



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Wednesday, Seventeenth day of April, 2024

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. Jone Usamate, Hon. Faiyaz Koya, Hon. Sanjay Kirpal and Hon. Vijay Nath.

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 Tuesday, 16 April 2024 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 the Honourable Members to refrain or avoid moving their Chambers Bosch System cards as it would cause the microphone of the Members to be disconnected from the main Central Control Unit; the Member would not be able to register a vote; and the Member would be registered absent as the card would not be recognised in the system.

Hon. Speaker also informed that Written Question 29/2024 by the Hon. Sashi Kiran would be dropped from the Order Paper, as the Hon. Minister for Agriculture and Waterways had provided a substantive response during his Ministerial Statement on Monday.

6. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(a) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu tabled the Committee's Report on the annual review of the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 Annual Reports of the Fiji National Sports Commission.

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) Standing Committee on Economic Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna tabled the Committee's Consolidated Review Report on the 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020 Annual Reports for the Ministry of Sugar Industry (MoSI).

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 is initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

(c) 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 Committee's Report on the 2018-2019 Annual Report of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

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 is initiated at a future sitting. The motion was seconded and agreed to unanimously.

7. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

- (a) The Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises and Veteran Affairs the Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Inia Seruiratu subsequently responded.

- (b) The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications the Hon. Manoa Kamikamica delivered his first Ministerial Statement. Hon. Semi Koroilavesau subsequently responded.
- (c) The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications the Hon. Manoa Kamikamica delivered his second Ministerial Statement. Hon. Premila Kumar subsequently responded.
- (d) The Minister for Youth and Sports the Hon. Jese Saukuru delivered a Ministerial Statement. Hon. Alipate Tuicolo subsequently responded.
- (e) The Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Kalaveti Ravu delivered a Ministerial Statement. Hon. Viliame Naupoto subsequently responded.

8. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

- 20/2024 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament of Fiji Airway’s charter policies and procedures they follow when processing charter requests.
- 21/2024 Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu asked the Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the progress of the revived Rural Housing Programme Initiative.
- 22/2024 Hon. Virendra Lal asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – There is an increase in HIV cases and a contributing factor, amongst others, is the practice of injecting diluted meth into blood streams then sharing the drug-infused blood with other users. Can the Minister inform Parliament on the measures in place to combat the issue.
- 23/2024 Hon. Sashi Kiran asked the Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Ministry’s plan to balance economic development with environmental conservation in the context of mining and land use policies.
- 24/2024 Hon. Ioane Naivalurua asked the Minister for Youth and Sports – Given the dismal performance of Team Fiji in the last three Pacific Games, can the Minister inform Parliament on the plans to improve and elevate Fiji’s performance in the next Pacific Games.

- 25/2024 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 update Parliament on the new and innovative approaches to raise funds for MSME businesses.
- 26/2024 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the selection criteria and tools employed in the appointment of Special Administrators for towns and cities.
- 27/2024 Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna asked the Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations – Can the Minister update Parliament on the investigations conducted by the Labour Standards and Compliance Services on workers' complaints and labour inspections cases lodged with the Ministry from 1st August 2023 to 31st March 2024.

Written Questions

- 28/2024 Hon. Viliame Naupoto asked the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration – In light of the changes in our Immigration Law and policy as announced by the Minister, can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) how many that have come to Fiji as Business visitors are now employed and the general sector where they are employed;
 - (b) how many of those non-citizens that are registered in the *Vola ni Kawa Bula* have entered Fiji through the permit exemption granted under the Immigration (Amendment) Act 2023; and
 - (c) how many foreigners who are descendants of a Fiji Citizen on 10 October 1970 have entered Fiji through the permit exemptions granted under the Immigration (Exemption by Descent) Order 2023.
- 29/2024 Hon. Sashi Kiran to ask the Minister for Agriculture and Waterways – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) the rationale behind the reinstatement of the Drainage Board;
 - (b) the current status of the appointment of the Drainage Boards for each Division; and
 - (c) the mechanism as to how the Drainage Board will receive complaints and suggestions and submit the same for remedial action to the Ministry of Waterways.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The response to Written Question 28/2024 would be submitted in accordance with Standing Order 45(3). As communicated from the

Chair earlier in the day, Written Question 29/2024 was dropped from the Order Paper.

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. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

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

11. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

- (a) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the National Fire Authority Annual Report for the 7 months period ended 31 July 2016' which was tabled on 22 November 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (b) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Sakuisa Tubuna moved that Parliament debates the 'Consolidated Review Report of the Fiji Financial Intelligence Unit 2021–2022 Annual Reports' which was tabled on 22 November 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (c) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources the Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna moved that Parliament debates the 'Annual Review Report of the Ministry of Agriculture for the Year 2018–2019' which was tabled on 22 November 2023.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions and adjourned Parliament until Thursday, 18 April 2024 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 8.32 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

17th April, 2024.