



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Friday, Sixth day of September, 2024

1. The House met at 9.30 a.m. pursuant to adjournment.
2. Hon. Speaker took the Chair and read the Prayer.
3. ATTENDANCE
 - (a) All Honourable Members were present except for the Hon. Semi Koroilavesau.
 - (b) The following Honourable Members gave their apologies to the Hon. Speaker for their absence from the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Vijay Nath, Hon. Alvick Maharaj, Hon. Jese Saukuru, Hon. Ifereimi Vasu, Hon. Pio Tikoduadua and Hon. Ifereimi Vasu.
 - (c) The following Honourable Members obtained approval from the Hon. Speaker for their intermittent absence(s) during the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka, Hon. Filimoni Vosarogo, Hon. Siromi Turaga, Hon. Lynda Tabuya, Hon. Aseri Radrodoro, Hon. Alitia Bainivalu, Hon. Faiyaz Koya and Hon. Charan Singh.

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 Thursday, 5 September 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 also welcomed the students and teachers of Totoya District School from Totoya, Lau.

The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that Fiji would host the next 5th Pacific Islands Parliamentary Group Conference from the 25th to the 29th of August 2025. The Hon. Speaker requested Honourable Members to lock in those dates so that many Honourable Members could participate at the Conference.

The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that the following written responses had been received from the respective Ministers –

- (a) the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau to Written Questions 101, 114, 124, 125 and 134 of 2023; and Written Questions 65, 76 and 87 of 2024 – all asked by the Hon. Jone Usamate; and
- (b) the Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration the Hon. Pio Tikoduadua to Written Questions 39, 88, 123, 182 and 194 of 2023 – asked by the Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua; Written Question 144/2023 asked by the Hon. Virendra Lal; and Written Question 10/2024 asked by the Hon. Sashi Kiran.

The Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that the responses had been conveyed to the respective Honourable Members and copies are available on the Parliament's website. The Hon. Speaker thanked the Honourable Ministers for furnishing the written responses and confirmed that there were no overdue written responses.

6. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

The following reports were tabled and referred accordingly to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence –

- (a) Reserve Bank of Fiji Insurance Annual Report 2023;
- (b) Accident Compensation Commission, Fiji – 2022 Annual Report; and
- (c) Savusavu Town Council – Annual Report 2013.

7. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

195/2024 Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament on how the Ministry plans to regularise private vehicles that are engaged in illegal public service activities.

- 205/2024 Hon. Viliame Naupoto asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the criteria used by the Ministry to approve Cadet training in schools.
- 206/2024 Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the marketing initiatives in place for Destination Fiji in support of Fiji Airways’ forthcoming services to Dallas, United States.
- 207/2024 Hon. Parveen Bala to ask the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on when the Local Government elections will be held.
- 208/2024 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Attorney-General – Can the Attorney-General update Parliament on the functions and composition of the proposed Fiji’s Human Rights Task Force.
- 209/2024 Hon. Faiyaz Koya asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament on what level of expansion we have had in the outsource industry in the last 24 months and has the wage rise affected this expansion.
- 210/2024 Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Sub-Recipient Agreement between the Ministry and the United Nations Development Programme for a Global Fund Programme to fight Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, Tuberculosis and Malaria in Fiji.
- 211/2024 Hon. Sachida Nand asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the progress of the Termite Control Assistance Grant for dwellings and structures affected by the Asian Subterranean Termites in both Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.
- 212/2024 Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the Memorandum of Understanding between Fiji and the People’s Republic of China with respect to Deepening Blue Economy Cooperation and Sustainable Development.
- 213/2024 Hon. Joseph Nand asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – can the Minister update Parliament on the development of the dedicated Drug Rehabilitation Centre.

Written Question

214/2024 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following with respect to the 2024-2025 financial year –

- (a) how many primary school teachers are there altogether;
- (b) how many teachers teaching in primary schools have primary teachers' qualification (Certificate, Diploma or Degree in Primary Education and early childhood education); and
- (c) how many teachers teaching in primary schools have secondary teachers' qualification (Diploma or Degree in Secondary Education).

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Speaker allowed the Hon. Jone Usamate to ask Oral Question 207/2024 in Hon. Parveen Bala's absence. The Hon. Speaker also ruled that from the next sitting, he would strictly uphold Standing Order 45(6) whereby if an Honourable Member is not present to ask a question at the allotted time, the question lapses. The response to Written Question 214/2024 was tabled by the Minister for Education.

8. 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 12.30 p.m. to complete the remaining items listed on the Order Paper.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

9. END OF WEEK STATEMENTS

- (a) Hon. Aliko Bia delivered his End of Week Statement and the Assistant Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister the Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna subsequently responded.
- (b) Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu delivered his End of Week Statement and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad subsequently responded.

- (c) Hon. Sanjay Kirpal delivered his End of Week Statement and the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change, Environment, Civil Service, Information, Public Enterprises and Veteran Affairs the Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka subsequently responded.
- (d) Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna delivered his End of Week Statement and the Minister for Agriculture and Waterways the Hon. Vatimi Rayalu subsequently responded.

10. FIRST READING OF THE AUDIT BILL 2024 (BILL NO. 17 OF 2024)

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad moved pursuant to Standing Order 84, that the Audit Bill 2024 be read a first time. The motion was subsequently seconded.

The Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance tabled the four copies of the Audit Bill 2024.

A Bill for an Act to repeal the Audit Act 1969 and provide for the powers, duties and mandate of the Auditor-General, and for the audit of public accounts and public entities and related matters (Bill No. 17 of 2024).

The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that in accordance with Standing Order 84(1), the Audit Bill 2024 had been read for the first time and the Audit Bill 2024 would be listed on the Order Paper for Second Reading on a future sitting day.

The Hon. Speaker reminded Honourable Members to utilise the time to peruse the Bill and prepare for debate which would primarily focus on the principles and merits of the Bill.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Leader of the Government in Parliament the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau moved that Parliament stands adjourned until Monday, 30 September 2024 at 9.30 a.m.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions during the sitting week, and declared Parliament adjourned until Monday, 30 September 2024 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 3.30 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

6th September, 2024.