

Lavetiviti



2018 General Election Ballot Paper Number Draw

Raising the standards in the delivery of Elections in Fiji

The first number that will appear on the 2018 General Election Ballot Paper is 508.

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The Fijian Electoral Commission has approved the number 508 after a ball draw at the Head office in Suva in May this year. A blindfolded person randomly selected the numbers and the entire event was witnessed by police officers from the Fiji Police Force and members of the Fijian Electoral Commission.

The Electoral Commission Chairperson, Mr Suresh Chandra confirmed that the numbers used for the 2014 General Election would not be used again. Therefore the first number of the Ballot Paper for the 2018 General Election will be a three digit number within the 400 – 500 range.

The number draw is pursuant to Section 36(2) (c) of the Electoral Act 2014. The Act outlines that the Electoral Commission is required to approve the first three (3) digit number of the Ballot paper for the 2018 General Election.



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51 Seats in Parliament



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Polling Agents Handbook



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Election Training for Political Parties

51 Seats in Parliament



The Electoral Commission, in March, announced that the number of seats in Parliament will increase from 50 to 51 in the next General Election.

Electoral Commission Mr Suresh Chandra said that this is the first time in history that the Electoral Commission is empowered by the Constitution to alter the number of seats in parliament.

“We found that in 2014, with a national population of 873,608, there was a ratio of one seat in Parliament for every 17,472 citizen. As at 1 March, the Fiji Bureau of Statistics has projected that the national population had increased to 886,416. In order to maintain the ratio, we would need 51 seats in parliament,” said Mr Suresh Chandra.

The Electoral Commission considered the population data provided by the Fiji Bureau of Statistics together with the data from the National Register of Voters submitted by the Fijian Elections Office to work out the ratio of the population to the seats, in 2014. The Commission then used this same ratio to assess whether there was a need to increase the number of seats based on the current population and the current voter data. The Chairperson, Mr Suresh Chandra stated that they have worked this out carefully.

One Fiji Party De-registered



The One Fiji Party has been de-registered as a Political Party following the continued breach of the Political parties (Registration, Conduct, Funding & Disclosures) Act, 2013.

“On February 16 2017, I issued a notice to One Fiji Party advising the Party that it had breached the Act by failing to submit its audited accounts. The Party was then given 60 days to remedy the breach which it failed to do,” explained Mr Saneem, Registrar of Political Parties.

Given that One Fiji Party has failed to submit the Audited accounts as required by the Act, and the 60 days given under the Act had been exhausted without remedy, the Registrar, in compliance with the requirements under the Act, has de-registered the One Fiji Party.

7,000 Polling Agents Handbooks Delivered



On 27 July one thousand copies of the 2018 General Election Polling Agents Handbook were dispatched to the seven registered political parties.

While handing out the handbooks, Electoral Commission Chairperson Mr Suresh Chandra said it was essential that the political parties were provided with crucial information in terms of the performance, rights and responsibilities and restrictions of polling agents in the next General Election.

He also stressed that it is of fundamental importance for political parties to fully

understand the electoral process before they can positively participate in it.

The Fijian Elections Office had printed 10,000 copies of the Polling Agents Handbook so that it is widely distributed around the country to keep every Fijian citizen informed. An e-copy of the Polling Agents Handbook is available for download on the Electoral Commission website: <http://electoralcommission.org.fj/handbooksand-manuals>

MOA Signed Between the Fijian Elections Office and the Unit Trust of Fiji [Management] Limited

The Fijian Elections Office [FEO] has signed a Memorandum of Agreement [MOA] with the Unit Trust of Fiji (Management) Limited [UTOF] at the FEO Headquarters in a move to promote personal investment initiative and financial security for FEO employees.

Furthermore, it is envisaged that this MOA will foster collaboration between UTOF and FEO by creating awareness on how to:

1. Improve and increase investment knowledge with regard to personal investment plans;
2. Educate FEO employees about the benefits and associated risks of this scheme by way of training and awareness programs to be conducted with UTOF.

“With UTOF being one of the major investment institutions of capital markets in Fiji, FEO employees stand to gain a lot from this MOA in as far as investment opportunities for personal wealth manage-



Supervisor of Elections, Mr Mohammed Saneem (right) and UTOF Chief Executive Officer, Mr Vilash Chand sign the Memorandum of Agreement.

ment are concerned,” said the Supervisor of Elections, Mr Mohammed Saneem.

UTOF Chief Executive Officer, Mr Vilash Chand, welcomed the FEO as the twenty-first organization in Fiji to join the scheme.

Appeals and Objections on the National Register of Voters

On Monday June 12, the Electoral Commission approved the rules governing objections and appeals to registration on the National Register of Voters.

Section 155(b) of the Electoral Act 2014 specifies that the Electoral Commission may make rules relating to voter registration and maintenance of the National Register of Voters.

Currently there are no provisions where a person can lodge a complaint against a registration. The rules will create this process and allow for natural justice principles to be exercised during the adjudication process.

An Appeals process has also been established to allow the Electoral Commission to finalize the verification of a registered voter.

The OBJECTION TO REGISTRATION AS A VOTER form can be obtained from any of the Voter Services Centre and can also be downloaded from the FEO website: www.fijielects2018.org.fj



Election Training for Political Parties



Twelve representatives from registered political parties attended a three-day workshop called 'Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections [BRIDGE] in April. The BRIDGE module focused on Polling, Counting and Results.

Supervisor of Elections, Mr Mohammed Saneem said "the workshop was organized in line with FEO's Strategic Plan, which is to enhance the knowledge and skills of FEO's stakeholders through training and capacity building".

The workshop also delivers on the need for political party agent training for the 2018 General Election, as highlighted by the Multinational Observer Group (MOG).

The FEO will provide the necessary training, information and background of the entire process of elections to allow Political Parties to develop their own training programs for their Polling Agents. It is the choice of the Political Parties to determine the level of training and the nature of scrutiny they wish to implement.

National Register of Voters given to Registered Political Parties



The Electoral Commission has printed copies of the National Register of Voters as at 19 April 2017 for Registered political parties.

The Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, Mr Suresh Chandra presented the National Register of Voters to representatives from the Fiji United Freedom Party, Fiji First Party, Fiji Labour Party, National Federation Party and Social Democratic Liberal Party.

“We have given five [5] Registered Political Parties a copy of the complete set of the National Register of Voters free of charge in order to help them prepare accordingly for the 2018 General Election,” said Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, Mr Suresh Chandra.

The National Register of voters contains the details of 605,997 Fijians eligible to vote in the next General Election as at April 19 2017.

SMS Notification Feature Tried By FEO



The Fijian Elections Office [FEO] piloted its ‘SMS Notification Feature’ on June 1 that is now being incorporated into the Voter Registration system. 2,502 voters who had either registered or updated their details between January 2017 and 20 March 2017, and had provided the FEO with

their mobile numbers would have received a ‘confirmation’ sms advising them of the registration.

“We are currently testing the system so that the FEO can directly communicate with every registered Voter,” remarked Mr Mohamed Saneem, Supervisor of Elections.

Election Management Bodies around the world continuously try to find avenues to directly engage with voters. Since mobile phones are very popular in Fiji, the FEO has taken advantage of this medium.

The ‘SMS Notification Feature’ will allow the FEO to confirm the Voter’s details with every registered Voter.

Photo Gallery



The President – His Excellency, Major General Jioji Konousi Konrote with his new VoterCard.



The Speaker, Dr Jiko Luveni taking advantage of the Business House Registration Drive at the Parliamentary complex.



Members of the public verify their details on the National Register of Voters, during the Outdoor Broadcast at the Government Information Referral Centre in Suva.

Visit our Website
www.feo.org.fj
for more information

Upcoming Events

- **Election Officials Recruitment Drive**
28 July - 23 September
- **Half Day Training for Polling Day Workers (PDW)**
August 14 @ 8:00 am - October 16 @ 5:00 pm



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