heritage Funds to restore the heritage sites damaged during TC Winston in 2016 at Levuka.

### **Written Questions**

- 191/2023 Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice – Can the Minister update Parliament on the total compensation that has been paid out by Accident Compensation Commission Fiji for road accident from the period January to September 2023.

- 192/2023 Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister provide Parliament with details on the total funds spent by the Land Transport Authority on Road Safety Education and Awareness Programmes and the breakdown of each activity for the period January to September 2023.
- 193/2023 Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister update Parliament on the following –
- (a) how many students had graduated from FNU Koronivia campus in the course of Degree in Animal Health since the inception of the course; and
  - (b) how many have been absorbed into the Ministry of Agriculture or any other Government Ministry or Department.
- 194/2023 Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua asked the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) the total number of reports received by the Fiji Police Force in the period 5 December 2006 to 22 December 2022 of alleged acts of brutal and inhumane treatment while in Police custody and the breakdown of the same by year and division;
  - (b) the total number of police officers who were investigated and the total number of police officers who were charged for committing alleged acts of brutalities and inhumane treatment on those in the police custody in the period from 5 December 2006 to 22 December 2022 and the breakdown of the same by year and division;
  - (c) the total number of police officers who were successfully convicted and sentenced for committing acts of brutalities and inhumane treatment on those in police custody in the period from 5 December 2006 to 22 December 2022 and the breakdown of the same by year and division;
  - (d) the total number of police officers who are still under investigation either in the force or suspended for committing alleged acts of brutalities and inhumane treatment on those in the police custody in the period from 5 December 2006 to 22 December 2022 and the breakdown of the same by year and division; and
  - (e) the total number of deaths and injuries in police custody in the period from 5 December 2006 to 22 December 2022 and the breakdown the same by year and division.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. Oral Question 183/2023 was dropped from the Order Paper as the relevant Minister had provided a response during his Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Speaker allowed the Hon. Ifereimi Vasu to respond to Oral Question 190/2023. The response to Written Question 194/2023 would be tabled at a later sitting of Parliament. The following Ministers tabled their written responses –

- (a) Attorney-General and Minister for Justice – Written Question 191/2023;

- (b) Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Written Question 192/2023; and
- (c) Minister for Education – Written Question 193/2023.

9. SUSPENSION MOTION BY THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau 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.

10. ITAUKEI AFFAIRS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2023 (BILL NO. 26 OF 2023)

The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved that pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Tuesday, 21 November 2023, that the iTaukei Affairs (Amendment) Bill 2023 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes cast –

Yes	–	28
No	–	22
Not Voted	–	3
Abstention	–	1

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to amend the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944, enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

11. EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2023 (BILL NO. 27 OF 2023)

The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved that pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Tuesday, 21 November 2023, that the Employment Relations (Amendment) Bill 2023 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes cast –

Yes	–	27
No	–	23
Not Voted	–	4

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Employment Relations Act 2007, enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

12. MAHOGANY INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 2023 (BILL NO. 28 OF 2023)

The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved that pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Tuesday, 21 November 2023, that the Mahogany Industry Development (Amendment) Bill 2023 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes cast –

Yes	–	27
No	–	23
Not Voted	–	2

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Mahogany Industry Development Act 2010, enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 2023 (BILL NO. 29 OF 2023)

The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved that pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Tuesday, 21 November 2023, that the Local Government (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2023 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes cast –

Yes	–	27
No	–	23
Not Voted	–	4

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Local Government Act 1972, enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

#### 14. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

- (a) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that Parliament debates the ‘Consolidated Review of Levuka Town Council Annual Reports for the Years 2012 and 2013’ which was tabled on 12 September 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (b) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that Parliament debates the ‘Review of Tavua Town Council Annual Report for the Year Ended 2015’ which was tabled on 12 September 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (c) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that Parliament debates the ‘Review of Ba Town Council Annual Report for the Year 2019’ which was tabled on 13 September 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (d) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Viliame Naupoto moved that Parliament debates the 'Consolidated Review Report of the Fiji Police Force 2017-2018 and 2019-2020 Annual Reports' which was tabled on 14 September 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (e) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Esrom Immanuel moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Performance Audit on the Monitoring of Implementation of the Sugarcane Development and Farmers Assistance Programme' which was tabled on 14 September 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

## 15. ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Friday, 24 November 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 9.47 p.m.

**Speaker of Parliament**

**Secretary-General to Parliament**

23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2023.