PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

MINUTES

of Proceedings of Parliament at Suva on Friday, Twenty-first day of August, 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. Sitiveni Rabuka, Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau, Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna, Hon. Aliki Bia, Hon. Inia Seruiratu, Hon. Ketan Lal, Hon. Viam Pillay, Hon. Mosese Bulitavu, Hon. Faiyaz Koya and Hon. Kalaveti Ravu 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. Filimoni Vosarogo, Hon. Aseri Radrodro, Hon. Pio Tikoduadua and Hon. Agni Singh.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Government Whip the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Thursday, 20 August 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. Hon. Speaker also welcomed the students, teachers and parents of Naikeleyaga Village School from Kabara Island in Lau and the High Commissioner of New Zealand to Fiji His Excellency Mr Greg Andrews.

Hon. Speaker informed all Honourable Members that the Secretariat had received the response from the Minister for Education to Written Question No. 147 of 2026, which had been conveyed to the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Inia Seruiratu and a copy of the response uploaded on the Parliament's website.

Hon. Speaker also informed that his office had received the letter of apology from the Hon. Alvick Maharaj following his ruling delivered on Monday, 17 August 2026. He confirmed that the Hon. Maharaj has duly complied with, and adhered to the ruling of the Chair.

The Hon. Speaker also informed that the Fijian Elections Office team were in the Small Committee Room until 11:30 a.m., and appreciation was extended to the Supervisor of Elections for arranging the voter registration services in Parliament.

The Hon. Speaker advised the Honourable Members that he had granted approval for the partial closure of Constitution Avenue from 22 August, to facilitate preparations for the 70th Anniversary 2026 Miss Hibiscus Festival. Parking arrangements had been made for the Honourable Members, and he thanked all Honourable Members for their understanding and co-operation.

6. QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

181/2026 Hon. Virendra Lal asked the Minister for Finance – Can the Minister inform Parliament on what measures are being undertaken to ensure that FRCS processes and returns VAT refunds to eligible businesses within a specified and reasonable timeframe.

182/2026 Hon. Ratu Isikeli Tuiwailevu asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on the status of the Western Sanitary Landfill project and the remediation of the Sigatoka Dumpsite and the measures implemented to improve waste management and safeguard public health.

183/2026 Hon. Alvick Maharaj asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the Government's plan to recruit and appoint newly qualified medical doctors.

184/2026 Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu asked the Minister for Policing and Communications – Can the Minister update Parliament on the process in place for obtaining Police Clearance.

185/2026 Hon. Inia Seruiratu to ask the Minister for Justice and Acting Attorney-General – Can the Minister inform Parliament whether the Legal Aid Commission is undertaking a review of the $15,000 means threshold given the increase in cost of living.

186/2026 Hon. Kalaveti Ravu to ask the Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection – Can the Minister update Parliament on the implementation of the Child Care and Protection Act 2024, the Child Justice Act 2024 and the Adoption Act 2020.

187/2026 Hon. Faiyaz Koya to ask the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport – Can the Minister inform Parliament on what progress has been made towards the establishment of the Engineers Registration Board (ERB) and when does the Government expect it to become fully operational.

188/2026 Hon. Taito Rokomatu asked the Minister for Immigration – Can the Minister inform Parliament on how Immigration can bring its services closer to the people of Wainibuka and nearby areas.

189/2026 Hon. Jone Usamate asked the Minister for Health and Medical Services – Can the Minister inform Parliament on what measures is the Ministry putting in place to prevent the re-occurrence of the mishap that almost saw the loss of lives of their staff who were travelling from Moce Island to Oneata Island in Lau, at the end of July this year.

190/2026 Hon. Naisa Tuinaceva asked the Minister for Information, and Environment and Climate Change – Can the Minister update Parliament on the Revised Community Levy Agreement for Naboro Landfill.

Written Questions

191/2026 Hon. Premila Kumar asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on all capital projects undertaken by each municipal council during the last three financial years, including –

(a) project description and approved budget for each capital project;
(b) actual expenditure; and
(c) source of funding and project completion status.

192/2026 Hon. Alipate Tuicolo asked the Minister for Housing and Local Government – Can the Minister update Parliament on the key deliverables achieved by the Housing Authority over the past financial year, and how these achievements have contributed to increasing access to affordable housing and home ownership opportunities for Fijians.

193/2026 Hon. Inia Seruiratu to ask the Prime Minister, and Minister for Civil Service, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics – Can the Prime Minister inform Parliament on the following, for the period October 2025 to 30 June 2026 –

(a) how many civil servants are currently under suspension; and
(b) the total cost to Government in salaries and benefits paid to them during their suspension periods.

194/2026 Hon. Hem Chand asked the Minister for Education – Can the Minister inform Parliament on the number of students found in possession of drugs in primary and secondary school premises in the last 3 years.

The responses to the Oral and Supplementary Questions were provided by the respective Ministers. Oral Question 187/2026 would be asked at a later sitting of Parliament. The Hon. Speaker allowed the Hon. Jone Usamate to ask Oral Question 185/2026 and Written Question 193/2026; and the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu to ask Oral Question 186/2026.

The response to Written Questions 191/2026, 192/2026, and 194/2026 were tabled by the respective Ministers.

The response to Written Question 193/2026 would be tabled in accordance with Standing Order 45(3).

7. SUSPENSION MOTION BY THE GOVERNMENT WHIP

The Government Whip the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu 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 12.30 p.m. to complete the remaining items listed on the Order Paper.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

8. END OF WEEK STATEMENTS

(a) Hon. Virendra Lal delivered his End of Week Statement and the Hon. Prof. Biman Prasad responded.

(b) Hon. Jovesa Vocea delivered his End of Week Statement and the Minister for Finance the Hon. Esrom Immanuel responded.

(c) Hon. Ratu Josaia Niudamu delivered his End of Week Statement and the Minister for Justice and Acting Attorney-General the Hon. Siromi Turaga responded.

9. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

(a) Fiji National University Bill 2026 (Bill No. 27 of 2026)

The Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister for Industries, Commerce and Business Development, and Public Enterprises the Hon. Manoa Kamikamica moved pursuant to Standing Order 84, that the Fiji National University Bill 2026 be read a first time. The motion was subsequently seconded.

The Deputy Prime Minister tabled the four copies of the Fiji National University Bill 2026.

A Bill for an Act to provide for the governance and administration of the Fiji National University, and for related matters (Bill No. 27 of 2026).

The Hon. Speaker informed Honourable Members that in accordance with Standing Order 84(1), the Fiji National University Bill 2026 had been read for the first time and the Bill would be listed on the Order Paper for Second Reading on a future sitting day.

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

(b) Yaqona (Kava) Bill 2026 (Bill No. 28 of 2026)

The Acting Minister for Agriculture and Waterways the Hon. Filimoni Vosarogo moved pursuant to Standing Order 84, that the Yaqona (Kava) Bill 2026 be read a first time. The motion was subsequently seconded.

The Acting Minister for Agriculture and Waterways tabled the four copies of the Yaqona (Kava) Bill 2026.

A Bill for an Act to establish the Fiji Yaqona Council for the purpose of the regulation and management of the Yaqona Industry in Fiji and for related matters (Bill No. 28 of 2026).

The Hon. Speaker informed the Honourable Members that in accordance with Standing Order 84(1), the Yaqona (Kava) Bill 2026 had been read for the first time and the Bill would be listed on the Order Paper for Second Reading on a future sitting day.

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

(c) Electoral (Amendment) Bill 2026

The Minister for Justice and Acting Attorney-General the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

(i) That the Electoral (Amendment) 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 him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(d) Electoral (Registration of Voters) (Amendment) Bill 2026

The Minister for Justice and Acting Attorney-General the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

(i) That the Electoral (Registration of Voters) (Amendment) 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 him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

(e) Political Parties (Registration, Conduct, Funding and Disclosures) (Amendment) Bill 2026

The Minister for Justice and Acting Attorney-General the Hon. Siromi Turaga moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 51 –

(i) That the Political Parties (Registration, Conduct, Funding and Disclosures) (Amendment) 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 him as the Member moving the motion.

Motion seconded.

Motion debated.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The Government Whip the Hon. Alitia Bainivalu moved that Parliament adjourns until Monday, 28 September 2026 at 9.30 a.m.

Motion seconded.

Question put.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

Hon. Speaker thanked all Honourable Members for their contributions throughout the week and all those watching the live proceedings.

The Hon. Speaker adjourned Parliament until Monday, 28 September 2026 at 9.30 a.m.

Parliament adjourned at 3.48 p.m.

Speaker of Parliament

Secretary-General to Parliament

21st August, 2026.