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Clarke questions Rokoika's powers

THE process followed in appointing the head of the Fiji Independent Commission against Corruption is again under scrutiny.

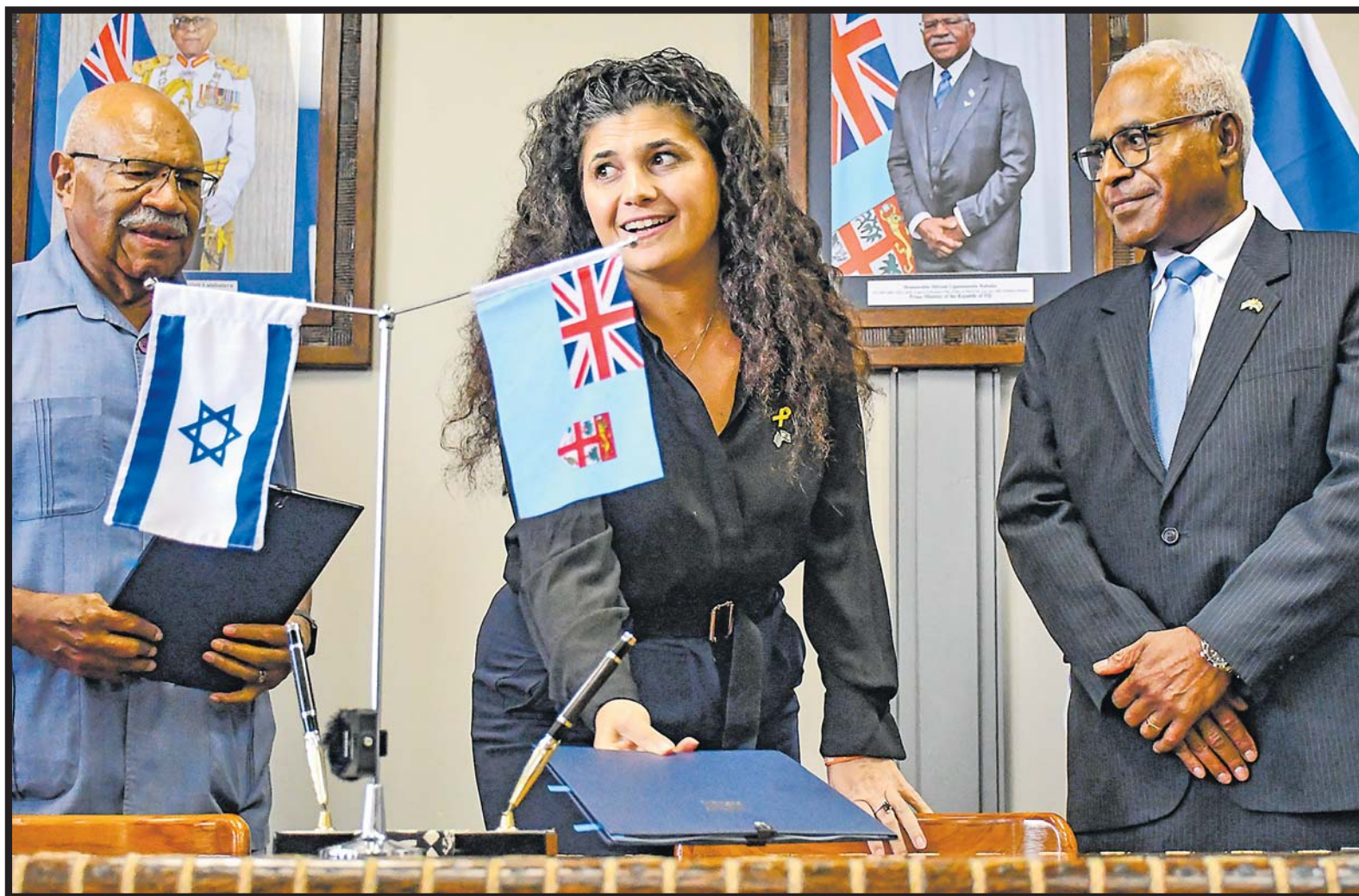
Yesterday, the validity of Acting Commissioner Lavi Rokoika's appointment — and her prosecutorial powers — came under the spotlight in the trial of former deputy prime minister and trade minister Manoa Kamikamica.

His lawyer, Wylie Clarke, told the Suva Magistrate's Court that charges against Mr Kamikamica were defective because of her lack of authority to sanction them.

The former minister faces a count of perjury for knowingly making a false statement under oath, claiming he had nothing to do with the appointment of former FICAC commissioner Barbara Malimali.

Prosecutor Lilian Mausio said this legal question should be raised in the appropriate forum by filing proper applications before the High Court.

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Israel Deputy Foreign Minister Sharren Haskel (middle) is flanked by Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka (left) and non-resident Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Fiji to the State of Israel, Filipo Tarakinikini, at the MOU signing at the PM's Office in Suva yesterday. Picture: ELIKI NUKUTABU

TROOPS FOR POST-GAZA PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

ISRAEL has signalled that Fiji's disciplined and neutral military could play a key role in any future peacekeeping mission once negotiations on Gaza's next phase are finalised.

The indication came during a visit to Suva by Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Sharron Haskel, who said her government's talks with the United States and Arab nations would shape the structure of any international deployment.

Ms Haskel also announced plans to deepen Israel's development partnership with Fiji beyond defence, expanding into agriculture, water technology, healthcare, and women's empowerment.

Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka reaffirmed Fiji's readiness to assist in peace efforts, noting the nation's long-standing contribution to peacekeeping operations in the Middle East since 1978.

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Fiji on Israel radar

By CHEERIEANN WILSON

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