



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Thursday, First day of May, 2025

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. Pio Tikoduadua.
 - (b) The following Honourable Members obtained approval from the Hon. Speaker for intermittent absence(s) during the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka, Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad, Hon. Manoa Kamikamica,
Hon. Agni Singh and Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu.
 - (c) The following Honourable Members obtained approval from the Hon. Speaker to be absent from the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Aliko Bia and Hon. Sanjay Kirpal.

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, 30 April 2025 as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

The 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 another group of PL 100 School of Law and Politics Students from the University of the South Pacific.

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that the secretariat had received the written response from the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad, to Written Question 11/2025 asked by the Hon. Inia Seruiratu. The response had been conveyed to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and a copy uploaded on the Parliament's website.

Hon. Speaker also informed all Honourable Members that the back-to-office report for the 150th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly, which was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan was available in the Library for perusal and reference.

6. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(a) Standing Committee on Economic Affairs

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs the Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna tabled the Committee's Review Report on the Reserve Bank of Fiji Insurance Annual Reports for the years 2021 and 2022.

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 Foreign Affairs and Defence

(i) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua tabled the Committee's Review Report on the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji's 2022-2023 Annual Report.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence 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 Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua tabled the Committee's Consolidated Review Report on the 2014 and 2015 Annual Reports of the Savusavu Town Council.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence 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.

(c) Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Esrom Immanuel tabled the Committee's Review Report on the Audit Report for Provincial Councils Volumes 4, 5 and 6.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts 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.

(d) Standing Committee on Natural Resources

- (i) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources the Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna tabled the Committee's consolidated review report on the Ministry of Agriculture's Annual Reports for the financial years 2019–2020, 2020–2021, and 2021–2022.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources 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 Natural Resources the Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna tabled the Committee's review report on the Ministry of Fisheries' Annual Reports for the 2021–2022 and 2022–2023 financial years.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources 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 Women, Children and Social Protection the Hon. Sashi Kiran delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Virendra Lal responded.
- (b) The Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection the Hon. Sashi Kiran delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Inia Seruiratu responded.
- (c) The Minister for Environment and Climate Change the Hon. Mosese Bulitavu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Semi Koroilavesau responded.
- (d) The Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management the Hon. Sakiasi Ditoka delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Vijay Nath responded.

8. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

- 49/2025 Hon. Viam Pillay asked the Minister for Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry – Can the Minister update Parliament on the extension and construction of Railway network as announced earlier.
- 50/2025 Hon. Alipate Tuicolo to ask 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 Fiji's National Digital Strategy.
- 51/2025 Hon. Vijay Nath 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 why despite the Government's repeated assurances of bridging the digital divide, internet connectivity in Vanua Levu remains challenging.
- 52/2025 Hon. Lynda Tabuya 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 short- and long-term benefits of the Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] signed recently between Fiji and the United Arab Emirates [UAE].
- 53/2025 Hon. Inia Seruiratu asked the Minister for Environment and Climate Change – Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of Fiji's NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions).
- 54/2025 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the timeline for completing the upgrades at Nadi International Airport, to improve and enhance service quality ahead of the projected 2025 tourism growth.
- 55/2025 Hon. Alvick Maharaj asked the Minister for iTaukei Affairs and Culture, Heritage and Arts – Can the Minister inform Parliament how *mataqali* members are being compensated now that equal distribution of lease money has been removed and *mataqali* members are getting far less compared to what they used to get under equal distribution.
- 56/2025 Hon. Esrom Immanuel to ask the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister update Parliament on the grant funding agreement with the International Solar Alliance (ISA) for the implementation of solar projects under the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) Climate Initiative for healthcare facilities and solar cold storage.

- 57/2025 Hon. Semi Koroilavesau to ask the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Civil Service and Public Enterprises, and Information – Can the Prime Minister update Parliament on Fiji’s progress toward its MPA “30 by 30” initiative commitment to ocean protection, including key initiatives and milestones achieved.
- 58/2025 Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure 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 how the recently approved Wind Loads Standards will improve resilience of building structures against the severe wind events in Fiji.

Written Question

- 59/2025 Hon. Premila Kumar 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 following –
- (a) number of accidents involving Government vehicles from January 2023 to February 2025, including the total cost of repairs and write-offs, and the number of new drivers appointed during this period, along with how many were involved in those accidents; and
 - (b) what disciplinary actions have been taken against drivers found at fault, including the number of drivers surcharged and the total value of surcharges to be recovered.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that Oral Questions 50/2025 and 57/2025 would drop from the Order Paper as these had been addressed through Ministerial Statements. The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that Oral Question 56/2025 had been withdrawn.

The response to Written Question 59/2025 would be tabled at a later sitting date in accordance with Standing Order 45(3).

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

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

(a) LAND TRANSPORT (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 2025

The Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport the Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau moved pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on Wednesday, 30 April 2025, that the Land Transport (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2025 be debated, voted upon and be passed.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes Cast –

Yes	–	36
No	–	0
Not Voted	–	6
Abstention	–	13

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Land Transport Act 1998, enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

(b) SECOND READING OF THE WORK CARE BILL 2025

The Minister for Employment, Productivity and Workplace Relations the Hon. Agni Singh moved pursuant to Standing Order 85(1) that the Work Care Bill 2025 be read a second time.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

A Bill for an Act to establish the Work Care Fund and provide for compensation benefits for injured workers and pupils, and for related matters (Bill No. 7 of 2025).

Hon. Speaker referred the Bill to the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs pursuant to Standing Order 85(4)(a), and that the Standing Committee must report back to Parliament at the next sitting.

(c) SECOND READING OF THE ACCIDENT COMPENSATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 2025

The Minister for Employment, Productivity and Workplace Relations the Hon. Agni Singh moved pursuant to Standing Order 85(1), that the Accident Compensation (Amendment) Bill 2025 be read a second time.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes Cast –

Yes	–	33
No	–	11
Not Voted	–	10
Abstention	–	1

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to amend the Accident Compensation Act (Bill No. 8 of 2025).

Hon. Speaker referred the Bill to the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs pursuant to Standing Order 85(4)(a), and that the Standing Committee must report back to Parliament at the next sitting.

11. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

- (a) The Hon. Attorney-General the Hon. Graham Leung moved that for the purpose of section 51 of the Constitution and pursuant to Standing Order 130(4), that Parliament approve that Fiji ratifies the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement).

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (b) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence the Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua moved that Parliament debates the 'Consolidated Review Report of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces 2019–2022 Annual Reports' which was tabled on 13 March 2025.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (c) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts the Hon. Esrom Immanuel moved that Parliament debates the 'Review of the Audit Report on Follow Up of High Risk Ministries/Departments' which was tabled on 13 March 2025.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (d) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights the Hon. Ratu Rakuira Vakalalabure moved that Parliament debates the 'Consolidated Review Report on the Ministry of Justice Annual Reports 2018–2022' which was tabled on 13 March 2025.

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 Friday, 2 May 2025 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 10.05 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

1st May, 2025.