



(Tenth Parliament - First Session)

No. 175.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Thursday, August 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

Honourable Anura Kumara Dissanayake, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Hon. Dr. Harini Amarasuriya, Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education

Hon. (Prof.) Chrishantha Abeysena, Minister of Science and Technology

Hon. Anura Karunathilaka, Minister of Ports and Civil Aviation and Minister of Energy

Hon. Sunil Kumara Gamage, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports

Hon. Ramalingam Chandrasekar, Minister of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources

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

Hon. Eranga Gunasekara, Deputy Minister of Urban Development

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

Hon. Anton Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Environment

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. 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. (Prof.) Ruwan Ranasinghe, Deputy Minister of Tourism

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

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. Roshan Akmeemana

Hon. Ajith Agalakada

Hon. Amirthanathan Adaikkalanathan

Hon. Aboobucker Athambawa

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

Hon. Hector Appuhamy

Hon. Rohitha Abeygunawardhana

Hon. U.P. Abeywickrama, Attorney at Law

Hon. (Prof.) L.M. Abeywickrama
Hon. (Dr.) Nihal Abeysinghe
Hon. (Dr.) Ramanathan Archchuna
Hon. M.K.M. Aslam
Hon. Lakshman Nipuna Arachchi
Hon. Manjula Suraweera Arachchi
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 Kugathan
Hon. Wasantha Pushpa Kumara
Hon. Chaminda Lalith Kumara
Hon. Sarath Kumara, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Mrs.) Nilanthi Kottahachchi, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Mrs.) M.A.C.S. Chathuri Gangani
Hon. Mano Ganesan
Hon. Lasith Bhashana Gamage
Hon. Thilanka U. Gamage
Hon. (Mrs.) Nilusha Lakmali Gamage, Attorney at Law
Hon. Ajantha Gammeddage
Hon. Chathura Galappaththi
Hon. Nihal Galappaththi
Hon. Ajith Gihan
Hon. (Dr.) Jagath Gunawardana
Hon. (Mrs.) Samanmali Gunasingha
Hon. Ashoka Gunasena
Hon. Gayan Janaka
Hon. Kumara Jayakody

Hon. Ruwanthilaka Jayakody
Hon. Nalin Bandara Jayamaha
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. 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. Kins Nelson
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. Lal Premanath
Hon. Padmasiri Bandara
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. Ravindra Bandara

Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen
Hon. Sudath Balagalla
Hon. (Dr.) S. Sri Bavanandarajah
Hon. Wijesiri Basnayake
Hon. Sunil Biyanwila
Hon. (Dr.) Sandaruwan Madarasinghe
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Imran Maharoof
Hon. Chanaka Madugoda
Hon. Ruwan Mapalagama
Hon. (Dr.) Nandana Millagala
Hon. Danushka Ranganath
Hon. Sanjeeva Ranasingha
Hon. Sunil Rathnasiri
Hon. R.M. Gamini Rathnayake
Hon. Suranga Rathnayaka
Hon. Asoka Sapumal Ranwala
Hon. Thurairasa Ravikaran
Hon. Mujibur Rahman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna
Hon. Namal Rajapaksa, Attorney at Law
Hon. Sunil Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. (Mrs.) Hasara Liyanage, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Mrs.) Deepthi Wasalage
Hon. M.S. Abthul Wazeeth
Hon. Kanchana Welipitiya
Hon. (Mrs.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna
Hon. R.G. Wijerathna
Hon. Ruwan Wijeweera
Hon. Darmapriya Wijesinghe
Hon. Chaminda Wijesiri
Hon. Asitha Niroshana Egoda Vithana
Hon. Athula Welandagoda
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Gnanamuththu Srineshan

Hon. Fasmin Sharif
Hon. Thilina Samarakoon
Hon. (Dr.) Nishantha Samaraweera
Hon. (Ms.) Ambika Samivel
Hon. (Dr.) Elayathamby Srinath
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. Rauff Hakeem, 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. (Mrs.) Geetha Herath, Attorney at Law
Hon. Bhagya Sri Herath, Attorney at Law
Hon. Muhammad Faizal
Hon. Riyas Farook

Mrs. Kushani Rohanadeera, 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 inform Parliament that I have received copies of another four petitions in respect of the Bill titled ‘Twenty Second Amendment to the Constitution’ filed at the Supreme Court in terms of the Article 121(1) of the Constitution, in addition to the receipt of three Petitions mentioned in my announcement dated 19 August 2026.”

2. Presentation of Papers: (1) The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education presented the Annual Performance Report of the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education for the year 2025 (Volume I - General Education, Volume II - Higher Education and Volume III - Vocational Education) and moved that the Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education, Manpower and Human Capital.

Question put, and agreed to.

(2) The Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education presented the Note on Supplementary Allocations from the Development Activities Programme appearing under Expenditure Head No. 240 of the Department of National Budget for the period from 01.07.2026 to 31.07.2026 in terms of Section 6(1) of the Appropriation Act, No. 23 of 2025.

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

(3) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the Supplementary Estimate No. 04 of 2026 and moved that the Supplementary Estimate be referred to the Committee on Public Finance.

Question put, and agreed to.

(4) The Minister of Health and Mass Media presented the Annual Report of the Distance Learning Centre for the year 2022 and moved that the Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Governance, Justice and Civil Protection.

Question put, and agreed to.

(5) The Minister of Environment 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 Ministry of Environment in the Report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament; and
- (ii) 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 National Botanic Gardens in the Report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of Public Petitions:

(1) Hon. Lasith Bhashana Gamage presented —

- (i) A petition dated 19.09.2025 from Mr. K.P. Sumanasiri Karunanayaka of 'Karunika', Essella, Veyangoda; and
 - (ii) A petition dated 09.07.2025 from Mr. P.D.T. Wasantha of No. 77, Kaluwarippuwa East, Katana.
- (2) Hon. Sunil Rajapaksha presented a petition dated 01.09.2025 from Mr. P.G.P. Somathilaka of Udagammadda, Godagama, Pelmadulla.
- (3) Hon. Bhagya Sri Herath, Attorney at Law presented a petition dated 15.10.2025 from Mr. D.M.A. Dissanayake of No. 4, Wadigawewa, Meegaswewa, Medirigiriya.

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

4. Privileges: The Hon. Gayantha Karunathilleka, seconded by Hon. (Mrs.) Chamindranee Kiriella, Attorney at Law moved,— That the question of privilege arising out of the matters raised by the Hon. (Dr.) Ramanathan Archchuna, M.P. on 07th July, 2026 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.

5. Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children (Amendment) Bill:
Order for Second Reading read.

The Minister of Health and Mass Media on behalf of the Minister of Labour moved,— That the Bill be now read a second time.

(At 11.50 a.m. the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

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

(At 2.07 p.m. the Deputy Chairperson of Committees took the Chair.)

The Deputy Minister of Labour moved,— That Hon. Sanjeeva Ranasingha do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.44 p.m. Hon. Sanjeeva Ranasingha took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

The Minister of Labour 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 Presiding Member took the Chair.

Clauses 1 to 6 were agreed to.

Enacting Clause and Title

Question that the Enacting Clause and the Title Stand part of the Bill, put, and agreed to.

Bill Reported without amendments.

The Minister of Labour moved,— That the Bill, as amended, be now read the third time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill, accordingly read the third time and passed.

6. Adjournment (Dress Code Issues Faced by Newly Recruited Muslim Nursing Assistants at Kalmunai North Base Hospital): The Minister of Labour and Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourn.

Question proposed and debated.

And it being past 5.30 p.m. Parliament was at 6.10 p.m. adjourned by the Deputy Speaker pursuant to the Resolution of Parliament this day.

Parliament adjourned accordingly until 9.30 a.m. on Friday, August 21st, 2026.