

Parliamentary Series No :- 488

**Name of the Institution :- Department of
Immigration & Emigration**

**Submission of observations of Hon. Minister
and steps taken with regard to the reports
tabled by the Committee on Public Accounts
in terms of Standing Order No :- 119(4)**

Submission of observations and current progress in relation to the reports (Parliamentary Series No. 488) submitted to Parliament by the Committee on Public Accounts (COPA)

Serial No.	Issues identified by the Report	Actions taken by the institution to correct the deficiencies / Current Position
01	<u>Crediting the income to the Consolidated Fund</u> The Committee, which instructed to take action to legalize the Welfare Fund of the Department, recommended to the Chief Accounting Officer (CAO) of the Ministry of Public Security to provide the Committee with a detailed report on the manner in which income is received by this Fund.	The relevant report has been submitted by the letter of the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Security bearing No. PS/IA/E&I/109/02/24 dated 14.05.2024.
02	<u>Issuance of Electronic Passports (e-passport)</u> The Committee recommended to the C.A.O. of the Ministry of Public Security to provide the Committee with a report on the current status of the issuance of e-passports and the timelines up to the completion of this process.	A detailed report has been submitted by the letter of the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Security bearing No. PS/IA/E&I/109/02/24 dated 14.05.2024. The procurement of 05 million of electronic passports through international competitive bidding has been completed in accordance with the procurement guidelines. The Department is currently receiving the stocks of electronic passports. The process of awarding the tender after calling international competitive bids for the purchase of PKI required for personalization is also in the final stage.
03	<u>Delay in the implementation of the e-gates project</u> The Committee made recommendation to the C.A.O. of the Ministry of Public Security to submit a report to the Committee before 15 May 2024, including the reasons for	The relevant report has been submitted by the letter of the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Security bearing No. PS/IA/E&I/109/02/24 dated 14.05.2024. Currently, e-gates have been installed for the arrival terminal as a grant from the International Organization for Migration. In

	the delay in the implementation of the e-gates project to prevent congestion at the airport and the expected timeline for the completion of the project. According to the relevant report, the Controller General and the relevant technical team had participated in the Factory Acceptance Test of the e-gates on 12.05.2024, and they have informed that this project can be completed without delay.	addition to that, Airport and Aviation Services Sri Lanka (AASL) has also started activities for providing e-gates for the departure terminal.
04	<u>Effective deployment of airport staff</u> The Committee, emphasizing the need to assign more officers during busy periods according to the flight schedule, recommended that the C.A.O. of the Ministry of Public Security submit a report before 15 May 2024. This report should outline measures to deploy airport staff more effectively when preparing duty rosters, instead of the current practice of deploying equal numbers of officers for day and night shifts. Accordingly, although a minimum of 133 officers are required for a 24-hour duty period, it is not practically possible to deploy that number due to the shortage of officers, and it has been stated that more officers are being directed to night shifts than day shifts while managing the existing number of officers.	The relevant report has been submitted by the the letter of the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Security bearing No. PS/IA/E&I/109/02/24 dated 14.05.2024. During the year 2025, 45 Authorized Officers were recruited on the limited basis and 64 Authorized Officers were newly recruited on the open basis. Simultaneously, 56 Authorized Officers were promoted to Acting Senior Authorized Officers. Fifty (50) Operation Assistants were recruited to this Department during the year 2025. At present, the number of officers assigned to the airport per day through the monthly duty roster has increased compared to the number of officers assigned previously. The total number of Authorized Officers deployed on airport duty using the duty roster is about 314. Accordingly, approximately 55 authorized officers are assigned to work on a day shift and 70 officers are assigned to work on a night shift per day through the duty roster. In order to properly supervise the operational process at the airport and the authorized officers, operation assistants and other officers attached to the Department, about 10

		senior authorized officers are assigned to work on a shift. In order to support the airport passenger handling process, about 7 operation assistants are assigned to work on a shift. At present, a sufficient number of officers are assigned to work on daily airport duties to properly manage the passenger congestion and ensure that the passenger service counters are adequately operated in times of passenger congestion. Senior authorized officers work to regulate passenger congestion by studying the flight schedule and maintaining proper supervision during busy periods of airport operations. Furthermore, the Operation Assistants work to properly direct passengers to the immigration and emigration counters and provide necessary assistance to passengers.
05	<u>Ranking of Henley Passport Index</u> The Committee recommended to the C.A.O. of the Ministry of Public Security to submit a report to the Committee on the current position of Sri Lanka in relation to each of the criteria of this ranking and the measures that can be taken to improve the current position.	A report containing measures that can be taken to improve the current position of Sri Lanka in the ranking of Henley Passport Index has been forwarded to the Secretary of the Ministry by the letter of the Controller General of the Department of Immigration and Emigration bearing No. DIE/IA/05/01/2024 dated 18.12.2024 in order to submit it to the Committee on Public Accounts.
06	<u>Condition of the Regional Offices</u> The Committee stated that the condition of the regional offices of the Department of Immigration and Emigration, which have been established to issue passports, is very unsatisfactory.	As there is no shortage of passports currently, passports are issued to all clients who come to the regional offices to obtain passports. Moreover, since a new regional office was opened in Jaffna in the previous year, the congestion at the Vavuniya office has decreased. Furthermore, the lack of sufficient space in the regional offices is a major problem. It is planned to move the Matara office to a more spacious location. Efforts are being made to obtain new office facilities for the Kandy and Kurunegala offices.

07	<u>Engagement of foreigners in business activities in this country</u> The Committee paid its attention to the illegal business activities carried out by foreign nationals staying in this country on Visit Visas. The Committee pointed out that such activities are common, especially in the southern province of Sri Lanka, and emphasized that necessary steps should be taken to stop such activities immediately.	Surveillance activities have been expanded regarding the carrying out of illegal business activities by foreign nationals staying in this country on Visit Visas. Investigations are also being carried out in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Police. About 700 foreigners, who stayed illegally during the first quarter of 2026 in this manner, were sent back to their countries.
08	<u>Payment of Incentives</u> The Committee recommended to the C.A.O. of the Ministry of Public Security to provide a report containing details on the current incentive system to the Committee before 15 May 2024.	A detailed report has been submitted by the letter of the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Security bearing No. PS/IA/E&I/109/02/24 dated 14.05.2024. The payment of incentives of the Department of Immigration and Emigration has been approved by the letter of the Director General of Establishments bearing No. EST-8/ALLOW/04/125/2 dated 05.09.2012, subject to the concurrence of the General Treasury on the conditions and revised allowances, taking into account the recommendations made by the National Salaries and Cadre Commission. While the other matters and conditions mentioned in the said letter remain unchanged, the approval has been granted by the letter of the Director General of Establishments bearing No. EST-7/04/ALLOW/0125(iii) dated 2025.12.07 to apply the salaries in Schedule II of Public Administration Circular 10/2025 dated 25.03.2025 by amending the conditions I, II, III and IV mentioned in paragraph 02 thereof. Accordingly, incentives are currently being paid as per the above approval. Furthermore, relevant committees have been

		appointed to review the existing incentive system and necessary further work is currently being carried out.
09	<u>Storing of 62 CCTV cameras since 2017 without using them</u> The Committee, which expressed its strong displeasure over the storage of 62 CCTV cameras without using them for 6 years, appointed a committee comprised of officers of the Information Technology Division under the supervision of an Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Public Security to prepare a plan for the installation of these cameras, and to find out what further equipment is required according to that plan, and to submit a report to the Committee before 15 May 2024 including the date and time when the installation of these cameras will be completed.	A detailed report has been submitted by the letter of the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Security bearing No. PS/IA/E&I/109/02/24 dated 14.05.2024. The relevant 62 CCTV cameras have been installed within the Department, and are currently operational.
10	<u>Purchase of blank passports from a single institution</u> The Committee revealed that the Department of Immigration and Emigration has been purchasing blank passports from a single institution for 21 years without calling for tenders. It was also revealed in the Committee that this purchase, which has been made without considering the need for blank passports, has also been a reason for the delay in issuing the passports.	The procurement of 05 million electronic passports has been completed after inviting international competitive bids as per the procurement guidelines. Accordingly, purchases will be made from Thales DIS Finland Oy from the year 2024.
11	<u>Revision of Passport Fees</u> The Committee paid its attention to the fact that the increase in the fee for passports issued under the normal service, from Rs. 5000/= to Rs. 10000/= with effect from 01 February	The relevant officers have been instructed to revise passport fees according to the cost related to the issuance of passports by taking action in terms of the Act if it is necessary in the future.

	2024, had not been implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Act.	
12	<u>Places where people illegally enter the country are detained</u> The A.O. stated that a centre with facilities for 100 persons is being maintained in the Welisara area for this purpose, and a 2-acre land in the Ragama area has been acquired, and a building that complies with the international standards has been proposed to be constructed there.	The relevant project proposal for the construction of the new detention centre has been recommended and forwarded to the Director General of the Department of National Planning by the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs on 31.03.2026.
13	<u>Installation of CCTV cameras at Katunayake Airport</u> The Committee recommended to the C.A.O. of the Ministry of Public Security to submit a report containing details of the proposed CCTV camera system to be installed at the counters to obtain passenger information at the terminal of the Katunayake Airport to the Committee before 15 May 2024.	The relevant report has been submitted by the letter of the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Security bearing No. PS/IA/E&I/109/02/24 dated 14.05.2024. Since all administrative activities of the Katunayake Airport terminal are carried out by the Civil Aviation Authority, the installation of CCTV to obtain passenger information is carried out by that Authority.