

POINT OF ORDER

Madam Speaker,

I rise on a Point of Order, under Standing Order 74(1)(a) where in my humble view Madam there is an alleged breach of Standing Orders or practices of Parliament.

I urge this august House to consider Standing Order 58(3)(a) and (b) as I lay out the issue which say's:

58. Protocols while speaking

3. A member must not be interrupted, except by the Speaker, or another member who is—

(a) raising a point of order; or

(b) trying to clarify some matter raised by the member in his or her speech, but only if the member speaking is willing to give way and resume his or her seat and the member wishing to interrupt is called by the Speaker.

Madam Speaker on Monday, 05 March 2018 during the question time pertaining to my Leader of Opposition's question regarding the 2017 Census, I followed up with a supplementary question, which then led to the Hon Attorney General and Chief Legal Advisor to Government, blatantly misleading this august House that no ethnic data was collected by the 2017 Census enumerators.

I quote Madam Speaker the comment by the learned Attorney General on Monday in response to my Supplementary Question:

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- No such data was collected. He needs to understand that there has been no aggregation of data based on ethnicity under the 2000 and 2017 Census none whatsoever. They need to move away from that, they think we are hiding it, we are not hiding it. There was no collection of data.

The points of the Hon Attorney General allegedly misleading and bringing dishonour and disrepute to this august House, which are NOT A STANDARD PRACTICE OF THIS HOUSE as per Standing Order 74(1)(a) are as follows:

(1) There was no census done in 2000. There was a Census done in 2007.

(2) In the 2007 census there is public information readily available that clearly shows aggregation of data based on ethnicity.


Madam Speaker, the people of Fiji who we are supposed to represent are up in arms over this issue. There is already a hashtag called [#MyEthnicityCounts](#) starting on social media.

Everyone who was counted, Madam Speaker, willingly allowed strangers in the form of enumerators into their houses to extract very PRIVATE and CONFIDENTIAL information from them, with the understanding that this information is to be used for enhanced government services and support -- and are now being told that the Bureau of Statistics has a competence issue which I find very hard to believe because the previous statements are contrary to the statements of the Bureau today -- especially when this exercise has cost taxpayers \$14.5M which we passed in the 2017-2018 Budget only last year."

Madam Speaker, with this Point of Order I seek a ruling from your Chair that the Attorney General immediately apologise to this august House for misleading us when he said that a census was done in 2000 and that there was no aggregation of data based on ethnicity done - it was done in 2007.

I lay on on the table a brief pertaining to public statements in support of Standing Order 74(1)(a) that there is an alleged breach of Standing Orders or practices of Parliament.

Annex 1: 2007 Census Figures (by Ethnicity), from:
<http://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/statistics/2007-census-of-population-and-housing>



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STATISTICAL NEWS

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CENSUS2007 RESULTS: POPULATION SIZE, GROWTH, STRUCTURE AND DISTRIBUTION

2007 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING

This is the first release concerning the 2007 Census of Population and Housing. It deals with the most basic characteristics of the population, its size, growth, structure and distribution. Subsequent releases covering the labour force, employment and unemployment, education, training, housing and other census topics will be published shortly.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Population size and growth by Ethnicity and Geographic sector

- The population by ethnicity and geographic sector, enumerated during the 2007 Census and compared to the enumerated population during the previous census in 1996 is presented in the following table:

Geographic Sector	Ethnic Group	Population Size	
		P ₁₉₉₆ (Nr)	P ₂₀₀₇ (Nr)
Total Fiji	All	775,077	837,271
	Fijians	393,575	475,739
	Indians	338,818	313,798
	Others	42,684	47,734
Rural Sector	All	415,582	412,425
	Fijians	232,240	264,235
	Indians	170,783	135,918
	Others	12,559	12,272
Urban Sector	All	359,495	424,846
	Fijians	161,335	211,504
	Indians	168,035	177,880
	Others	30,125	35,462

Annex 2: 2017 Census Questionnaire



Population and Housing Census 2017

Self-Filling Questionnaire

Province: _____

Tikina: _____

Ea Number: _____

Residential Address: _____

Household Number: _____

Annex 3: Public Statement and Tweet from the Fiji Bureau of Statistics

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Race data held back

Luke Nacei
Wednesday, January 17, 2018

THE Fiji Bureau of Statistics will only release data on ethnicity from the 2017 Fiji Population and Housing Census if it is instructed to do so, says Census commissioner Epeli Waqavonovono after requests from several political parties for the data to be made public.

"What people should be expecting all the time is whatever the bureau releases is what is available," Mr Waqavonovono said.

He said they collected data on ethnicity during the counting process.

"We did ask about people's ethnicity, but the decision to release it has to come from higher authority. Once we are instructed then we will release it," said Mr Waqavonovono.

Former speaker of parliament Pita Nacuva said every individual had the right to know the results of the census.

"This is where individuals have the right to know. We must be honest with one another. It's about transparency and my opinion is nothing should be hidden from the public in a democratic system," he said.

National Federation Party leader Professor Biman Prasad said it was unacceptable that the census data, particularly on the composition of Fiji's population by ethnicity, was not being released.

He said as the census was a publicly-funded exercise, it was almost criminal that selectively released data was being "drip-fed" to taxpayers who were questioned for almost every facet of private data.

Fiji Labour Party leader Mahendra Chaudhry said he would write to the Bureau of Statistics for the release of the data.



Fiji Bureau of Stats
@fjbureauofstats

Replying to [@MichaelFieldNZ](#)

Now what gives you that idea?
Just because we had been advised to wait on a directive to release it, DOES NOT mean we do not value it. Ethnicity will always be an important component of any demographic analysis. All statisticians will tell you that.

4:34 pm · 01 Mar. 18

