Fiji held its national elections on 14 December 2022 for 55 parliamentary seats. The elections had its own controversies following a “glitch” in the counting that resulted in the Supervisor of elections halting the counting and reverting to manual counts of votes. The leader of the People’s Alliance Party (PAP) called on the military and the President to step in and halt the election. Following this call, Rabuka was then taken in by the Police for questioning. However, by 18 December, it was clear that there was no outright winner though the ruling Fiji First government retained the highest number of seats (Fiji First 26 seats, PAP 21 seats, National Federation Party 5 seats and SODELPA 3 seats) but not enough to govern by itself. The tense negotiations that followed with SODELPA the former Opposition Party resulted in SODELPA accepting a coalition with PAP and NFP. However, SODELPA General Secretary protested the process resulting in the Supervisor of Elections stepping in and nullifying the SODELPA management board decision and calling for another vote. By December 24, SODELPA reconstituted management board again voted in favour of a PAP/NFP Coalition. On 24 December, the PAP/NFP/SODELPA government was sworn in by the President of Fiji at government house. Sitiveni Rabuka was elected Prime Minister and a government of 29 Ministers and Assistant Ministers sworn in by the President. At a time of heightened political tensions, the Commander reportedly called on the new government to ensure that they work within the Constitution following concerns by the Opposition Party, that the Government was flaunting the provisions of the Constitution. He was then called by the Minister for Home Affairs for a meeting.

Immediately after assuming government, significant changes started to take place including the resignations and/or terminations of Members of Government Board, or Senior Civil Servants appointed by the Bainimarama government (now Opposition). The Constitutional Officers Commission (COC) tasked with appointments of Constitutional Office holders was reconstituted under the provisions of the Constitution but also written to favour the government. Members include the Prime Minister and Attorney General on one side together with two nominees, while the other is the OL with one other nominee.

1. Suspension of the Commissioner of Police
   - On 30 January 2023, the Commissioner of Police was suspended by the COC pending an allegation of abuse of office lodged against him.
2. Suspension of the Commissioner of Corrections
   - On 30 January 2023 the Commissioner of Corrections was suspended by the COC
3. Suspension of the Supervisor of Elections
   - On 19 January 2023 the Supervisor of Elections was suspended by the COC following complaints of abuse of office made against him.
4. Suspension of the Chief Justice
   - On 30 January 2023 the Chief Justice was suspended by the COC following complaints of judicial misconduct made against him.

The former Attorney General and General Secretary of the Fiji First was taken in by Police for questioning. Immediately after the new government took office, a police watch was placed at the airport since the former AG had travelled overseas at the time and upon his arrival was met by the police. The next day he presented himself for questioning at the CID HQ. A few days later the LO and the former AG again were required to attend the CID for questioning on complaints by a Government Minister on allegations of community incitement among other allegations including abuse of office. No charges have been laid yet as legal advice has been sought from the Office of the DPP.
On 17 February, Parliament voted to suspend the LO for 3 years following his maiden speech and right of reply to the President’s Speech to open the Parliament for 2023-2024. According to the allegations made by Government Minister, the LO had breached Standing Orders by attacking the President in his reply as well as calling on the rank and order of the Military to fulfil their constitutional role which the Minister argued amounted to seditious comments and incitement of the military to take over the government. The Speaker referred the matter to the Privilege Committee who recommended to Parliament for the suspension. The Government moved a motion to adopt the report and recommendations of the Privilege Committee and the vote took place on Friday 17 February. The LOP stands suspended till February 2026. In similar suspensions issued by the previous parliament for terms of up to 2 years, the IPU has argued that the periods of suspensions are excessive.

Various legislative changes have been made by government including by the President in his speech to open parliament. Minister for Communications announced the review of draconian Media Act that has been criticised including by the Human Rights Council for its breaches of various rights related to a free press. Other changes in laws include those passed by the previous government affecting traditional rights and lands.

The government has indicated that it will reinstate of the Great Council of Chiefs, Fiji’s apex chiefly body that was abolished by the former government. The GCC was responsible for issues relating to indigenous rights particularly land and matters of custom but was removed when Bainimarama overthrew the government in 2006.

Key human rights organisations in Fiji have reportedly stated that human rights are now respected and promoted in Fiji following the change of government. Others have argued that people are “finally free after 16 years of Fiji First government” and oppression of rights. The Fiji First led Opposition on the other hand have argued that the current government continues to violate human rights and the provisions of the 2013 Constitution.

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