



(Tenth Parliament - First Session)

No. 126.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Friday, January 23, 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. Dr. Harini Amarasuriya, Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education

Hon. Anura Karunathilaka, Minister of Ports and Civil Aviation

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

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 Finance and Planning

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

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

Hon. Sajith Premadasa, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament

Hon. (Dr.)(Ms.) Kaushalya Ariyaratne, Deputy Minister of Mass Media

Hon. Namal Karunaratne, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Livestock

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

Hon. Eranga Gunasekara, Deputy Minister of Urban Development

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

Hon. Nalin Hewage, Deputy Minister of Vocational Education

Hon. Ajith Agalakada

Hon. Amirthanathan Adaikkalanathan

Hon. Aboobucker Athambawa

Hon. Hector Appuhamy

Hon. U.P. Abeywickrama, Attorney at Law

Hon. (Prof.) L.M. Abeywickrama

Hon. (Dr.) Nihal Abeysinghe

Hon. (Dr.) Ramanathan Archchuna

Hon. Lakshman Nipuna Arachchi

Hon. B. Ariyawansa
Hon. (Dr.) Najith Indika
Hon. M.S. Uthumalebbe
Hon. Gayantha Karunathilleka
Hon. Ravi Karunanayake
Hon. (Ms.) Krishnan Kalaichelvi
Hon. M. Nizam Kariapper, PC
Hon. Upul Kithsiri
Hon. (Mrs.) Chamindrane Kiriella, Attorney at Law
Hon. Kathiravelu Shanmugam Kugathan
Hon. Chaminda Lalith Kumara
Hon. Sarath Kumara, Attorney at Law
Hon. Kaveenthiran Kodeeswaran
Hon. Mano Ganesan
Hon. (Mrs.) Nilusha Lakmali Gamage, Attorney at Law
Hon. Ajantha Gammeddage
Hon. Ajith Gihan
Hon. (Mrs.) Samanmali Gunasingha
Hon. D. V. Chanaka
Hon. Ruwanthilaka Jayakody
Hon. Nalin Bandara Jayamaha
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. Rajeevan Jeyachandramoorthy
Hon. M.A.M. Thahir
Hon. Jeevan Thondaman
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake
Hon. Sugath Wasantha de Silva
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva
Hon. Thanura Dissanayake
Hon. Sujeewa Dissanayake
Hon. Susantha Dodawatta, Attorney at Law

Hon. W. H. M. Dharmasena
Hon. Nandana Pathmakumara
Hon. Aruna Panagoda
Hon. Nimal Palihena
Hon. Nishantha Perera
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. G.G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Chithral Fernando, Attorney at Law
Hon. Stepni Fernando
Hon. Kanthasamy Prabu
Hon. Lal Premanath
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. Ravindra Bandara
Hon. Sudath Balagalla
Hon. (Dr.) S. Sri Bavanandarajah
Hon. E.M. Basnayaka
Hon. Sunil Biyanwila
Hon. (Dr.) Sandaruwan Madarasinghe
Hon. Lieutenant Commander (Rtd.) Prageeth Madhuranga
Hon. Imran Maharoof
Hon. Chanaka Madugoda
Hon. Ruwan Mapalagama
Hon. (Dr.) Nandana Millagala
Hon. Faiszer Musthapha, PC
Hon. Danushka Ranganath
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. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
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. (Mrs.) Hiruni Wijesinghe, Attorney at Law
Hon. Chaminda Wijesiri
Hon. Asitha Niroshana Egoda 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. Dewananda Suraweera
Hon. Chandana Sooriyaarachchi
Hon. Kitnan Selvaraj
Hon. Arjuna Sujeewa Senasinghe, Attorney at Law
Hon. Kabir Hashim
Hon. (Dr.) M.L.A.M. Hizbullah
Hon. Chandima Hettiaratchi
Hon. Champika Hettiarachchi
Hon. (Ms.) Lakmali Hemachandra, Attorney at Law
Hon. Muhammad Faizal

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:—

“A Motion may be moved to refer the Question of Privilege raised by the Hon. Arjuna Sujeewa Senasinghe, Attorney at Law, M.P., in Parliament on 7th January 2026 to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges.”

2. Presentation of Papers: (1) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the Annual Report of the National Building Research Organization for the year 2024 and moved that report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Governance, Justice and Civil Protection.

Question put, and agreed to.

(2) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the Annual Report of the Housing Development Finance Corporation Bank of Sri Lanka for the year 2024 and moved that report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Economic Development and International Relations.

Question put, and agreed to.

(3) The Minister of Justice and National Integration presented the Regulations made by the then Minister of Technology under Section 71(1) read with Section 17(10) of the Sri Lanka Telecommunications Act, No. 25 of 1991 as amended by the Sri Lanka Telecommunications (Amendment) Acts, No. 27 of 1996 and No. 39 of 2024 regarding Telecommunications Infrastructure Sharing and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2396/32 of 07th August 2024 and moved that those Regulations be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Digital Economy.

Question put, and agreed to.

(4) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the Annual Report of the Colombo Commercial Fertilizers Limited for the year 2023/2024 and moved 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 Annual Report of the Coconut Cultivation Board for the year 2023 and moved that report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Resource Sustainability.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of reports from Committees: (1) Hon. (Dr.) Rizvie Salih, Deputy Speaker and the Chair of Committees presented the First Report of the Ministerial Consultative Committees.

Ordered that the said Report do lie upon the **Table** and be Printed.

(2) Hon. Hector Appuhamy, the Chair of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Resource Sustainability presented the Report of the Committee on the —

- (i) Performance Reports of the Rubber Development Department for the years 2023 and 2024;
- (ii) Annual Report of the Chilaw Plantations Limited for the year 2021;
- (iii) Annual Report of the Thurusaviya Fund for the year 2022;

- (iv) Annual Report of the Tea Shakthi Fund for the year 2015;
- (v) Annual Report of the Rubber Research Institute of Sri Lanka for the year 2022;
- (vi) Annual Report of the Coconut Research Institute for the year 2022;
- (vii) Annual Reports of the Sri Lanka State Plantations Corporation for the years 2021 and 2022; and
- (viii) Annual Performance Report of the Non - Cabinet Ministry of State Plantation Enterprises Reforms for the year 2023

which were referred to the said Committee.

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

(3) Hon. (Ms.) Krishnan Kalaichelvi, Member of the Committee, on Behalf of the Chair of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education, Manpower and Human Capital presented the Report of the Committee on the Universities (Amendment) Bill which was referred to the said Committee.

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

(4) Hon. (Ms.) Krishnan Kalaichelvi, Member of the Committee, on behalf of the Chair of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education, Manpower and Human Capital presented the Report of the Committee on the —

- (i) Annual Performance Report of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs for the year 2023;
- (ii) Annual Performance Report of the Department of Sports Development for the year 2023; and
- (iii) Annual Reports of the National Sports Fund for the years 2021 and 2022

which was referred to the said Committee.

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

4. Presentation of Public Petitions:

- (1) Hon. Rathna Gamage presented a petition dated 05.07.2025 from Mr. Rytin Mawadawilage and twenty four others of “Dilhani”, Karathura, Boossa.
- (2) Hon. Thanura Dissanayake presented a petition dated 28.05.2025 from Mr. S.M.A.K. Molagoda of No 102/1, Udahingulwala, via Kandy.
- (3) Hon. Sunil Biyanwila presented a petition dated 02.07.2025 from Mr. Demuni Thilak de Soysa Abeywardhana of 264 D 1, 4th Lane, Shanthipura, Thalawathugoda.
- (4) Hon. Suranga Rathnayaka presented a petition dated 20.07.2025 from Mr. H.B.S.D. Herath, Near the Sarakkugala, Yaya 06, Angamuwa, Anuradhapura.

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

5. Universities (Amendment) Bill : Order for Second Reading read.

The Minister of Ports and Civil Aviation on behalf of the Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education moved,— That the Bill be now read a second time.

(At 11.37 a.m, the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

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

The Minister of Health and Mass Media moved,—That Hon. Lakshman Nipuna Arachchi do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 1.27 p.m. Hon. Lakshman Nipuna Arachchi took the Chair.)

The Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs moved,— That Hon. Sujeewa Dissanayake do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.29 p.m. Hon. Sujeewa Dissanayake took the Chair.)

Hon. Ravi Karunanayake, seconded by Hon. M.S. Uthumalebbe moved,— That Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.57 p.m. Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 4.56 p.m., the Speaker took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to;

Bill accordingly read a second time.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education moved,— That the Bill be referred to a Committee of the whole Parliament.

Question put, and agreed to.

Parliament immediately resolved itself into Committee.

(In the Committee)

The Speaker took the Chair.

Clause 1 was agreed to.

Clause 2

The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education proposed an amendment to delete lines 1 to 4 (both inclusive) and substitute the following in page 2:—

“(b) Where any Senior Professor, Professor, Associate Professor or Senior Lecturer (Grade I) is elected as the Dean of the Faculty under paragraph (a), and is, at the”;

Question that the amendment be agreed to, put, and agreed to.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education proposed another amendment to delete line 7 and substitute the following in page 2:—

“that Faculty, such Senior Professor, Professor, Associate Professor or Senior Lecturer (Grade I)”;

Question that the amendment be agreed to, put, and agreed to.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education proposed another amendment to delete line 14 and substitute the following in page 2:—

“Council in accordance with the due procedure, as may be specified by the Commission,”;

Question that the amendment be agreed to, put, and agreed to.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education proposed another amendment to delete line 22 and substitute the following in page 2:—

“(4) No person shall be elected as the”;

Question that the amendment be agreed to, put, and agreed to.

Question that the Clause as amended, stand part of the Bill, put, and agreed to.

Clause 3

The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education proposed an amendment to delete lines 4 and 5 and substitute the following in page 4:—

“Study of the same Faculty, determined by the Senate, shall be appointed in such capacity and”;

Question that the amendment be agreed to, put, and agreed to.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education proposed another amendment to delete line 12 and substitute the following in page 4:—

“Council in accordance with the due procedure, as may be specified by the Commission,”;

Question that the amendment be agreed to, put, and agreed to.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education proposed another amendment to delete line 2 and substitute the following in page 5:—

“provisions, and no other eligible persons are”.

Question that the amendment be agreed to, put, and agreed to.

Question that the Clause as amended, stand part of the Bill, put, and agreed to.

Clause 4 was agreed to.

Enacting Clause and Title

Question that the Enacting Clause and Title stand part of the Bill, put, and agreed to.
Bill reported with Amendments.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education moved,— That the Bill, as amended, be now read the third time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill, as amended, accordingly read the third time and passed.

6. Resolution under the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka: The Leader of the House moved,— In accordance with the decision reached at the meeting of the Committee on Parliamentary Business held today at 2.30 p.m., the business relating to the ‘Resolution under the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka’, which is to be included immediately after Item No. 1 of the main business on today’s Order Paper, be exempted from the Standing Order 27 of Parliament and with the special leave of the House, the Resolution be passed by Parliament this day.

Accordingly, the Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education moved the following resolution :—

“Whereas the terms of incumbent members of the Constitutional Council who have been appointed under Article 41A (1) (e) (iii) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, have expired with effect from 19.01.2026, under Article 41A (8) (b) of the Constitution;

That this Parliament resolves that the under mentioned persons who are not Members of Parliament, for the appointment by the President upon the nomination of the Speaker, by agreement of the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition under Articles 41A (1) (e) (iii), 41A (4) and 41A (5) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, be approved by Parliament under Article 41A (5) of the Constitution:—

1. Kalupage Austin Fernando;
2. Prof. Wasantha Seneviratne; and
3. Udunuwara Gampathige Ranjith Ariyaratne.”

Question put, and agreed to.

7. Adjournment : The Hon. Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourn.

And it being past 5.30 p.m. Parliament was at 5.40 p.m. adjourned by the Speaker pursuant to the Resolution of Parliament this day.

Parliament adjourned accordingly until 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, February 03, 2026.