



(Tenth Parliament - First Session)

No. 51.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Friday, May 09, 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. (Dr.) 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. (Dr.) 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.) 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 Vidyaratna, 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. 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. (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. 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. 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. Eranga Weeraratne, Deputy Minister of Digital Economy

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. (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. U.P. Abeywickrama, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Prof.) L.M. Abeywickrama
Hon. (Dr.) Nihal Abeysinghe
Hon. (Dr.) Ramanathan Archchuna
Hon. J.C. Alawathuwala
Hon. Heshan Withanage Ankumbura Arachchi
Hon. Lakshman Nipuna Arachchi
Hon. (Dr.)(Ms.) Kaushalya Ariyaratne
Hon. B. Ariyawansa
Hon. (Dr.) Najith Indika
Hon. K. Ilankumaran
Hon. (Mrs.) Oshani Umanga
Hon. Gayantha Karunathilleka
Hon. Ravi Karunanayake
Hon. (Mrs.) Chamindranee Kiriella, Attorney at Law
Hon. Kathiravelu Shanmugam Kugathasan
Hon. Chaminda Lalith Kumara
Hon. (Mrs.) Nilanthi Kottahachchi, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Mrs.) M.A.C.S. Chathuri Gangani
Hon. Ajantha Gammeddage
Hon. Chathura Galappaththi
Hon. Nihal Galappaththi
Hon. (Mrs.) Samanmali Gunasingha
Hon. Ashoka Gunasena
Hon. D. V. Chanaka
Hon. Ruwanthilaka Jayakody
Hon. Nalin Bandara Jayamaha
Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne, Attorney at Law
Hon. Dilith Jayaweera
Hon. (Mrs.) Thushari Jayasingha, Attorney at Law
Hon. T.K. Jayasundara
Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara, Attorney at Law
Hon. Rajeevan Jeyachandramoorthy

Hon. Sugath Wasantha de Silva
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva
Hon. Thanura Dissanayake
Hon. Dharmapriya Dissanayake
Hon. Susantha Dodawatta, Attorney at Law
Hon. W. H. M. Dharmasena
Hon. Susantha Kumara Nawarathna
Hon. (Prof.) Sena Nanayakkara
Hon. Aruna Panagoda
Hon. Nishantha Perera
Hon. Ajith P. Perera
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. G.G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Lal Premanath
Hon. Rohana 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. Lieutenant Commander (Rtd.) Prageeth Madhuranga
Hon. Imran Maharoof
Hon. Chanaka Madugoda
Hon. Ismail Muththu Mohamed
Hon. Sanjeewa Ranasingha
Hon. R.M. Gamini Rathnayake
Hon. Suranga Rathnayaka
Hon. Asoka Sapumal Ranwala
Hon. Thurairasa Ravikaran
Hon. Mujibur Rahman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna

Hon. Manoj Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) V.S. Radhakrishnan
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. (Mrs.) Deepthi Wasalage
Hon. (Mrs.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna
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. (Dr.) Pathmanathan Sathiyalingam
Hon. Thilina Samarakoon
Hon. (Dr.) Nishantha Samaraweera
Hon. (Ms.) Ambika Samivel
Hon. Dewananda Suraweera
Hon. Chandana Sooriyaarachchi
Hon. Aravinda Senarath
Hon. Kitnan Selvaraj
Hon. Kabir Hashim
Hon. Chandima Hettiaratchi
Hon. Champika Hettiarachchi
Hon. Dinindu Saman Hennayake
Hon. (Ms.) Lakmali Hemachandra, Attorney at Law

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 announcement:—

“I wish to make a clarification to this House regarding the situation that arose on 08th May 2025 when an attempt was made by another Member of Parliament to ask a supplementary question making use of the provision that according to Standing Order 33(1), ‘any Member of Parliament may put not more than two supplementary questions on any such answer given under Standing Order 32’, just after the Hon. Ravindra Bandara had declared that he would ask only one supplementary question and asked that one supplementary question following the answer given by the Hon. Deputy Minister to his Question which had been posed to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

According to Standing Order 32(1), ‘when any question seeking an oral answer has been published on the Order Paper of Parliament, the Speaker shall call upon the Member in whose name the question stands and the Member so called shall rise in his place and ask the question by reference to its number on the Order Paper of Parliament’.

Further, according to Standing Order 33(1), ‘any Member may put not more than two supplementary questions on any such answer given under Standing Order 32. Nevertheless, such supplementary questions shall not introduce matters not included in the original question, and shall be put only for the purpose of further elucidating any matter arising out of an oral answer.’

In this instance, the term ‘any Member’ means the Member in whose name the question is published and only such Member can ask not more than two questions.

At the same time, there exists a tradition whereby another Member asking supplementary questions only on the sanction and permission of the Member in whose name the question has been published, and I wish to inform the House that as on the occasion in question, another Member attempted to ask a supplementary question without the sanction and permission of the Member who had asked the original question and opportunity was not given to that other Member to ask the supplementary question.”

2. Presentation of Papers: (1) The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education presented the Report on the observations and steps taken in terms of the Standing Order 119(4) of the Parliament with regard to the matters mentioned on the Ministry of Defence and the institutions coming under its purview 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 Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education presented the Annual Report of the Defence Service Command and Staff College for the year 2023 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Governance, Justice and Civil Protection.

Question put, and agreed to.

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

- (i) Annual Report of the Regional Development Bank for the year 2021;
- (ii) Annual Report of the National Insurance Trust Fund for the year 2022;
- (iii) Annual Report of the Development Lotteries Board for the year 2023;
- (iv) Annual Report of the National Lotteries Board for the year 2023; and
- (v) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation for the year 2023

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Economic Development and International Relations.

Question put, and agreed to.

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

- (i) Annual Report of the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences of the University of Peradeniya for the year 2023;
- (ii) Annual Report of the Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology of the University of Colombo for the year 2023;
- (iii) Annual Report and Accounts of the Postgraduate Institute of Indigenous Medicine of the University of Colombo for the year 2023; and
- (iv) Annual Report of the Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies of the University of Kelaniya for the year 2023

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education, Manpower and Human Capital.

Question put, and agreed to.

(5) The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education presented the Order made by the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education under Section 20(4)(b) of the Universities Act, No. 16 of 1978, with regard to the appointment of Senior Professor R. M. U. S. K. Rathnayaka as the Competent Authority in lieu of Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna with effect from 25th February 2025 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2425/03 of 24th February 2025.

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

(6) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the Annual Report of the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Limited for the year 2022 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Health, Media and Women's Empowerment.

Question put, and agreed to.

(7) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management for the year 2022 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Economic Development and International Relations.

Question put, and agreed to.

(8) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the Annual Report of the Ceylon Fertilizer Company Limited for the year 2021/2022 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Resource Sustainability.

Question put, and agreed to.

(9) The Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure presented the Annual Report of the Coconut Cultivation Board for the year 2022 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Resource Sustainability.

Question put, and agreed to.

(10) The Minister of Trade, Commerce, Food Security and Cooperative Development presented the Annual Report of the National Institute of Co-operative Development — Polgolla for the year 2023 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Resource Sustainability.

Question put, and agreed to.

(11) The Minister of Urban Development, Construction and Housing presented the Annual Report of the Hotel Developers (Lanka) Limited for the year 2023 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Infrastructure and Strategic Development.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of Public Petitions:

(1) Hon. Ajith P. Perera presented —

- (i) A petition dated 24.01.2025 from Mr. A. T. B. De Silva of Galle Road, Kuda Waskaduwa, Waskaduwa;
- (ii) A petition dated 22.01.2025 from Mrs. H. F. F. Fasmiya of No. 88/D, Hijaraa Watta, Welipenna; and
- (iii) A petition dated 24.01.2025 from Mr. Sunil Withana Arachchi of No. 9/1, 'Sampath Uyana', Maththegoda Road, Maththegoda.

- (2) Hon. Lakshman Nipuna Arachchi presented a petition dated 05.02.2025 from Mr. O. M. D. Gemunu of No. 276/4 D, Jayanthi Mawatha, Himbutana.
- (3) Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera presented a petition dated 13.12.2024 from Mr. P. U. P. Kumara De Silva of No. 65, Station Road, Balapitiya.
- (4) Hon. Dewananda Suraweera presented —
 - (i) A petition dated 10.02.2025 from Mr. G.P.H. Wijayasena of No. 39/43, Nuga Gaha Pedesa, Piliyandala Road, Maharagama;
 - (ii) A petition dated 30.12.2024 from Ms. G. Samanthi De Silva of No. 2/1 A, Gangarama Road, Wewala, Piliyandala; and
 - (iii) A petition dated 07.02.2025 from Mrs. W. Sheela Kanthi of No. 613/A, Thalangama South, Thalangama.

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. Privileges: Hon. Gayantha Karunathilleka, seconded by Hon. W. H. M. Dharmasena moved,— That the question of privilege arising out of the matter raised by the Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake, M.P. on 18th March, 2025 in Parliament to the effect that his privileges have been infringed, be referred to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges in terms of the provisions of Standing Order 118 of the Parliament.

Question put, and agreed to.

6. Leave to introduce Bill: Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara, Attorney at Law, seconded by Hon. Hesha Withanage Ankumbura Arachchi moved,— That leave be granted to introduce the following Bill:—

“Bill to incorporate the Mabotuwana Sri Piyarathana Nayaka Thero Suwasevana Foundation.”

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read the first time and ordered to be printed.

The Bill stood referred under Standing Order 52(6) of the Parliament to the Minister of Health and Mass Media for report.

(At 11.19 a.m. the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

7. Appropriately curtailing the privileges enjoyed by people's representatives representing the Parliament of Sri Lanka, and former Heads of State and their widows: Hon. Hesha Withanage Ankumbura Arachchi, seconded by Hon. Suranga Rathnayaka moved,— That this Parliament resolves that whereas there has been discourse in the election campaigns as well as in the society about the privileges and

perks enjoyed by the people's representatives representing the Parliament of Sri Lanka, and former heads of state and their widows, the government, should pay attention to the requests from the general public and fulfill their expectations, by taking necessary measures to discuss and get a fair response from all the members of parliament from both the government and the opposition in Parliament regarding the measures necessary to appropriately reduce or abolish the privileges that have long been granted to them. (P. 2/2024)

Question put, and agreed to.

8. Formulating a programme to enhance the state sector involvement in the importation and distribution of essential items of food: Hon. Rohana Bandara, seconded by Hon. Chaminda Wijesiri moved,— That this Parliament resolves that the government formulate a suitable programme to enhance the involvement of the state sector in the process of importing essential food items, medicines and other items as the public is confronted with numerous inconveniences owing to the aforesaid process being monopolized by a few individuals. (P. 12/2024)

(At 1.00 p.m. the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

9. Preparation of a course of action for the implementation of the recommendations given by the audit reports: Hon. Chaminda Wijesiri, seconded by Hon. Mujibur Rahman moved,— That this Parliament resolves that, as the audit reports reveal facts about various financial frauds occurring in various ministries, departments, and statutory bodies of the government, the government should prepare a programme to implement the recommendations given by the audit reports to prevent such acts of fraud and corruption from happening in the government institutions. (P. 19/2024)

(At 1.58 p.m. the Deputy Chairperson of Committees took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

10. Providing a house for every family in Sri Lanka to live in: Hon. Ravi Karunanayake, seconded by Hon. J.C. Alawathuwala moved,— That this Parliament resolves that it is necessary to facilitate the chief householder by empowering him/her not to buy, construct or rent a house for his safety, security and well being as every family in Sri Lanka should be entitled to a house to live in. (P. 25/2024)

The Minister of Labour and Deputy Minister of Economic Development moved,— That Hon. (Dr.)(Ms.) Kaushalya Ariyaratne do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.06 p.m. Hon. (Dr.)(Ms.) Kaushalya Ariyaratne took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

11. Formulation of laws to import only buses that comply with public transport standards: Hon. Ravindra Bandara, seconded by Hon. Dinindu Saman Hennayake moved,— That this Parliament resolves that the Government should enact relevant laws ensuring that, in the future, only buses specifically manufactured for passenger transport, designed for passenger comfort, in compliance with public transport standards are imported by both the public and private sectors considering that buses operated by both the Sri Lanka Transport Board and the private sector are not in a suitable condition for passenger transport, and that most of these buses are built on lorry chassis. (P. 37/2025)

The Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning moved,—That Hon. (Prof.) Sena Nanayakkara do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 4.06 p.m. Hon. (Prof.) Sena Nanayakkara took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

12. Taking actions to use all the buildings that have been constructed in Sri Lanka so far under the name of "development proposals", but have not been put to any use, for public usage: Hon. Lal Premanath, seconded by Hon. Nishantha Perera moved,— That this Parliament resolves that the Government should make appropriate decisions to renovate the buildings that have been constructed so far but are not put to any use, for public usage, whereas such buildings have been constructed across the country under the name of "development proposals " using foreign aid or foreign loans or using money from the central government or local authorities. (P. 38/2025)

Question put, and agreed to.

13. Adjournment: The Minister of Urban Development, Construction and Housing moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourn.

And it being 5.30 p.m. Parliament was adjourned by the Presiding Member without Question put.

Parliament adjourned accordingly until 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 20, 2025.