



(Tenth Parliament - First Session)

No. 8.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, January 07, 2025 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT :

Hon. (Dr.) Jagath Wickramaratne, Speaker

Hon. (Dr.) Rizvie Salih, Deputy Speaker and the Chair of Committees

Hon. (Mrs.) Hemali Weerasekara, Deputy Chairperson of Committees

Hon. Dr. Harini Amarasuriya, Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education

Hon. (Prof.) A.H.M.H. Abayarathna, Minister of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government

Hon. (Prof.) Chrishantha Abeysena, Minister of Science and Technology

Hon. Anura Karunathilaka, Minister of Urban Development, Construction and Housing

Hon. K.D. Lal Kantha, Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Land and Irrigation

Hon. Sunil Kumara Gamage, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports

Hon. Ramalingam Chandrasekar, Minister of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources

Hon. Kumara Jayakody, Minister of Energy

Hon. (Dr.) Nalinda Jayathissa, Minister of Health and Mass Media and Chief Government Whip

Hon. (Prof.) Anil Jayantha, Minister of Labour and Deputy Minister of Economic Development

Hon. Harshana Nanayakkara, Attorney at Law, Minister of Justice and National Integration

Hon. (Dr.) Dammika Patabendi, Minister of Environment

Hon. (Dr.) Upali Pannilage, Minister of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment

Hon. (Mrs.) Saroja Savithri Paulraj, Minister of Women and Child Affairs

Hon. Bimal Rathnayake, Minister of Transport, Highways, Ports and Civil Aviation and Leader of the House of Parliament

Hon. Ananda Wijepala, Minister of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs

Hon. K.V. Samantha Vidyarathna, Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure

Hon. Wasantha Samarasinghe, Minister of Trade, Commerce, Food Security and Cooperative Development

Hon. (Dr.) Hiniduma Sunil Senevi, Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs

Hon. Sunil Handunnetti, Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development

Hon. Vijitha Herath, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism

Hon. Sajith Premadasa, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament

Hon. Chathuranga Abeysinghe, Deputy Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development

Hon. Namal Karunaratne, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Livestock

Hon. Janitha Ruwan Kodithuwakku, Deputy Minister of Ports and Civil Aviation

Hon. Rathna Gamage, Deputy Minister of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources

Hon. Eranga Gunasekara, Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs

Hon. (Dr.) Prasanna Gunasena, Deputy Minister of Transport and Highways

Hon. Anton Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Environment

Hon. Mahinda Jayasinghe, Deputy Minister of Labour

Hon. Major General (Rtd.) Aruna Jayasekera, Deputy Minister of Defence

Hon. Sugath Thilakaratne, Deputy Minister of Sports

Hon. Gamagedara Dissanayake, Deputy Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs

Hon. Wasantha Piyathissa, Deputy Minister of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment

Hon. Sundaralingam Pradeep, Deputy Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure

Hon. Muneer Mulafter, Deputy Minister of National Integration

Hon. (Prof.) Ruwan Ranasinghe, Deputy Minister of Tourism

Hon. (Dr.) Susil Ranasinghe, Deputy Minister of Land and Irrigation

Hon. Sunil Watagala, Attorney at Law, Deputy Minister of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs

Hon. (Dr.) Hansaka Wijemuni, Deputy Minister of Health and Mass Media

Hon. Upali Samarasingha, Deputy Minister of Cooperative Development

Hon. T. B. Sarath, Deputy Minister of Housing

Hon. (Dr.) Namal Sudarshana, Deputy Minister of Women and Child Affairs

Hon. (Dr.) Harshana Suriyapperuma, Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning

Hon. P. Ruwan Senarath, Deputy Minister of Provincial Councils and Local Government

Hon. (Dr.) Madhura Senevirathna, Deputy Minister of Education and Higher Education

Hon. Arun Hemachandra, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Employment

Hon. Nalin Hewage, Deputy Minister of Vocational Education

Hon. Roshan Akmeemana

Hon. Ajith Agalakada

Hon. Amirthanathan Adaikkalanathan

Hon. Aboobucker Athambawa

Hon. (Mrs.) Sagarika Athauda, Attorney at Law

Hon. Hector Appuhamy

Hon. Rohitha Abeygunawardhana

Hon. U.P. Abeywickrama, Attorney at Law

Hon. (Prof.) L.M. Abeywickrama

Hon. (Dr.) Nihal Abeysinghe

Hon. (Dr.) Ramanathan Archchuna

Hon. J.C. Alawathuwala

Hon. M.K.M. Aslam

Hon. Lakshman Nipuna Arachchi

Hon. Manjula Suraweera Arachchi

Hon. (Dr.)(Ms.) Kaushalya Ariyaratne

Hon. B. Ariyawansa

Hon. (Dr.) Najith Indika

Hon. K. Ilankumaran

Hon. Arkam Ilyas

Hon. M.S. Uthumalebbe

Hon. (Mrs.) Oshani Umanga

Hon. Gayantha Karunathilleka

Hon. Ravi Karunanayake

Hon. (Ms.) Krishnan Kalaichelvi

Hon. M. Nizam Kariapper, PC

Hon. Upul Kithsiri

Hon. (Mrs.) Chamindranee Kiriella, Attorney at Law

Hon. Kathiravelu Shanmugam Kugathasan

Hon. Chaminda Lalith Kumara

Hon. Sarath Kumara, Attorney at Law

Hon. (Mrs.) Nilanthi Kottahachchi, Attorney at Law

Hon. Kaveenthiran Kodeeswaran

Hon. (Mrs.) M.A.C.S. Chathuri Gangani

Hon. Mano Ganesan

Hon. Lasith Bhashana Gamage

Hon. Thilanka U. Gamage

Hon. (Mrs.) Nilusha Lakmali Gamage

Hon. Ajantha Gammeddage

Hon. Chathura Galappaththi

Hon. Nihal Galappaththi

Hon. Ajith Gihan

Hon. (Dr.) Jagath Gunawardana

Hon. (Mrs.) Samanmali Gunasingha

Hon. Ashoka Gunasena

Hon. D. V. Chanaka

Hon. Ruwanthilaka Jayakody

Hon. Nalin Bandara Jayamaha

Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne

Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana

Hon. Dilith Jayaweera

Hon. Kosala Nuwan Jayaweera

Hon. (Mrs.) Thushari Jayasingha, Attorney at Law

Hon. T.K. Jayasundara

Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara, Attorney at Law

Hon. Mayilvaganam Jegatheeswaran

Hon. Rajeevan Jeyachandramoorthy

Hon. M.A.M. Thahir

Hon. Sellaththamby Thilaganathan

Hon. (Mrs.) Anushka Thilakarathne, Attorney at Law

Hon. Chandana Thennakoon

Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake

Hon. Sugath Wasantha de Silva
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva
Hon. Palani Thigambaram
Hon. Thanura Dissanayake
Hon. Dharmapriya Dissanayake
Hon. Sujeewa Dissanayake
Hon. Susantha Dodawatta, Attorney at Law
Hon. W. H. M. Dharmasena
Hon. Mohamed Sali Naleem
Hon. Susantha Kumara Nawarathna
Hon. (Prof.) Sena Nanayakkara
Hon. Nandana Pathmakumara
Hon. Aruna Panagoda
Hon. Nimal Palihena
Hon. Nishantha Perera
Hon. Ajith P. Perera
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. G.G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Chithral Fernando, Attorney at Law
Hon. Stepni Fernando
Hon. Kanthasamy Prabu
Hon. Amila Prasad
Hon. Lal Premanath
Hon. Rohana Bandara
Hon. Nanda Bandara
Hon. Padmasiri Bandara
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. Ravindra Bandara
Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen
Hon. Sudath Balagalla
Hon. (Dr.) S. Sri Bavanandarajah
Hon. E.M. Basnayaka
Hon. Wijesiri Basnayake
Hon. Sunil Biyanwila
Hon. (Dr.) Sandaruwan Madarasinghe
Hon. Lieutenant Commander (Rtd.) Prageeth Madhuranga

Hon. Jagath Manuwarna
Hon. S.M. Marikkar
Hon. Imran Maharoof
Hon. Chanaka Madugoda
Hon. Ruwan Mapalagama
Hon. (Dr.) Nandana Millagala
Hon. Faiszer Musthapha, PC
Hon. Ismail Muththu Mohamed
Hon. Danushka Ranganath
Hon. Sanjeewa Ranasingha
Hon. Sunil Rathnasiri
Hon. R.M. Gamini Rathnayake
Hon. Manjula Sugath Rathnayaka
Hon. Suranga Rathnayaka
Hon. (Mrs.) A.M.M.M. Rathwaththe
Hon. Asoka Sapumal Ranwala
Hon. Thurairasa Ravikaran
Hon. Mujibur Rahman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna
Hon. Namal Rajapaksa, Attorney at Law
Hon. Manoj Rajapaksha
Hon. Sunil Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) V.S. Radhakrishnan
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. (Mrs.) Hasara Liyanage, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Mrs.) Deepthi Wasalage
Hon. Nayana Wasalathilaka
Hon. R.G. Wijerathna
Hon. Priyantha Wijerathna , Attorney at Law
Hon. Ruwan Wijeweera
Hon. Darmapriya Wijesinghe
Hon. (Mrs.) Hiruni Wijesinghe, Attorney at Law
Hon. Chaminda Wijesiri
Hon. Asitha Niroshana Egoda Vithana
Hon. Jagath Vithana

Hon. Hesha Withanage
Hon. Dilip Wedaarachchi
Hon. Athula Welandagoda
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Gnanamuththu Srineshan
Hon. Fasmin Sharif
Hon. (Dr.) Pathmanathan Sathiyalingam
Hon. Dinindu Saman
Hon. Thilina Samarakoon
Hon. (Dr.) Nishantha Samaraweera
Hon. (Ms.) Ambika Samivel
Hon. (Dr.) Elayathamby Srinath
Hon. Dewananda Suraweera
Hon. Chandana Sooriyaarachchi
Hon. Major General (Rtd.) G.D. Sooriyabandara
Hon. Aravinda Senarath
Hon. Kitnan Selvaraj
Hon. Arjuna Sujeewa Senasinghe, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Dr.) Janaka Senarathna
Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Dr.) M.L.A.M. Hizbullah
Hon. Chandima Hettiaratchi
Hon. Champika Hettiarachchi
Hon. (Ms.) Lakmali Hemachandra, Attorney at Law
Hon. Dinesh Hemantha
Hon. (Mrs.) Geetha Herath, Attorney at Law
Hon. Bhagya Sri Herath, Attorney at Law
Hon. Muhammad Faizal
Hon. Riyas Farook

Mrs. Kushani Rohanadeera, Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Chaminda Kularatne, Chief of Staff and Deputy Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Hansa Abeyrathne, Assistant Secretary-General

Parliament met pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker took the Chair.

1. Announcements by the Speaker: The Speaker made the following announcements:—

I

“I wish to inform that, notwithstanding the provisions of the Standing Order 115 of the Parliament, as per the motion agreed to by Parliament subject to the amendments, on the 06th December 2024, the following Members have also been nominated with the Speaker as the Chair, the Deputy Speaker, the Deputy Chairperson of Committees, the Leader of the House of Parliament, the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, the Chief Government Whip and the Chief Opposition Whip, by the Committee of Selection, to serve on the Committee on Parliamentary Business:—

Hon. (Prof.) Anil Jayantha

Hon. Gamagedara Dissanayake

Hon. Gayan Janaka”

II

“I wish to inform that the following Members have also been nominated by the Committee of Selection to serve on the Committee on Public Finance, in terms of the provisions of the Standing Order 121 of Parliament and the motion agreed to by Parliament on the 06th December 2024 :—

Hon. Chathuranga Abeysinghe

Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Kaushalya Ariyaratne

Hon. Arkam Ilyas”

III

“I wish to inform this House that the Committee on Parliamentary Business held on 31 December 2024 approved the request to re-establish the Caucus on Climate Parliament of Sri Lanka for the Tenth Parliament and accordingly the first meeting of the said Caucus will be held on Wednesday, 08 January 2025 at 2.00 p.m. in the Committee Room No. 02 of Parliament.”

IV

“I wish to inform this House that the Committee on Parliamentary Business held on 31 December 2024 approved the request to re-establish the Parliamentary Caucus for Open Parliament Initiative for the Tenth Parliament.”

2. Presentation of Papers: (1) The Speaker presented the —

- (i) Second Installment – Part LVII and Ninth Installment – Parts XLIII, XLIV and XLV of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2021;
- (ii) Second Installment – Parts LVII, LVIII and LIX and Ninth Installment – Part XLI of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2022; and

- (iii) Second Installment – Parts XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV and XXVI, Third Installment – Parts XII, XIII and XIV and Ninth Installment – Parts X, XI, XII, XIII and XIV of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2023

in terms of Article 154(6) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Ordered that the said Reports do lie upon the **Table** and be printed.

(2) The Speaker presented the Financial Statements and the Independent Auditor's Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements of the National Audit Office for the year 2023 in terms of Section 36(3) of the National Audit Act, No. 19 of 2018 which was submitted to the Speaker by the Auditor-General in terms of Section 36(1) of the said Act.

Ordered that the said Reports do lie upon the **Table**.

(3) The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education presented the —

- (i) Annual Report of the Eastern University of Sri Lanka for the year 2022;
- (ii) Annual Report of the Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture of the University of Peradeniya for the year 2023; and
- (iii) Annual Performance Report of the Inland Revenue Department for the year 2023

and moved that those Reports be referred to the relevant Committees.

Question put, and agreed to.

(4) The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education presented the —

- (i) Regulations made by the then Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 20 of the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969 amended by Acts, No. 48 of 1985 and No. 28 of 1987 read with Sections 4(1) and 14 of the aforesaid Act and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2384/35 of 17th May 2024;
- (ii) Regulations made by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development under Section 20 of the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969 amended by Acts, No. 48 of 1985 and No. 28 of 1987 read with Sections 4(1) and 14 of the aforesaid Act and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2413/37 of 04th December 2024;
- (iii) Order made by the then Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 22 of the Foreign Exchange Act, No. 12 of 2017 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2389/08 of 18th June 2024;

- (iv) Regulations made by the then Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 17 read with Section 11 of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, No. 28 of 2005 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2382/11 of 30th April 2024;
- (v) Regulation made by the then Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 4 read with Section 3 of the Casino Business (Regulation) Act, No. 17 of 2010 relating to Casino Business Licensing Regulations, and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2386/09 of 29th May 2024;
- (vi) Order made by the then Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 3(3) of the Ports and Airports Development Levy Act, No. 18 of 2011 relating to Ports and Airports Development Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2377/39 of 28th March 2024;
- (vii) Regulations made by the then Minister of Investment Promotion in consultation with the Colombo Port City Economic Commission and the Condominium Management Authority established under Section 2 of the Condominium Management Authority Law, No. 10 of 1973, under paragraph (q) of Section 71(2) read with Section 54 of the Colombo Port City Economic Commission Act, No. 11 of 2021 relating to Colombo Port City Management of Condominium Property and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2394/68 of 26th July 2024;
- (viii) Order made by the then Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 2 of the Special Commodity Levy Act, No. 48 of 2007, relating to Special Commodity Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2384/31 of 17th May 2024;
- (ix) Order made by the then Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Sections 2 and 5 of the Special Commodity Levy Act, No. 48 of 2007, relating to Special Commodity Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2395/32 of 31st July 2024;
- (x) Order made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Development, Policy Formulation, Planning and Tourism under Section 2 of the Special Commodity Levy Act, No. 48 of 2007, relating to Special Commodity Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2404/19 of 02nd October 2024;
- (xi) Order made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Development, Policy Formulation, Planning and Tourism under Sections 2 and 5 of the Special Commodity Levy Act, No. 48 of 2007, relating to Special Commodity Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2406/02 of 14th October 2024;

- (xii) Order made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Development, Policy Formulation, Planning and Tourism under Section 2 of the Special Commodity Levy Act, No. 48 of 2007, relating to Special Commodity Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2408/15 of 01st November 2024;
- (xiii) Order made by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development under Section 2 of the Special Commodity Levy Act, No. 48 of 2007, relating to Special Commodity Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2412/38 of 30th November 2024; and
- (xiv) Aswesuma Welfare Benefit Payment Scheme made by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development under Section 9 of the Welfare Benefits Act, No. 24 of 2002, relating to Welfare Benefits and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2415/66 of 21st December 2024

and moved that the Regulations, Orders and the Scheme be referred to the Committee on Public Finance.

Question put, and agreed to.

(5) The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education presented the —

- (i) Procurement Guidelines - 2024 on Goods, Works, and Non-Consulting Services, formulated by the National Procurement Commission in terms of the Article 156C(1) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2412/01 of 25th November 2024; and
- (ii) Order made by the then Minister of Education under Section 27(1) read with Sections 21 and 139 of the Universities Act, No. 16 of 1978 on the recommendation of the University Grants Commission with regard to the establishment of Faculties and Departments of the University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2394/65 of 26th July 2024.

Ordered that the said Papers do lie upon the **Table**.

(6) The Hon. Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development presented the Order made by the then Minister of Investment Promotion under Section 14 of the Sri Lanka Export Development Act, No. 40 of 1979 regarding CESS levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2400/25 of 05th September 2024 and moved that this Order be referred to the Committee on Public Finance.

Question put, and agreed to.

(7) The Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure presented the Annual Reports of the Sri Lanka Cashew Corporation for the years 2019 and 2020, and moved that those Reports be referred to the relevant Committee.

Question put, and agreed to.

(8) The Minister of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government presented the Annual Reports of the Distance Learning Centre for the years 2020 and 2021, and moved that these Reports be referred to the relevant Committee.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of Reports from Committees: The Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva, the Chair of the Committee on Public Finance presented the Report of the Committee on the Mid - Year Fiscal Position Report of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, Policy Formulation, Planning and Tourism for the year 2024 which was referred to the said Committee.

Ordered that the said Report do lie upon the **Table**.

4. Sittings of the Parliament: The Leader of the House of Parliament presented,— That notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order 8 of the Parliament, the hours of sitting of Parliament on this day shall be 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 1.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.. At 11.10 a.m. Standing Order 8(5) of the Parliament shall operate. At 5.30 p.m. Mr. Speaker shall adjourn the Parliament without question put.

Question put, and agreed to.

5. Adjournment (Mid-Year Fiscal Position Report-2024): The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourn.

Question proposed, and debated.

(At 11.32 a.m. the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

(At 1.52 p.m. the Deputy Chairperson of Committees took the Chair.)

The Minister of Trade, Commerce, Food Security and Cooperative Development moved,— That Hon. Chanaka Madugoda do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.58 p.m. Hon. Chanaka Madugoda took the Chair.)

And it being 5.30 p.m. Parliament was adjourned by the Presiding Member without Question put, pursuant to the Resolution of Parliament on this day.

Parliament adjourned accordingly until 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 08, 2025.