



STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Consolidated Review Report on the 2019, 2020 (January to July) and 2020-2021 Labasa Town Council Annual Reports



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI
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Table of Contents

	Page
CHAIRPERSON’S FOREWORD	3
ACRONYM	4
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	5
1.0 INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 Committee Procedures	6
2.0 BACKGROUND	7
3.0 KEY FINDINGS	8
4.0 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS	9
5.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL AND GENDER ANALYSIS	10-11
6.0 CONCLUSION	12
7.0 COMMITTEE MEMBERS SIGNATURE	13
8.0 ANNEXURE	14

CHAIRPERSON’S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the Standing Committee on Social Affairs report on the Consolidated Review Report of the 2019, 2020 (January to July) and 2020–2021 Labasa Town Council Annual Reports.

The reports were referred to the Committee pursuant to Standing Order 109(2)(b) and were examined in accordance with the Committee’s constitutional mandate and the Standing Orders of Parliament.

The Committee’s review highlighted significant challenges affecting the Council, including the loss of revenue following the repeal of business licensing fees, the need to upgrade and expand Subrail Park, increasing pressure on the Namara Landfill, limited funding for services to Rotuma, Dreketi and Seaqaqa and delays to planned developments and capital projects. The recommendations in this report are intended to strengthen revenue recovery, infrastructure planning, waste management, service delivery and the timely implementation of priority projects.

The Committee is urging the responsible authority to act on the recommendations in this report and monitor progress so that residents of Labasa and the communities served by the Labasa Town Council benefits from reliable, equitable and sustainable municipal services.

On behalf of the Committee, I express my sincere appreciation to the Special Administrators, Acting Chief Executive Officer and staff of the Labasa Town Council for their cooperation, professionalism and valuable contributions throughout the review process.

I also extend my gratitude to the Honourable Members of the Committee, Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure, Hon. Alipate Tuicolo, Hon. Viam Pillay, Hon. Alikia Bia and Hon. Parveen Bala for their invaluable contribution and support. Further I extend my appreciation to Hon Joseph Nand, and Hon Vijay Nath as alternate members of the Committee.

I acknowledge the dedicated efforts of the Committee Secretariat in facilitating the review and compiling of this report.

I commend this report to Parliament and trust that its findings and recommendations will contribute to stronger local governance, improved municipal services and sustainable development for the people of Labasa.



.....
Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu
Chairperson

ACRONYMS

FRA	Fiji Road Authority
LTC	Labasa Town Council
SO	Standing Order
WAF	Water Authority of Fiji

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs (**‘Committee’**) is established under Section 70 of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji and Standing Order 109. The Committee’s mandate and functions are provided under SO 109 (2) and 110 (1) (a)-(d) & (f).

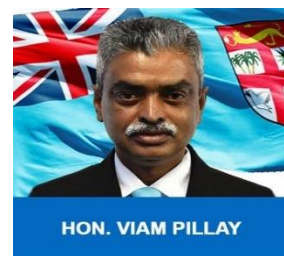
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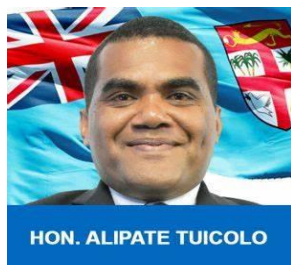
Chairperson



Deputy Chairperson



Member



Member



Member



Member

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 2019, 2020 (Jan-July) and 2020-2021 Labasa Town Council Annual Reports were tabled in Parliament on the 13th of March 2026 and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Affairs pursuant to Standing Order 109(2)(b).

Standing Order 109(2)(b) empowers the Standing Committee on Social Affairs to examine matters related to health, education, social services, labour, aviation, culture and media.

1.1 Committee Procedures

Deliberations on the 2019, 2020 (Jan-July) and 2020-2021 Labasa Town Council annual reports commenced in August 2026. The Committee reviewed the report, prepared questions and sought clarifications on key issues of interest from Labasa Town Council.

The Committee held Public Submission with the Executives of Labasa Town Council on 17th September 2026.

Upon receipt of all pertinent information addressing the Committee's queries, the report was finalised and subsequently endorsed on 25th September 2026.

Responses from Labasa Town Council can be accessed via the following link:
<https://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>

2.0 Background of Labasa Town Council

2.1 Labasa Town Council

Labasa was officially proclaimed as a township on May 5, 1939, under the township ordinance, evolving from a small regional settlement into the economic hub of Vanua Levu. Further the Local Government Act was enacted in 1972, hence Labasa was elevated to township status in June 1972.

During the period in review Labasa Town Council served an estimated population of 27,949 in Labasa urban and peri urban areas and supported major developments within its municipality.

3.0 KEY FINDINGS

The Committee conducted its review of the 2019, 2020 (Jan-July) and 2020-2021 Labasa Town Council annual report and identified the following key findings:

- 3.1 The Committee noted the repeal of the Business Licencing in 2020 removed an estimated \$200,000 in annual revenue for the Labasa Town Council.
- 3.2 The Committee noted that the facilities at Subrail Park in Labasa requires further upgrading and expansion.
- 3.3 The Committee noted that the transfer of the rural local authority has placed added pressure on the Labasa Town Councils resources, particularly the Namara landfill, currently reaching its full capacity.
- 3.4 The Committee noted that the \$50,000 grant allocated for service delivery to Rotuma, Dreketi and Seaqaqa was insufficient and that it is confined to inspection only.
- 3.5 The Committee noted that due to funding constraints, Labasa Town Councils planned developments and projects are delayed.

4.0 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends the following:

- 4.1 The Labasa Town Council, in consultation with the Ministry of Local Government and other relevant authorities, must develop a documented revenue-recovery and diversification plan to address the loss of income earned from the repeal of business licencing fees.
- 4.2 The Labasa Town Council must work with the line ministry to prioritise the upgrading and expansion of Subrail Park to accommodate a standard stadium and supporting amenities.
- 4.3 The Labasa Town Council, must prioritise the extension of the Namara Landfill and identify a secure and suitable alternative disposal facility.
- 4.4 The Labasa Town Council, in consultation with the Ministry of Local Government, must review the current service-delivery arrangements for Dreketi, Seaqaqa and Rotuma in order to develop a costed funding and implementation plan that reflects their geographical and operational requirements.
- 4.5 The Labasa Town Council, in consultation with the Ministry of Local Government, land owning units and funding stakeholders, must develop, implement a prioritised costed and time-bound plan for the delivery of its capital projects and development.

5.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND GENDER ANALYSIS

(Provided by the Labasa Town Council)

5.1 The Labasa Town Council (LTC) has localized nine key Sustainable Development Goals through its Voluntary Local Review (VLR) and Climate Action Plan (CAP) frameworks to guide sustainable urban development and climate resilience in the Northern Division.

- **SDG 3: Health and Well-Being**
 - Progress: Enhanced municipal public health enforcement, town sanitization routines and regular refuse collection to curb vector-borne diseases.
 - Key Initiatives: Upgraded food vendor shelters and public convenience facilities with clean water standpipes and improved sanitation infrastructure.
- **SDG 5: Gender Equality**
 - Progress: Promoted inclusive economic participation by supporting female market vendors, who constitute a major portion of the Labasa Market workforce.
 - Key Initiatives: Improved market safety, overnight accommodation and hygiene facilities within municipal market grounds to support women's livelihoods.
- **SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**
 - Progress: Prioritized urban sanitation and safe liquid waste management across commercial and residential zones.
 - Key Initiatives: Upgraded public washrooms, expanded drainage networks, and enforced strict health inspection standards for commercial waste disposal.
- **SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy**
 - Progress: Transitioned municipal infrastructure toward renewable energy sources to reduce carbon emissions and operational utility costs.
 - Key Initiatives: Implementation of solar electrification projects, including the installation of energy-efficient solar floodlights at Subrail Park and solar streetlighting initiatives.
- **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**
 - Progress: Fostered local economic development and commercial activity following economic shocks.
 - Key Initiatives: Advanced the Vakamaisuasua Industrial Project to expand light manufacturing and warehousing capacity, providing new local employment opportunities.
- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**
 - Progress: Expanded public open spaces and improved municipal disaster readiness against tropical cyclones and river flooding.

- Key Initiatives: Completed community recreational assets like the Naodamu Multi-Purpose Court and secured iTaukei Land Trust Board (iTLTB) land leases for public parks in Delailabasa, Tuatua and Covata.
- **SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production**
 - Progress: Integrated sustainable waste management practices to divert municipal solid waste from landfills.
 - Key Initiatives: Established circular economy initiatives, such as site preparation for the "Return and Earn" buy-back recycling centre at the Vakamaisuasua carpark, to relieve waste volume pressure on the Namara Landfill.
- **SDG 13: Climate Action**
 - Progress: Embedded climate adaptation and flood mitigation directly into town planning through the LTC Climate Action Plan (CAP).
 - Key Initiatives: Undertook localized stormwater drainage overhauls (e.g., Sarosaro Lane, Ritova Street, and Damanu Street) and partnered with national agencies for river dredging along the Labasa, Qawa, and Wailevu rivers.
- **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals**
 - Progress: Built multi-stakeholder partnerships with national ministries, international climate networks and regional trusts to fund and execute municipal projects.
 - Key Initiatives: Active engagement with the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) for climate technical support, partnership with the Ministry of Waterways for flood mitigation and collaboration with event committees for major civic festivals.

5.2 Gender Analysis

The number of staff as per the table below

Year	Male	Female	Total
2018	50	20	70
2019	50	13	63
2020	48	11	59
2021	48	10	59
2022	47	12	59
2023	53	16	69
2024	48	15	63
2025	51	13	64
2026	40	14	54

6.0 CONCLUSION

The Committee concluded that timely implementation of its recommendations will strengthen the Council's financial sustainability, infrastructure planning, waste-management capacity, service delivery to the people of Labasa. Furthermore, this will align municipal initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals by supporting inclusive participation and community resilience.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE

We, the Members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, hereby agree with the contents of this report:

Committee Member	E-Signature
Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu Chairperson	
Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure Deputy Chairperson	
Hon. Alipate Tuicolo Member	
Hon. Viam Pillay Member	
Hon. Parveen Bala Member	
Hon Aliko Bia Member	
Date: 25th September, 2026	

ANNEXURE

Published evidence

Written evidence, transcripts, and supporting documents can be viewed on the Parliament website at the following link: <https://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Labasa Town Council 2019, 2020 and 2021 Annual Report

SUBMITTEE : Labasa Town Council
VENUE: Big Committee Room, Parliament
DATE: Thursday, 17th September, 2026

VERBATIM NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS HELD AT THE BIG COMMITTEE ROOM ON THURSDAY, 17TH SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 3.06 P.M.

The Committee resumed at 3.06 p.m.

Present

Hon. I.S. Vanawalu	-	Chairman
Hon. V. Pillay	-	Member
Hon. A. Bia	-	Member
Hon. P.K. Bala	-	Member

Submittees

Labasa Town Council

Mr. Paul Jaduram	-	Special Administrator
Mr. Samuela Ligairi	-	Special Administrator
Mr. Irfan Ali	-	Acting Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Satesh Nand	-	Market Manager/Properties Officer

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, members of the public, Secretariat, dear viewers, ladies and gentlemen. A very good afternoon to you all and it is a pleasure to welcome everyone here this afternoon, especially the viewers that are watching this public hearing session live. At the outset, for information purpose, pursuant to Standing Order 111 of the Standing Order of Parliament, all committee meetings are to be open to the public. Therefore, please note that this submission is open to the public and the media and it is also being aired via the *Walesi* platform and streamlined live on Parliament website and social media platform.

For any sensitive information concerning the matter before us this afternoon that cannot be disclosed in public, this can be provided to the Committee either in private or in writing. However, please be advised that Standing Order 111 in the following circumstances permit the non-disclosure of information. These are:

- (1) national security matters;
- (2) third-party confidential information;
- (3) personal or human resources matters; and
- (4) Committee's deliberation and development of the Committee's recommendation based on this report.

This is a Parliamentary meeting and all information gathered is covered under the Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act of 1965. Please bear in mind that we do not condone slander or libel of any sort. Any information brought before this Committee should be based on facts.

In terms of protocol of this Committee meeting, please minimize the usage of mobile phones and all mobile phones are to be on silent mode while the meeting is in progress. I wish to also remind honourable Members and our guests that all information to be asked are to be addressed through the chairperson. I would like the members of the Committee to introduce themselves.

(Introduction of Committee Members)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Today, the Committee will be hearing submission from the Labasa Town Council. This is in relation to the Labasa Town Council 2019, 2020, 2021 Annual Reports. Before us, we have the representative from the Council, and I would like to thank them for availing themselves to appear to this hearing.

Please be reminded due to the essence of time, you may give a response brief, and the Members will intervene with their supplementary questions during your presentation. Now, I invite the officials to introduce themselves and begin with their presentation.

(Introduction of Labasa Town Council officials)

MR. I. ALI.- Good afternoon everyone. Moving on to the presentation. The first part is on financial performance.

Question 1 - Key revenue streams and evaluation over the years.

The four key revenue streams for Labasa Town Council were town rates, market income, rent from properties and business licence. Key revenue streams evaluation, this is on the next slide. Town rates, market income, rent from properties had continued over the years with steady income, while business licence had ceased from August 2020.

Question 2 -

MR. CHAIRMAN.- CEO, the business licence. Is there any opportunity to get this back so it will help you out in your operations? Are there any communications between the relevant authorities? How best can you get back this business licence? I know that it was removed from the municipalities? What are your thoughts and future plans? Did you communicate with other stakeholders involved?

MR. I. ALI.- Mr. Chairman, we have communicated with stakeholders as well as our Ministry; Ministry of Local Government. Since this was one of the key revenue streams, so we are looking forward to getting this income activated for Labasa Town Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Are there any positive feedbacks on the same subject matter that we are discussing now?

MR. I. ALI.- Yes, we are looking forward to having this for Labasa Town Council, since it is one of the revenue streams, so we have received positive feedback.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, may I intervene? I just want to go back on the key revenue. In 2019, it says around \$2.1 million. But for 2020 and 2021, if you add, it comes to around \$3.3 million. So, 2019 was basically COVID period, right? If you really look at it, 2019 revenue was more than compared to those two years. Can you give some explanation on that?

MR. I. ALI.- Mr. Chairman through you, 2020 was a seven-month period because we had changed our financial year period. Before it was January to December, and in 2020 it went to June to July, and then from August to July, from there on.

HON. P.K. BALA.- No, no, that is fine. I understand that. You are saying here, June to July, and then 2020, 2021, next column is 1.7. So that is ending December, right?

MR. I. ALI.- Yes.

HON. P.K. BALA.- If you add those two, it comes to around \$3.3 million. What I am saying is that for 2019 alone, during COVID, you collected about \$2.1 million, and for these two years, it is \$3.3 million. What is the reason?

MR. I. ALI.- The collection was slow because of the effect of COVID-19. So, payment from the ratepayers and other vendors was slow. That is why the collection is slow.

Next question was on incentives and challenges during the COVID-19 period. Incentives provided to ratepayers. There was interest waivers provided on areas. Early payment discounts were provided to the ratepayers. This is normally in August and September. We provide 7 percent in August and 5 percent in September. And flexible payment plans were provided to the ratepayers.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, may I intervene? Does that incentive help? What is the percentage that you collect after giving that incentive?

MR. I. ALI.- Our collection for rates is usually above 45 percent to 50 percent because ratepayers, they usually take advantage of the discount periods, and they make their payments in full. So, we are able to get the rates in advance at the beginning of the year. Last incentive provided was rental and market stall fee waivers. This was subsidised.

Continuing on to next slide. Challenges faced during COVID-19 in rate collection. Ratepayer financial hardships. Accumulation of rates areas. There were movement restrictions and lockdowns. Diversion of household expenditure and increase in town rate areas.

Next question is on the insights and major expenditure and operational efficiency. Major expenditure categories. The first one is staff, wages, and salaries. Second one is waste management and public health operations. Third one is infrastructure, repair, and public maintenance. And last one is administrative and other operational overhead costs. Contributions to operational efficiency. It streamlined waste management. Prevented infrastructure maintenance. Digitisation of administrative processes and focused on revenue generating assets.

Next question will be discussed by a fellow colleague.

MR. S. NAND.- Mr. Chairman through you, question number four is update on revenue collection from Subrail Park, which is from 2019 to 2025. In 2020, the collection was \$17,126 and there was a slight decrease in 2021 because that was for only seven months, which is from January to July. In 2021 and 2022, \$56,000 and 2022, 2023 is \$87,000 and we had a drastic increase in income was \$195,000 and 2024, 2025, it was \$118,042.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, through you, am I right in saying that your Labasa team is well trained and that will reflect on your income?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- May I, just a question on Subrail Park. We are aware of what is happening at Subrail Park on its standard and the compliance. Are there any future plans in place for you to look at other areas that you need to develop in order to cater for that more or like a standard class whereby we can get some of these fixed, especially for the super rugby to come over to the north? Any future plan on that?

MR. S. NAND.- Mr. Chairman, currently the council is looking for a bigger space, and it is very difficult to get a bigger lot somewhere around the town area. Just recently, we had a discussion with Lands Department. We were promised to be given a piece of lot, but unfortunately, that lot which we are getting is around seven acres. Within those seven acres, our national stadium will not be able to be fitted in there because we need other facilities as well like car park and if we put athletics and other things, it will not fit in there. So currently, the council is looking for a bigger space.

Question five is on contribution by LTC on various programmes from 2019 to 2025. Council has contributed in 2019, 2023 and 2024 for the Festival of the Friendly North where council has sponsored a queen. And for Fiji Independent Day celebration in 2021, council contributed \$8,493.78 towards the float construction and 2023, \$3,852.11.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman through you, could I get what you are saying for float? You spent \$8,000?

MR. S. NAND.- The preparation of floats.

HON. P.K. BALA.- What type of float was that?

MR. S. NAND.- Floats and incentives towards the Fiji Day celebration.

HON. P.K. BALA.- It means your contribution?

MR. S. NAND.- Yes, that was the council's contribution.

HON. P.K. BALA.- So Government is not contributing, is not funding for the national celebration?

MR. S. NAND.- That information was through the evidence which was adduced from the records.

Policy and regularity changes. Question number six. Some of the major changes in policy and impact on service delivery was the repeal of the Business Licencing Act. I think it has already been discussed where council has lost the revenue of around \$200,000 per year and alignment of the financial year where in the year 2020, we had seven months which was from January till July and implementation of rate relief and COVID-19 mitigation guidelines.

The next questions will be answered by our Special Administrator, Mr. Paul Jaduram.

MR. P. JADURAM.- Mr. Chairman and honourable Members. Question 7, Capital Development Projects and the taken stormwater drainage and flood mitigation upgrades. This was carried out by the drainage system, rolls, river filtration and master plan engagement. Subrail Park facilities upgrade, pavilion and structural upgrades were undertaken, ground infrastructure maintenance.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman through you, one of the subject matters that has been mentioned here which is very interesting is the master drainage plan. Is this for the whole of Labasa within the municipality? My question is, have you people engaged someone to carry out this master drainage plan or is it in the pipeline? And if you have engaged someone, how far you have gone into this?

MR. I. ALI.- Mr. Chairman through you, as per our latest update, this has been taken care of by Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation through the Navualiku project. The consultation has been done with the stakeholders. By the end of this month, we are expecting the presentation by the team at Labasa Town Council.

MR. P. JADURAM.- Next one is Subrail Park Facilities Upgrade. We have public parks and open spaces and recreation facilities and Naodamu Multi-purpose court. This construction and completion of new multi-purpose sports courts at Naodamu open space to serve local youth and recreation needs. And next is securing land, leases and future parks, public amenities and front vendor shelters.

Question eight. Challenges faced on transfer of RLA responsibilities. Capacity and pressure on the Namara landfill. Geographical isolation and infeasibility of serving Rotuma Island. Inadequate financial resources and grants. Strain on council resources and operations.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman through you - inadequate financial resources and grants. Which area you do not receive grant to carry out such work, which is out of your control?

MR. I. ALI.- Mr. Chairman through you, this is in regards to Rotuma. It is very far from Labasa Town Council, so we are facing difficulty in reaching out to Rotuma. The grant given is very less.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman through you. So far, have you people done any work in Rotuma, because what we have gathered or what we have been informed that Labasa Town Council has not been providing services. Is it true?

MR. I. ALI.- Sir, as per the agreement implementation plan, it is only for inspection. So, we have made few visits, inspected and we have submitted our plans. We had submitted last year for additional grant, but unfortunately, we did not receive. It is only for inspection.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Waste collection and all those not in the agreement?

MR. I. ALI.- No.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Mr. Chairman through you, what is the current grant which you are receiving to provide the services at Rotuma?

MR. I. ALI.- Mr. Chairman through you, for current financial year grant, we have received \$50,000, but that is for Dreketi, Seaqaqa and Rotuma combined.

MR. P. JADURAM.- Strain on council resources and operations, subdivision expansions, commercial interest, integration with sustainability initiatives and infrastructure provisions. Development on Vakamasisuasua Industrial Project. We have with us the responses as I have read earlier on. That is all I have to say.

MR. S. LIGAIRI.-Through you, Mr. Chairman, as tasked with question 10, the Labasa Town Council SDG progress, health and well-being, gender equality, and that is where we have the booklet here, the VLR Review of 2025, and the Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, where one of our staff is currently in China, Partnership for the Goals, localised in LTC voluntary local review. That is the VLR report, as I have showed you.

Question 11 is on Labasa Town Council staff statistics, 2018, 2019, 2020.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman through you, in the meantime, when you say please provide the number of staff, does this include general workers or just staff?

MR. S. LIGAIRI.- General locals. Question 12, LTC achievements after implementations of the five-year strategic plan. First, the open spaces. Second is the harvesting of renewable energy.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, through you, when you talk about open space, then you are saying completed. What do you mean by that?

MR. S. LIGAIRI.- Completed means after so many years, we have now got the proper list or the actual documentations of those open spaces. Some that has been for so many years, but we were able to achieve the original list.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman through you, so all the open spaces within the municipality of Labasa, now you have a proper list, that is what you are telling us? For all open spaces?

MR. S. LIGAIRI.- Yes.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Okay.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Through you Mr. Chairman, you have just acquired all the leases. What is currently happening to these open spaces? These would be used as parks or recreation areas for the community. What are some of the other developments happening on these open spaces?

MR. S. LIGAIRI.- Through you Mr. Chairman, I believe the Town Council have a strategic plan with that, long-term and short-term. Like for those that become parks, will be for parks for our children. And those for developments, we are looking for PPP partnership. That is our long-term plan for our development.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Mr. Chairman through you, looking at the number of developments, some completed, some in progress, some pending, what are some of the challenges faced by Labasa Town Council in regards to these developments?

MR. I. ALI.- Mr. Chairman through you, the major challenge is in regards to the funds. While we have plans in place, but when it comes to funding, we do not have it. That is why we are going for public-private partnerships.

HON. V. PILLAY.- That means some of the projects which are pending, this is due to the funding aspect.

MR. I. ALI.- Yes. Sir.

MR. S. LIGAIRI.- Number 3 is Seafood Centre at Naiyaca Subdivision. This is a new fish market that has the pontoon jetty. That is alongside a recent agreement that we have drawn up with Extra Supermarket. New Dreketi and Rotuma Markets, as we just completed the feasibility studies at Rotuma. The JND drainage system, beautification projects, electronic parking metres, new landfill site and acquisition of additional garbage compact trucks and machinery. That I

believe is in progress and revision of the Labasa Town Planning Scheme, scenario exercise, master development plan and master drainage plan.

Question 12, strategic priority areas and objectives for 2022 to 2026. It is a community and lifestyle, health and public safety, economic development, environmental sustainability, infrastructure services, transport services, organisational performance and governance.

Question 12 continued through you, Mr. Chairman. Milestones achieved, financial and governance, infrastructure and amenities improvement, market, local trade facilities, traffic and transport management, waste management and environmental improvements, community engagements and civic events, health and safety and organisational performance.

Question number 13, brief administrative history of Labasa Town Council. It is there on the board, Sir. Justine Hunter, Mr. Ami Kohli, our current NCA, Mr. Paul Jaduram and executive boards, Mr. Vijay Nand, Mr. Ami Kohli, Doreen Miller-Robinson, myself, Mr. Samuel Ligairi, Mr. Edwin Chand and Mr. Paul Jaduram again for this year, Sir.

And for our executive management, our chief executive officer position, Mr. Faiz Ali, Mr. Sumit Prasad, Muhammad Faiz Ali again, current Mr. Irfan Ali was acting, confirmed last year, Mr. Vimal Vikas Chand, just for three months, resigned again and we have our own again acting current CEO-Mr. Irfan Ali, Sir. That is, I believe that is all, Sir, from Labasa Town Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you very much, honourable Members and the members from the Labasa Town Council. We believe that a lot of work has been done so far. Maybe our last, honourable Members, if there are any further supplementary questions to facilitate our meeting this afternoon.

HON. P.K. BALA.- How long you have been acting, CEO? Since when?

MR. I. ALI.- One year, Sir.

HON. P.K. BALA.- So two chairs here. Why is he on acting?

MR. P. JADURAM.- Through you Mr. Chairman, the last CEO, we had advertised and got the position. He resigned after a month. So, we had to get back to acting CEO's position. But in the meantime, we are going through the agent who will advertise. And then we will have to choose one out of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you very much honourable Members, just a question from me. In terms of looking at the Look North policy and its development by the government of the day, we believe there is a lot to be done, especially for the main town and area like Labasa and Savusavu. I will get you back to the outside boundaries that you served from 2018, which used to be served by the local rural authority. What are some of the challenges that you face in terms of getting the service delivery to this area, that is beyond the municipality?

MR. I. ALI.- Mr. Chairman, the major problem is serving these, because before Labasa Town Council was serving only the ratepayers, so extending the boundaries had put pressure on our current landfill, which is near its full capacity, which is why we are liaising with Ministry of Tourism through the Navualiku project for another substation for landfill site. The major problem is that our current landfill is getting full, due to serving the other residents, apart from the ratepayers.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Do you have the funding to cater for that, or are you depending on other stakeholders to help you out?

MR. I. ALI.- Sir, at the moment the study is being undertaken by Navualiku team, there is another team who handles the landfill and waste management, and they are currently there in the planning phase.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you very much honourable Members and the executive team from the Labasa Town Council, thank you very much for your time. Just in terms of looking at your annual reports, I believe there is a lapse of time, which you need to embark on and fix those gaps in order to have your next annual reports beforehand to us, so that

we will be able to give you a current update, what is happening on the ground, likewise when you are reporting back to Parliament.

At this juncture I wish to sincerely thank you all for availing yourself to this public hearing session. We thank you for your time and hope that you will avail yourself for any further queries that the Committee may have on today's submission.

On that note, honourable Members and the team, I declare this meeting closed.

The Committee adjourned at 3.36 p.m.]



LABASA TOWN COUNCIL



**RESPONSE TO THE
QUESTIONS
RAISED ON
LABASA TOWN
COUNCIL (LTC)
ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR
2019, JAN-JULY
2020, AND 2020-
2021**

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

QUESTION 1

What were the key revenue streams for the Labasa Town Council during the period, and how did they evolve over the years?

RESPONSE

The primary revenue driver for the Labasa Town Council across the evaluated periods remains **Town Rates**, followed by **Market Income**, **Rent from Properties**, and **Business License Fees** (before ceased from August 2020)

Key Revenue Streams Performance:

NO.	REVENUE STREAM	2019	Jan-July 2020	2020/2021	RANKING
1	TOWN RATES	1,187,332	1,093,016	978,757	1 st
2	MARKET INCOME	567,735	267,699	560,539	2 nd
3	RENT FROM PROPERTIES	213,943	140,183	188,998	3 rd
4	BUSINESS LICENSE	201,549	188,742	NIL	4 th
		2,170,559	1,689,640	1,728,294	

During the primary reporting focus period (2019 to 2020/2021), the top streams ranked as follows:

- **1st – Town Rates:** Generated \$1,187,332 in 2019, \$1,093,016 in Jan–July 2020, and \$978,757 in 2020/2021.
- **2nd – Market Income:** Generated \$567,735 in 2019, \$267,699 in Jan–July 2020, and recovered to \$560,539 in 2020/2021.
- **3rd – Rent from Properties:** Accounted for \$213,943 in 2019, \$140,183 in Jan–July 2020, and \$188,998 in 2020/2021.
- **4th – Business License Fees:** Contributed \$201,549 in 2019 and \$188,742 in Jan–July 2020 before transitioning to NIL in line with deregulation.

Key Revenue Streams Evolution:

Revenue Stream	2018	2019	2020(7)	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
TOWN RATES	1,194,624	1,187,332	1,093,016	978,757	1,183,173	1,054,834	1,277,496	1,303,524
MARKET INCOME	386,425	567,735	267,699	560,539	658,773	738,877	656,267	613,085
RENT FROM PROPERTIES	195,036	213,943	140,183	188,998	291,685	291,792	322,174	325,205
BUSINESS LICENSE	192,663	201,549	188,742	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
TOTAL	1,968,748	2,170,559	1,689,640	1,728,294	2,133,631	2,085,503	2,255,937	2,241,814

Key Analytical Insights

- **Impact of Policy Deregulation:** Business license collections ceased completely starting in the 2020/2021 financial year due to national policy reforms abolishing municipal business licensing fees. This removed approximately \$190,000–\$200,000 in recurring annual revenue.
- **COVID-19 Financial Contraction:** Total revenue dipped to a low of \$1,728,294 in the 2020/2021 financial year, driven primarily by rate payment delays during economic disruptions and reduced operational activity during the 7-month transition period in 2020.

- **Post-Pandemic Recovery & Sustained Growth:** Total revenue rebounded past pre-pandemic levels, reaching \$2,133,631 in 2021/2022 and achieving peak performance in 2023/2024 (\$2,255,937) and 2024/2025 (\$2,241,814).
- **Rental from Properties:** Property rentals demonstrated consistent upward trajectory, expanding from \$195,036 in 2018 to \$325,205 in 2024/2025 (a 66.7% growth), helping offset the statutory loss of business licensing revenue alongside strong rate collection mechanisms.

QUESTION 2

Did LTC provided incentives to the ratepayers of Labasa for the rate payments and what were the challenges faced during COVID 19 in collecting rates?

RESPONSE

Incentives Provided to Ratepayers

To support ratepayers during financial hardship and encourage rate recovery, the Labasa Town Council (LTC) implemented several relief measures and incentives:

- **Interest Waivers on Arrears:** Waivers on interest were given in hardship cases screened through the Ministry of Local Government.
- **Early Payment Discounts:** Discounts offered on current rates for ratepayers who settled their dues early or in full within designated periods.
- **Flexible Payment Plans:** Agreements allowing ratepayers to enter into structured weekly, monthly, or quarterly payment schedules without incurring immediate legal enforcement actions.
- **Rental and Stall Waivers:** Operational concessions, including temporary rent relief or fee reductions for municipal market vendors and council-owned property tenants impacted by lockdowns. This was partially subsidized by the Government

Challenges Faced During COVID-19 in Rate Collection

The COVID-19 pandemic severely constrained council revenue collection mechanisms due to broad economic disruptions across the town:

- **Ratepayer Financial Hardship:** Widespread business downturns, reduced commercial sales (up to 80% during peak periods), reduced working hours, and job losses compromised the financial capacity of ratepayers to clear annual dues.
- **Accumulation of Rate Arrears:** Defaults by commercial and residential ratepayers led to an accumulation of rate and lease arrears.
- **Movement Restrictions & Lockdowns:** Curfews, health travel restrictions, and physical office closures hindered ratepayers from physically visiting the council offices to make cash or over-the-counter payments.
- **Diversion of Household Expenditure:** Ratepayers prioritized basic household necessities and emergency healthcare over civic rate obligations during periods of heightened economic uncertainty.
- **Increase in Town Rate Arrears:** The combination of reduced business activity and collection delays created a persistent backlog of unpaid rates.

QUESTION 3

Can you provide insights into the major expenditures and how they contributed to operational efficiency?

RESPONSE

Major Expenditure Categories

The council's total expenditure over the period focused on four major operational areas:

- **Staff Wages and Salaries:** Personnel costs required to maintain statutory administrative functions, municipal enforcement, engineering, and financial management services.
- **Waste Management & Public Health Operations:** Costs associated with daily household and green waste collection, transport, and maintenance at the Namara Landfill site.
- **Infrastructure Repairs & Public Maintenance:** Ongoing maintenance of town roads, drainage networks, streetlights, public parks (including Subrail Park), and market infrastructure.
- **Administrative and Operational Overheads:** Insurance, external audits, utility costs, and vehicle maintenance.

Contributions to Operational Efficiency

- **Streamlined Waste Management:** Contracting and in-house management of waste collection routes minimized illegal dumping and reduced long-term health hazards, preventing high reactive cleanup costs.
- **Preventative Infrastructure Maintenance:** Regular servicing of town drainage and road assets protected council infrastructure against severe tropical weather and flood damage, preserving capital assets over their lifecycle.
- **Digitization of Administrative Processes:** Modernization of financial processes and internal controls improved transaction speed, enhanced monitoring of rate arrears, and optimized staff resource allocation despite tight operating budgets.
- **Focusing on Revenue Generating Assets:** Selective capital expenditure on revenue-generating assets (such as market spaces and Subrail Park facilities) ensured steady operational yields while lowering long-term maintenance overheads.

QUESTION 4

Update on the revenue collected from use of facilities/ground at Subrail Park from 2019 to 2025?

RESPONSE

The following is the revenue collected from the use of facilities and ground hire charges at Subrail Park from 2019 to 2025:

YEAR	REVENUE COLLECTED (\$)	REVENUE SOURCE	ADDITIONAL REMARKS
2019	17,126	HIRE OF GROUND/FACILITY – SUBRAIL PARK	GROUND HIRE CHARGES
Jan-July 2020	6,737	HIRE OF GROUND/FACILITY – SUBRAIL PARK	GROUND HIRE CHARGES
2020-2021	36,300	HIRE OF GROUND/FACILITY – SUBRAIL PARK	GROUND HIRE CHARGES + FIJI FACT 2020
2021-2022	56,244	HIRE OF GROUND/FACILITY – SUBRAIL PARK	INCREASE IN HIRE OF SUBRAIL PARK
2022-2023	87,033	HIRE OF GROUND/FACILITY – SUBRAIL PARK	INCREASE IN HIRE OF SUBRAIL PARK
2023-2024	195,080	HIRE OF GROUND/FACILITY – SUBRAIL PARK	INCREASE IN HIRE OF SUBRAIL PARK AND FIJI FACT 2024
2024-2025	118,042	HIRE OF GROUND/FACILITY – SUBRAIL PARK	INCREASE IN HIRE OF SUBRAIL PARK

Subrail Park's revenue took a hit during the early days of the pandemic, dropping to \$6,737 in early 2020, but it bounced back remarkably fast as restrictions lifted. By hosting major national sporting events like the Fiji FACT tournament in both 2020 and 2024, the council saw bookings soar, eventually reaching a record peak of \$195,080 in the 2023–2024 financial year. Even without hosting a major tournament every single year, ground hire earnings have settled at a solid baseline above \$118,000, proving that ongoing facility upgrades and steady local demand have turned the park into a reliable, strong revenue generator for Labasa.

QUESTION 5

Can you provide the amount of funds contributed from LTC towards the following programs from 2019 to 2025:

- A. Festival of Friendly North
- B. Northern Crime Prevention Carnival
- C. Agriculture Show
- D. Fiji Constitution Day Celebration
- E. Fiji Independent Day Celebration

RESPONSE

Program	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Festival of Friendly North	2,532.41	NIL	NIL	NIL	1,654.78	2,177.19	NIL
Northern Crime Prevention Carnival	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Agriculture Show	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Fiji Constitution Day Celebration	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Fiji Independent Day Celebration	NIL	NIL	8,493.78	NIL	3,852.11	NIL	NIL
	2,532.41	NIL	8,493.78	NIL	5,506.89	2,177.19	NIL

During the entire seven-year period from 2019 to 2025, the Labasa Town Council spent very little direct money on these major community events—just \$18,710.27 in total. Every minor expense was carefully reviewed and approved by management strictly for essential operational or logistical support. Because these celebrations were primarily organized and funded by independent committees, government ministries, or event trusts, the council's main role was simply showing up as an active civic partner by helping with venue preparations, cleaning up afterwards, and coordinating on-the-ground support.

POLICY AND REGULATORY CHANGES

QUESTION 6

What were some of the major changes in policy that were implemented during the review period, and how did they impact on service delivery?

RESPONSE

Major Policy Changes and Impact on Service Delivery (2019–2021)

1. Repeal of the Business Licensing Act 1976 (Effective 1 August 2020)

- **Policy Change:** The national government officially repealed the *Business Licensing Act 1976* as announced in the 2020/2021 National Budget. This eliminated the requirement for businesses to obtain annual municipal business licenses and completely abolished the collection of business licensing fees by municipal councils.
- **Impact on Revenue & Operations:** For the Labasa Town Council, this policy resulted in an immediate, direct loss of approximately \$190,000–\$200,000 in annual recurring revenue (moving from \$201,549 in 2019 to NIL from 2020/2021 onwards).
- **Impact on Service Delivery:** To cushion this financial shortfall without cutting core municipal services, LTC had to restructure its operations and increase reliance on general rate collections, property rentals, and venue hire at Subrail Park. Administratively, service delivery turned toward streamlined business registration verification via centralized databases (such as the Registrar of Companies and FRCS) rather than manual council inspection routines.

2. Alignment of the Financial Year Period (2020 Transition)

- **Policy Change:** Pursuant to Ministry of Local Government directives, municipal council financial reporting periods were transitioned from a traditional calendar year (January–December) to a government-aligned financial year running from 1 August to 31 July. This resulted in a truncated 7-month transition period (January–July 2020).
- **Impact on Revenue & Operations:** The 7-month reporting window led to an apparent sharp drop in annual accounting performance indicators (revenue totalled \$1,689,640 for the 7 months compared to \$2,170,559 in full-year 2019), requiring management to tightly realign operational spending budgets and financial schedules.
- **Impact on Service Delivery:** Maintenance schedules, rate collection drives, and capital projects were recalibrated into a shortened 7-month operational plan, ensuring continuous delivery of essential health, waste management, and infrastructure upkeep without disruption.

3. Implementation of Rate Relief & COVID-19 Mitigation Guidelines

- **Policy Change:** In response to the economic pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic, national directives guided municipal councils to offer financial relief packages to ratepayers. These included temporary waivers on the statutory 11% interest penalty for overdue rate arrears, extension of early payment discount periods, flexible payment plan arrangements, and temporary rental concessions for market vendors.
- **Impact on Revenue & Operations:** Cash flow collections experienced significant delays, as ratepayers prioritized emergency household needs and business survival during lockdown periods.
- **Impact on Service Delivery:** The council prioritized core public health and essential community services—such as municipal garbage collection, town sanitization, market hygiene controls, and critical drainage maintenance—while deferring non-essential capital works to manage liquid resources effectively.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

QUESTION 7

Was there any Capital development projects undertaken during the period of review?

RESPONSE

During the review period (2019 to 2020/2021), the Labasa Town Council undertook targeted capital development and infrastructure upgrading projects aimed at maintaining public assets, improving municipal services, and building climate resilience. While large-scale capital expansion was constrained by pandemic-related financial pressures, key projects completed or initiated during this timeframe included:

1. Stormwater Drainage & Flood Mitigation Upgrades

- **Drainage System Overhauls:** Major upgrade works were executed on stormwater drainage systems to mitigate flash flooding in town hotspots. Specific completed projects included works along Sarosaro Lane, off Ritova Street, adjoining Galaxy Hotel off Prasad Place (leading to Nasekula Creek), and behind the Labasa College Girls Hostel off Park Street and Damanu Street.
- **River Siltation & Master Plan Engagement:** Following Tropical Cyclone Ana in 2021, the council actively liaised with the Ministry of Waterways to request the recommissioning of river dredging for the heavily silted Labasa, Qawa, and Wailevu rivers, while laying groundwork for a comprehensive Master Drainage Plan.

2. Subrail Park Facility Upgrades

- **Pavilion & Structural Upgrades:** Major renovation and upgrading works were carried out on the main grandstands and stadium pavilions to improve seating, safety, and operational standards.
- **Ground Infrastructure Maintenance:** Turf rehabilitation and facility enhancements were completed to ensure the park met national requirements, enabling LTC to host major events like the Fiji FACT 2020.

3. Public Parks, Open Spaces, and Recreational Facilities

- **Naodamu Multi-Purpose Court:** Construction and completion of a new multi-purpose sports court at the Naodamu open space to serve local youth and recreational needs.
- **Securing Land Leases for Future Parks:** Secured official leases from the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) for open spaces and public parks at Nalovolailai, Delailabasa, Tuatua, and Covata subdivisions to pave the way for planned community park upgrades.

4. Public Amenities & Food Vendor Shelters

- **Library Public Amenities Upgrade:** Upgrades to the food shelter and leisure area adjacent to the Labasa Public Library. This included installing additional standpipes, public waste bins, and new seating benches and tables for vendors and patrons.

QUESTION 8

What were the challenges if any, faced when the responsibility was transferred from the Rural Local Authority to the Council to extend their services covering the whole of Macuata Province including Rotuma Island?

RESPONSE

The operational and geographic expansion of municipal responsibilities beyond traditional town boundaries to cover the broader Macuata Province and Rotuma Island presented several major challenges:

- **Capacity and Pressure on the Namara Landfill:** Extending waste management and public health services to outer areas significantly increased the volume of waste collected. Consequently, the Namara Landfill has been under severe pressure from non-ratepayer customers and external commercial users, creating a pressing issue regarding landfill space capacity and shortening its overall lifespan.
- **Geographic Isolation and Infeasibility of Serving Rotuma Island:** Rotuma Island is an extremely remote, offshore territory located over 500 kilometers north of Vanua Levu. The extreme geographical distance and maritime logistical hurdles make it operationally unsuitable and unfeasible for the Labasa Town Council to effectively carry out direct service delivery, waste collection, or continuous health inspections.
- **Inadequate Financial Resources and Grants:** The operational grant provided by the government to cover these extended jurisdictional areas was insufficient to offset the actual logistical, fuel, maintenance, and administrative costs required to serve sparse, far-flung rural communities and island dependencies.
- **Strain on Council Resources and Operations:** Servicing expansive rural areas diverted limited municipal machinery, enforcement personnel, and maintenance teams away from the core council boundaries, straining everyday operations for existing urban ratepayers.

QUESTION 9

Provide update on development in Vakamaisuasua Industrial Project as highlighted on page 10 of 2019 Labasa Town Council Report?

RESPONSE

The Vakamaisuasua Industrial Project has progressed from its initial planning phases highlighted in the 2019 report into active operational expansion:

- **Subdivision Expansion:** Development has advanced to another stage as the industrial area, adding 10 additional industrial lots to accommodate expanding commercial and industrial demand in Labasa.
- **Commercial Interest:** The council has actively facilitated lot allocations and lease processing to promote local economic growth, light manufacturing, and warehousing within the Northern Division.
- **Integration with Sustainability Initiatives:** Beyond standard industrial allocations, the council has integrated green municipal projects into the area, including utilizing the Vakamaisuasua carpark site for new sustainability infrastructure such as the "Return and Earn" buy-back center.
- **Infrastructure Provision:** Ongoing collaboration with national government agencies continues for the upgrading of road access, heavy drainage, and utility connections to support full commercial operations at the site.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

QUESTION 10

How well has the LTC achieved its Sustainable Development Goals? (Please specify each goal)

RESPONSE

The Labasa Town Council (LTC) has localized nine key Sustainable Development Goals through its Voluntary Local Review (VLR) and Climate Action Plan (CAP) frameworks to guide sustainable urban development and climate resilience in the Northern Division.

- **SDG 3: Health and Well-Being**
 - **Progress:** Enhanced municipal public health enforcement, town sanitization routines, and regular refuse collection to curb vector-borne diseases.
 - **Key Initiatives:** Upgraded food vendor shelters and public convenience facilities with clean water standpipes and improved sanitation infrastructure.
- **SDG 5: Gender Equality**
 - **Progress:** Promoted inclusive economic participation by supporting female market vendors, who constitute a major portion of the Labasa Market workforce.
 - **Key Initiatives:** Improved market safety, overnight accommodation, and hygiene facilities within municipal market grounds to support women's livelihoods.
- **SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**
 - **Progress:** Prioritized urban sanitation and safe liquid waste management across commercial and residential zones.
 - **Key Initiatives:** Upgraded public washrooms, expanded drainage networks, and enforced strict health inspection standards for commercial waste disposal.
- **SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy**
 - **Progress:** Transitioned municipal infrastructure toward renewable energy sources to reduce carbon emissions and operational utility costs.
 - **Key Initiatives:** Implementation of solar electrification projects, including the installation of energy-efficient solar floodlights at Subrail Park and solar streetlighting initiatives.
- **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**
 - **Progress:** Fostered local economic development and commercial activity following economic shocks.
 - **Key Initiatives:** Advanced the Vakamaisuasua Industrial Project to expand light manufacturing and warehousing capacity, providing new local employment opportunities.
- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**
 - **Progress:** Expanded public open spaces and improved municipal disaster readiness against tropical cyclones and river flooding.
 - **Key Initiatives:** Completed community recreational assets like the Naodamu Multi-Purpose Court and secured iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) land leases for public parks in Delailabasa, Tuatua, and Covata.

- **SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production**
 - **Progress:** Integrated sustainable waste management practices to divert municipal solid waste from landfills.
 - **Key Initiatives:** Established circular economy initiatives, such as site preparation for the "Return and Earn" buy-back recycling centre at the Vakamaisuasua carpark, to relieve waste volume pressure on the Namara Landfill.
- **SDG 13: Climate Action**
 - **Progress:** Embedded climate adaptation and flood mitigation directly into town planning through the LTC Climate Action Plan (CAP).
 - **Key Initiatives:** Undertook localized stormwater drainage overhauls (e.g., Sarosaro Lane, Ritova Street, and Damanu Street) and partnered with national agencies for river dredging along the Labasa, Qawa, and Wailevu rivers.
- **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals**
 - **Progress:** Built multi-stakeholder partnerships with national ministries, international climate networks, and regional trusts to fund and execute municipal projects.
 - **Key Initiatives:** Active engagement with the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) for climate technical support, partnership with the Ministry of Waterways for flood mitigation, and collaboration with event committees for major civic festivals.

QUESTION 11

Please provide the number of staff, as per the table below, for Labasa Town Council staff.

RESPONSE

YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
2018	50	20	70
2019	50	13	61
2020	48	11	59
2021	49	10	59
2022	47	12	59
2023	53	16	69
2024	48	15	63
2025	51	13	64
2026	40	14	54

PERFORMANCE

QUESTION 12

Please highlight the achievements of LTC after implementing the 5-year Strategic Plans?

RESPONSE

5-YEAR STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN [2022-2026]

VISION

To build Labasa Town as a great place to live, work, visit and do business.

Strive to honor our past, manage our present, and embrace our future to create a quality, unique place for families and businesses.

MISSION

To provide a framework for a high quality of life, promote a strong sense of community and provide responsive public services in a caring, ethical, innovative and accountable manner.

NO.	DEVELOPMENT PLAN		STATUS
1	OPEN SPACE	Council to secure proper leases over Open Space within its 2007 Approved Labasa Town Planning Scheme.	COMPLETED
2	HARVESTING RENEWABLE ENERGY [CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE]	Solar panels – Market Premises	IN PROGRESS
3	SEAFOOD CENTRE – NAIYACA SUBDIVISION	New Fish Market, Pontoon Jetty, Riverside Restaurants, Ice-plant & Convention Centre	IN PROGRESS
4	NEW DREKETI & ROTUMA MARKETS	Dry & wet goods; kiosks; Bus/taxi/carrier stands	PARTIALLY COMPLETED
5	CBD Drainage System	Flashing out of Underground drains	PENDING
6	Beautification Projects	Constructing new planters within CBD area; Planting ornamental trees, installing street furnitures [benches/tables/drinking fountains/street lamp post, custom design litter bins]	COMPLETED
7	Electronic Parking Meters	Acquiring & installing new pay & display electronic parking meters within CBD area	COMPLETED

8	New Landfill site & Acquisition of additional Garbage Compactor Trucks & machinery, etc	New landfill site ; Transfer Station [3R]; Additional fleets for garbage services within Extended Areas.	PARTIALLY COMPLETED; PLANNING PHASE
9	Revision of the Labasa Town Planning Scheme	Revise the existing 2007 Labasa Town Planning Scheme	IN PROGRESS THROUGH WORLD BANK/MIN. OF TOURISM – PLANNING PHASE
10	Sexennial Exercise	Rates valuation - last carried out in year 2017	COMPLETED
11	Master Development Plan & Master Drainage Plans	Council urgently needs a master development plans and overall drainage mapping	IN PROGRESS BY THE WORLD BANK /MIN. OF TOURISM – UNDER PLANNING PHASE

Key Strategic Priority Areas & Objectives [2022-2026]

NO	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	DELIVERABLES	REVIEWED
1	COMMUNITY & LIFESTYLE	COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		TOWN RATES	MONTHLY MEETINGS
2	HEALTH & PUBLIC SAFETY	LICENSING & PERMITS	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		EFFECTIVE SERVICE & COMPLIANCE	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		MONITORING & EVALUATION	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS	MONTHLY MEETINGS
3	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	PROMOTING LABASA AS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		STANDARD INFRASTRUCTURE AT AFFORDABLE LEVELS	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		INDUSTRIAL AND MANUFACTURING GROWTH	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		TOURISM VISITATION	MONTHLY MEETINGS

4	ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES	MONTHLY MEETINGS
5	INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS REGISTER	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		ANNUAL MAINTENANCE FUNDS	MONTHLY MEETINGS
6	TRANSPORT SERVICES	TRANSPORT PLANNING AND CONGESTION	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		PUBLIC TRANSPORT	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		STREET & TRAFFIC SIGNALS	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		PARKING FACILITIES	MONTHLY MEETINGS
7	ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE	FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		BUDGET CONTROL	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING	MONTHLY MEETINGS
8	GOVERNANCE	CIVIC LEADERSHIP	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		ADVICE AND CUSTOMER SERVICE	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		STRATEGIC PLANNING	MONTHLY MEETINGS
		STRATEGIC NETWORKS AND ALLIANCES	MONTHLY MEETINGS

The following are the key highlights of the achievements of Labasa Town Council from the objectives set:

1. Financial and Governance

- Completed sexennial revaluation exercise for rateable properties in 2023, implementing updated Unimproved Capital Value (UCV) rates effective August 1, 2023.
- Completed the backlog external audits for financial years 2019, 2020, 2020/2021, 2021/2022, 2022/2023, and 2023/2024. 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 are in progress and will soon be submitted to OAG.
- Completed the Independent JEE for LTC and implementation is in progress

2. Infrastructure & Amenities Improvement

- Built new kerb and channel works at Naiyaca and footpaths along Macuata Drive.
- Installed precast concrete 'V' drains and rock lining to control stormwater and flash flooding in Naodamu and off-James Madhavan Street.
- Upgraded public facility amenities, including market, custom litter bins, park benches, and solar lighting in public parks.
- Upgraded bus shelter infrastructure and installed new entrance signage at the Labasa Bus Station.

3. Market & Local Trade Facilities

- Constructed the dedicated Wheelbarrow Boys Stand and canteens at the Labasa Bus Station area;
- Built a temporary grog stall facility and upgraded overall town market infrastructure.
- Renovated and built the food parcel market section with new tables and seating amenities

4. Traffic and Transport Management

- Modernized CBD parking and revenue collection by installing electronic pay-and-display parking meters along major commercial streets in Labasa Town.
- Designated and marked updated taxi bases and loading/unloading zones in collaboration with the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA).

5. Waste Management & Environment Improvements

- Upgraded the Namara Landfill with improved general solid waste cells, leachate collection systems, and JICA-supported composting programs.
- Conducted quarterly town clean-ups, anti-mosquito spraying campaigns, and 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) waste separation programs for PET bottles, timber, and scrap metals.

- Carried out CBD beautification, including flower bed maintenance, landscaping, and a new welcome sign at Nasekula.
6. Community Engagement & Civic Events
- Enhanced public parks, open spaces, and sports facilities (e.g., Subrail Park) to support recreation and charitable community events.
 - Resumed hosting major annual civic and charitable events at Subrail Park post-COVID-19, including the Festival of the Friendly North and the Northern Crime Prevention Carnival, sporting events such as Fiji Fact and BOG soccer tournaments etc.
7. Health and Safety
- Maintain public hygiene standards through continuous municipal health inspections, cleanup campaigns and anti-mosquito spraying campaigns.
8. Organizational Performance
- Modernized internal municipal administration and financial management processes.
 - • Transitioned operational workflows toward upgraded cloud-based accounting systems to increase departmental efficiency and reporting accuracy. Digitized systems include MYOB accounting software, WINBIZ Payroll software, etc.

QUESTION 13

Please provide a brief administrative history of the Labasa Town Council

RESPONSE

The following is the brief administrative history of the Labasa Town Council:

SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR – CHAIR (EXECUTIVE BOARD)

NO.	NAME	POSITION	APPOINTMENT DATES
1	JUSTIN HUNTER	SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR - CHAIR	AUGUST 2019 – FEBRUARY 2022
2	AMI KOHLI	SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR - CHAIR	FEBRUARY 2022 – DECEMBER 2023
3	PAUL JADURAM	SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR - CHAIR	DECEMBER 2023 – APRIL 2026

SPECIAL ADMINISTRATORS (EXECUTIVE BOARD)

NO.	NAME	POSITION	APPOINTMENT DATES
1	VIJAY CHAND	SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR	APRIL 2009 – FEBRUARY 2019
2	AMI KOHLI	SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR	AUGUST 2019 – FEBRUARY 2022
3	DOREEN MILLER ROBINSON	SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR	AUGUST 2019 – DECEMBER 2023
4	SAMUELA LIGAIRI	SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR	DECEMBER 2023 – CURRENT (2026)
5	EDWIN LARSEN CHAND	SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR	DECEMBER 2023 – CURRENT (2026)
6	PAUL JADURAM	SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR	MAY 2026 – CURRENT (2026)

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT (CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS)

NO.	NAME	POSITION	APPOINTMENT DATES
1	MOHAMMED FAIZ ALI	ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	APRIL 2016 – OCTOBER 2019
2	SUMEET PRASAD	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	OCTOBER 2019 – OCTOBER 2020
3	MOHAMMED FAIZ ALI	ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	DECEMBER 2020 – APRIL 2025
4	IRFAN ALI	ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	APRIL 2025 – MARCH 2026
5	VIMAL VIKASH CHAND	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	MARCH 2026 – MAY 2026
6	IRFAN ALI	ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	JUNE 2026 - CURRENT (2026)

THANK YOU