



(Tenth Parliament - First Session)

No. 123.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 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. (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 Ports and Civil Aviation

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 Jayatissa, Minister of Health and Mass Media and Chief Government Whip

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. (Dr.) Susil Ranasinghe, Minister of Housing, Construction and Water Supply

Hon. Bimal Rathnayake, Minister of Transport, Highways and Urban Development 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. 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. (Dr.)(Ms.) Kaushalya Ariyaratne, Deputy Minister of Mass Media

Hon. Arkam Ilyas, Deputy Minister of Power

Hon. Namal Karunaratne, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Livestock

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

Hon. Eranga Gunasekara, Deputy Minister of Urban Development

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

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

Hon. Nishantha Jayaweera, Deputy Minister of Economic Development

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 Mulaffer, Deputy Minister of Religious and Cultural Affairs

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

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

Hon. Eranga Weeraratne, Deputy Minister of Digital Economy

Hon. Upali Samarasingha, Deputy Minister of Cooperative Development

Hon. T. B. Sarath, Deputy Minister of Housing, Construction and Water Supply

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

Hon. Aravinda Senarath, Deputy Minister of Land and Irrigation

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

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

Hon. Dinindu Saman Hennayake, Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs

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

Hon. Nalin Hewage, Deputy Minister of Vocational Education

Hon. Ajith Agalakada

Hon. Aboobucker Athambawa

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

Hon. Hector Appuhamy

Hon. Rohitha Abeygunawardhana

Hon. U.P. Abeywickrama, Attorney at Law

Hon. (Dr.) Nihal Abeysinghe

Hon. (Dr.) Ramanathan Archchuna

Hon. J.C. Alawathuwala

Hon. M.K.M. Aslam

Hon. Heshu Withanage Ankumbura Arachchi

Hon. Lakshman Nipuna Arachchi

Hon. B. Ariyawansa

Hon. (Dr.) Najith Indika

Hon. K. Ilankumaran

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. Wasantha Pushpa 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. Lasith Bhashana Gamage

Hon. Thilanka U. Gamage

Hon. (Mrs.) Nilusha Lakmali Gamage, Attorney at Law
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. Gayan Janaka
Hon. Ruwanthilaka Jayakody
Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana
Hon. Dilith 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. (Dr.) 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. Thanura Dissanayake
Hon. Dharmapriya Dissanayake
Hon. Sujeewa Dissanayake
Hon. Susantha Dodawatta, Attorney at Law
Hon. W. H. M. Dharmasena
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. (Dr.) S. Sri Bavanandarajah
Hon. Wijesiri Basnayake
Hon. Sunil Biyanwila
Hon. (Dr.) Sandaruwan Madarasinghe
Hon. Imran Maharroof
Hon. Chanaka Madugoda
Hon. (Dr.) Nandana Millagala
Hon. Faiszer Musthapha, PC
Hon. Danushka Ranganath
Hon. Sanjeewa Ranasingha
Hon. R.M. Samantha Ranasinghe
Hon. Sunil Rathnasiri
Hon. R.M. Gamini Rathnayake
Hon. (Mrs.) A.M.M.M. Rathwaththe
Hon. Thurai rasa Ravikaran
Hon. Mujibur Rahman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna
Hon. Manoj Rajapaksha
Hon. Sunil Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. (Mrs.) Hasara Liyanage, Attorney at Law
Hon. M.S. Abthul Wazeeth

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. Chaminda Wijesiri
Hon. Asitha Niroshana Egoda Vithana
Hon. Jagath Vithana
Hon. Dilip Wedaarachchi
Hon. Gnanamuththu Srineshan
Hon. Fasmin Sharif
Hon. (Dr.) Pathmanathan Sathiyalingam
Hon. Thilina Samarakoon
Hon. (Ms.) Ambika Samivel
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. (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. 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 Parliament that I have received copies of three petitions filed at the Supreme Court in terms of the Article 121(1) of the Constitution in respect of the Bill titled ‘Parliamentary Pensions (Repeal)’.”

II

“A motion may be moved to refer the Question of Privilege raised by the Hon. Amirthanathan Adaikkalanathan, M.P., in Parliament on 13th November 2025 to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges.”

2. Presentation of Papers: (1) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented —

- (i) Annual Report of the Uva Wellassa University for the year 2023;
- (ii) Annual Report and Accounts of the Bhiksu University of Sri Lanka for the year 2024; and
- (iii) Annual Report of the University of the Visual and Performing Arts for the year 2024.

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

Question put, and agreed to.

(2) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the —

- (i) 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 Institutions coming under the purview of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament; and
- (ii) Reports 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 Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education in the reports of the Committee on Public Accounts which were presented to Parliament

and moved that those reports be referred to the Committee on Public Finance.

Question put, and agreed to.

(3) The Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development presented the Annual Report of the National Crafts Council for the year 2024 and moved that that report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Economic Development and International Relations

Question put, and agreed to.

(4) The Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure presented the Annual Report of the Elkaduwa Plantations Limited for the year 2018 and moved that that Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Resource Sustainability .

Question put, and agreed to.

(5) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the —

- (i) Annual Report of the Petroleum Development Authority of Sri Lanka for the year 2023; and
- (ii) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority for the year 2023

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Infrastructure and Strategic Development.

Question put, and agreed to.

(6) The Minister of Health and Mass Media 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 Department of Archaeology in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament and moved that that Reports be referred to the Report be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of Reports from Committees: Hon. Champika Hettiarachchi, Member of the Committee on behalf of the Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva, the Chair of the Committee on Public Finance presented the Report of the Committee on the Aswesuma Welfare Benefit Payment Scheme under Section 9 of the Welfare Benefits Act, No. 24 of 2002 (Published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2467/03 of 15.12.2025) which was referred to the said Committee.

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

4. Presentation of Public Petitions:

- (1) Hon. Mahinda Jayasinghe presented a petition dated 18.08.2025 from Mr. S.N. Ranaweera of Hon. Joint Secretary, Navy Civilian Union, Navy Camp, Tangalle.
- (2) Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake presented a petition dated 06.08.2025 from Ms. W.A. Bhashini Chathurika of No 54/A/3, Sapumal Uyana, Maththegoda.

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

5. Protection of Occupants: The Minister of Justice and National Integration presented,— Bill to prevent a landlord from ejecting persons from occupation of a premises; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday 03, February, 2026, be printed and be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Governance, Justice and Civil Protection

6. Rent (Repeal): The Minister of Justice and National Integration presented,— Bill to Repeal the Rent Act, No. 7 of 1972.

The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday 03, February, 2026, be printed and be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Governance, Justice and Civil Protection .

7. Licensing of Container Depot Operators: The Minister of Ports and Civil Aviation presented,— Bill to provide for the regulation and control of the carrying on the business of Container Depot Operators; and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday 03, February, 2026, be printed and be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Infrastructure and Strategic Development.

8. Licensing of Shipping Agents, Freight Forwarders, Non-Vessel Operating Common Carriers and Container Operators (Amendment): The Minister of Ports and Civil Aviation presented,— Bill to amend the Licensing of Shipping Agents, Freight Forwarders, Non-Vessel Operating Common Carriers and Container Operators Act, No. 10 of 1972; and to provide matters connected Therewith or incidental thereto.

The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday 03, February, 2026, be printed and be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Infrastructure and Strategic Development.

9. Aswesuma Welfare Benefit Payment Scheme under the Welfare Benefits Act: The Minister of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment on behalf of the Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education moved,— That the 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. 2467/03 of 15th December 2025, which was presented on 06.01.2026, be approved.

(At 12.11. the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

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

The Minister of Women and Child Affairs moved,— That Hon. Sanjeewa Ranasingha do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 2.03 p.m. Hon. Sanjeewa Ranasingha took the Chair.)

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

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.15 p.m. Hon. Imran Maharroof took the Chair.)

The Minister of Science and Technology moved,— That Hon. Sujeewa Dissanayake do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 4.03 p.m. Hon. Sujeewa Dissanayake took the Chair.)

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

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 4.29 p.m. Hon. (Prof.) Sena Nanayakkara took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

10. Adjournment : The Minister of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourn.

Question put, and agreed to; Parliament was at 5.22 p.m. adjourned by the Presiding Member until 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 21, 2026.