



(Tenth Parliament - First Session)

No. 18.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Friday, February 07, 2025 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT :

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. Chrishantha Abeysena, Minister of Science and Technology

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

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

Hon. Anton Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Environment

Hon. R.M. Jayawardhana, Deputy Minister of Trade, Commerce and Food Security

Hon. Mahinda Jayasinghe, Deputy Minister of Labour

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

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. (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. Eranga Weeraratne, Deputy Minister of Digital Economy

Hon. Upali Samarasingha, Deputy Minister of Cooperative Development

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

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

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

Hon. Nalin Hewage, Deputy Minister of Vocational Education

Hon. Roshan Akmeemana

Hon. Ajith Agalakada

Hon. Aboobucker Athambawa

Hon. Hector Appuhamy

Hon. U.P. Abeywickrama, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Prof.) L.M. Abeywickrama
Hon. (Dr.) Nihal Abeysinghe
Hon. J.C. Alawathuwala
Hon. M.K.M. Aslam
Hon. Hesha Withanage Ankumbura Arachchi
Hon. Lakshman Nipuna Arachchi
Hon. Manjula Suraweera Arachchi
Hon. (Dr.)(Ms.) Kaushalya Ariyaratne
Hon. B. Ariyawansa
Hon. (Dr.) Najith Indika
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 Kugathanan
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. Thilanka U. Gamage
Hon. (Mrs.) Nilusha Lakmali Gamage
Hon. Ajantha Gammeddage
Hon. Chathura Galappaththi
Hon. Ajith Gihan
Hon. (Dr.) Jagath Gunawardana
Hon. (Mrs.) Samanmali Gunasingha
Hon. Ashoka Gunasena
Hon. D. V. Chanaka
Hon. Gayan Janaka

Hon. Nalin Bandara Jayamaha
Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne
Hon. Dilith Jayaweera
Hon. Kosala Nuwan Jayaweera
Hon. T.K. Jayasundara
Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara, Attorney at Law
Hon. Mayilvaganam Jegatheeswaran
Hon. Rajeevan Jeyachandramoorthy
Hon. M.A.M. Thahir
Hon. Chandana Thennakoon
Hon. Jeevan Thondaman
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake
Hon. Sugath Wasantha de Silva
Hon. Dharmapriya 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. Kins Nelson
Hon. Nandana Pathmakumara
Hon. Aruna Panagoda
Hon. Nimal Palihena
Hon. Nishantha Perera
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. G.G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Stepni Fernando
Hon. Kanthasamy Prabu
Hon. Amila Prasad
Hon. Lal Premanath
Hon. Rohana Bandara
Hon. Padmasiri Bandara
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen
Hon. Sudath Balagalla
Hon. E.M. Basnayaka

Hon. Wijesiri Basnayake
Hon. Sunil Biyanwila
Hon. Lieutenant Commander (Rtd.) Prageeth Madhuranga
Hon. Jagath Manuwarna
Hon. Imran Maharroof
Hon. Chanaka Madugoda
Hon. Ruwan Mapalagama
Hon. (Dr.) Nandana Millagala
Hon. Ismail Muththu Mohamed
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. Thurairasa Ravikaran
Hon. Mujibur Rahman
Hon. Sunil Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) V.S. Radhakrishnan
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. (Mrs.) Hasara Liyanage, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Mrs.) Deepthi Wasalage
Hon. Nayana Wasalathilaka
Hon. Kanchana Welipitiya
Hon. (Mrs.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna
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. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Gnanamuththu Srineshan
Hon. Fasmin Sharif

Hon. (Dr.) Pathmanathan Sathiyalingam
Hon. Thilina Samarakoon
Hon. (Dr.) Nishantha Samaraweera
Hon. (Ms.) Ambika Samivel
Hon. (Dr.) Elayathamby Srinath
Hon. Shantha Pathma Kumara Subasingha
Hon. Dewananda Suraweera
Hon. Chandana Sooriyaarachchi
Hon. Major General (Rtd.) G.D. Sooriyabandara
Hon. Kitnan Selvaraj
Hon. Arjuna Sujeewa Senasinghe, Attorney at Law
Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at Law
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

Mr. Chaminda Kularatne, Acting Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Hansa Abeyrathne, Assistant Secretary-General

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

1. Announcements by the Speaker: The Deputy Speaker made the following announcement:—

“A Motion may be moved to refer the Question of Privilege raised by the Hon. (Dr.) Ramanathan Archchuna, M.P. in Parliament on 23rd January 2025 to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges.”

2. Presentation of Papers: (1) The Minister of Justice and National Integration presented the Report on the submission of observations and steps taken in terms of the Standing Order 119(4) of the Parliament with regard to the matters mentioned on the Department of Prisons, Department of Debt Conciliation and Department of Community Based Corrections in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament and moved that this Report be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

(2) The Minister of Environment presented the Annual Report of the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau for the year 2022 and moved that this Report be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of Public Petitions:

- (1) Hon. (Mrs.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna presented —
 - (i) A petition dated 30.11.2024 from Mr. H.K.P.C. Jayasinghe of No. 275, Medaweragama, Kaikawala, Matale;
 - (ii) A petition dated 22.11.2024 from Mr. M.G.C. Harshan Wijerathne of No. 142, Walakumbura, Galewela;
 - (iii) A petition dated 06.12.2024 from Mr. S.M. Weerakoon Banda of No. 44/03, Pitiyegedara, Thenna, Matale;
 - (iv) A petition dated 04.12.2024 from Mr. T.G. Hamlet of Karagahalanda, Alwatta; and
 - (v) A petition dated 16.12.2024 from Mr. W.M.W.G.T. Bandara Wijerathna of No. 125/2, Eramudugolla, Walawela, Matale.
- (2) Hon. Chaminda Wijesiri presented a petition dated 04.12.2024 from Mr. M. M. Wimalarathna of Mahagedara, Mahaulpotha, Bandarawela.
- (3) Hon. U.P. Abeywickrama, Attorney at Law presented —
 - (i) A petition dated 02.12.2024 from Mr. B.G.W. Jayasinghe of No. 116/F, Kiriwelewatta, Millathe, kirindiwela; and
 - (ii) A petition dated 04.12.2024 from Mr. R.P.K.A.W.K. Ranasinghe of No. 90/5, Ranasinghe Mawatha, Migahawatta, Siyambalape.
- (4) Hon. E.M. Basnayaka presented —
 - (i) A petition dated 30.11.2024 from Mr. R.M. Jayasundara of No. 19/4, Ihalagonagama, Makkaniyagama, Watthetigama; and
 - (ii) A petition dated 28.11.2024 from Mr. S.M. Viraj Kumara Samaraweera of No. 20 B 2, Purana Vihara Road, Kahalla, Katugasthota.
- (5) Hon. Sanjeewa Ranasingha presented a petition dated 10.12.2024 from Mr. G.L. Piyasena of Galketigahena, Migahathenna.

The Petitions stood referred under Standing Order 30(10) of the Parliament, to the Committee on Public Petitions.

4. Business of the Parliament: The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,—
That the proceedings on Item Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 appearing on the Order Paper be exempted at this day's sitting from the provisions of Standing Order 24(2) of the Parliament.

Question put, and agreed to.

5. Sittings of the Parliament: The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That this Parliament at its rising this day do adjourn until 10.30 a.m. on Monday, February 17th, 2025.

Question put, and agreed to.

6. Acquisition of estate roads to the Government: Hon. Hesha Withanage Ankumbura Arachchi, seconded by Hon. B. Ariyawansha moved,— That this Parliament resolves that necessary steps be taken to acquire the estate roads to be under the Local Government and Provincial Council roads as the ownership, as management and administration of estates that have a significant place in the plantation sector of Sri Lanka are subjected to changes at different times whereas the dwellings of the plantation workers are located in the middle of the estates far away from the main road and whereas the estate roads used by these people are in highly dilapidated condition with no development. (P. 1/2024)

(At 1.00 p.m. the Deputy Chairperson of Committees took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

7. Preparation of a proper procurement program for the process of purchasing goods for cooperatives: Hon. Kins Nelson, seconded by Hon. Rohana Bandara moved,— That this Parliament resolves that the government should formulate a proper procurement procedure for the process of purchasing goods for the cooperative societies since the cooperative movement, which is quite close to the rural community, has been facing various problems. (P.11/2024)

Question put, and agreed to.

8. Making arrangements for maintaining a rice reserve with the government: Hon. Rohana Bandara, seconded by Hon. Chathura Galappaththi moved,— That this Parliament resolves that an appropriate arrangement be made for maintaining a rice reserve with the government in order to control the price of rice in the market as the rice market in Sri Lanka is currently in the grip of a few private businessmen. (P.13/2024)

Question put, and agreed to.

The Minister of Justice and National Integration moved,—That Hon. Chanaka Madugoda do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.01 p.m. Hon. Chanaka Madugoda took the Chair.)

9. Formulation of a proper methodology for the appointment of Labour Welfare Officers: Hon. Chaminda Wijesiri, seconded by Hon. Hector Appuhamy moved,— This Parliament resolves that the government should formulate a proper methodology in appointing Labor Welfare Officers responsible for the welfare of migrant workers, who make a significant contribution to the economy of Sri Lanka, in order to avoid the many issues that have arisen because of not adopting a proper methodology so far. (P.15/2024)

Question put, and agreed to.

10. Abolishing the Pension Scheme of the Members of Parliament of Sri Lanka:

Hon. Ravi Karunanayake, seconded by Hon. M. Nizam Kariapper, PC moved,— That this Parliament resolves that the Pension Scheme of the Members of Parliament of Sri Lanka should be abolished with immediate effect as it is very apparent that Sri Lankan voters are very hostile for Parliament Members to receive pensions after the completion of their term of office. (P. 24/2024)

Question put, and agreed to.

11. Appointing a Select Committee of Parliament to investigate and make appropriate recommendations regarding the cremation, instead of burial, of the bodies of COVID-19 pandemic victims:

Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at law, seconded by Hon. Mujibur Rahman moved,— Whereas the remains of COVID-19 Pandemic victims were cremated without the consent of the relatives based on a policy decision by the government in 2020 to the effect that there was a risk of the virus mixing with underground water while the World Health Organization had issued instructions that the bodies of those who died due to the COVID-19 pandemic could be buried, whereas the government later extended an official apology stating the decision was incorrect, whereas the relatives of those who died in the pandemic lost the opportunity to perform their final rites according to their religion or witness the bodies, whereas, instead of cremation, the bodies were buried in an isolated area called Oddamawadi, Majma Nagar in Batticaloa in the face of the protests and pressure locally and internationally, still depriving the relatives of the right to perform religious rites and pay their last respects, this parliament resolves that a select Committee of Parliament be appointed to investigate the above-mentioned serious mistakes on the part of the Government and to make recommendations, considering the need to do justice to the families and the next of kin of the deceased and considering the requests on the part of the general public. (P.28/2024)

Question put, and agreed to.

12. Adjournment (Proper Programme to Develop and Free Cricket from Fraud and Corruption): The Minister of Health and Mass Media moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourned.

Question proposed, and debated .

And it being past 5.30 p.m., Parliament was at 6.32 p.m. adjourned by the Presiding Member without Question put, pursuant to the Resolution of Parliament of this day.

Parliament adjourned accordingly until 10.30 a.m. on Monday, February 17, 2025, pursuant to the Resolution of Parliament of this day.