ආයතනයේ නම : ජනලේඛන හා සංඛ්‍යාලේඛන දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව

පාර්ලිමේන්තු ප්‍රකාශනමාලා අංක : 489

පාර්ලිමේන්තුවේ රජයේ ගිණුම් පිළිබඳ කාරක සභාව විසින් සභාගත කරන ලද වාර්තා සම්බන්ධයෙන් ස්ථාවර නියෝග අංක 119(4) යටතේ ගරු මුදල්, ක්‍රමසම්පාදන සහ ආර්ථික සංවර්ධන අමාත්‍යවරයාගේ නිරීක්ෂණ සහ ගනු ලබන පියවර පාර්ලිමේන්තුව වෙත ඉදිරිපත් කිරීම

நிறுவனத்தின் பெயர் : **தொகை மதிப்பு மற்றும் புள்ளிவிபரவியல் திணைக்களம்**

பாராளுமன்ற வெளியீட்டுத் தொடர் இலக்கம் : **489**

பாராளுமன்ற பொது கணக்கு குழுவால் பாராளுமன்றத்திற்கு சமர்ப்பிக்கப்பட்ட அறிக்கை தொடர்பாக கௌரவ நிதிஇ திட்டமிடல் மற்றும் பொருளாதார அபிவிருத்தி அமைச்சர் அவர்களால் நிலையியல் கட்டளை இலக்கம் 119(4)-இன் கீழ் எடுக்கப்பட்ட அவதானிப்புகள் மற்றும் நடவடிக்கைகள் சமர்ப்பிப்பு

Name of the Institution : **Department of Census and Statistics**

Parliamentary Series : **489**

Submission of the observations and measures taken by Hon. Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development under Standing Order No. 119(4) regarding the report tabled by the Committee on Public Accounts of Parliament, to the Parliament

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நிதி, திட்டமிடல் மற்றும் பொருளாதார அபிவிருத்தி அமைச்சு
MINISTRY OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

මහලේකම් කාර්යාලය, කොළඹ 01,
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දිනය / திகதி / Date 03.06.2026

Through Hon. Leader of the House of Parliament
Hon. Speaker of Parliament
The Parliament of Sri Lanka
Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte

<u>Submission of observations and actions taken by the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance, regarding the report presented to Parliament by the Committee on Public Accounts (COPA) concerning Ministries, Departments, Provincial Councils, and Local Authorities.</u>

<u>Parliamentary Series No. 489 Report of the Committee on Public Accounts</u>

Following the investigation of the affairs of Ministries and Departments by the Committee on Public Accounts as per the revised Standing Order No. 119(4) of the Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance is required to submit to Parliament his observations and the measures taken regarding the observations, recommendations, and orders contained in the report presented to Parliament by the Committee on Public Accounts (COPA).

Accordingly, the report compiled by the Committee on Public Accounts (COPA) based on the investigation into the Department of Census and Statistics, which was conducted during the First Session of the Tenth Parliament, is contained in Parliamentary Series No. 489. I hereby present the report containing my observations and the measures being taken on the matter, in my capacity as the Honorable Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

The attention of the Honorable Parliament is hereby drawn to the fact that this report includes the observations and actions taken by the Department of Census and Statistics regarding the recommendations pertaining to the Department in the report compiled by the Committee on Public Accounts.

Sgd.
Anura Kumara Dissanayake
Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

PARLIAMENTARY SERIES NO. : 489

NAME OF THE DEPARTMENT : Department of Census and Statistics

Submission to Parliament of the observations and actions taken by the Hon. Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development under Standing Order No. 119(4) regarding the reports tabled by the Committee on Public Accounts of Parliament

No.	Deficiencies Identified by the Committee in the Report	Actions Taken by the Institution to Rectify the Deficiencies / Current Status
1	**Population and Housing Census – 2021**	The Census Day for the Population and Housing Census was declared as 2024.12.19, and accordingly, the field activities related to the enumeration stage were successfully completed covering the entire island. Accordingly, **01. Preliminary Report of the Population and Housing Census** On 2025.03.24, the Preliminary Report of the Population and Housing Census was published and presented to His Excellency the President. Furthermore, the preliminary report was uploaded to the Department's website, and printed copies thereof were also provided to District Secretaries and Heads of District Statistics Divisions. **02. Basic Information on Population and Housing** On 2025.10.30, the following two reports were published: 1. Basic Information on Population (by District and Divisional Secretariat Division) 2. Basic Information on Housing (by District and Divisional Secretariat Division) These reports, prepared in all three languages, were uploaded to the Department's website on the same day they were published. In addition, all related data tables in PDF and Excel formats were made available on the Department's website at the District, Divisional Secretariat Division, and Grama Niladhari Division levels. Based on this census information, the data tables and maps required for managing the disaster situation caused by Cyclone DITWA were also published on the Department's website.

No.	Deficiencies Identified by the Committee in the Report	Actions Taken by the Institution to Rectify the Deficiencies / Current Status
		Simultaneously with the release of these reports, the necessary arrangements were made to inform Ministry and Department Heads as well as media personnel. **03. Final Report of the Census of Population and Housing** On 2026.03.20, the Final Report of the Census of Population and Housing was published, and it was officially presented to His Excellency the President at the Presidential Secretariat on 2026.04.06. On 2026.04.10, a programme was conducted to disseminate the information contained in the final report and to educate data users and media personnel. On the same day, a data dashboard containing census information was prepared and incorporated into the Department's website, and the relevant stakeholders were informed accordingly. This report was prepared in all three languages and uploaded to the Department's website.
2	**Failure to Conduct the Population and Housing Census – 2021, Economic Census, Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), and Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)**	Based on the data collected through the Population and Housing Census, the required data for preparing the sample for the Household Income and Expenditure Survey as of December 30, 2024, had been provided. Accordingly, the Household Income and Expenditure Survey was commenced in January 2025. The field data collection of the survey was carried out continuously for one year and was completed in January 2026. At present, the processes of data entry and editing are being carried out, and the final report is scheduled to be published in October 2026.
3	**"e-Grama Niladhari" Project (e-GN Project)** It was revealed that all data collected through the Population and Housing Census questionnaires are also collected by Grama Niladharis through another questionnaire for the "e-Grama Niladhari" Project, and that only a small amount of additional data is collected by Grama Niladharis for the e-GN Project in addition to census data.	The Population and Housing Census is conducted under the provisions of the Census Ordinance. Accordingly, in compliance with the Census Ordinance, there is a possibility of providing Population and Housing Census data for the e-Grama Niladhari project upon the request of the relevant parties. The activities related to the preparation of the "Strategy for the Development of Statistics in Sri Lanka" and the drafting of the Statistics Act are being carried out in coordination with the relevant institutions.
4	**Information and Communication Technology Plan 2016–2025**	The Population and Housing Census 2021 was successfully conducted using tablet computers with CAPI (Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing) technology. It has been planned to conduct future censuses, including the Economic Census (Agricultural

<table>
<tr><th>No.</th><th>Deficiencies Identified by the Committee in the Report</th><th>Actions Taken by the Institution to Rectify the Deficiencies / Current Status</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>Activities) and the Economic Census (Non-Agricultural Activities), using tablet computers through CAPI technology. It is also expected that data collection for most future surveys will be carried out using this CAPI technology.</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Per Capita Household Expenditure</td><td>According to the 2019 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), the average monthly per capita household expenditure was approximately Rs. 17,000. This survey is scheduled to be conducted once every three years, and following the 2021 Population and Housing Census, it had been planned to conduct the HIES in 2022 using the new census frame. However, since the Population and Housing Census was completed only in 2024, the Household Income and Expenditure Survey using the new frame was conducted in 2025. At present, data accuracy verification and data processing activities are being carried out. Therefore, based on changes in the National Consumer Price Index (adjusted for inflation), the estimated values of the average monthly per capita household expenditure from 2021 to 2025 are shown in the table below.
<table>
<tr><th>Year</th><th>HIES*
2019</th><th>2021</th><th>2022</th><th>2023</th><th>2024</th><th>2025</th></tr>
<tr><td>Estimated Average Monthly Per Capita Household Expenditure – Rupees</td><td>17,000</td><td>19,000</td><td>34,000</td><td>39,000</td><td>40,000</td><td>41,000</td></tr>
</table>

*HIES – Household Income and Expenditure Survey

Furthermore, provisions required to conduct the Demographic and Health Survey have been allocated through the 2026 Budget, and the necessary plans are currently being prepared to carry out the survey during this year.</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>Construction of a 12-storey building for the Department in 2015 using World Bank assistance and Government funds, and commencement of office operations therein Audit observations revealed deficiencies such as failure to obtain the complete report and warranty certificate from the contractor regarding the building construction, payment of 88% of the retention money amounting to Rs.</td><td><u>Conducting a Technical Audit of the Building</u>

Due to the existing deficiencies in the Head Office building of this Department, estimates were called from the Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau (CECB) for conducting a building/technical audit.

An evaluation committee comprising departmental officers and an engineer from the Department of Buildings was appointed to make a decision regarding the estimate submitted amounting to Rs. 12,458,000.00 (excluding taxes).</td></tr>
</table>

No.	Deficiencies Identified by the Committee in the Report	Actions Taken by the Institution to Rectify the Deficiencies / Current Status
	35,673,850.00 to the contractor while two weeks still remained for completion of construction work, water leakages on upper floors during rainy days, and water flowing into internal office premises.	According to the report submitted by the committee, it was recommended that an estimate be obtained from a consultancy institution in order to carry out the task and proceed with further action. However, the engineer appointed by the Department of Buildings verbally informed that he did not possess the capability to prepare the specifications required for selecting an institution to conduct the building/technical audit. Furthermore, according to Section 3.1.6 of the Procurement Guidelines effective from 2025.01.01, this task cannot be carried out by calling quotations from only one institution. Therefore, considering the difficulties in preparing tender documents including the technical specifications required for calling quotations to conduct the building/technical audit, a request was submitted to the Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development through Letter No. DCS/AC/PRO/F03/02-Building/Technical Audit dated 2025.04.01 requesting the nomination of an engineer experienced in this field to the relevant tender evaluation committee. As the engineer attached to the said Ministry was also unable to participate in this task due to heavy workload, the Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, through Letter No. MF1/01/25CEN/EST-18(ii) dated 2025.05.08, informed that an engineer possessing the relevant expertise and capability should be obtained from the Department of Buildings in order to accomplish this task. Accordingly, after informing the Department of Buildings through Letters No. DCS/Admin/MT/Building Audit dated 2025.05.15 and 2025.06.04, discussions were held in this regard. During these discussions, officers of the Department of Buildings stated that since they did not possess the required equipment, they were unable to conduct a building/technical audit themselves. However, they indicated that they were capable of preparing and submitting the specification document and Bill of Quantities (BOQ) containing the technical details required for calling quotations to select an institution to conduct the building technical audit. Subsequently, as per the request made through Letter No. DCS/Admin/MT/14/ALUMINIUM dated 2025.06.20, another discussion was held with officers of the Department of Buildings on 2025.07.01. Thereafter, on 2025.07.07 and 2025.07.08, technically qualified officers from the Department of Buildings representing the Architectural, Structural, Water

No.	Deficiencies Identified by the Committee in the Report	Actions Taken by the Institution to Rectify the Deficiencies / Current Status
		Supply and Drainage, and Electrical Divisions visited the building in groups, carried out on-site inspections regarding the existing defects in the building, and obtained the required information. Based on the information gathered, the Terms of Reference (TOR), including the client's requirements, were submitted by the Department of Buildings on 2025.08.04. It was further informed that upon granting approval thereto, the tender documents would be prepared and submitted. In addition, it was informed that a sum of Rs. 150,000.00 should be paid to the Department of Buildings as departmental management fees for this task. Accordingly, provisions amounting to Rs. 150,000.00 under Expenditure Item No. 252-01-01-1409-140 were transferred to the Department of Buildings on 2025.11.25 under Financial Regulation 208. In order to commence the procurement process for selecting a consultancy institution relevant to this task, names of officers were forwarded to the Ministry for the appointment of a Departmental Consultancy Committee in accordance with Section 2.6.3 of the Procurement Guidelines (Consultancy) 2007. However, the Ministry informed that, as the appropriate Consultancy Procurement Committee should be determined according to the estimated cost of this procurement, a cost estimate should first be submitted. Accordingly, the Department of Buildings was informed on 2026.04.02 to submit the required cost estimate. However, the Department of Buildings informed on 2026.04.21 that they were unable to provide the relevant estimate because they did not possess Chartered Engineers required for preparing estimates relating to information technology inspections and several other sectors. They further stated that although the estimate previously verbally indicated by the semi-government institution carried a relatively high value, it would be appropriate to use either that estimate value or approximately 75% thereof for the purpose of appointing the Consultancy Procurement Committee. At present, this task continues to remain problematic due to the lack of officers possessing engineering expertise within the Department to prepare a formal estimate required for appointing a consultancy committee either through an external party or otherwise to carry out this task. Furthermore, although

No.	Deficiencies Identified by the Committee in the Report	Actions Taken by the Institution to Rectify the Deficiencies / Current Status
		attempts were made to accomplish this task through the Department of Buildings, they too informed that they do not possess Chartered Engineers required for the purpose. Nevertheless, the following measures have been taken to rectify deficiencies such as water leakages currently existing in the building. **Measures Taken to Prevent Water Leakages** Repairs relating to the water leakage in the concrete slab of the Prices and Wages Division located on the 5th floor were completed on 2025.12.13. Two dehumidifier machines were installed as part of the repairs, and these machines completely absorb the water retained on the surface of the concrete slab. The repairs were completed successfully. Water leakages had occurred through holes in the duct line containing the pipe systems (water supply and sewerage systems) connected to the women's washrooms from the 1st floor to the 10th floor. Repair work relating thereto was completed during the year 2025. Waterproofing work relating to the elevator machine room of the building and all connected areas, as well as the slab above the dining room located on the 10th floor, has commenced, and approximately 90% of the work has now been completed. As the second phase, the Department of Buildings was informed on 2026.04.27 to provide estimates for waterproofing the open areas on the 6th and 11th floors, the areas where air-conditioning cooling water tanks are located, and all external walls of the building. **Blacklisting of the Private Consultancy Firm that Issued the Construction Certification for the Building** As the private consultancy firm that issued the construction certification for the building had failed to provide a correct certification in relation to the said building, advice was sought from the National Procurement Commission regarding the future course of action relating to blacklisting the company. The National Procurement Commission informed that formal guidelines for blacklisting consultancy service providers have not yet been prepared and advised that a formal investigation should be conducted at institutional level, subject to the

No.	Deficiencies Identified by the Committee in the Report	Actions Taken by the Institution to Rectify the Deficiencies / Current Status
		approval of the Chief Accounting Officer, while ensuring fairness, equality, and transparency in the process. Accordingly, the Director General instructed that a committee be appointed to conduct a formal departmental investigation under the chairmanship of the Civil Engineering Officer of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, including two Civil and Electrical Engineering Officers from the Department of Buildings and a Legal Officer from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Relevant institutions were informed accordingly. In relation thereto, the Department of Buildings nominated the Director of Construction (Zone 3) and an Electrical Engineer, while the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development nominated a Director from the Department of Project Management and Monitoring. Furthermore, the Ministry informed that arrangements should be made to appoint a Legal Officer either from this Department or another institution. However, since this Department does not possess a Legal Officer, requests were made on 2026.03.23 to the Ministry of Transport, Highways and Urban Development and the Ministry of Housing, Construction and Water Supply, where Legal Officers are presently attached, seeking the necessary legal assistance. Accordingly, it was informed that the assistance of the Legal Officer of the Ministry of Housing, Construction and Water Supply could be provided. Accordingly, the committee comprising the above officers together with officers of the Department was appointed on 2026.05.06.
7	**Deficiencies in the Printing Division and Old Office Premises** Audit observations revealed that the Printing Division had not been planned to be accommodated within the new building during the design stage. The Committee inquired into the possibility of relocating the Printing Division to the new building premises.	A committee was appointed to inspect the buildings and constructions within the premises of the Printing Division at 16/7, and accordingly, the committee has submitted its recommendations. Based on these recommendations, out of the four existing buildings, two buildings have been recommended to be maintained in their present condition with further development. At present, the ground floor of one of the two-storey buildings is being used for the operations of the Printing Division. Estimates have been requested from the Department of Buildings for the renovation of the other single-storey building, and after renovation, it will be maintained as a warehouse. Furthermore, the other two-storey building and the single-storey building are in a dilapidated condition. Therefore, the committee

No.	Deficiencies Identified by the Committee in the Report	Actions Taken by the Institution to Rectify the Deficiencies / Current Status
		has recommended that these buildings be inspected by an institution with specialized technical expertise to determine whether they are in a usable condition. Accordingly, the National Building Research Organisation was informed on 2026.01.22 to carry out the relevant inspections, and the related estimates have now been submitted. After completing the relevant payments and obtaining the report, the necessary further actions will be taken. In addition, deficiencies in the buildings and premises that caused disruptions to daily official activities—such as defects in the roofs, drainage systems, garage, and gates—were repaired and restored to proper condition. Moreover, garbage, scrap materials, and waste had accumulated in several locations within the premises, and actions were taken to remove them and clean the Printing Division premises. The Technical Officer who was newly appointed to the Department has also inspected the activities related to the warehouse and submitted a report. Necessary further actions will also be taken regarding those recommendations.

The above information is respectfully submitted regarding the observations and actions taken in relation to the reports presented by the Committee on Public Accounts under Standing Order No. 119(4) relevant to the Department of Census and Statistics under Parliamentary Series No. 489.

K M D S D. Karunaratne

K.M.D.S.D. Karunaratne
Director General
Department of Census and Statistics