The service of Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, former Secretary General of Parliament appreciated in the Parliament

Date : 25-05-2023

- **The former Secretary General was able to protect the independence and dignity of the Parliament under seven Speakers as well as in a number of governments - Hon. Dinesh Gunawardena, Prime Minister**
- **He meticulously managed the most challenging situations that he had to face during his service, including the election of the President by Parliament – Hon. Ajith Rajapakse, Deputy Speaker**
- **His valuable service for 29 years, his extensive knowledge of Parliament's procedures and practices are highly appreciated – Leader of the house states presenting the service appreciation address**

Many Members of the Parliament representing the Government and the Opposition parties expressed their views in the Parliament today (May 25), appreciating the services of Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, the former Secretary General of the Parliament, who retired from service on the 23rd.

In accordance to the customs and traditions of Parliament, when a Secretary General of the Parliament retires, time is allocated for the presenting of a Vote of Appreciation. Accordingly, time of 9.30 am - 12.30 pm was reserved for the vote to appreciate the service rendered by the former Secretary General Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake. Accordingly, with the permission of the House, the Hon. Speaker invited the former Secretary General to a seat in the secretarial panel below the Speaker's seat.

Accordingly, the Vote of Appreciation on Retiring Secretary-General of Parliament was moved by Hon. (Dr.) Susil Premajayantha, the Leader of the House.

Presenting the vote, the Leader of the House said that this Parliament highly appreciates valuable service rendered by Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake for 29 years and his extensive knowledge about the procedures and practices of the Parliament. Moreover, he added that his strong commitment in the performance of his duties and the excellent contribution in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association as the Asian Regional Secretary and outside of it and in various parliamentary associations are gratefully acknowledged.

Addressing the House, Hon. Dinesh Gunawardena, Prime Minister said that the former Secretary General had the ability to face various challenging times in the Parliament independently and in the strongest manner. The Prime Minister pointed out that he managed to protect the independence and dignity of the Parliament under seven Speakers as well as in many governments.

Also, Hon. Ajith Rajapakse, Deputy Speaker said that the former Secretary General had the ability to meticulously manage the most challenging situations he had to face during his tenure, including the election of the President by the Parliament.

Hon. Sajith Premadasa, the Leader of the Opposition pointed out that the former Secretary General

played an excellent role in the establishment of the Sectoral Oversight Committees of Parliament, including more democratic measures. The opposition leader also requested the former Secretary General to publish a book that would be useful for future generations based on his experiences. He also said that he wishes him the best for his future work as the secretary of the Constitutional Council.

Also, the Hon. Lakshman Kiriella, the Chief Opposition Whip also congratulated and said that the excellent service of Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake is commendable.

Former Speaker, Member of Parliament Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa, while speaking, said that the former Secretary General was highly respected and recognized in international conferences and events, including the Commonwealth Parliamentarians' Conference. Moreover, the former Speaker recalled that when there was a flood in the Parliament, he used to conduct Parliamentary sessions by using candlelight and he was a great strength in every challenging situation.

Thereafter, many members of the Government and the Opposition expressed their wishes while appreciating the service of the former Secretary General. Many Members pointed out that he was able to deal impartially and directly by managing the pressure from all sides of the Government and the opposition in Parliament and thus his excellent service is commendable.

Mrs. Salini Nilmalgoda, the wife of the former Secretary General, relatives including children also joined to watch the event from the special guests' gallery.

A brief introduction about former Secretary General Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake

Having schooled from D.S. Senanayake College and form Royal College, Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake completed his Bachelors of Laws (LLB) and Masters of Laws (LLM) from the University of Colombo. After being sworn in as an Attorney-at-Law of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka, he became the Legal Adviser (Research) for the Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau since 1988.

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake joined the service of the Attorney General's Department as a State Counsel in 1989 and has carried out cases on behalf of the government in many High Courts including Galle, Colombo, Gampaha, Ratnapura, Halawatha, Panadura, Negombo and Avissawella. Furthermore, he has represented the government in many cases pertaining to the violations of fundamental rights assigned before the Supreme Court as well as many criminal appeals assigned before the Court of Appeal.

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, who started his Parliamentary career as the Assistant Secretary General of the Parliament in 1994, became the Deputy Secretary General of the Parliament in 2003 and was promoted to the position of Secretary General of the Parliament in 2012.
During his long years in parliamentary service, Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake has contributed to many domestic and international diplomatic activities and he has represented Sri Lanka in many conferences of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and SAARC Parliamentary Association.

He has been a member of the working committee representing the South Asian region of the Parliamentary Secretaries General Forum of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the secretary of the South Asian Regional Secretaries General Forum during the period 2010-2012, and

the secretary of the SAARC Speakers and Members of Parliament Forum. Moreover, in the year 2000, the Commonwealth Foundation has awarded Mr. Dasanayake with a scholarship in Parliamentary Administration.

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake retired on 22.05.2023 as the 6th General Secretary of the Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka after completing 29 years of parliamentary service.