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**Fiji** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en) [Template:Respell](/wiki/Template:Respell) [Template:Lang-fj](/wiki/Template:Lang-fj); [Fiji Hindi](/wiki/Fiji_Hindi): फ़िजी), officially the **Republic of Fiji**[[1]](#cite_note-1) ([Template:Lang-fj](/wiki/Template:Lang-fj);[[2]](#cite_note-2) [Template:Lang-hif](/wiki/Template:Lang-hif)[[3]](#cite_note-3) [Template:Lang-hif](/wiki/Template:Lang-hif)), is an [island country](/wiki/Island_country) in [Melanesia](/wiki/Melanesia) in the [South Pacific Ocean](/wiki/Pacific_Ocean) about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) northeast of [New Zealand's](/wiki/New_Zealand) [North Island](/wiki/North_Island). Its closest neighbours are [Vanuatu](/wiki/Vanuatu) to the west, [New Caledonia](/wiki/New_Caledonia) to the southwest, [New Zealand's](/wiki/New_Zealand) [Kermadec Islands](/wiki/Kermadec_Islands) to the southeast, [Tonga](/wiki/Tonga) to the east, the [Samoas](/wiki/Samoan_Islands) and [France's](/wiki/France) [Wallis and Futuna](/wiki/Wallis_and_Futuna) to the northeast, and [Tuvalu](/wiki/Tuvalu) to the north.

Fiji is an [archipelago](/wiki/Archipelago) of more than 330 islands, of which 110 are permanently inhabited, and more than 500 [islets](/wiki/Islet), amounting to a total land area of about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). The farthest island is [Ono-i-Lau](/wiki/Ono-i-Lau). The two major islands, [Viti Levu](/wiki/Viti_Levu) and [Vanua Levu](/wiki/Vanua_Levu), account for 87% of the population of almost 860,000. The capital, [Suva](/wiki/Suva) on Viti Levu, serves as Fiji's principal cruise port.<ref name=cruise-rep>[Fiji Cruises Destination Topics](https://www.cruisesalefinder.com.au/blog/ports/fiji-cruises). Retrieved 23 March 2016.</ref> About three-quarters of Fijians live on Viti Levu's [coasts](/wiki/Coast), either in Suva or in smaller urban centres like [Nadi](/wiki/Nadi) (tourism)<ref name=cruise-rep/> or [Lautoka](/wiki/Lautoka) ([sugar cane industry](/wiki/Sugar_cane_industry)). Viti Levu's interior is sparsely inhabited due to its terrain.[[4]](#cite_note-4) Fiji has one of the most developed economies in the Pacific due to an abundance of forest, mineral, and fish resources. Today, the main sources of [foreign exchange](/wiki/Foreign_exchange_market) are its tourist industry and sugar exports.[[5]](#cite_note-5) The country's currency is the [Fijian dollar](/wiki/Fijian_dollar). Fiji's local government, in the form of city and [town councils](/wiki/Town_council), is supervised by the Ministry of Local Government and Urban Development.[[6]](#cite_note-6) The majority of Fiji's islands were formed through [volcanic](/wiki/Volcanic) activity starting around 150 million years ago. Today, some [geothermal](/wiki/Geothermal) activity still occurs on the islands of Vanua Levu and [Taveuni](/wiki/Taveuni).[[7]](#cite_note-7) Fiji has been inhabited since the second millennium BC, and was settled first by [Austronesians](/wiki/Austronesian_peoples) and later by [Melanesians](/wiki/Melanesians), with some [Polynesian](/wiki/Polynesians) influences. Europeans visited Fiji from the 17th century,[[8]](#cite_note-8) and, after [a brief period as an independent kingdom](/wiki/Monarchy_of_Fiji), the British established the [Colony of Fiji](/wiki/Colonial_Fiji) in 1874. Fiji was a [Crown colony](/wiki/Crown_colony) until 1970, when it gained independence as a [Commonwealth realm](/wiki/Commonwealth_realm). A republic was declared in 1987, following [a series of coups d'état](/wiki/1987_Fijian_coups_d'état).

In a [coup in 2006](/wiki/2006_Fijian_coup_d'état), [Commodore](/wiki/Commodore_(rank)) [Frank Bainimarama](/wiki/Frank_Bainimarama) seized power. When the High Court ruled in 2009 that the military leadership was unlawful, [President](/wiki/President_of_Fiji) [Ratu](/wiki/Ratu) [Josefa Iloilo](/wiki/Josefa_Iloilo), whom the military had retained as the nominal [Head of State](/wiki/Head_of_State_of_Fiji), formally abrogated the [Constitution](/wiki/1997_Constitution_of_Fiji) and reappointed Bainimarama. Later in 2009, Iloilo was replaced as President by Ratu [Epeli Nailatikau](/wiki/Epeli_Nailatikau).[[9]](#cite_note-9) After years of delays, a [democratic election was held on 17 September 2014](/wiki/Fijian_general_election,_2014). Bainimarama's [FijiFirst](/wiki/FijiFirst) party won with 59.2% of the vote, and the election was deemed credible by international observers.[[10]](#cite_note-10)

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

Fiji's main island is known as Viti Levu and it is from this that the name "Fiji" is derived, though the common English pronunciation is based on that of their island neighbours in [Tonga](/wiki/Tonga). Its emergence can be described as follows:

Fijians first impressed themselves on European consciousness through the writings of the members of the expeditions of [Cook](/wiki/James_Cook) who met them in Tonga. They were described as formidable warriors and ferocious cannibals, builders of the finest vessels in the Pacific, but not great sailors. They inspired awe amongst the Tongans, and all their Manufactures, especially bark cloth and clubs, were highly valued and much in demand. They called their home Viti, but the Tongans called it Fisi, and it was by this foreign pronunciation, Fiji, first promulgated by Captain James Cook, that these islands are now known.[[11]](#cite_note-11)

"Feejee", the Anglicised spelling of the Tongan pronunciation,[[12]](#cite_note-12) was used in accounts and other writings until the late 19th century, by missionaries and other travellers visiting Fiji.[[13]](#cite_note-13)[[14]](#cite_note-14)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

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### Early history[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Pottery](/wiki/Pottery) art from Fijian towns shows that Fiji was settled before or around 3500 to 1000 BC, although the question of Pacific migration still lingers. It is believed that the [Lapita people](/wiki/Lapita_people) or the ancestors of the [Polynesians](/wiki/Polynesians) settled the islands first but not much is known of what became of them after the [Melanesians](/wiki/Melanesians) arrived; they may have had some influence on the new culture, and archaeological evidence shows that they would have then moved on to [Samoa](/wiki/Samoa), [Tonga](/wiki/Tonga) and even Hawai'i.

[thumb|The first Europeans to land and live among the Fijians were shipwrecked sailors like](/wiki/File:FIJI_CLUB_DANCE.png) [Charles Savage](/wiki/Charles_Savage_(beachcomber)). The first settlements in Fiji were started by voyaging traders and settlers from the west about 5000 years ago. [Lapita](/wiki/Lapita) pottery shards have been found at numerous excavations around the country. Aspects of Fijian culture are similar to the Melanesian culture of the western [Pacific](/wiki/Pacific_Ocean) but have a stronger connection to the older Polynesian cultures. Trade between Fiji and neighbouring archipelagos long before European contact is testified by the [canoes](/wiki/Canoe) made from native Fijian trees found in Tonga and Tongan words being part of the language of the [Lau](/wiki/Lau_Islands) group of islands. Pots made in Fiji have been found in Samoa and even the [Marquesas Islands](/wiki/Marquesas_Islands). [thumb|160px|left|Ratu](/wiki/File:Ratu_Tanoa_Visawaqa.jpg) [Tanoa Visawaqa](/wiki/Tanoa_Visawaqa). Across [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from east to west, Fiji has been a nation of many languages. Fiji's history was one of settlement but also of mobility. Over the centuries, a unique Fijian culture developed. Constant warfare and [cannibalism](/wiki/Cannibalism) between warring tribes were quite rampant and very much part of everyday life.[[15]](#cite_note-15) During the 19th century, [Ratu Udre Udre](/wiki/Ratu_Udre_Udre) is said to have consumed 872 people and to have made a pile of stones to record his achievement.[[16]](#cite_note-16) According to Deryck Scarr,<ref name=Scarr>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> "Ceremonial occasions saw freshly killed corpses piled up for eating. 'Eat me!' was a proper ritual greeting from a commoner to a chief." Scarr also reported that the posts that supported the chief's house or the priest's temple would have sacrificed bodies buried underneath them, with the rationale that the spirit of the ritually sacrificed person would invoke the gods to help support the structure, and "men were sacrificed whenever posts had to be renewed".<ref name=Scarr/> Also, when a new boat, or *drua*, was launched, if it was not hauled over men as rollers, crushing them to death, "it would not be expected to float long".[[17]](#cite_note-17) Fijians today regard those times as "na gauna ni tevoro" (time of the devil). The ferocity of the cannibal lifestyle deterred European sailors from going near Fijian waters, giving Fiji the name *Cannibal Isles*; as a result, Fiji remained unknown to the rest of the world.[[18]](#cite_note-18) [thumb|200px|A Fijian mountain warrior, photograph by](/wiki/File:Fijian_mountain_warrior,_Kai_Colo.jpg) [Francis Herbert Dufty](/wiki/Francis_Herbert_Dufty), 1870s. The Dutch explorer [Abel Tasman](/wiki/Abel_Tasman) visited Fiji in 1643 while looking for the Great Southern Continent.[[19]](#cite_note-19) Europeans settled on the islands permanently beginning in the 19th century.[[20]](#cite_note-20) The first European settlers to Fiji were [beachcombers](/wiki/Beachcombing), missionaries, whalers, and those engaged in the then booming [sandalwood](/wiki/Sandalwood) and [bêche-de-mer](/wiki/Sea_cucumber_(food)) trade.

[Ratu Seru Epenisa Cakobau](/wiki/Seru_Epenisa_Cakobau) was a Fijian chief and warlord from the island of Bau, off the eastern coast of Viti Levu, who united part of Fiji's warring tribes under his leadership. He then styled himself as [*Tui Viti*](/wiki/Monarchy_of_Fiji) or King of Fiji, and then *Vunivalu*, or Protector, after the cession of Fiji to the United Kingdom. The British subjugated the islands as a [colony in 1874](/wiki/Colonial_Fiji), and the British brought over Indian [contract labourers](/wiki/Contract_labour) to work on the sugar plantations as the first governor of Fiji, [Arthur Charles Hamilton-Gordon](/wiki/Arthur_Hamilton-Gordon,_1st_Baron_Stanmore), adopted a policy disallowing the use of native labour or any interference in their culture or way of life. In 1875–76, an epidemic of [measles](/wiki/Measles) killed over 40,000 Fijians,[[21]](#cite_note-21) about one-third of the Fijian population.[[22]](#cite_note-22) The population in 1942 was approximately 210,000 of whom 94,000 were Indians, 102,000 native Fijians, 2,000 Chinese and 5,000 Europeans.[[23]](#cite_note-23)

### Independence (1970)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

The British granted Fiji independence in 1970. Democratic rule was interrupted by two [military coups](/wiki/1987_Fijian_coups_d'état) in 1987 precipitated by a growing perception that the government was dominated by the [Indo-Fijian](/wiki/Indians_in_Fiji) (Indian) community. The second 1987 coup saw both the Fijian monarchy and the [Governor General](/wiki/Governor-General_of_Fiji) replaced by a non-executive president and the name of the country changed from [*Dominion*](/wiki/British_Dominions) *of Fiji* to *Republic of Fiji* and then in 1997 to *Republic of the Fiji Islands*. The two coups and the accompanying civil unrest contributed to heavy Indo-Fijian emigration; the resulting population loss resulted in economic difficulties and ensured that Melanesians became the majority.[[24]](#cite_note-24) In 1990, the new constitution institutionalised ethnic Fijian domination of the political system. The [Group Against Racial Discrimination](/wiki/Group_Against_Racial_Discrimination) (GARD) was formed to oppose the unilaterally imposed constitution and to restore the 1970 constitution. In 1992 [Sitiveni Rabuka](/wiki/Sitiveni_Rabuka), the Lieutenant Colonel who had carried out the 1987 coup, became Prime Minister following elections held under the new constitution. Three years later, Rabuka established the [Constitutional Review Commission](/wiki/Constitutional_Review_Commission_(Fiji)), which in 1997 wrote a new constitution which was supported by most leaders of the indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian communities. Fiji was re-admitted to the [Commonwealth of Nations](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Nations).

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Urville-Viti-Lebouka2.jpg)[Levuka](/wiki/Levuka), 1842. The year 2000 brought along [another coup](/wiki/2000_Fijian_coup_d'état), instigated by [George Speight](/wiki/George_Speight), which effectively toppled the government of [Mahendra Chaudhry](/wiki/Mahendra_Chaudhry), who in 1997 had become the country's first Indo-Fijian Prime Minister following the adoption of the new constitution. Commodore [Frank Bainimarama](/wiki/Frank_Bainimarama) assumed executive power after the resignation, possibly forced, of President Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. Later in 2000, Fiji was rocked by [two mutinies](/wiki/Mutinies_of_the_2000_Fijian_coup_d'état) when rebel soldiers went on a rampage at Suva's Queen Elizabeth Barracks. The [High Court](/wiki/High_Court_of_Fiji) ordered the reinstatement of the constitution, and in September 2001, to restore democracy, a general election was held which was won by interim Prime Minister [Laisenia Qarase's](/wiki/Laisenia_Qarase) [Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua](/wiki/Soqosoqo_Duavata_ni_Lewenivanua) party.[[25]](#cite_note-25) In 2005, the Qarase government amid much controversy proposed a [Reconciliation and Unity Commission](/wiki/Reconciliation,_Tolerance,_and_Unity_Bill) with power to recommend compensation for victims of the 2000 coup and amnesty for its perpetrators. However, the military, especially the nation's top military commander, Frank Bainimarama, strongly opposed this bill. Bainimarama agreed with detractors who said that to grant amnesty to supporters of the present government who had played a role in the violent coup was a sham. His attack on the legislation, which continued unremittingly throughout May and into June and July, further strained his already tense relationship with the government.

In late November and early December 2006, Bainimarama was instrumental in the [2006 Fijian coup d'état](/wiki/2006_Fijian_coup_d'état). Bainimarama handed down a list of demands to Qarase after a bill was put forward to parliament, part of which would have offered pardons to participants in the 2000 coup attempt. He gave Qarase an ultimatum date of 4 December to accede to these demands or to resign from his post. Qarase adamantly refused either to concede or resign, and on 5 December the president, Ratu [Josefa Iloilo](/wiki/Josefa_Iloilo), was said to have signed a legal order dissolving the parliament after meeting with Bainimarama.

In April 2009, the [Fiji Court of Appeal](/wiki/Court_of_Appeal_of_Fiji) ruled that the 2006 coup had been illegal. This began the [2009 Fijian constitutional crisis](/wiki/2009_Fijian_constitutional_crisis). President Iloilo abrogated the constitution, removed all office holders under the constitution including all judges and the governor of the Central Bank. He then reappointed Bainimarama as prime minister under his "New Order" and imposed a "Public Emergency Regulation" limiting internal travel and allowing press censorship.

For a country of its size, Fiji has fairly large armed forces, and has been a [major contributor](/wiki/Fiji_and_the_United_Nations) to [UN peacekeeping missions](/wiki/UN_peacekeeping) in various parts of the world. In addition, a significant number of former military personnel have served in the lucrative security sector in [Iraq](/wiki/Iraq) following the 2003 [US](/wiki/United_States)-led invasion.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

[thumbnail|250px|Fiji's location in Oceania.](/wiki/File:Fiji_and_oceania.jpg) [thumb|250px|A map of Fiji](/wiki/File:Fiji_map.png) [thumb|250px|Topography of Fiji](/wiki/File:Fiji_topo.png) [thumb|250px|](/wiki/File:The_Point_(Fiji).jpg)[Coconut](/wiki/Coconut) palms line the beaches of Fiji

Fiji covers a total area of some [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of which around 10% is land.

Fiji is the hub of the South West Pacific, midway between [Vanuatu](/wiki/Vanuatu) and [Tonga](/wiki/Tonga). The archipelago is located between 176° 53′ east and 178° 12′ west. The 180° meridian runs through [Taveuni](/wiki/Taveuni) but the [International Date Line](/wiki/International_Date_Line) is bent to give uniform time (UTC+12) to all of the Fiji group. With the exception of Rotuma, the Fiji group lies between 15° 42′ and 20° 02′ south. [Rotuma](/wiki/Rotuma) is located [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) north of the group, [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from Suva, 12° 30′ south of the equator.

Fiji consists of 332[[5]](#cite_note-5) [islands](/wiki/List_of_islands_of_Fiji) (of which 106 are inhabited) and 522 smaller islets. The two most important [islands](/wiki/List_of_islands_of_Fiji) are [Viti Levu](/wiki/Viti_Levu) and [Vanua Levu](/wiki/Vanua_Levu), which account for about three-quarters of the total land area of the country. The [islands](/wiki/List_of_islands_of_Fiji) are mountainous, with peaks up to 1,324 metres (4,341 ft), and covered with thick [tropical forests](/wiki/Tropical_forest).

The highest point is [Mount Tomanivi](/wiki/Mount_Tomanivi) on Viti Levu. Viti Levu hosts the capital city of [Suva](/wiki/Suva), and is home to nearly three-quarters of the population. Other important towns include [Nadi](/wiki/Nadi) (the location of the international airport),<ref name=cruise-rep/> and [Lautoka](/wiki/Lautoka), Fiji's second city with large sugar cane mills and a seaport.

The main towns on Vanua Levu are [Labasa](/wiki/Labasa) and [Savusavu](/wiki/Savusavu). Other [islands](/wiki/List_of_islands_of_Fiji) and [islandgroups](/wiki/List_of_islands_of_Fiji) include [Taveuni](/wiki/Taveuni) and [Kadavu](/wiki/Kadavu_Island) (the third and fourth largest [islands](/wiki/List_of_islands_of_Fiji), respectively), the [Mamanuca Group](/wiki/Mamanuca_Group) (just off Nadi) and [Yasawa Group](/wiki/Yasawa_Islands), which are popular tourist destinations, the [Lomaiviti Group](/wiki/Lomaiviti_(archipelago)), off Suva, and the remote [Lau Group](/wiki/Lau_Islands). [Rotuma](/wiki/Rotuma), some [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) north of the archipelago, has a [special administrative status](/wiki/Local_government_in_Fiji) in Fiji. [Ceva-i-Ra](/wiki/Conway_Reef), an uninhabited reef, is located about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) southwest of the main archipelago.

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

The climate in Fiji is [tropical marine](/wiki/Tropical_marine_climate) and warm year round with minimal extremes. The warm season is from November to April and the cooler season lasts from May to October. Temperature in the cool season still averages [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).

Rainfall is variable, with the warm season experiencing heavier rainfall, especially inland. Winds are moderate, though cyclones occur about once a year (10–12 times per decade).[[26]](#cite_note-26) On 20 February 2016, Fiji was hit by the full force of [Cyclone Winston](/wiki/Cyclone_Winston), the only [Category 5 tropical cyclone](/wiki/Severe_tropical_cyclone) to make landfall in the nation. Winston destroyed tens of thousands of homes across the island, killing 44 people and causing an estimated FJ$2 billion ($1 billion USD) in damage.[[27]](#cite_note-27)[[28]](#cite_note-28)

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

Politics in Fiji normally take place in the framework of a [parliamentary](/wiki/Parliamentary_system) [representative democratic](/wiki/Representative_democracy) republic wherein the Prime Minister of Fiji is the [head of government](/wiki/Head_of_government) and the President the [Head of State](/wiki/Head_of_State_of_Fiji), and of a multi-party system. [Executive power](/wiki/Executive_power) is exercised by the government, [legislative power](/wiki/Legislative_power) is vested in both the government and the [Parliament of Fiji](/wiki/Parliament_of_Fiji), and the [judiciary](/wiki/Judiciary) is independent of the executive and the legislature.

### 2006 military takeover[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

Citing corruption in the government, Commodore [Josaia Voreqe (Frank) Bainimarama](/wiki/Frank_Bainimarama), Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, staged a military takeover on 5 December 2006 against the prime minister that he had installed after a 2000 coup. There had also been a military coup in 1987. The commodore took over the powers of the presidency and dissolved the parliament, paving the way for the military to continue the takeover. The coup was the culmination of weeks of speculation following conflict between the elected prime minister, Laisenia Qarase, and Commodore Bainimarama. Bainimarama had repeatedly issued demands and deadlines to the prime minister. A particular issue was previously pending legislation to pardon those involved in the 2000 coup. Bainimarama named [Jona Senilagakali](/wiki/Jona_Senilagakali) as caretaker prime minister. The next week Bainimarama said he would ask the Great Council of Chiefs to restore executive powers to the president, Ratu Josefa Iloilo.[[29]](#cite_note-29) On 4 January 2007, the military announced that it was restoring executive power to president Iloilo,[[30]](#cite_note-30) who made a broadcast endorsing the actions of the military.[[31]](#cite_note-31) The next day, Iloilo named Bainimarama as the interim prime minister,[[32]](#cite_note-32) indicating that the military was still effectively in control. In the wake of the takeover, reports emerged of alleged intimidation of some of those critical of the interim regime.

On 9 April 2009, the Court of Appeal overturned the High Court decision that Cdre. Bainimarama's takeover of Qarase's government was lawful and declared the interim government to be illegal. Bainimarama agreed to step down as interim PM immediately, along with his government, and president Iloilo was to appoint "a distinguished person independent of the parties to this litigation as caretaker Prime Minister, ...to direct the issuance of writs for an election."

On 10 April 2009, President Iloilo [suspended the Constitution](/wiki/2009_Fijian_constitutional_crisis) of Fiji, dismissed the Court of Appeal and, in his own words, "appoint[ed] [him]self as the Head of the State of Fiji under a new legal order".[[33]](#cite_note-33) As President, Iloilo had been Head of State prior to his abrogation of the Constitution, but that position had been determined by the Constitution itself. The "new legal order" did not depend on the Constitution, thus requiring a "reappointment" of the Head of State. "You will agree with me that this is the best way forward for our beloved Fiji", he said. Bainimarama was re-appointed as Interim Prime Minister; he, in turn, re-instated his previous cabinet.

On 2 May 2009, Fiji became the first nation ever to have been suspended from participation in the [Pacific Islands Forum](/wiki/Pacific_Islands_Forum), for its failure to hold democratic elections by the date promised.[[34]](#cite_note-34)[[35]](#cite_note-35) Nevertheless, it remains a member of the Forum.

On 1 September 2009, Fiji was suspended from the [Commonwealth of Nations](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Nations). The action was taken because Cdre. Bainimarama failed to hold elections by 2010 as the Commonwealth of Nations had demanded after the 2006 coup. Cdre. Bainimarama stated a need for more time to end a voting system that heavily favoured ethnic Fijians at the expense of the multi-ethnic minorities. Critics, however, claimed that he had suspended the constitution and was responsible for human rights violations by arresting and detaining opponents.[[36]](#cite_note-36)[[37]](#cite_note-37) In his 2010 New Year's address, Cdre. Bainimarama announced the lifting of the Public Emergency Regulations (PER). The PER had been put in place in April 2009 when the former constitution was abrogated. The PER had allowed restrictions on speech, public gatherings, and censorship of news media and had given security forces added powers. He also announced a nationwide consultation process leading to a new Constitution under which the [2014 elections](/wiki/Fijian_general_election,_2014) will be held.

On 14 March 2014, the [Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group](/wiki/Commonwealth_Ministerial_Action_Group) voted to change Fiji's full suspension from the [Commonwealth of Nations](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Nations) to a suspension from the councils of the Commonwealth, allowing them to participate in a number of Commonwealth activities, including the [2014 Commonwealth Games](/wiki/2014_Commonwealth_Games).[[38]](#cite_note-38)[Template:Primary source inline](/wiki/Template:Primary_source_inline) The suspension was lifted in September 2014.[[39]](#cite_note-39) A [general election took place on 17 September 2014](/wiki/Fijian_general_election,_2014). Bainimarama's FijiFirst party won with 59.2% of the vote, and the election was deemed credible by a group of international observers from Australia, India and Indonesia.[[10]](#cite_note-10)

### Armed forces and law enforcement[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

The military consists of the [Republic of Fiji Military Forces](/wiki/Republic_of_Fiji_Military_Forces) (RFMF) with a total manpower of 3,500 active soldiers and 6,000 reservists, and includes a Navy Unit of 300 personnel.

The Land Force comprises the [Fiji Infantry Regiment](/wiki/Fiji_Infantry_Regiment) (regular and territorial force organised into six light infantry battalions), Fiji Engineer Regiment, Logistic Support Unit and Force Training Group. The two regular battalions are traditionally stationed overseas on peacekeeping duties.

The Law Enforcement branch is composed of:

* [Fiji Police Force](/wiki/Law_enforcement_in_Fiji)[[40]](#cite_note-40)\* [Fiji Corrections Service](/wiki/Fiji_Corrections_Service)[[41]](#cite_note-41)

### Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [250px|thumb|A map of Fiji's administrative divisions.](/wiki/File:Fiji_divisions_named.png)

Fiji is divided into Four Major Divisions which are further divided into 14 provinces. They are:

* [Central Division](/wiki/Central_Division,_Fiji) has 5 provinces: [Naitasiri](/wiki/Naitasiri_Province), [Namosi](/wiki/Namosi_Province), [Rewa](/wiki/Rewa_Province), [Serua](/wiki/Serua_Province), and [Tailevu](/wiki/Tailevu_Province).
* [Eastern Division](/wiki/Eastern_Division,_Fiji) has 3 provinces: [Kadavu](/wiki/Kadavu_Province), [Lau](/wiki/Lau_Islands), and [Lomaiviti](/wiki/Lomaiviti_Province).
* [Northern Division](/wiki/Northern_Division,_Fiji) has 3 provinces: [Bua](/wiki/Bua_Province), [Cakaudrove](/wiki/Cakaudrove_Province), and [Macuata](/wiki/Macuata_Province).
* [Western Division](/wiki/Western_Division,_Fiji) has 3 provinces: [Ba](/wiki/Ba_Province), [Nadroga-Navosa](/wiki/Nadroga-Navosa_Province), and [Ra](/wiki/Ra_Province).

Fiji was also divided into 3 Confederacies or Governments during the reign of [Seru Epenisa Cakobau](/wiki/Seru_Epenisa_Cakobau), though these are not considered political divisions, they are still considered important in the social divisions of the indigenous Fijians:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Confederacy** | **Chief** |
| Burebasaga | Ro [Teimumu Vuikaba Kepa](/wiki/Teimumu_Kepa) |
| Kubuna | Vacant |
| Tovata | Ratu Naiqama Tawake Lalabalavu |

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

[thumb|350px|A proportional representation of Fiji's exports.](/wiki/File:Tree_map_exports_2009_Fiji.jpeg) [thumb|Suva, capital and commercial centre of Fiji](/wiki/File:Suva,_Fiji_01.jpg)

Endowed with forest, mineral, and fish resources, Fiji is one of the most developed of the Pacific island economies, though still with a large [subsistence sector](/wiki/Subsistence_economy). Some progress was experienced by this sector when [Marion M. Ganey](/wiki/Marion_M._Ganey), S.J., introduced credit unions to the islands in the 1950s. Natural resources include timber, fish, gold, copper, offshore oil, and hydropower. Fiji experienced a period of rapid growth in the 1960s and 1970s but stagnated in the 1980s. The coup of 1987 caused further contraction.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Economic liberalisation in the years following the coup created a boom in the garment industry and a steady growth rate despite growing uncertainty regarding land tenure in the sugar industry.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The expiration of leases for sugar cane farmers (along with reduced farm and factory efficiency) has led to a decline in sugar production despite subsidies for sugar provided by the EU; Fiji has been the second largest beneficiary of sugar subsidies after [Mauritius](/wiki/Mauritius).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Fiji's vital gold mining industry based in [Vatukoula](/wiki/Vatukoula), which shut down in 2006, was reactivated in 2008.

Urbanisation and expansion in the service sector have contributed to recent GDP growth. Sugar exports and a rapidly growing tourist industry – with tourists numbering 430,800 in 2003[[42]](#cite_note-42) and increasing in the subsequent years – are the major sources of foreign exchange. Fiji is highly dependent on tourism for revenue. Sugar processing makes up one-third of industrial activity. Long-term problems include low investment and uncertain property rights. The political turmoil in Fiji in the 1980s, the 1990s, and 2000 had a severe impact on the economy, which shrank by 2.8% in 2000 and grew by only 1% in 2001.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

The tourism sector recovered quickly, however, with visitor arrivals reaching pre-coup levels in 2002, resulting in a modest economic recovery which continued into 2003 and 2004 but grew by a mere 1.7% in 2005 and by 2.0% in 2006. Although inflation is low, the policy indicator rate of the [Reserve Bank of Fiji](/wiki/Reserve_Bank_of_Fiji) was raised by 1% to 3.25% in February 2006 due to fears of excessive consumption financed by debt. Lower interest rates have so far not produced greater investment in exports.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

However, there has been a housing boom due to declining commercial mortgage rates. The tallest building in Fiji is the fourteen-storey [Reserve Bank of Fiji Building](/wiki/Reserve_Bank_of_Fiji_Building) in Suva, which was inaugurated in 1984. The [Suva Central Commercial Centre](/wiki/Suva_Central_Commercial_Centre), which opened in November 2005, was planned to outrank the Reserve Bank building at seventeen stories, but last-minute design changes ensured that the Reserve Bank building remained the tallest.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Trade and investment with Fiji have been criticised due to the country's military dictatorship.[[43]](#cite_note-43) In 2008, Fiji's interim Prime Minister and coup leader [Frank Bainimarama](/wiki/Frank_Bainimarama) announced election delays and said that Fiji would pull out of the [Pacific Islands Forum](/wiki/Pacific_Islands_Forum) in [Niue](/wiki/Niue), where Bainimarama was to have met with [Australian Prime Minister](/wiki/Australian_Prime_Minister) [Kevin Rudd](/wiki/Kevin_Rudd) and [New Zealand Prime Minister](/wiki/New_Zealand_Prime_Minister) [Helen Clark](/wiki/Helen_Clark).<ref name=abcnet>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The [South Pacific Stock Exchange](/wiki/South_Pacific_Stock_Exchange) (SPSE) is the only licensed securities exchange in Fiji and is based in Suva. Its vision is to become a regional exchange.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

### Tourism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|Shangri-La's Fijian Resort](/wiki/File:Shangri-La_Fijian_Resort_15.jpg) [thumb|An island in the](/wiki/File:Mamanuca_island.jpg) [Mamanuca Islands group](/wiki/Mamanuca_Islands).

Fiji has a significant amount of tourism with the popular regions being [Nadi](/wiki/Nadi,_Fiji), the [Coral Coast](/wiki/Coral_Coast,_Fiji), [Denarau Island](/wiki/Denarau_Island), and [Mamanuca Islands](/wiki/Mamanuca_Islands). The biggest sources of international visitors by country are Australia, New Zealand and the United States.[[44]](#cite_note-44) Fiji has a significant number of soft [coral reefs](/wiki/Coral_reef), and [scuba diving](/wiki/Scuba_diving) is a common tourist activity.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Fiji's attraction is primarily its white sandy beaches and aesthetically pleasing islands with all-year-round tropical weather. In general, Fiji is a mid-range priced holiday/vacation destination with most of the accommodations in this range. It also has a variety of world class five-star resorts and hotels. More budget [resorts](/wiki/Resort) are being opened in remote areas, which will provide more tourism opportunities.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Official statistics show that in 2012, 75% of visitors stated that they came for a holiday/vacation.[[46]](#cite_note-46) Honeymoons are very popular as are romantic getaways in general. There are also family friendly resorts with facilities for young children including kids' clubs and nanny options.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Fiji has several popular tourism destinations. The Botanical Gardens of Thursten in [Suva](/wiki/Suva), Sigatoka Sand Dunes, and Colo-I-Suva Forest Park are three options on the mainland (Viti Levu). A major attraction on the outer islands is scuba diving.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Most visitors arriving to Fiji on short term basis are from the following countries or regions of residence:[[47]](#cite_note-47)[[48]](#cite_note-48)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rank** | **Country** | **2012** | **2015** |
| 1 | [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) | 337,291 | 367,273 |
| 2 | [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) | 106,122 | 138,537 |
| 3 | [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) | 56,478 | 67,831 |
| 4 | Pacific Islands | 38,886 | 48,570 |
| 5 | [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) | 26,395 | 40,174 |
| 6 | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) [Continental Europe](/wiki/Continental_Europe) | 29,327[[49]](#cite_note-49) | 31,195 |
| 7 | [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) | 17,076 | 16,716 |
| 8 | [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) | 13,426 | 11,709 |
| 9 | Other Asian countries | 13,576 | 10,371 |
| 10 | [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) | 7,069 | 6,092 |
|  | Total number of visitors | 660,590 | 754,835 |

### Transport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

[thumb|Nadi airport – Arrivals.](/wiki/File:Nadi_airport_-_Arrivals_2.jpg) [thumb|The Yasawa Flyer connects Port Denarau near](/wiki/File:Yasawa_Flyer_Ferry.jpg) [Nadi](/wiki/Nadi) with the [Yasawa Islands](/wiki/Yasawa_Islands). The [Nadi International Airport](/wiki/Nadi_International_Airport) is located [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) north of central Nadi and is the largest Fijian hub.[[50]](#cite_note-50) [Nausori International Airport](/wiki/Nausori_International_Airport) is about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) northeast of downtown Suva and serves mostly domestic traffic. The main airport in the second largest island of Vanua Levu is Labasa Airport[[51]](#cite_note-51) located at Waiqele, southwest of Labasa Town. The largest aircraft handled by Labasa Airport is the ATR42. [Airports Fiji Limited (AFL)](http://www.airportsfiji.com/) is responsible for the operation of 15 public airports in the Fiji Islands. These include two international airports: Nadi international Airport, Fiji’s main international gateway, and Nausori Airport, Fiji’s domestic hub, and 13 outer island airports. Fiji's main airline was previously known as Air Pacific, but is now known as [Fiji Airways](/wiki/Fiji_Airways).[[52]](#cite_note-52) Fiji's larger islands have extensive bus routes that are affordable and consistent in service.[[45]](#cite_note-45) There are bus stops, and in rural areas buses are often simply hailed as they approach.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Buses are the principal form of public transport[[53]](#cite_note-53) and passenger movement between the towns on the main islands. Buses also serve on roll-on-roll-off inter-island ferries. Bus fares and routes are heavily regulated by the [Land Transport Authority (LTA)](http://www.ltafiji.com/). Bus and taxi drivers hold Public Service Licenses (PSVs) issued by the LTA.

Taxis are licensed by the LTA and operate widely all over the country. Apart from urban, town-based taxis, there are others that are licensed to serve rural or semi-rural areas. The flagfall for regular taxis is F$1.50 and tariff is F$0.10 for every 200 meters.[[54]](#cite_note-54) For taxis that are allowed to charge Value Added Tax (VAT), the flagfall is F$1.50 and tariff is F$0.30 for the first 200 meters, and F$0.11 for every 200 meters thereafter. Taxis operating out of Fiji's international airport, Nadi charge a flagfall of F$5. The elderly and Government welfare recipients are given a 20% discount on their taxi fares.[[55]](#cite_note-55) Inter-island ferries provide services between Fiji's principal islands and large vessels operate roll-on-roll-off services, transporting vehicles and large amounts of cargo between the main island of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, and other smaller islands.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

## Society[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

### Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

The 2007 census found that the permanent population of Fiji was 837,000. The population density at the time was 45.8 inhabitants per [square kilometre](/wiki/Square_kilometre). The [life expectancy](/wiki/Life_expectancy) in Fiji was 72.1 years. Since the 1930s the population of Fiji has increased at a rate of 1.1% per year. The population is dominated by the 15–64 age segment. The median age of the population was 27.9, and the gender ratio was 1.03 males per 1 female.

### Ethnic groups[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Fijian_women_ceremonial.jpg)[Native Fijian](/wiki/Fijians) women, 1935

The population of Fiji is mostly made up of [native Fijians](/wiki/Fijians), who are [Melanesians](/wiki/Melanesians) (54.3%), although many also have [Polynesian](/wiki/Polynesians) ancestry, and [Indo-Fijians](/wiki/Indians_in_Fiji) (38.1%), descendants of Indian [contract labourers](/wiki/Indentured_servant) brought to the islands by the British colonial powers in the 19th century. The percentage of the population of Indo-Fijian descent has declined significantly over the last two decades due to migration for various reasons.[[56]](#cite_note-56) Indo-Fijians suffered reprisals for a period after the [Fiji coup of 2000](/wiki/2000_Fijian_coup_d'état).[[57]](#cite_note-57)[[58]](#cite_note-58) There is also a small but significant group of descendants of indentured labourers from the [Solomon Islands](/wiki/Solomon_Islands).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

About 1.2% are [Rotuman](/wiki/Rotumans)—natives of Rotuma Island, whose culture has more in common with countries such as [Tonga](/wiki/Tonga) or [Samoa](/wiki/Samoa) than with the rest of Fiji. There are also small but economically significant groups of [Europeans](/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_Europe), [Chinese](/wiki/Chinese_people), and other Pacific island minorities. The total membership of other ethnic groups of Pacific Islanders is about 7,300.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Relationships between ethnic Fijians and Indo-Fijians in the political arena have often been strained, and the tension between the two communities has dominated politics in the islands for the past generation. The level of political tension varies among different regions of the country.[[59]](#cite_note-59)

### Demonym[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

Within Fiji, the term *Fijian* refers solely to [indigenous Fijians](/wiki/Fijians): it denotes an ancestral ethnicity, not a nationality. Constitutionally, citizens of Fiji are referred to as "Fiji Islanders" though the term *Fiji Nationals* is used for official purposes. In August 2008, shortly before the proposed [People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress](/wiki/People's_Charter_for_Change,_Peace_and_Progress) was due to be released to the public, it was announced that it recommended a change in the name of Fiji's citizens. If the proposal were adopted, all citizens of Fiji, whatever their ethnicity, would be called "Fijians". The proposal would change the English name of indigenous Fijians from "Fijians" to *itaukei*, the [Fijian language](/wiki/Fijian_language) [endonym](/wiki/Endonym) for indigenous Fijians.[[60]](#cite_note-60) Deposed Prime Minister [Laisenia Qarase](/wiki/Laisenia_Qarase) reacted by stating that the name "Fijian" belonged exclusively to indigenous Fijians, and that he would oppose any change in legislation enabling non-indigenous Fijians to use it.[[61]](#cite_note-61) The [Methodist Church](/wiki/Methodist_Church_of_Fiji_and_Rotuma), to which a large majority of indigenous Fijians belong, also reacted strongly to the proposal, stating that allowing any Fiji citizen to call themselves "Fijian" would be "daylight robbery" inflicted on the indigenous population.[[62]](#cite_note-62) In an address to the nation during the [constitutional crisis of April 2009](/wiki/2009_Fijian_constitutional_crisis), military leader and interim Prime Minister [Voreqe Bainimarama](/wiki/Frank_Bainimarama), who has been at the forefront of the attempt to change the definition of "Fijian", stated: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

[thumb|Fijians](/wiki/File:Fiji_(9476712582)_(2).jpg) In May 2010, [Attorney-General](/wiki/Attorney_General_of_Fiji) [Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum](/wiki/Aiyaz_Sayed-Khaiyum) reiterated that the term "Fijian" should apply to all Fiji nationals, but the statement was again met with protest. A spokesperson for the Viti Landowners and Resource Owners Association claimed that even fourth-generation descendants of migrants did not fully understand "what it takes to be a Fijian", and added that the term refers to a legal standing, since legislation affords specific rights to "Fijians" (meaning, in legislation, indigenous Fijians).[[63]](#cite_note-63) Fiji academic [Brij Lal](/wiki/Brij_Lal_(historian)), although a prominent critic of the Bainimarama government,[[64]](#cite_note-64)[[65]](#cite_note-65) said he "would not be surprised" if the new definition of the word "Fijian" were included in the government's projected new Constitution, and that he personally saw "no reason the term Fijian should not apply to everyone from Fiji".[[66]](#cite_note-66)

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

[Fijian](/wiki/Fijian_language) is an [Austronesian](/wiki/Austronesian_languages) language of the [Malayo-Polynesian family](/wiki/Malayo-Polynesian_languages) spoken in Fiji. It has 350,000 first-language speakers, which is less than half the population of Fiji, but another 200,000 speak it as a second language. The [1997 Constitution](/wiki/1997_Constitution_of_Fiji) established Fijian as an official language of Fiji, along with English and [Fiji Hindi](/wiki/Fiji_Hindi), and there has been discussion about establishing it as the "national language", though English and Hindi would remain official. Fijian is a [VOS](/wiki/Verb–object–subject) language.

The Fiji Islands developed many [dialects](/wiki/Dialect), which may be classified in two major branches — [eastern](/wiki/East_Fijian_languages) and [western](/wiki/West_Fijian_languages). Missionaries in the 1840s chose an Eastern dialect, the speech of [Bau Island](/wiki/Bau_Island) off the southeast coast of the main island of [Viti Levu](/wiki/Viti_Levu), to be the written standard of the [Fijian language](/wiki/Fijian_language). Bau Island was home to [Seru Epenisa Cakobau](/wiki/Seru_Epenisa_Cakobau), the chief who eventually became the self-proclaimed King of Fiji.

{| class="wikitable" |- ! English | Hello/hi | Good morning | Goodbye |- ! Fijian | bula | yadra (Pronounced Yandra) | moce (Pronounced Mothe) |- ! Fiji Hindi | नमस्ते (namaste) | सुप्रभात (suprabhat) | अलविदा (Pronounced alavida) |}[[67]](#cite_note-67)

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Sri_Siva_Subramaniya_Temple.jpg)[Sri Siva Subramaniya](/wiki/Sri_Siva_Subramaniya_temple) Hindu temple, [Nadi](/wiki/Nadi,_Fiji) [thumb|St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Suva](/wiki/File:St_Andrews_Church_Suva_MatthiasSuessen-8433.jpg)

According to the 2007 census, 64.4% of the population at the time was [Christian](/wiki/Christian), followed by 27.9% [Hindu](/wiki/Hindu), 6.3% [Muslim](/wiki/Muslim), 0.8% non-religious, 0.3% [Sikh](/wiki/Sikh), and the remaining 0.3% belonging to other religions.[[68]](#cite_note-68)Among Christians, 54% were counted as [Methodist](/wiki/Methodist), followed by 14.2% [Catholic](/wiki/Catholic), 8.9% [Assemblies of God](/wiki/Assemblies_of_God), 6.0% [Seventh-day Adventist](/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventist), 1.2% [Anglican](/wiki/Anglican), with the remaining 16.1% belonging to other denominations.[[68]](#cite_note-68) The largest Christian denomination is the [Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma](/wiki/Methodist_Church_of_Fiji_and_Rotuma). (The general secretary is Revd Tuikilakila Waqairatu.) With 34.6%[[68]](#cite_note-68) of the population (including almost two-thirds of ethnic Fijians), the proportion of the population adhering to [Methodism](/wiki/Methodism) is higher in Fiji than in any other nation. In 2012, permission was granted by the government for Methodists to hold their annual conference, for the first time in four years, with the conditions that the conference not coincide with the national Hibiscus Festival and should only last for three days, and that no political matters were to be discussed, only church matters.[[69]](#cite_note-69) [Roman Catholics](/wiki/Roman_Catholicism_in_Fiji) have their proper Metropolitan [Archdiocese of Suva](/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Archdiocese_of_Suva), whose province also includes the dioceses of [Raratonga](/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Rarotonga) (on the [Cook Islands](/wiki/Cook_Islands), for those and [Niue](/wiki/Niue), both New Zealand-associated countries) and [Tarawa and Nauru](/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Tarawa_and_Nauru) (with see at Tarawa on [Kiribati](/wiki/Kiribati), also for [Nauru](/wiki/Nauru)) and the [Mission Sui Iuris of Tokelau](/wiki/Mission_Sui_Iuris_of_Tokelau) (again with New Zealand). This reflects that much major Roman Catholic missionary activity was conducted through the former Apostolic Prefecture (created in 1863 from the [Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania](/wiki/Apostolic_Vicariate_of_Central_Oceania)), then [Apostolic Vicariate of Fiji](/wiki/Apostolic_Vicariate_of_Fiji), which has since been promoted to Archdiocese of Suva, which spans the whole of Fiji. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Furthermore, the [Assemblies of God](/wiki/Assemblies_of_God), the [Seventh-day Adventists](/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventist_Church) and [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](/wiki/The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints) (LDS Church) are significant. Fiji also is the base for the [Anglican Diocese of Polynesia](/wiki/Anglican_Diocese_of_Polynesia) (part of the [Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia](/wiki/Anglican_Church_in_Aotearoa,_New_Zealand_and_Polynesia)). These and other denominations have small numbers of Indo-Fijian members; Christians of all kinds comprise 6.1% of the Indo-Fijian population. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Hindus belong mostly to the [Sanatan](/wiki/Sanatan) sect (74.3% of all Hindus) or else are unspecified (22%). The small [Arya Samaj](/wiki/Arya_Samaj) sect claims the membership of some 3.7% of Hindus in Fiji. Muslims are mostly [Sunni](/wiki/Sunni) (96.4%) following the [Hanafi](/wiki/Hanafi) school of jurisprudence, with a small [Ahmadiyya](/wiki/Ahmadiyya_Community) minority (3.6%). The [Sikh](/wiki/Sikh) religion comprises 0.9% of the Indo-Fijian population, or 0.4% of the national population in Fiji. Their ancestors originated from the [Punjab](/wiki/Punjab,_India) region of India; they are a fairly recent wave of immigrants who did not live through[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify) the indenture system.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The [Bahá'í Faith](/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith) has over 21 local [Spiritual Assemblies](/wiki/Spiritual_Assembly) throughout Fiji, and Baha'is live in more than 80 localities.[[70]](#cite_note-70) The first Baha'i in the islands was a [New Zealander](/wiki/New_Zealand) who arrived in 1924.[[70]](#cite_note-70)There is also a small Jewish population of about 60 people.[[71]](#cite_note-71) Every year the Israeli Embassy organises a Passover celebration with about 50-60 people attending.[[71]](#cite_note-71)

### Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further)

Primary school education in Fiji is compulsory, and free for eight years.<ref name=ilab>["Fiji"](http://www.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/tda2001/Fiji.htm) [Template:Wayback](/wiki/Template:Wayback). *2001 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor*. [Bureau of International Labor Affairs](/wiki/Bureau_of_International_Labor_Affairs), [U.S. Department of Labor](/wiki/U.S._Department_of_Labor) (2002). *This article incorporates text from this source, which is in the* [*public domain*](/wiki/Public_domain)*.</ref> As of 2001, attendance was decreasing due to security concerns and the burden of school fees, often due to the cost of transport.<ref name=ilab/> Following the government coup in May 2000, more than 5,000 students were reported to have left school.<ref name=ilab/>*

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|300px|Huts in the village of](/wiki/File:BureNavala2.jpg) [Navala](/wiki/Navala) in the [Nausori Highlands](/wiki/Nausori_Highlands).

Fiji's culture is a rich mosaic of indigenous Fijian, Indo-Fijian, Asian and European traditions, comprising social polity, language, food (coming mainly from the sea, plus casava, dalo (taro) and other vegetables), costume, belief systems, architecture, arts, craft, music, dance, and sports.

While indigenous Fijian culture and traditions are very vibrant and are integral components of everyday life for the majority of Fiji's population, Fijian society has evolved over the past century with the introduction of traditions such as Indian and Chinese as well as significant influences from Europe and Fiji's Pacific neighbours, particularly Tonga and Samoa. Thus, the various cultures of Fiji have come together to create a unique multicultural national identity.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Fiji's culture was showcased at the World Exposition held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1986 and more recently at the Shanghai World Expo 2010, along with other Pacific countries in the Pacific Pavilion.[[72]](#cite_note-72)

### Holidays and festivals[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

This is a list of holidays celebrated in Fiji:[[73]](#cite_note-73) [Template:Div col](/wiki/Template:Div_col)

* New Year's Day
* [Good Friday](/wiki/Good_Friday)
* [Easter Saturday](/wiki/Easter_Saturday)
* [Easter Monday](/wiki/Easter_Monday)
* [Fiji Day](/wiki/Fiji_Day)
* [Diwali](/wiki/Diwali)
* Christmas
* [Boxing Day](/wiki/Boxing_Day)
* [Prophet Mohammed's Birthday](/wiki/Mawlid)

[Template:Div col end](/wiki/Template:Div_col_end)

The exact dates of public holidays vary from year to year, but the dates for the next year can be found at the [Fiji Government Web Site](http://www.fiji.gov.fj/About-Fiji/Public-Holidays.aspx)

The following holidays are no longer celebrated in Fiji:

* [Queen's Official Birthday](/wiki/Queen's_Official_Birthday)[[74]](#cite_note-74)\* [National Youth Day](/wiki/Youth_day)
* [Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna Day](/wiki/Ratu_Sir_Lala_Sukuna_Day)[[75]](#cite_note-75)

### Sport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) Sports are very popular in Fiji, particularly sports involving physical contact. Fiji's national sport is [Rugby Sevens](/wiki/Rugby_Sevens).

#### Rugby union[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Unreferenced section](/wiki/Template:Unreferenced_section) [right|thumb|250px|The](/wiki/File:Fiji_vs_Canada_RWC2007_lineout.jpg) [Fiji national rugby union team](/wiki/Fiji_national_rugby_union_team) during the [2007 Rugby World Cup](/wiki/2007_Rugby_World_Cup) playing against [Canada](/wiki/Canada_national_rugby_union_team) [Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

[Rugby Union](/wiki/Rugby_Union) is the most-popular team sport played in Fiji.

The [Fiji national sevens side](/wiki/Fiji_national_rugby_union_team_(sevens)) is one of the most popular and successful [rugby sevens](/wiki/Rugby_sevens) teams in the world, and has won the [Hong Kong Sevens](/wiki/Hong_Kong_Sevens) a record fifteen times (and counting) since its inception in 1976. Fiji has also won the [Rugby World Cup Sevens](/wiki/Rugby_World_Cup_Sevens) twice — in 1997 and 2005 (coincidentally, the two times it has been held in Hong Kong). The Fiji national rugby union sevens team is currently the reigning [Sevens World Series](/wiki/Sevens_World_Series) Champions in World Rugby and will feature in the [Rugby sevens at the Summer Olympics](/wiki/Rugby_sevens_at_the_Summer_Olympics) in 2016.

The [national rugby union team](/wiki/Fiji_national_rugby_union_team) is very successful given the size of the population of the country, and has competed at five [Rugby World Cup](/wiki/Rugby_World_Cup) competitions, the first being in [1987](/wiki/1987_Rugby_World_Cup), where they reached the quarter-finals. The Fiji national side did not match that feat again until the [2007 Rugby World Cup](/wiki/2007_Rugby_World_Cup) when they upset [Wales](/wiki/Wales_national_rugby_union_team) 38–34 to progress to the quarter-finals where they nearly beat the eventual Rugby World Cup winners, South Africa. Fiji also defeated the British and Irish Lions in 1977.

Fiji competes in the [Pacific Tri-Nations](/wiki/Pacific_Tri-Nations) and the [IRB Pacific Nations Cup](/wiki/IRB_Pacific_Nations_Cup). The sport is governed by the [Fiji Rugby Union](/wiki/Fiji_Rugby_Union) which is a member of the [Pacific Islands Rugby Alliance](/wiki/Pacific_Islands_Rugby_Alliance), and contributes to the [Pacific Islanders rugby union team](/wiki/Pacific_Islanders_rugby_union_team). At the club level there are the [Skipper Cup](/wiki/Skipper_Cup) and [Farebrother Trophy Challenge](/wiki/Farebrother_Trophy_Challenge).

The Fiji national rugby union team is a member of the Pacific Islands Rugby Alliance (PIRA) formerly along with Samoa and Tonga. In 2009, Samoa announced their departure from the Pacific Islands Rugby Alliance, leaving just Fiji and Tonga in the union. Fiji is currently ranked eleventh in the world by the IRB (as of 28 December 2015).

Fiji is one of the few countries where rugby union is the main sport. There are about 80,000 registered players from a total population of around 950,000. One of the problems for Fiji is simply getting their players to play for their home country, as many have contracts in Europe or with [Super Rugby](/wiki/Super_Rugby) teams, where monetary compensation is far more rewarding. The repatriated salaries of its overseas stars have become an important part of some local economies. In addition, a significant number of players eligible to play for Fiji end up representing Australia or New Zealand; notable examples are Fiji-born cousins and former [New Zealand All Blacks](/wiki/New_Zealand_national_rugby_union_team), Joe Rokocoko and Sitiveni Sivivatu, current All Black [Waisake Naholo](/wiki/Waisake_Naholo) as well as [Australian Wallabies](/wiki/Australia_national_rugby_union_team) former winger, Lote Tuqiri and current wallabies' [Tevita Kuridrani](/wiki/Tevita_Kuridrani) and [Henry Speight](/wiki/Henry_Speight). Fiji has won the most [Pacific Tri-Nations](/wiki/Pacific_Tri-Nations) Championships of the three participating teams.

#### Rugby league[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

The [Fiji national rugby league team](/wiki/Fiji_national_rugby_league_team), nicknamed the Bati (pronounced [mˈbatʃi]), represents Fiji in the sport of rugby league football and has been participating in international competition since 1992. It has competed in the [Rugby League World Cup](/wiki/Rugby_League_World_Cup) on three occasions, with their best results coming when they made consecutive semi-final appearances in the [2008 Rugby League World Cup](/wiki/2008_Rugby_League_World_Cup) and [2013 Rugby League World Cup](/wiki/2013_Rugby_League_World_Cup). The team also competes in the [Pacific Cup](/wiki/Pacific_Cup).

Members of the team are selected from a domestic Fijian competition, as well as from competitions held in New Zealand and Australia. For the 2000, 2008 and 2013 World Cups, the Bati were captained by Lote Tuqiri, [Wes Naiqama](/wiki/Wes_Naiqama) and the legendary [Petero Civoniceva](/wiki/Petero_Civoniceva) respectively. Fiji have also produced stars like [Akuila Uate](/wiki/Akuila_Uate), [Jarryd Hayne](/wiki/Jarryd_Hayne), [Kevin Naiqama](/wiki/Kevin_Naiqama), [Semi Tadulala](/wiki/Semi_Tadulala), [Marika Koroibete](/wiki/Marika_Koroibete), [Apisai Koroisau](/wiki/Apisai_Koroisau), [Sisa Waqa](/wiki/Sisa_Waqa) and the Sims brothers [Ashton Sims](/wiki/Ashton_Sims), [Tariq Sims](/wiki/Tariq_Sims) and [Korbin Sims](/wiki/Korbin_Sims)

#### Rugby war dance (Cibi and Bole) and Fijian hymn[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

The [Cibi](/wiki/Cibi) (pronounced *Thimbi*) war dance was traditionally performed by the Fiji rugby team before each match. It was replaced in 2012 with the new "Bole" (pronounced *mBolay*) war cry. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Tradition holds that the original Cibi was first performed on the rugby field back in 1939 during a tour of New Zealand, when then Fijian captain Ratu Sir George Cakobau felt that his team should have something to match the [Haka](/wiki/Haka) of the All Blacks. The 'Cibi' had perhaps been used incorrectly though, as the word actually means "a celebration of victory by warriors," whereas 'Bole' is the acceptance of a challenge.

The Fiji Bati rugby league team also gather in a huddle and perform the noqu masu before each match.[[76]](#cite_note-76)

#### Association football[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Association football](/wiki/Association_football) was traditionally a minor sport in Fiji, popular largely amongst the Indo-Fijian community, but with international funding from [FIFA](/wiki/FIFA) and sound local management over the past decade, the sport has grown in popularity in the wider Fijian community. It is now the second most-popular sport in Fiji, after rugby (union 15's and union 7's) for men, and after netball for women.

The [Fiji Football Association](/wiki/Fiji_Football_Association) is a member of the [Oceania Football Confederation](/wiki/Oceania_Football_Confederation). The [national football team](/wiki/Fiji_national_football_team) defeated [New Zealand](/wiki/New_Zealand_national_football_team) 2–0 in the 2008 [OFC Nations Cup](/wiki/OFC_Nations_Cup),[[77]](#cite_note-77) on their way to a joint-record third-place finish. However, they have never reached a [FIFA World Cup](/wiki/FIFA_World_Cup) to date. Fiji won the [Pacific Games](/wiki/Pacific_Games) football tournament in [1991](/wiki/Football_at_the_1991_South_Pacific_Games) and [2003](/wiki/Football_at_the_2003_South_Pacific_Games). Fiji qualified for the [2016 Summer Olympics](/wiki/2016_Summer_Olympics) men's tournament for the first time in history.

#### Netball[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Netball](/wiki/Netball) is the most popular women's participation sport in Fiji.[[78]](#cite_note-78)[[79]](#cite_note-79) The [national team](/wiki/Fiji_national_netball_team) has been internationally competitive, at [Netball World Cup](/wiki/INF_Netball_World_Cup) competitions reaching 6th position in 1999, its highest level to date. The team won gold medals at the 2007[[80]](#cite_note-80) and [2015](/wiki/Netball_at_the_2015_Pacific_Games) [Pacific Games](/wiki/Pacific_Games).

#### Cricket[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[Cricket](/wiki/Cricket) is a minor sport in Fiji. The [Cricket Fiji](/wiki/Cricket_Fiji) is an Associate member of [International Cricket Council](/wiki/International_Cricket_Council). Fiji U19 cricket team won the [2015 edition](/wiki/2015_EAP_Under-19_Cricket_Trophy) of the tournament, and consequently qualified for the [2016 Under-19 World Cup](/wiki/2016_ICC_Under-19_Cricket_World_Cup), becoming the first team outside of [Papua New Guinea](/wiki/Papua_New_Guinea_Under-19_cricket_team) to qualify from the region.

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Portal](/wiki/Template:Portal)

* [Bua (Fijian Communal Constituency, Fiji)](/wiki/Bua_(Fijian_Communal_Constituency,_Fiji))
* [Fiji Meteorological Service](/wiki/Fiji_Meteorological_Service)
* [Foreign relations of Fiji](/wiki/Foreign_relations_of_Fiji)
* [Index of Fiji-related articles](/wiki/Index_of_Fiji-related_articles)
* [Outline of Fiji](/wiki/Outline_of_Fiji)
* [Telecommunications in Fiji](/wiki/Telecommunications_in_Fiji)
* [Visa policy of Fiji](/wiki/Visa_policy_of_Fiji)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## Further reading[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

[Template:Refbegin](/wiki/Template:Refbegin)

* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book) Traces the colonisation of the Fiji Islands, explains how the Fijians have managed to keep their language and culture intact, and describes modern Fiji society.
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book) Details on Fiji its history and Geography.
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book) Details of Fiji's History, Geography, Economy.
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* David Routledge: *Matanitu – The Struggle for Power in Early Fiji*, [University of the South Pacific](/wiki/University_of_the_South_Pacific), Suva 1985
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)

[Template:Refend](/wiki/Template:Refend)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

[Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links)

Government

* [Official Website of the Government of Fiji](http://www.fiji.gov.fj/)
* [Chief of State and Cabinet Members](http://web.archive.org/web/20100324192626/https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/world-leaders-f/fiji.html)
* [Fiji Bureau of Statistics](http://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/)

General information

* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)
* [Template:Osmrelation](/wiki/Template:Osmrelation)
* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [Fiji](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/fiji.htm) at *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Fiji profile](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-14919067) from the [BBC News](/wiki/BBC_News)
* [Key Development Forecasts for Fiji](http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=FJ) from [International Futures](/wiki/International_Futures)
* [The Fiji Times](http://www.fijitimes.com/) News, Sport and Weather from Fiji's leading newspaper

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