



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Monday, Twenty-fifth day of May, 2026

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) The Hon. Penioni Ravunawa and Hon. Pio Tikoduadua conveyed their apologies to the Hon. Speaker for being unable to attend the sitting of Parliament.
 - (b) The following Honourable Members obtained approval from the Hon. Speaker for intermittent absence during the sitting of Parliament –

Hon. Lynda Tabuya, Hon. Sashi Kiran, Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka, Hon. Mosese Bulitavu, Hon. Viliame Naupoto 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 Friday, 1 May 2026 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.

Tribute to the Girmitiyas and Tribute to the Descendants

Hon. Speaker paid tribute to the Girmitiyas and their descendants and their contribution to the development of our country. He also acknowledged the two (2) Girmitiya descendants, and both women no less, who have dared history by becoming Members of the Parliaments of Westminster in London and the Scottish Parliament, in Holyrood, Edinburgh. First, the Hon. Sureena Brackenridge, MP for the British Parliament, representing Wolverhampton, Northeast constituency. Her grandparents had emigrated from Fiji to the UK in the 1960s. She was first elected to Westminster in 2024.

Secondly, Hon. Sumitra Kumar was elected to the Scottish Parliament representing Edinburgh Southwestern as a member of the Scottish National Party. Hon. Sumitra Kumar grew up in Samabula, attended Dudley High School and only emigrated with her parents to Scotland in 1987, at the age of 17.

Arrangement of Sitting Week Business and Waiver of 21-Day Response Period

Hon. Speaker further informed all Honourable Members that the Business Committee had considered the arrangement of business for this sitting week, particularly in relation to the scheduling of Ministerial Statements and the progression of debates on Bills before the House. Honourable Members were advised that Ministerial Statements would only be scheduled for Monday, 25 May 2026 and Tuesday, 26 May 2026, with no Ministerial Statements to be taken on Wednesday and Thursday. This arrangement was intended to provide additional time for the House to consider and debate Bills before Parliament this week.

Furthermore, Honourable Members were advised that, pursuant to Standing Order 20, the Chair had approved the waiver of the 21-day response period under Standing Order 121(6)(b). The waiver had been granted to facilitate the timely progression of proceedings and to allow the debate on the Standing Committee reports to commence from Monday, 25 May 2026.

Attendance at Workshops and Seminars

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members of the importance of attending scheduled workshops and seminars, and the fact that outside and international agencies including NGOs, voluntarily expend their own resources, including time and personnel, to help our system of governance function in the most efficient and transparent way.

Absence of Members During Parliament Sittings

Hon. Speaker raised a matter of concern regarding the absence of certain Members of Parliament during Parliament sittings. Whilst some Honourable Members notify the Secretariat of late arrivals, it had been observed that they often enter the Chambers much later than indicated, remain only briefly, and thereafter absent themselves for the remainder of the sitting. In addition, there are instances where some Honourable Members attend only the morning session and do not return following suspension breaks without sufficient justification.

Hon. Speaker also stated that such attendance patterns diminish the effectiveness of parliamentary proceedings and undermine the dignity and orderly conduct of the House.

Withdrawal of a Tabled Committee Report

Hon. Speaker informed the Honourable Members that he had issued a directive and guidance to the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, for the withdrawal from Parliament, of the Standing Committee's Consolidated Review Report on the 2018-2019, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Fiji Higher Education Commission Annual Reports.

The Standing Committee report was tabled on 1 October 2025. Having tried to resolve the matter over the past 6 months the Speaker had now deemed it pertinent to invoke Standing Order 20 for the purposes of ensuring effective oversight and scrutiny.

The Consolidated Review Report on the 2018-2019, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Fiji Higher Education Commission Annual Reports is withdrawn from Parliament, for further scrutiny by the Standing Committee on Social Affairs. The Standing Committee, having concluded further scrutiny, shall table its report in Parliament.

Committee of the Whole Parliament – Education Bill 2025

Hon. Speaker Informed all Honourable Members on the decision of the Business Committee on the procedural arrangements for the Committee of the Whole Parliament stage, on the Education Bill 2025. In line with Standing Order 87(3), the Business Committee had agreed that the clauses of the Bill, including the Schedule, be grouped in Parts, and accordingly, debate and voting during the Committee stage would proceed on the basis of the sequential Parts of the Bill, rather than on individual clauses. This arrangement was intended to ensure that proceedings were conducted in an orderly and efficient manner.

The Business Committee has also resolved that the voting at the Committee stage will be through acclamation; but the voting at the Third Reading stage would be conducted electronically.

Survey on Quality of Services

Hon. Speaker informed the Honourable Members that the Parliament Secretariat was conducting a survey to gather feedback from Honourable Members on the quality of services provided by the Secretariat. The survey seeks to assess satisfaction with service delivery, performance, customer service, logistics and administrative processes, whilst also identifying areas for improvement and addressing potential service-related issues.

The Hon. Speaker further informed that the survey QR Code had been placed on the tables of the Members who had not participated in the survey.

Voter Registration Services

Hon. Speaker informed the Honourable Members that arrangements had been made in collaboration with the Supervisor of Elections to provide voter registration services at the Small Committee Room (SCR) during the sitting week from Monday through Thursday, between 8.30 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. The services would include new voter registrations, updates to voter details, replacement of voter cards and general voter registration enquiries.

COCA COLA GAMES

Hon. Speaker shared his insights on the recent win of the Coca Cola games by Queen Victoria School.

6. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The Hon. Speaker informed that there were no committee reports for tabling.

7. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

- (a) The Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development the Hon. Esrom Immanuel delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Alvick Maharaj responded.
- (b) The Minister for Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Jone Usamate responded.
- (c) The Minister for Education the Hon. Aseri Radrodro delivered a Ministerial Statement. The Hon. Hem Chand responded.

8. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

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| 3/2026 | Hon. Premila Kumar to ask the Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development – In light of rising global fuel prices driven by ongoing tensions in the Middle East, Can the Minister inform Parliament whether the Government will consider reducing the fuel tax levy. |
| 17/2026 | Hon. Taito Rokomatu asked the Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Asian Development Bank's financing facility under the Pacific Health Islands Transformation project. |
| 30/2026 | Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu asked the Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development – Can the Minister update Parliament on the National Disaster Risk Financing Policy of 2026-2031. |

31/2026	Hon. Premila Kumar to ask the Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development – Can the Minister update Parliament on the methodology used by the FCCC in setting fuel prices.
52/2026	Hon. Faiyaz Koya asked the Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development – Can the Minister inform Parliament on why all those engaged under the GP PPP scheme and Lab PPP scheme have not been regularly paid since October 2025.
64/2026	Hon. Inia Seruiratu asked the Prime Minister, and Minister for Civil Service, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics, and Youth and Sports – Can the Prime Minister update Parliament on the Millenium Challenge Co-operation recently signed between Fiji and the United States of America.
65/2026	Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Fiji-Australia Vuvale Union and the Ocean of Peace Mutual Defence Treaty.
66/2026	Hon. Joseph Nand asked the Minister for Employment, Productivity and Workplace Relations – Can the Minister update Parliament if there are plans for the establishment of the Labour Management Consultation and Co-operation Committees (LMCCC) for employers with over 20 workers to boost productivity.
67/2026	Hon. Alipate Tuicolo asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on how the Ministry intends to improve direct air connectivity between Fiji and European markets following Fiji's participation at ITB Berlin 2026.
68/2026	Hon. Rinesh Sharma asked the Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development – Can the Minister inform Parliament what inspection or enforcement mechanisms are in place at the point of importation to prevent unsafe solar system units from entering the Fijian market.
69/2026	Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Agent Agreement between the Ministry of Local Government and the Japan International Co-operation System for the Procurement of Waste Management Equipment.
70/2026	Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament whether there have been any recent changes, agreements or administrative arrangements affecting the allocation of TSLs scholarships and tertiary funding assistance.

- 71/2026 Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu asked the Minister for Information, and Environment and Climate Change – Can the Minister update Parliament on the progress of the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) for the passenger carrier, Sinu-i-Wasa that had been grounded along the beach of Toki in Levuka since TC Winston in 2016.
- 72/2026 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the process used to assess and provide financial and logistical support to Fijian citizens who require specialised medical treatment abroad when such treatment is unavailable locally.
- 73/2026 Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu asked the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways, and Sugar Industry – Can the Minister update Parliament if there are plans to introduce Crop Insurance Cover especially for commercial farmers during natural disasters.

Written Questions

- 74/2026 Hon. Jone Usamate asked the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister provide Parliament a detailed schedule on the road construction and maintenance outputs achieved by the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) for each financial year from 2022 to the current 2025-2026 period, specifically categorised by –
- (a) the total distance (in kilometres) of existing sealed roads that have undergone full rehabilitation (ripped and remade);
 - (b) the total distance (in kilometres) of previously unsealed or gravel roads that have been newly sealed with bitumen; and
 - (c) the total distance (in kilometres) of entirely new road links that have been cut and constructed where no road previously existed.
- 75/2026 Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu asked the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation – Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) the total number of applications received under the Pilot Tourism Micro and Small Enterprises Fund;
 - (b) the total funds disbursed to date; and
 - (c) the categories of tourism businesses that have benefitted.
- 76/2026 Hon. Rinesh Sharma asked the Minister for Public Enterprises, and Multi-Ethnic Affairs, Culture, Heritage and Arts – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) the total number of unplanned electricity outages recorded by Energy Fiji Limited during the financial year 2024-2025;
 - (b) the average duration of those outages; and
 - (c) the capital programme for grid reliability over the financial year 2025-2026.

- 77/2026 Hon. Jovesa Vocea asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on the performance of the Housing Authority over the past 2 years and in doing so –
- (a) update Parliament on the key achievements including progress and achievements in the provision of affordable and accessible housing, land development, and support available to low and middle income households;
 - (b) plans and upcoming initiatives to further address the increasing demand for affordable, safe and accessible housing particularly for first-home buyers; and
 - (c) how performance and service delivery have improved over the years.
- 78/2026 Hon. Jone Usamate asked the Minister for Justice and Acting Attorney-General – Can the Minister provide Parliament a detailed statement regarding the operational and financial outputs of the Yellow Ribbon Programme from the 2022 financial year to the 2025-2026 financial year, specifically –
- (a) the total number of inmates who were officially enrolled in the Yellow Ribbon Programme for each financial year; and
 - (b) the total value of financial or material assistance provided directly to these enrolled inmates upon their release or reintegration.
- 79/2026 Hon. Joseph Nand asked the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways, and Sugar Industry – Can the Minister update Parliament with respect to the following –
- (a) what is the status of the Ministry’s digital agriculture initiative as announced in the 2025 National Agriculture Show; and
 - (b) how many young farmers have so far accessed funding or training for smart-farming technology in 2026.
- 80/2026 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) how many teachers are reporting to MOE Head Quarters and District Education Offices and the reason why they are reporting to the Education Office;
 - (b) how many post holders are reporting to the District Education Offices and Head Quarters because with their substantive positions, someone else has been appointed to act on; and
 - (c) if there are positions at the Ministry that no longer exist but officers are still occupying them.

- 81/2026 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) a list of all commenced and continuing Capital Projects for the financial year 2025-2026 to date; and
 - (b) indicate the status, that is, whether they are completed and/or still work in progress.
- 82/2026 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Finance, Commerce and Business Development – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following –
- (a) the number of accidents involving Government vehicles (owned or leased) from March 2025 to April 2026, including the total cost of repairs and write-offs; and
 - (b) a detailed breakdown of fuel expenditure for all Government vehicles (owned or leased), on a yearly basis from 2023 to date, and on a month-by-month basis for 2026 (January to May).

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. Oral Questions 3/2026 and 31/2026 were dropped as they had been addressed through the Ministerial Statement by the Hon. Minister for Finance earlier in the day.

The responses to Written Questions 75/2026, 76/2026, 77/2026, 78/2026, 79/2026 and 80/2026 were tabled by the respective Ministers. The responses to Written Questions 74/2026, 81/2026 and 82/2026 would be tabled 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) Pasifika Communities University Bill 2026

The Minister for Education the Hon. Aseri Radrodro moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

- (i) That the Pasifika Communities University Bill 2026 be considered by Parliament without delay;
- (ii) That the Bill must pass through one stage at a single sitting of Parliament;
- (iii) That the Bill must be immediately referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights;
- (iv) That the Standing Committee must report on the Bill at the next sitting of Parliament; and
- (v) That upon presentation of the report on the Bill by the Standing Committee, the Bill must be debated and voted upon by Parliament, with the right of reply given to the Hon. Minister as the member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(b) Education Bill 2025 (Bill No. 34 of 2025)

Committee of the Whole Parliament on the Education Bill 2025

Parliament resolved into the Committee of the Whole Parliament on a Bill for an Act to give effect to the constitutional right to education, and for related matters (Bill No. 34 of 2025).

Hon. Speaker vacated the Speaker's Chair and convened the Committee of the Whole Parliament as Mr Chair.

Members debated and voted on the following –

Part 1

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Premila Kumar.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Amendments in the name of the Hon. Aseri Radrodro.

Amendments seconded.

Amendments debated.

Question put.

Amendments agreed to.

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Hem Chand.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Question put on Part 1.

Part 1 agreed to unanimously.

Part 2

Question put on Part 2.

Part 2 agreed to unanimously.

Part 3

Question put on Part 3.

Part 3 agreed to unanimously.

Part 4

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Hem Chand.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Premila Kumar.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Question put on Part 4.

Part 4 agreed to unanimously.

Part 5

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Aseri Radrodro.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Hem Chand.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Premila Kumar.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Question put on Part 5.

Part 5 agreed to unanimously.

Part 6

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Hem Chand.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Question put on Part 6.

Part 6 agreed to unanimously.

Part 7

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Premila Kumar.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Question put on Part 7.

Part 7 agreed to unanimously.

Part 8

Question put on Part 8.

Part 8 agreed to unanimously.

Part 9

Question put on Part 9.

Part 9 agreed to unanimously.

Part 10

Question put on Part 10.

Part 10 agreed to unanimously.

Part 11

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Premila Kumar.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Question put on Part 11.

Part 11 agreed to unanimously.

Part 12

Question put on Part 12.

Part 12 agreed to unanimously.

Part 13

Amendment in the name of the Hon. Jone Usamate.

Amendment seconded.

Amendment debated.

Question put.

Amendment defeated.

Question put on Part 13.

Part 13 agreed to unanimously.

Part 14

Question put on Part 14.

Part 14 agreed to unanimously.

Part 15

Question put on Part 15.

Part 15 agreed to unanimously.

Part 16

Amendments in the name of the Hon. Premila Kumar.

Amendments seconded.

Amendments debated.

Question put.

Amendments defeated.

Question put on Part 16.

Part 16 agreed to unanimously.

Schedule

Question put on Schedule.

Schedule agreed to unanimously.

Mr Chair informed the Honourable Members that the Committee of the Whole Parliament had concluded and then he resumed the Speaker's Chair.

The Committee of the Whole Parliament had agreed to a Bill for an Act to give effect to the constitutional right to education, and for related matters (Bill No. 34 of 2025).

(c) Third Reading of the Education Bill 2025

The Minister for Education the Hon. Aseri Radrodro moved pursuant to Standing Order 88 that the Education Bill 2025 (Bill No. 34 of 2025) be read a third time and do pass.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Votes Cast –

Yes	–	38
No	–	14
Not voted	–	3

Motion agreed to.

A Bill for an Act to give effect to the constitutional right to education, and for related matters (Bill No. 34 of 2025), enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

11. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

- (a) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report on the 2020 Fiji Public Trustee Corporation Pte Limited Annual Report' which was tabled on 28 April 2026.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (b) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report on the 2024 Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji Annual Report' which was tabled on 28 April 2026.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

- (c) The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs the Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu moved that Parliament debates the 'Review Report on the 2025 Fiji National Provident Fund Annual Report' which was tabled on 28 April 2026.

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 Tuesday, 26 May 2026 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 10.55 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

25th May, 2026.