



First Session of the Ninth Parliament of the
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Parliamentary Series No. 165

First Report of the Ministerial Consultative Committees
(October - 2021)

Presented by

Hon. Ajith Rajapaksa
Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees

on 09 June 2022

Minutes of the following Ministerial Consultative Committee Meetings are included in the report as the Committee has confirmed them.

Name of the Ministerial Consultative Committee		Date
01.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Mass Media	21.11.2020
02.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Irrigation	23.11.2020
03.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Public Services, Provincial Councils & Local Government	23.11.2020
04.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Urban Development & Housing	24.11.2020
05.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Agriculture	24.11.2020
06.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Fisheries	25.11.2020
07.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Plantation	26.11.2020
08.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Lands	26.11.2020
09.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education	28.11.2020
10.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Foreign	30.11.2020
11.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Power	30.11.2020
12.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Defence	01.12.2020
13.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Trade	01.12.2022
14.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Ports & Shipping	02.12.2020
15.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Tourism	02.12.2020
16.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment	03.12.2020
17.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife & Forest Resources Conservation	03.12.2020
18.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Transport	04.12.2020

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19.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice	05.12.2020
20.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Finance	07.12.2020
21.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Highways	07.12.2020
22.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Tourism	09.02.2020
23.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice	10.02.2021
24.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Agriculture	11.02.2021
25.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Foreign	11.02.2021
26.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education	10.03.2021
27.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment	25.03.2021
28.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Fisheries	26.03.2021
29.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Mass Media	20.07.2021
30.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife & Forest Conservation	21.09.2021

Minutes of the following Ministerial Consultative Committee Meetings are not included in the report, as the Committee has not confirmed them.

Name of the Ministerial Consultative Committee		Date
01.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Buddhasasana, Religious & Cultural Affairs	2020.11.23
02.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Energy	2020.11.25
03.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Youth & Sports	2020.11.26
04.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Water Supply	2020.11.27
05.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Health	2020.11.28
06.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Industries	2020.12.03
07.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Labour	2020.12.04
08.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Agriculture	2021.03.09
09.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Finance	2021.03.09
10.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Power	2021.03.09
11.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Trade	2021.03.10
12.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Plantation	2021.03.23
13.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Transport	2021.03.23
14.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Urban Development & Housing	2021.03.24
15.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Ports & Shipping	2021.03.24
16.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Lands	2021.03.24
17.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Irrigation	2021.03.26
18.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Public Services, Provincial Councils & Local Government	2021.04.07
19.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Defence	2021.04.08

Report of the Ministerial Consultative Committees (October 2021)

20.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Highways	2021.07.19
21.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Foreign	2021.08.04
22.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment	2021.03.25
23.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Fisheries	2021.08.05
24.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Irrigation	2021.09.07
25.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education	2021.09.10
26.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice	2021.10.07
27.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Mass Media	2021.10.21
28.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Tourism	2021.10.21
29.	Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife & Forest Conservation	2021.10.22

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Mass Media
01st Meeting - 21st November 2020**

Committee Members present

Hon. Keheliya Rambukwella (Chair)
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. Manusha Nanayakkara
Hon. Uddika Premarathne
Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath

Non-Committee Members present

Hon. (Prof.) G.L. Peirs
Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera
Hon. Dilan Perera
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Mohomad Muzsamml
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. S.M.M. Muszhaaraff
Hon. Ajith Rajapaksha
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakkiyan Rajapuththiran Rasamanikkam
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam
Hon. (Dr.) Suren Raghavan
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, P.C
Hon. Marjan Faleel

1. Motions by Hon. Members of Parliament

1.1 Providing opportunity to the Hon. Members of Parliament to comment on the Sri Lanka Press Council Act, which is to be amended – Hon. (Prof). Charitha Herath

The Hon. Chair informed the Members of Parliament to submit their proposals as it is expected to amend the Press Council Act.

1.2 Formulation of a self- regulatory mechanism for the media institutions, and other matters-Hon. Manusha Nanayakkara

The Hon. Member proposed that a parliamentary bill has been drafted to formulate a self- regulatory mechanism and that it is appropriate to legalize it.

1.2.1 Broadcasting Parliamentary proceedings

The Hon. Member proposed that parliamentary proceedings be broadcast through the channel “T” of Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation.

1.2.2 Control and regulation of websites

It was informed by the Hon. Chair that a methodology of regulating the websites of the sort described by the Hon. Member of Parliament would be created.

1.2.3 Controlling news websites and social media

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that a suitable methodology should be created to cease the acts of character assassination and defamation carried out by news websites and social media based on untruth.

1.3 Censoring the fake news published on foreign websites – Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, P.C.

The Hon. Member requested that a methodology be developed to regulate foreign websites that publish news in a way that leads to character assassination of individuals.

1.4 Media reporting in regard to the clashes that occurred in Digana area in 2018 - Hon.(Dr.) Suren Raghavan

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that it is necessary to control the publication of the news which spreads racism through the internet

1.5 Assaulting two local media personnel in Mulativu district and other matters - Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

1.5.1 Assaulting two local media personnel in Mulativu district

The Director General of the Department of Government Information informed the Committee that action has been taken according to the law against (the destruction of the camera equipment) and the assault on two media personnel who were engaged in reporting the forest destruction caused in Mulativu district.

1.5.2 Providing a permanent building for the post office in the town of Mulliyawalai in Mulativu district

The Hon. Member requested that a permanent building be provided for the sub post office in the town of Mulliyawalai in Mulativu district

1.5.3 Providing the membership of the Employees Provident Fund and Employees Trust Fund to freelance media personnel

The Hon. Member requested that action be taken to provide the membership of the Employees Trust Fund and the Employees Provident Fund to freelance media personnel

1.6 Problems existing in the Northern and Eastern provinces - Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren

1.6.1 Specifying a basic salary to the media personnel in the province

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee that a methodology be created to improve the abilities of the media personnel and that a basic salary be specified based on the profession

1.6.2 Providing employment to the persons in the Northern and Eastern provinces, who have studied mass media

The Hon. Member requested that the graduates having university degrees on media studies, mass media communication and communication studies be provided with employment in that field.

1.6.3 Establishing sound studios to provide training to the media personnel in the Northern and Eastern provinces

The Hon. Member requested that sound studios, which are relevant for providing training to the media personnel in Northern and Eastern provinces, be established

1.6.4 Shortage of teachers for the subject of communication and media studies in the Northern and Eastern provinces

The Hon. Member made a request from the Committee to provide teachers for teaching the subjects of communication and media studies

1.6.5 Awarding scholarships to freelance media personnel in the Northern and Eastern provinces to get higher education

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to take action to commence a scholarship program and relevant training centers for media personnel to receive higher education

1.6.6 Establishing a multiple communication centre in Jaffna district in the Northern province

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to take action to construct the currently proposed buildings such as a theatre hall, a tele studio and an auditorium in Jaffna district

1.6.7 Establishing language centres which are necessary for the media personnel in Northern and Eastern provinces to receive language education

The Hon. Member requested that the language resource centres which are required for the media personnel in the Northern and Eastern provinces to learn Sinhala and English languages be established

1.6.8 Providing identity cards to the media personnel in the Northern and Eastern provinces

The Hon. Member requested that identity cards be provided to the media personnel in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a consolidated program should be formulated together with the Ministry of Education with regard to some proposals submitted by the Hon. Member of Parliament

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that even though it is difficult to provide employment to the graduates in the media field definitely in the very manner in which the medical graduates are provided with employment, they can be provided with opportunities in the same manner in which the graduates of other fields are provided with employment.

Also, the Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a program would be formulated to provide financial assistance to the professionals in the media field to follow degree and post graduate courses in state universities or institutions approved by the University Grants Commission.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it has been proposed to establish 25 media schools in the 25 districts in order to provide a practical and subject related education on communication and media studies and that it is expected to provide the necessary media equipment to the media units of the aforesaid schools.

Furthermore, the Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it is expected to commence the digitalization process in the Northern and Western provinces

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the Ministry awards scholarships to more than 100 persons in the media field to follow study courses

and that media personnel in the Northern and Eastern provinces can also have that opportunity.

1.6.9 The building of the Point-Pedro post office in Jaffna district, which is under the purview of the Army

The Hon. Member requested that this building be transferred to the Department of Posts.

The Postmaster General informed the Committee that this can be transferred in the year 2022 and that it is appropriate to keep it under the purview of the Army until then.

1.6.10 Threats made to the Secretary of the Association of Tamil Media Personnel in Batticaloa district in the Eastern province

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that threats have been made to the Secretary of the Association of Tamil Media Personnel in Batticaloa district in the Eastern province, who took action to report about the destruction caused to the forests in Batticaloa district.

1.7 The current situation of the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation and the Independent Television Network- Hon. Shantha Bandara

The Hon. Member inquired about the current situation of the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation and the Independent Television Network.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that even though the aforesaid institutions have been relegated to a loss making state, those institutions will be improved to the profit making state in the future

1.7.1 Distribution of letters in Kurunegala district by the Department of Posts

It was informed by the Postmaster General that the disruption of the activities of the Department of Posts by the corona disease vehemently affected the activities of the Regional Postal Superintendent's Office and the sub post offices in Kurunegala district.

However, it was further informed that action will be taken to open the offices in the future in accordance with the health guidelines.

It was further informed to the Committee that the pharmaceutical distribution activities in the district is being continuously carried out. The Postmaster General informed the Committee that the Divisional Postal Superintendent's Office and the divisional sub post offices in Kurunegala district had to be temporarily closed down.

Also, the Postmaster General informed the Committee that pharmaceutical distribution activities are being carried out continuously under the auspices of the Polpithigama office.

1.7.2 Shortage of teachers in schools for media studies and aesthetic Subjects

The Hon. Member made a request from the Committee to take action to solve the problem of shortage of teachers in the schools in North Western province for teaching the subjects of communication and media studies, art, and drama and theatre.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that 18000 graduates that are undergoing training presently will be productively recruited to the Teachers' Service and that the graduates of the University of Kalyaniya will also be deployed to serve in the schools in which a shortage of teachers exists.

1.8 Use of language when presenting news by media - Hon. Uddika Premaratne

The Hon. Member proposed to the Committee that it is appropriate to formulate guidelines for the presentation of news as a deterioration can be observed in the use of language in presenting news by the private media channels.

1.8.1 Telecasting new creative programs on state television channels

The Hon. Member made a request from the Committee to take action to produce and telecast new, creative and qualitative programs as viewers have been compelled to watch television programs more due to the covid-19 pandemic situation.

1.8.2 To increase the revenue of state television institutions

The Hon. Member proposed to the Committee that a certain target should be provided to the staff of the state television institutions in order to get their contribution to produce creative programs as is done by private television channels and that a system should be formulated to provide benefits to the staff based on the fulfillment of the targets given.

1.9 Making amendments to the delimitation on postal areas for the purpose of letter distribution. – Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

The Hon. Member of Parliament requested the Committee to amend the delimitation on the distribution of letters in the rural areas in the district of Matara.

The Postmaster General informed the Committee that the problems can be observed once the delimitation activities are concluded in the future.

1.9.1 Attaching Letter Delivery Substitutes to the permanent staff of the Department of Posts

The Hon. Member made a request from the Committee to take action to attach to the permanent staff the group of persons who have been serving as letter delivery substitutes with dedication for a number of years.

The Postmaster General informed the Committee that requests have been made for making recruitments for around 150 areas of which the delimitation has been concluded by now and a certain number of substitutes can be confirmed on their posts upon the creation of vacancies.

1.9.2 Renovating the rural sub post offices that belong to the Department of Posts

The Hon. Member made a request from the Committee to take suitable action immediately as there is possibility for the rural sub post offices in difficult areas getting destroyed due to the fact that they are not renovated.

The Postmaster General informed the Committee that there are around 60 sub post offices under the Department to be renovated and the necessary renovation activities can be carried out in the year 2021.

1.9.3 The Post Office in Pitabaddara in Deniyaya Divisional Secretariat Division in Matara district.

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to establish this office in a new building as this office is being run on rent basis.

1.10 Regulating the use of social media- Hon. Ajith Rajapaksha

The Hon. Member made a request from the Committee to formulate a suitable methodology to censor the media which publish false news.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it has been proposed to take immediate action in regard to the use of social media.

1.11 Formulation of a simple and convenient methodology to register the websites, and other matters – Hon. Saanakkia Rajapuththiran, Rasamanikkam

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to formulate an easy and simple methodology to register websites as a large number of small scale web sites are functioning in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

1.11.1 Formulation of a methodology to complain against the fake news items published on news web sites.

The Hon. Member requested that the Committee to establish a suitable institutional structure to which complaints can be made in a way that media freedom is not curtailed against news published on news websites that cause damage and problems to the images of individuals and institutions.

1.11.2 Formulation of a methodology to produce polite media personnel

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that it would be preferable to develop a methodology to produce journalists who adhere to the polite media tradition.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that approval was received for registering websites under his government in the year 2014 and that it is expected to put that process into action again.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that he would take action to reduce the registration fees and annual fees by some extent.

Also, the Hon. Chair further informed the Committee that the Hon. Member of Parliament has the ability to make a complaint to the Sri Lanka Press Council against the publication of false news.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the Ministry of Mass Media awards scholarships to more than 100 persons in the media field to follow study courses.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that allocations have been made to commence an insurance scheme to media personnel and that it has been proposed to take action under the leadership of the Hon. Chairman to commence a Special Media School in the year 2021 for the creation of sensitive media personnel of higher quality in order to create an ethical media culture.

2. The meeting of the Committee was, at 11.30 a.m. , adjourned up to 2.00 p.m. on 19th January 2021
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**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Irrigation
01st Meeting - 23rd November 2020**

Committee Members present

Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa (Chair)
Hon. Siripala Gamlath
Hon. Anuradha Jayarathna
Hon. Dilan Perera
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda
Hon. Nimal Piyatissa

Non-Committee Members present

Hon.(Dr.) (Mrs.) Seetha Arambepola
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. H.M.M. Harees
Hon. Govindan Karunakaram
Hon. Sivgnanam Srithran
Hon. Charels Nirmalanathan
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. H. Nandasena
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. S.M.M. Muszhaaraff
Hon. Gunatilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. Mohomad Muzammil
Hon.(Dr.) Suren Raghavan
Hon. Marjan Faleel

1. Discussion on the Ministerial Affairs

1.1 Future plans of the Ministry

The Secretary to the Ministry of Irrigation made a descriptive explanation of the future plans and the present activities of the Ministry of Irrigation to the Committee

2. Motions By Hon. Members of Parliament

**2.1 Fulfillment of the drinking water and agricultural water requirements –
Hon.(Dr.) Suren Raghavan**

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the drinking water and agricultural water requirements can be fulfilled by getting the tanks and anicuts in Northern and Eastern provinces cleaned.

2.2 Expediting the Hadaoya project – Hon Faizal Cassim

Hon. Chair was informed that it is expected to commence the KubukkanOya project as well.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it is expected to reconstruct all the tanks with the assistance of voluntary organizations, the people of the village and the other organizations.

2.3 Getting allocations for the reconstruction activities of the tanks - Hon. H. Nandasena

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a programme of reconstructing at least one tank for one village is implemented.

2.4 Reconstruction of the tanks in Moneragala district – Hon. Faizal Cassim

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that these tanks should be reconstructed with the participation of the villagers, voluntary organizations and the army.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a rain water harvesting programme will be implemented to solve the drinking water problem of the people in the Northern province.

2.5 Motions submitted by Hon. Dilan Perera

2.5.1 Providing compensation to the people who lost their lands due to the Uma Oya project

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action should be taken to provide compensation to the land owners without delay when lands are acquired for projects.

2.5.2 Taking action to conclude the Morana project expeditiously

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to take action to include the Morana project expeditiously.

2.6 The shortage of drinking water in Arugambay area in Pothuvil - Hon. S. M.M. Muszhaaraff

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that public life has been restricted by a lack of drinking water in the Pothuvil area, which has also affected the tourism industry. Hon. Member also stated that this could be resolved if the Hadaoya project is completed.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that immediate action would be taken to solve this problem.

2.7 The water problem in Athimalaya area in Moneragala district - Hon. H. M.M. Harees

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken to provide relief to all three districts by expediting the Welioya project.

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that the preliminary work of this project has already been concluded.

2.8 Requesting alternative lands for seven families who lost their lands in the construction of Basnagoda tank in Ruwanwella electorate- Hon. Sudath Manjula

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that compensation is being paid to people who have lost their lands and that alternative lands would be found and provided concurrently.

The Hon. Chair requested that the State Ministers take measures to provide sufficient lands after viewing the region and identifying a suitable place.

2.9 Motions submitted by Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

2.9.1 Allocations made for the tank reconstruction projects in Batticaloa district

The Hon Anuradha Jayarathna, State Minister informed the Committee that necessary action is taken to reconstruct small tanks and anicuts and also that action is taken to provide long-term solutions to irrigation problems.

2.9.2 Expediting the reconstruction of Pudukunawa tank

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that four reservoirs have been proposed to reduce the risk of flooding in the Batticaloa area, and that the Rambakanoya project has been completed.

It was also said that funds for the projects have been allocated in this year's budget, and that as a result, floods would be managed and water would be available for farming activities throughout the Yala season.

2.9.3 Irregularities occurred in issuing licences to collect sand from the Mundenuaru reservoir

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that, despite the fact that the Chenkaladi Irrigation Engineer had granted approval to illegally issue a special

permit for the removal of sand from the Mundenuaru Reservoir, information has come to light that 32 licenses had been issued.

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that licences could be issued to remove sand subject to a maximum amount of 30 cubes per month in Mahaweli projects and that if special licences are issued it would be done through the head office.

Because banks of rivers are damaged and river beds are excessively dug when sand is mined by private parties, the Hon. Chair informed the Committee that mining sand in rivers should be carried out by the Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority or the Department of Irrigation, and that other parties should be given the opportunity to transport sand after it is mined.

2.10 Unauthorized sand mining in Iranamadu project-Hon. (Dr.) Suren Raghavan

The Hon. Chair directed that action be taken to issue a circular with specific directions for curbing illicit sand mining.

2.11 Getting irrigation requirement fulfilled from the Wayamba Maha Ela which flows through Matale district - Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda

Despite the fact that the expected estimate for this project is slightly higher, the Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that action will be done to meet the district's irrigation needs.

2.12. Providing the tanks associated with the estates in Nuwaraeliya district for the use of people- Hon. Nimal Piyatissa

The Hon. Member requested that these tanks and anicuts associated with estates be released from those who have encroached upon them without permission and the said tanks and anicuts be provided for the use of people.

2.13. Reconstruction of the tanks situated in Hewaheta electorate and constructing a tank in Gonamada forest reserve in Ankumbura, Pujapitiya - Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

The Hon. Member requested that action be taken to reconstruct Muthukelina tank, Moragolla tank and Bogamuwa tank along with the tank situated in Gonamada forest reserve in Ankumbura, Pujapitiya

2.14 Problems of the villagers of Moragolla and AkkaraPanaha in regard to the Moraghakanda reservoir in Matale district – Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the irrigation requirements of the villagers have not been fulfilled and the houses in the village have split and

at the same time people have faced a problematic situation due to the intrusion of elephants into the villages.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that action should be taken to inform the Regional Disaster Management Centre about the splits in houses and that the activities related to the Mahaweli Authority are carried out by this Ministry.

2.15 Obtaining the water required for agricultural activities in Killinochchi, Mulativu, Mannar and Vavuniya districts - Hon. S. Sritharan

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the districts of Killinochchi, Mulativu, Mannar and Vavuniya make a big contribution to paddy cultivation in Sri Lanka and that the water of the brooks named Paliyaru, Kudamuruttiyaru, Mandakallaru flow to the sea without being used for agriculture.

It was informed by the Hon. Member that earlier discussions were made to turn the water of the Paliyaru brook to Jaffna and that the foundation was laid to construct a tank in Chawakachcheri. It was further informed by the Hon. Member of Parliament that the said projects were stopped halfway though they were important to provide drinking water to the aforesaid area.

Also, it was informed by the Hon. Member that though paddy fields have been provided to the Devapuram village in Killinochchi, it has not been able to cultivate those paddy fields due to the lack of water.

It was further informed that the Department of Forest Conservation obstructs farmers in doing farming using the water of the Anaviluddan tank.

It was informed by the Hon. Member that though 1000 acres of agricultural land can be provided with water by the Wattakachchi Puludiyaaru tank, the aforesaid tank does not come under the purview of the Department of Irrigation. He requested that the said tank be reconstructed.

2.16 Motions submitted by Hon.(Dr.) Suren Raghavan

2.16.1 Reconstruction of the Pulidiyaaru tank

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that the reconstruction activities of the tank has been obstructed by the fact that the banks of this tank abounds with huge trees.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that reconstruction activities of 114 irrigation channels in Killinochchi district are scheduled to be commenced.

2.16.2 Delay in the activities of the “Wev Gam Pubuduwa” project

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it is expected to continue these projects using the local technology without obtaining foreign aid.

2.17 Motions submitted by Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

2.17.1 Taking action to solve the drinking water problem of the people of Iranamadu.

The Hon. Member requested that immediate action be taken to solve the drinking water problem of Iranamadu people and also to provide electricity to 1000 families.

2.17.2 Expediting the Yodaweve project and the Kivuloya project in Mannar

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that allocations have been made by the 2021 budget to reconstruct the tanks concerned.

It was informed by the Hon. Chair that the requirement of the backhoe machine for reconstruction work of the Yodaweve project in Mannar will be considered in the future.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that attention is paid to the matter of unauthorized acquisition of land within Yodaweve.

2.18 Reconstruction of small tanks, providing pure drinking water, developing irrigation and agricultural roads in Batticaloa district – Hon. Govindan Karunakaran

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the harvest can be increased by 50% by removing the silt filled in the small tanks that provide water to the paddy fields in Batticaloa district which provide about 300,000 metric tons of paddy annually.

The Hon. Member requested that all the small agricultural roads in the Paduwagkarei area be developed as those roads come under the purview of the Department of Irrigation.

Also, the Hon. Member requested that necessary action be taken to solve the drinking water problem of the people in Batticaloa district.

It was informed by the Hon. Chair that the government makes allocations for lift irrigation as a policy.

2.19 Taking necessary action to control the floods in Kalmunei district - Hon. H.M.M. Harees

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that a programme of expanding the estuary in Batticaloa district has been proposed for this and that the aforesaid programme is not able to be implemented due to the strong protest exerted by the fishermen in that district.

2.20 Reconstruction of the Welimada, Ambewala canal which has been breached by earth slips – Hon. Dilan Perera

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that a proper programme would be adopted for this.

2.21 Motions submitted by Upul Mahendra Rajapaksa

2.21.1 Reconstruction of the places in Attanagalla oya, that have got eroded

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that it has been proposed to renovate 18 anicuts and to construct several new anicuts. At the same time it was also informed that a portion of the allocations made for the Basnagoda reservoir project could be used for this task.

2.21.2 Taking action to reduce the speed of the downward flow of water by constructing stone walls in Attanagalla Oya

The Hon. Chair instructed the Director General of Irrigation to take action to expedite this task.

2.22 Minimizing the damages caused to river banks by reconstructing the canals in Kalutara district - Hon. Marjan Faleel

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that it is expected to carry out the reconstruction work of several identified canals which combine with the Benthota river.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee to take action to identify the main canals and reconstruct them.

2.23 Reconstructing the small and large scale tanks situated in Pothuvil area - Hon. S.M.M. Muszhaaraff

The Director General of Irrigation informed the Committee that survey activities required for the reconstruction of the aforesaid tanks are currently being carried out.

2.24 Motions submitted by Hon. Sudath Manjula

2.24.1 Providing relief to the people in Ruwanwalla and Dehiovita Divisional Secretariat Divisions, who are affected by the overflow of rivers and establishing an irrigation sub division office.

The Hon. Member requested that necessary action be taken in regard to the severe impacts made to the agricultural activities by the overflow of rivers and also that action be taken to establish an irrigation sub office as an irrigation office is not situated in the electorate, to which complaints can be submitted on such an occasion.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Director General of Irrigation to take action to attach an officer of the Ministry of Irrigation to the Divisional Secretariat and the State Minister was also instructed to visit that area and look into the aforesaid activities.

2.24.2 The problem of drinking water and the problems of access roads encountered by the people in Moraliya and Kanangama, Dehiovita Grama Niladhari Divisions

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this matter will be taken into consideration in the future

3. The Meeting of the Committee was, at 12.45 p.m., adjourned until 11.00 a.m. on 20th January 2021.

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Public Services, Provincial Councils and Local Government First Meeting – 23 November 2020

Committee Members Present

Hon. Janaka Bandara Thennakoon (Chair)
Hon. (Dr.) Sarath Weerasekera (State Minister)
Hon. Sudath Manjula

Non-Committee Members present

Hon. Prasanna Ranatunga
Hon. Thenuka Vidanagamage
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. Shantha Bandara

Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Lalith Ellawala
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban
Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Asanka Navarathna
Hon. Anupa Pasqual
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. Nalin Fernando
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe
Hon. M. W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara
Hon. Marjan Faleel
Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage

1. Motions by Hon. Members of Parliament

1.1. Delay in receipt of pensions for public servants – Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara

The Secretary to the Ministry and the Director General of Pensions informed the Committee about the offices where there are delays in the public service and the methods of payment of pensions.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that attention would be paid to this matter.

1.2. The shortage of teachers in provincial council schools, and other matters - Hon. Shantha Bandara

1.2.1. The shortage of teachers in provincial council schools

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the Hon. Minister of Education has submitted a Cabinet Paper to recruit new teachers.

1.2.2. The requirement of a community hall for the Narammala Pradeshiya Sabha.

It was informed by the State Minister to make a request from him in writing in this regard.

1.2.3. Deprivation of the pension due to an act of personal revenge

The Hon. Member of Parliament requested that attention be paid to this matter

1.3. Providing the first appointment of teachers to difficult areas - Hon. Diana Gamage

The Hon. Member requested that action be taken to provide the first appointment of teachers to the very areas in which they reside due to the fact that teachers encounter a number of personal problems as a result of acting in this manner.

It was informed by the Hon. Chair that it has been decided to award the first appointment to the very areas in which the appointees reside.

1.4. Acting in a fair manner when making recruitments and awarding appointments, and some other matters - Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

1.4.1. Acting in a fair manner when making recruitments and awarding appointments

The Hon. Member requested that instructions be given to the Public Service Commission in this regard.

The Hon. Chair informed that attention would be paid to this matter.

1.4.2. Efficiency of the Department of Pensions

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to the efficiency of the Department of Pensions.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that action was taken to pay a temporary allowance of 25,000 rupees to the pensioners whose pension could not be determined due to the Covid epidemic existing at present.

1.4.3. The number of public officers that retire annually

The Hon. Member inquired about the methodology available to specify the number of these officers.

The Director General of Pensions made an explanation of this matter to the Committee

1.4.4. Non receipt of the allowances related to the pension on some occasions

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the allowances related to the pension of a mother who died at child birth have not been received yet.

It was informed by the Director General of Pensions to convey information relating to this matter to him and that he would pay attention to it.

1.4.5. Taking action to lease out the auditorium of the Imaduwa Pradeshiya Saba.

The Hon. Member requested that a suitable methodology be formulated for such activities.

It was informed by the Hon. Member that this type of corruption that occurs in these institutions can be reduced by recruiting qualified persons to the post of Secretary to the Pradeshiya Sabha.

1.5. Absence of coordination among institutions in regard to the payment of pensions - Hon. (Major) Sudharshana Denipitiya

Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya informed the Committee that attention should be paid to this matter.

1.6. Introducing a new methodology to pay the pensions, and other matters – Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal

1.6.1. Introducing a new methodology to pay the pensions

The Hon. Member requested that a new methodology be introduced to pay the pensions expeditiously

Hon. State Minister inquired about the possibility of paying a monthly allowance with effect from the date of retirement on the basis of recovering it later until the pension is calculated and paid.

It was informed by the Secretary to the Ministry that a methodology can be formulated to avoid the delays that occur in paying the pensions.

1.6.2. Appointment of Grama Niladharis to the Puttalam electorate

The Hon. Member of Parliament informed the Committee that there are no Grama Niladharis to cover the Grama Niladhari divisions in Puttalam electorate

The Hon. Member requested that Grama Niladharis be appointed to this electorate and attention be paid to the fact whether such appointees have the ability of communicating in the language used in the area.

1.6.3. Dividing the Anamaduwa Pradeshiya Sabha area

It was informed by the the Hon. Member that it is appropriate to divide this Pradeshiya Sabha area, in which a huge population lives.

1.6.4. Not making payments for the activities carried out under the “Gamin Gamata Dorin Dorata” programme

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to the matter of making payments to the groups that conducted this program

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that it has been proposed to make all the payments before the 31st of December this year.

1.7. Awarding graduate appointments by the new government and confirming trainee graduates on their posts – Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

1.7.1. Graduate appointments by the new government

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to the problematic situation that has been created by the cancellation of these appointments after the said appointments were awarded.

The Secretary to the Ministry made an explanation of the matters related to this problem.

1.7.2. Conforming the unconfirmed trainee graduates on their posts.

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to the fact of confirming around 14000 of such graduates on their posts.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the approval has been given to the Cabinet Paper submitted by the Minister of Finance for confirming these graduates on their posts.

1.8. Making an intervention into the problem relating to the effective date of the degree certificate – Hon. Asanka Navarathna

The Hon. Member expressed gratitude for the intervention made in the problem relating to the effective date of degree certificates awarded by the Universities of Kelaniya, Sri Jayawardenepura, and Peradeniya in the years 2012–2013.

1.9. Providing facilities to the Millaniya Pradeshiya Sabha- Hon. Lalith Ellawala

The Hon. Member requested that building facilities and other facilities be provided to the Millaniya Pradeshiya Sabha which functions with less facilities

The Hon. Chair directed to make a written request in this regard.

1.10. Extending the period of service of the Secretaries to Provincial Councils after their retirement, and other matters – Hon. Prasanna Ranatunga

1.10.1. Extending the period of service of the Secretaries to Provincial Councils after their retirement

It was informed by the Hon. Minister that the officers in lower grades had been deprived of the opportunity of being promoted to higher grades due to this course of action

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that though there was no requirement to act in this manner it was not correct for the Governors to act in such action.

1.10.2. Transferring officials between the central government and the provincial councils.

The Hon. Member inquired about the possibility of introducing a suitable methodology for transfers.

It was informed by the Hon. Chair that action would be taken to provide a solution to this problem.

1.11. The vacancies that exist in local authorities and Grama Niladhari divisions, and other matters – Hon. Madhura Withanage

1.11.1. Vacancies existing for the posts in local authorities

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to fill the vacancies existing in the local authorities in Colombo district.

The Hon. Member also requested that the officers of the supra grade of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service be appointed to the posts of Commissioner in the municipal councils of the main cities.

It was informed by the Secretary to the Ministry that approval can be obtained to deploy the officers, who have retired from service recently, in service again for the vacancies existing in the health field of these institutions.

It was further informed by him that the officers with more than 15 years of experiences in the management service can be awarded appointments for supra grade positions.

The Hon. Member inquired about the filling of the vacancies for the post of engineer existing in local authorities as there is a shortage of engineers in local authorities.

It was informed by the Secretary to the Ministry that it expected to hold a written examination for recruiting about 190 engineers but approval can be given for awarding appointments on contract basis if there is an urgent requirement.

1.11.2. Division of Grama Niladhari divisions in an imbalanced manner

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that this imbalance has caused a problematic situation.

Also, it was informed by the Hon. Member that vacancies exist in most of the Grama Niladhari divisions.

1.11.3. Non availability of an internal audit system in local authorities

It was further informed by the Hon. Member that it is appropriate to appoint an independent team for carrying out internal audit activities in local authorities.

1.11.4. Absorbing the doctors who are employed under the Central government to the Provincial Public Service.

The Hon. Member inquired about the reason for the doctors employed under the central government are not employed under the provincial public service.

It was informed by the Secretary to the Ministry that such a situation does not exist but there exists a shortage of doctors.

1.11.5. Appointment of a chief medical officer for municipal councils.

It was informed by the Secretary to the Ministry that the recommendation of the Ministry can be given for this if this request is submitted to the Department of Management Services through this Ministry.

1.12. The problems existing in the local authorities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces – Hon. Shanakiyah Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

1.12.1. Division of Grama Niladhari divisions in an imbalanced manner

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to pay its attention to this matter.

1.12.2. Establishing new local authorities and updating the existing local authorities

It was also informed by the Hon. Member that there has arisen a requirement of establishing new local authorities and updating the existing local authorities taking into consideration the current population.

The Hon. Member requested that there is a requirement of establishing urban councils for Killinochchi and Mullativu districts and that a separate committee should be appointed to consider such matters.

It was informed by the Hon. Chair that action would be taken to appoint a committee for this purpose.

1.12.3. Appointing an accountant to the Kalmunei Divisional Secretariat

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to this matter.

1.13. The delay in the valuation of the sales outlets in Jaela – Hon. Nalin Fernando

It was informed by the Hon. Member of Parliament that the government has made a re-valuation of the sales outlets of Jaela urban Council and Jaela Pradeshiya Sabha after the lapse of a period of 12 years since the said sales outlets were rented out and that the rent of the aforesaid sales outlets has been increased by a huge amount.

The Hon. Member requested that a relief program be implemented in this regard.

1.14. Utilization of the buildings of the local authorities for productive purposes and changing the existing Local Authorities Election System - Hon. D. Weerasinghe

1.14.1. Utilization of the buildings of local authorities for productive purposes

It was further informed by the Hon. Member that the newly constructed buildings such as the sales outlets on the upper floor of the bus station constructed by the

Ampara urban council are not used for the due purposes and that it is appropriate to allocate such places for productive purposes.

1.14.2. Changing the existing Local Authorities Election System

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that a more appropriate system should be introduced in place of the Local Authorities Election System existing at present.

The Hon. State Minister informed the committee that action has been taken to change the existing Local Authorities Election System.

The legal officer of the State Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government informed the Committee that a proposal has been submitted to the Minister either to improve this election system having identified by the Ministry the shortcomings existing in mixed representation system at present or to appoint a committee to introduce another election system.

1.15 Allocations not being made properly due to the fact that provincial councils do not function – Hon. Rajika Wickramasinghe

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that allocations are not made to Kegalle district in a fair manner due to this situation.

The Hon. Member requested that allocations be made either by the central government for the development activities of Yatiyanthota and Bulathkohupitiya Pradeshiya Sabhas in Kegalle district, which earn a very low income.

It was informed by the State Minister that the proposals for the proposed development activities in the respective areas of each local authority be submitted to him.

1.16 Holding the provincial council election - Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon

It was informed by the Hon. Member that the provincial council election should be held expeditiously. It was further informed by the Hon. Member of Parliament that action should be taken to rectify the unfair sections incorporated in the amendment to the local authorities election system.

It was informed by the Hon. Chair that the Hon. Prime Minister has been informed of the fact of holding the provincial council election and that action would be taken in this regard expeditiously.

It was informed by the State Minister that though the delimitation was carried out, it has been referred to a review committee as it was not passed by a two-

thirds majority and that the report of the aforesaid committee has not yet been submitted.

1.17 The fact of amending the laws incorporated into the Local Authorities Amendment Act and other matters - Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka

1.17.1. The laws incorporated into the Local Authorities Amendment Act

It was informed by the Hon. Member to pay attention to the laws incorporated into the Act in the proximity of the election preventing a certain section of officials from contesting the election.

1.17.2. Attaching public officials for difficult service subject to a period of 5 years

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to the matter of attaching public officials to some other place after the period of difficult service though they have been subjected to a difficult service period of 5 years.

Similarly the Hon. Member requested that a methodology be prepared in the future to award appointments to officers in the areas in which they reside.

1.17.3. Conducting a national level competition among local authorities.

The Hon. Member requested that a national level competition be conducted among local authorities with the objective of enhancing the performance of the local authorities.

1.18 The activities carried out by the local authorities in Ratnapura district - Hon.(Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi

The Hon. Member requested that the roads in the Kalawana electorate in Ratnapura district, which are under the purview of the provincial council, be reconstructed and the drain system be constructed.

The Hon. Member also requested that action be taken to construct a shopping complex in the land of around 1 acre situated in the proximity of the fish market in Madampe.

1.19 Lack of fire services and fire trucks in Mannar and Mulativu districts, and other matters – Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

1.19.1. Fire services and fire trucks for Mannar and Mulativu districts

The Hon. Member inquired about the action taken in regard to the requests made for obtaining fire services and fire trucks for Mannar and Mulativu districts.

The State Minister informed the Committee that orders have been placed for that and the aforesaid fire trucks can be obtained within a period of five or six months once the relevant approval is granted by the Foreign Resources Department.

1.19.2. Establishing four new Pradeshiya Sabhas in the Northern province

The Hon. Member inquired about the progress of the activities of establishing four new Pradeshiya Sabas in the Northern Province.

The Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government informed the Committee that 83 proposals have been received by now for establishing new local authorities and that the appointment of district committees have been concluded for that purpose.

1.20 Withdrawal of officers from Local Government Service who received specialist training and other matters – Hon. Sudath Manjula

1.20.1. Withdrawal of officers from Local Government Service who receive specialist training

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that a huge drawback could be observed in the services provided by the local authorities due to the fact that the officers of the local authorities who receive specialist training withdraws from that service after receiving the aforesaid training.

1.20.2. The annual budget of the local authorities

The Hon. Member drew the attention of the Committee to the annual budgets of local authorities.

1.20.3. Streamlining the local government service

The Hon. Member requested that the local government service be streamlined having obtained the services of the very officers employed in the local authorities, who have subject related knowledge.

1.21 The fact of changing the delimitation system, and other matters – Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

1.21.1. Changing the delimitation system

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that it is essential to change the existing delimitation system in order that a member who represents the Sinhalese and the Muslims could be elected in Pradeshiya Sabha elections due to the fact that there are Sinhalese and Muslim villages in Attanagalla electorate.

1.21.2. Strengthening the internal audit system in local authorities

The Hon. Member requested that action be taken to streamline the local government service by strengthening the internal audit system in local authorities

1.21.3. Establishing two local authorities for Attanagalla electorate

The Hon. Member requested that two local authorities be established for Attanagalla electorate in which a huge population live at present.

1.21.4. Establishing a crematorium

The Hon. Member requested that crematoriums be established for Bemmulla and Urapola towns.

1.22 The requirement of focusing special attention in carrying out delimitation-Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that due to the current delimitation, a problematic situation has arisen in the electorates of Bandarawela and Haputhale.

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to this matter in carrying out delimitation in the future

It was informed by the Hon. Chair to submit this matter in writing.

2. The meeting of the Committee was, at 4:45 p.m., adjourned *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Urban Development and Housing
First Meeting - 24 November 2020**

Committee Members Present

Hon. Indika Anuruddha Herath (State Minister)
Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa (State Minister)
Hon. Mujibur Rahuman
Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte

Non-Committee Members Present

Hon. Angajan Ramanathan

Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. H. M. M. Harees
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. Jagath Kumara
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Asanka Navarathna
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. Nalin Fernando
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) Thilak Rajapakshe
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, PC
Hon. Marjan Faleel

1. Discussion on the Ministerial Affairs

1.1 Uplifting the living standards of the dwellers in the urban settlements and other matters - Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara

1.1.1. Uplifting the living standards of the dwellers in the urban settlements

Hon. Member informed the committee that a corporate action plan should be introduced by the Urban Settlement Development Authority to act upon the issues that are encountered by the urban community due to the lack of facilities in the urban settlement units.

Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa, State Minister informed the Committee that attention would be focused on this matter.

1.1.2. Development of Infrastructure around Japan Sri Lanka Friendship Road

Hon. Member requested the committee to instruct the Low Lands Development Board to re-open the toilet system which was established close to the jogging tracks which can be found parallel to the Japan Sri Lanka Friendship Road.

Moreover, Hon. Member requested that a center for common amenities be established near the gymnasium which belongs to the Low lands Development Board which is located nearby.

1.2 Enlightening the Hon. Members of the government on the programs implemented by the government – Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha

Hon. Member requested the committee to get the participation of the Members of Parliament of the relevant electorate for programs that are implemented in relation to providing houses for the low income earners.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this problematic situation will not occur in the future as arrangements have been made to appoint Members of Parliament to the Chairman position in the district coordination committees.

1.3 Approval of plans through an online system and other matters - Hon. Madhura Withanage

1.3.1 Approval of plans through the online system

Hon. Member requested the Committee to make arrangements for approving the plans of the local authorities through the online system

1.3.2 Updating the laws related to the approving of plans

Hon. Member requested the Committee to update the laws and regulations applicable for approving housing and building plans.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that an expeditious program will be implemented in relation to the above matters as per the directives given by the Hon. Prime Minister.

1.3.3 Appointing a permanent officer from the Urban Development Authority to local authorities

Hon. Member informed the Committee that it would be appropriate to appoint a permanent officer of the Urban Development Authority to each local authority in view of avoiding the delay which happens in relation to the matters of unauthorized constructions.

1.3.4 Obstructing the natural water drainage system

Hon. Member informed the Committee that houses have been constructed by obstructing the natural waterways due to the congested nature in the urban areas.

1.3.5. Enlightening the Members on the future projects

Hon. Member requested the Committee to enlighten the members of the area in relation to the anticipated projects and plans.

1.3.6. Raising the awareness on the malpractices that happened in the Urban Development Authority during the past

Hon. Member requested the Committee to raise the awareness on the malpractices that took place in the Urban Development Authority during the last five years.

1.3.7. Engineers and architects not acting practically in relation to building planning

Hon. Member informed the Committee to instruct the engineers and the architects in relation to this matter.

Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa, the State Minister informed that it is expected to appoint an expert committee to amend the guidelines of the Urban Development Authority.

1.3.8. Waste management

Hon. Member inquired from the Committee about the current status of the projects introduced in relation to this.

Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa, State Minister informed that the Kerawalapitiya project which was initiated to generate power using garbage will be completed this year.

Hon. State Minister further informed the Committee that the “Karandiyana” project has become a total failure and therefore arrangements would be made to hand it over to another party for implementation.

1.3.9. Lack of Proper maintenance in the apartments in Colombo

Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to this situation.

1.3.10. The necessity to establish a Water Transport Authority

Hon. Member informed the Committee that there is a requirement to establish a Water Transport Authority under the Ministry in order to solve the legal and administrative issues that come up when transport activities are conducted using the medium of water.

Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa, State Minister requested that a written proposal be submitted by the Hon. Member in this regard.

1.4 Unlawful approval of housing plans and other matters - Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

1.4.1. Unlawful approval of Housing plans

Hon. Member informed the Committee that currently a mafia is there in the process of approving plans relevant to the Housing constructions.

1.4.2. Intervention of the Urban Development Authority for the approval of housing plans and other matters

Hon. Member informed the Committee that general public is not aware of the rules and regulations relevant to the approval of rural housing construction plans and that therefore they face various difficulties.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that these laws should be amended within the next two years.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a methodology should be formulated to expedite the approval of plans as there are substantial number of applications pending for the approval.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the activities related to approving housing plans are conducted by the Urban Development Authority expeditiously.

1.5 Housing project implemented in the Grama Niladhari divisions and the Meerigama Township Plan – Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene

1.5.1. Housing project implemented in the Grama Niladhari divisions

Hon. Member inquired about the possibility to grant allocations under this project for housing constructions to those who have land ownership but live in rented houses as they do not have the money to construct a house.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a cabinet paper with regard to increasing the number of houses would be submitted as only one house is granted for each Grama Niladhari division under this program at the moment.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the funds allocated for the above project can be released for the matters mentioned by the Hon. Member if the relevant responsibility is taken by the district coordinating committee

1.5.2. Meerigama Township Plan

Hon. Member inquired about this matter from the Committee.

1.6 Implementation of Township plans - Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

1.6.1. Preparation of Township plans

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the requirements within the district should be prioritized with regard to township planning and act accordingly.

1.6.2. Implementation of Township plans for the cities of Deniyaya, Weligama and Akuressa

Hon. Member informed the Committee to implement the Township Plans for the cities of Deniyaya, Weligama and Akuressa.

He further informed the Committee to guide the relevant local administrative authorities and private investment institutions to give an opportunity to present their Township Plans for the future township planning conducted in ministerial level.

The Director General of the Urban Development Authority informed the Committee that arrangements have been made to have discussions with the relevant parties on the initial strategy of the Township plan for Deniyaya and to implement the Kamburupitiya Township plan.

He further informed the Committee that a preliminary plan is to be prepared for Hambantota district as well.

Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa, State Minister informed the Committee that each District Secretariat has been informed to prepare a Township plan for each town and that it is expected to implement them in future, based on the priorities.

1.7 Acquisition of the area adjoining the Mattala Airport by the Urban Development Authority and the other matters - Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

1.7.1. Acquisition of the area adjoining the Mattala airport by the Urban Development Authority

Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to this situation where the District Development Committee of the Hambantota district has approved the acquisition of 200 meters closer to Mattala airport by the Urban Development Authority.

1.7.2. Construction of houses as appropriate for a regional pattern

Hon. Member requested the Committee to instruct the Urban Development Authority with regard to this opinion.

The Director General of the Urban Development Authority informed the Committee that a master plan would be developed on behalf of the Hambantota district with the coordination of all the local authorities.

1.8 Transferring the power of the Urban Development Authority to the heads of the local authorities and Ruwanwella Township plan - Hon. Sudath Manjula

1.8.1. Transferring the authority vested with the Director General of the Urban Development Authority to the heads of the local authorities

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the technical difficulties would arise when the authority of the Director General of the Urban Development Authority is granted to the heads of local authorities with regard to the approval of construction plans.

Hon. Member informed the Committee that it would be appropriate to provide a technical training to the graduates who have been appointed by now and to direct them to the local authorities as officers representing the Urban Development Authority.

1.8.2. Ruwanwella Township Plan

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the financial and technical contribution of the Urban Development Authority is required to acquire the lands required for the implementation of the Ruwanwella Township plan.

Hon. Member informed the Committee that there is a requirement to construct a Housing Complex on behalf of the business community of the city parallel to the urban development plan.

1.9 Strategic development project for the district of Jaffna- Hon. Angajan Ramanathan

Hon. Member inquired about the current status of this project.

Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa, State Minister informed the Committee that this was inspected by him and that discussions are rescheduled with regard to the future continuation of this project.

1.10 Acquisition of lands by the Urban Development Authority and other matters - Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte

1.10.1. Acquisition of lands by the Urban Development Authority

Hon. Member informed the Committee that it is appropriate to be more flexible with the people in this kind of instances.

1.10.2. Issues in the Soyzapura Housing Complex in Moratuwa

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the issues in the Soyzapura Housing Complex in Moratuwa can be solved by providing houses to 16 families. Hon. member further informed that five families are willing to resettle in the remaining 5 houses and that the other families would be willing to settle down there if houses are provided for them.

Hon. Chair informed that houses can be provided for the remaining 11 families from the housing Complex of which the construction is to be started in the coming days, given the relevant payments are done.

1.10.3. Coastal erosion in Moratuwa

Hon. Member informed the Committee to pay attention towards this situation.

1.11 Bandarawela Township plan and other matters- Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya

1.11.1. Bandarawela Township plan

Hon. Member requested the Committee to prepare a proper Township plan for Bandarawela city and to inform the local authorities with regard to this matter.

1.11.2. Converting the Bandarawela and Ella towns into model cities

Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to the concept of converting the Bandarawela and Ella towns which are prominent towns related to tourism, into model cities.

1.11.3. Improper plan of Ella town

Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to this matter.

1.11.4. Providing relief to the people who lost houses due to landslides

Hon. Member informed the Committee that it would be more appropriate to construct a housing complex for the people who lost houses due to landslides instead of granting lands.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that as allocations have been made under resettlement, this can be done if the approval is obtained from the people as Members of the area.

1.11.5. Establishing a traffic light system or a flyover for the Bandarawela town

Hon. Member informed the Committee to establish a traffic light system or a flyover for the Bandarawela town as a solution to the traffic congestion prevailing there.

1.12 Unauthorized constructions of Kandy town and other matters. - Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

1.12.1. Unauthorized constructions done in the Kandy town

Hon. Member requested the Committee to enable the local authorities with the opportunity to obtain court orders to stop the unauthorized constructions done in the Kandy town.

1.12.2. The requirement of a Township plan for Kandy town

Hon. Member informed the Committee that there is a requirement for a proper Township plan for Kandy town which has been built up in an irregular manner.

1.12.3. Officers of the local authorities who happen to serve in one single institution for longer periods

Hon. Member informed the Committee that a proper methodology should be followed in relation to the situation resulted by the monopoly which is created when the officers of local authorities serve in one single institution for a longer period of time.

1.12.4. Earthquakes occurring in the Kandy district

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the public be enlightened on the earthquakes, having appointed an expert committee to obtain a report on the earthquakes that occurred in the Kandy district recently.

1.13 Commencing a housing project on the approval of the Urban Development Authority ignoring the Local Authority and other matters - Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

1.13.1. Commencing a housing project on the approval of the Urban Development Authority ignoring the Local Authority

Hon. Member informed the Committee that a housing project has been started in a private land near Aththanagalla by a private firm based on the approval of the Urban Development Authority ignoring the Local Authority. Hon. Member requested the Committee to properly implement this project after getting the ownership transferred as this project has been suspended later on.

Hon. Chair instructed the officers of the Urban Development Authority to pay attention to the attempt to partition and auction a land belonging to the Lanka Metal Factory of Gampaha.

Hon. Chair also informed that an investigation be carried out as a boundary wall is constructed across a large waterway.

1.13.2. Commencing a housing project

Hon. Member informed the Committee to launch a housing construction project in the land of 60 perches where a large number of families reside in the Aththanagalle electorate.

1.13.3. Developing the Weyangoda town

Hon. Member requested the Committee to develop the Weyandoga town as it is in an irregular condition.

1.14 Proper implementation of Township plans - Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura

Hon. Member requested the Committee to implement the township plans properly for the major cities and the other towns in the Kurunegala district.

1.15 The requirement to obtain the approval of the Urban Development Authority for constructions and the Kilinochchi Township Plan - Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan

1.15.1. The requirement to obtain the approval of the Urban Development Authority for constructions

Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to the gazette notification which has been issued informing the necessity to get the approval of the Urban Development Authority for the proposed constructions in the Jaffna district, causing immense difficulties for the people living in certain areas of the district.

The Director General of the Urban Development Authority informed the Committee that this gazette notification has been issued to designate this area as an urban area as Jaffna town should get further extended.

1.15.2. Township Plan for Kilinochchi town

Hon. Member requested the Committee that a township plan be implemented for Kilinochchi town.

Hon. (Dr). Nalaka Godahewa, State Minister informed the Committee that a township plan has been formulated for the whole Jaffna district and the Kilinochchi township plan would be drafted by March 2021.

1.16 Construction work related to the Mullaitivu Bus stand and the Mannar Stadium- Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

1.16.1. Construction work related to the Mullaitivu Bus stand

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the construction work of the Mullaitivu bus stand which had been initiated by the Urban Development Authority has not been completed.

The Director General of the Urban Development Authority informed the Committee that the first stage of the construction of the Mullaitivu bus stand has been completed and handed over to the Local authority which does not accept it. He further informed the Committee that the allocations for the second stage constructions have been allocated for the ensuing year.

1.16.2. Construction work related to the Mannar Stadium

Hon. Member inquired the Committee about the constructions of the Pallemune Stadium, Mannar.

The Director General of the Urban Development Authority informed the Committee that these constructions have not been properly done by the relevant private contractor and that measures will be taken to complete the construction work of this stadium based on the allocations received in the next year, after having discussed with the Hon. Minister.

1.17 Construction work of the Wapi Park in Embilipitiya. - Hon. Ajith Rajapakse

Hon. Member informed the committee to complete the said project expeditiously as its construction has not been completed yet.

1.18 The dilapidated building located in Kalmune and other matters - Hon. H. M. M. Harees

1.18.1. The dilapidated building located in Kalmune

Hon. Member requested the Committee that attention be paid towards the old building currently in a dilapidated condition located in Kalmune where different institutions of the area including different public institutions were housed.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this can be done since allocations have been made through this budget for the renovation of the old buildings.

1.18.2. Hiring a land for the district office of the National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority

Hon. Member informed the Committee that a request has been made asking for a hired land for the district office of the National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority in Kalmune.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the said request can be fulfilled.

1.19 Constructing a park in Meegahakotuwa in Kuliyaipitiya - Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to the plan regarding the construction of a park after reclaiming the Sohonakade junction of Meegahakotuwa in Kuliyaipitiya.

The Director General of the Urban Development Authority was instructed by the Hon. Chair to pay attention towards this matter.

1.20 Baddegama Township Plan - Hon. Isuru Dodangoda

Hon. Member requested that the attention of the Committee be drawn towards the Baddegama Township plan and that the construction work of the Bus stand be completed soon.

1.21 Providing infrastructure facilities for the Housing projects - Hon. Asanka Navarathna

Hon. Member informed the Committee that infrastructure facilities have not been provided for the housing projects started in the Galgamuwa seat during the past and requested that a programme be implemented in relation to that.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the necessary steps can be taken in this regard.

1.22 Township plans for Yatiyantota and Kithulgala towns and the construction work of the Bus stand in Mawanella town - Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe

1.22.1. Implementing the township plans for Yatiyantota and Kithulgala towns

Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to this matter.

The Director General of the Urban Development Authority informed the Committee that the Yatiyantota Township Plan is to be submitted to the Management Board of the Urban Development Authority.

1.22.2. Construction work of the Bus stand in Mawanella town

Hon. Member requested the Committee to complete these constructions.

1.23 Future work related to the Development of Imaduwa town and other matters - Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

1.23.1. Future work related to the Development of Imaduwa town

Hon. Member requested the Committee to undertake these activities expeditiously.

1.23.2. Declaring Rumassala as a conserved eco zone

Hon. Member made a request in this regard.

1.23.3. Preparing a plan for Unawatuna

Hon. Member informed the Committee to prepare a proper plan for Unawatuna.

1.23.4. Township Plan - Galle

Hon. Member informed the Committee to consult the Galle district Members prior to the implementation of the Galle township plan.

Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary to the Ministry to act based on the consultations done with the political authority and the local authorities in a particular district when township plans are made.

Hon. Member inquired the Committee about the allocation of funds for the construction of the Multi Modal Centre in Galle.

The Director General of the Urban Development Authority informed the Committee that the matter should be discussed with the Hon. Minister.

1.23.5. Township Plan - Elpitiya

Hon. Member requested the Committee to properly re-implement the Elpitiya Township plan which has been suspended, after having considered the suggestions of the political authority.

1.23.6. Area of the Galle Fort

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the area of the Galle fort should be developed to match with the needs of the tourism industry.

Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa, State Minister informed the Committee that it is expected to implement the development projects having identified the priorities and with the participation of all the relevant stakeholders.

1.24 Fisheries community facing inconveniences due to the construction of the Olivil Harbour- Hon. Faizal Cassim

Hon. Member requested the committee to pay attention to this matter.

Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa, State Minister informed the Committee that the matter is being considered at the moment.

1.25 Implementation of the Township plans in the towns of Alauwa, Narammala and Dambadeniya - Hon. Shantha Bandara

Hon. Member informed the Committee to pay attention to the serious traffic congestion that prevails in the Alauwa town, and to the implementation of the township plans for the towns of Alauwa, Narammala and Dambadeniya.

1.26 Implementation of the Township plan for the towns of Rakwana and Godakawela. - Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi

Hon. Member requested the Committee to implement these township plans and to develop the Kahawaththa bus stand.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Chair of the Committee would be enlightened on the submissions of the Hon. Members who participated in the Committee and that as State Ministers action would be taken to inform the Hon. Prime Minister on matters related to their scopes and to implement necessary action.

2. The Committee adjourned at 1.00 p.m. *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Agriculture
01st Meeting – 24th November 2020**

Committee Members present

Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage (Chair)
Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana De Silva (State Minister)
Hon. D.B. Herath (State Minister)
Hon. Shasheendra Rajapaksa (State Minister)
Hon. Sivagnanam Shriitharan
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

Non - Committee Members present

Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa
Hon. Nimal Siripala de Silva
Hon. Douglas Devananda
Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara
Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna
Hon. Kanaka Herath
Hon. Kanchana Wijesekera

Hon. Jayarathna Herath
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Velu Kumar
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara

Motion of Leave

Hon. S. Viyalendran, State Minister

1. Motions submitted by Hon. Members of Parliament

1.1 Proposals Submitted by Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna

1.1.1 The programme that can be implemented according to the data of the Department of Census and Statistics to fulfill the local food requirement of the year 2021.

The Hon. Minister inquired about this .

1.1.2 Managing the local food crops and the liquid milk production to meet the market and consumer requirement .

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that plans have been made having paid attention to 16 essential foods .

The Hon. Minister made a request to pay special attention to the cultivation of other food crops such as green leaves as well.

1.2 Not receiving the fertilizer subsidy in a systematic manner for crops such as tea, cinnamon and rubber –Hon. Kanaka Herath

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to issue the required amount of fertilizer from next year after testing the soil having brought soil test kits for 525 Agrarian Services Centers and that necessary instructions have been given to identify the districts with a higher requirement of fertilizer and provide such districts with more fertilizer.

1.3 Obtaining fertilizer for other crops in Moneragala district - Hon . Ranjith Madduma Bandara

Hon. Member requested that action be taken to issue fertilizer sufficiently as a sufficient amount of fertilizer is not issued for other crops in Moneragala district.

The Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that the problematic situation can be avoided by informing the tea smallholders to take action to get fertilizer directly from tea factories.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to distribute fertilizer through the Agrarian Services Centres from the year 2021 and that arrangements will be made to provide opportunity to purchase fertilizer from the open market as well in addition to that .

The Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that these activities can be successfully carried out by creating coordination between the Agrarian Services Centres and the Tea Smallholders Development Board .

1.4 Controlling the price of rice - Hon. Ishak Rahuman

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the price of rice can be controlled by extending the period of 6 months given by banks to the small rice mill owners to settle their loans up to 9 months and by prescribing a control price for rice.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to purchase 3 lakhs of metric tons of paddy through the Paddy Marketing Board from the next season wherein 1000 kilos of paddy from the first hectare and 500 kilos of paddy from the second hectare onwards will be purchased from each farmer who obtains the fertilizer subsidy.

1.5 Not receiving seed potato by the farmers in the Northern Province – Hon. Douglas Devananda

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to provide the 50% seed potato subsidy.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Director General of the Department of Agriculture to inform the District Secretary of Jaffna to take necessary action in regard to these matters .

1.6 Motions submitted by Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

1.6.1 Maintaining a data base on paddy harvest by banks under the Pledge Loan Scheme

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that necessary action has already been taken to maintain a data base on paddy production through the Department of Agrarian Services Development and that all the information on the paddy harvest could be obtained in the future from it .

1.6.2 Taking action for adopting crop diversification in cultivating crops

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the most foremost task of the Ministry of Agriculture is to prepare a national policy and maintain a data base.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it is expected to encourage farmers only to grow the crops which suit each district in the future through the preparation of a data base and provide a higher price to the harvest of those crops.

1.6.3 Providing a lasting solution to the problems of the chena farmers

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the act of cultivation of permanent crops in huge lands by businessmen having obtained permits for them should be monitored.

1.7 Motions submitted by Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya

1.7.1 Not receiving enough TSP fertilizer for the cultivation activities in Badulla district

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that as there is a problem in importing the essential fertilizer due to the defects in technical specifications, action will be taken to minimize the aforesaid problem having made the necessary studies.

1.7.2 Developing the farm and the Agricultural Research Institute in Halpe, Bandarwela and using them for agricultural research activities.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to recruit the necessary officers to the Agricultural Research Institute in the future as the court case has been concluded .

1.7.3 Taking action to provide to the Badulla Bandarawela area a higher number of Poly Tunnels introduced by SAPP project

The Hon. Chair informed that a list which contains the required extent of lands be submitted.

1.7.4 Formulation of a systematic programme to enhance bee keeping in Badulla district

The Director General of the Department of Agriculture informed the Committee that the shortage of the necessary allocations and the officers has become an obstacle for this and a suitable programme will be formulated using the allocations of the next year.

Hon. D.B. Herath, State Minister informed the Committee that as there is a group of officers with special training in Kurunegala district, the aforesaid officers can be deployed for this task.

The Hon. Chair gave instructions to the effect that the aforesaid activities shall be managed.

1.7.5 Construction of a new economic centre with cold room facilities in Bandarawela

The Hon. Chair gave instructions to the Director General (Policy Planning) of the State Ministry to inform Hon. Shasindra Rajapaksha to take necessary action in this regard.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it is not practical to provide cold room facilities.

The Director General (Planning) of the State Ministry informed the Committee that a Wholesale Collection Centre is scheduled to be provided to Badulla district.

1.8 Promotion of the use of organic fertilizer –Hon Samanpriya Herath

The State Minister informed the Committee of the future plans relating to the use of organic fertilizer for cultivation.

1.9 The importance of using soil test kits – Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the soil will be tested by Agricultural Inspectors and Agriculture Research Animator Assistants before fertilizer is issued in the future and that action will be taken to issue to the farmers a coupon relating to the composition of the soil, which shall be submitted by farmers to receive fertilizer .

The Hon.Chair further informed the Committee that action will be taken to minimize the use of fertilizer through this process.

It was informed by the Director General of Agriculture that it is expected to increase the production through the use of organic and chemical fertilizer and through the importation of fertilizer of higher quality.

1.10 Testing the soil in the paddy fields in Galgamuwa area – Hon. Chamal Rajapaksha

Even though a group of Japanese experts took action to map the use of fertilizer having tested the soil in the paddy fields in Galgamuwa area, the said task was not put into action. The Hon. Minister Chamal Rajapaksha inquired the reason for it.

It was informed by the Director General of Agriculture that it is expected to issue fertilizer having obtained the observations in regard to the soil and the crops subsequent to the Soil Test Kits and other essential equipment and machinery being delivered to the Agrarian Services Centre.

The Hon. Chair informed that action will be taken to provide fertilizer subsidy directly through the Agrarian Service Centre after observing the soil as is mentioned above.

In addition to this the Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to provide solutions to the problems of the farmers directly through the Agrarian Service Officers having provided with them Seed and Plant Sales Outlets and other facilities.

1.11 Obtaining the legal right for developing the Kovullaawatta tank in Narammala – Hon. Shantha Bandara

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action can be taken to grant permission for the reconstruction of the tank after reaching at a consensus having discussed the matter with the Chairman of the Livestock Development Board and the farmers.

1.12 Motions submitted by Hon. S. Sritharan

1.12.1 Converting the Wattakachchi farm into a government farm

Hon. Angajan Ramanathan informed the Committee that this farm is managed by the Civil Defence Force at present.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to release it from the custody of the army

1.12.2 Providing subsidies to the farmers who use organic fertilizer

The Additional Secretary to the State Ministry informed the Committee that the free distribution of organic fertilizer for paddy cultivation has already been commenced having purchased the said fertilizer from the licensed fertilizer producers, who are registered at the National fertilizer Secretariat and produce fertilizer according to the standards prescribed by the Sri Lanka Standards Institution.

1.13 Motions submitted by Hon. Nimal Siripala de Silva

1.13.1 Formulation of a static national policy to avoid the damages caused by wild animals

It was informed by the Hon. Chair that it is not permissible to kill wild animals as per the laws relating to the protection of wild animals and that action will be taken to sterilize the animals such as apes with the assistance of the Ministry of Wildlife and Forrester Conservation.

It was further informed that it is expected to pursue action such as preventing elephants from entering villages by growing crops inside forests, providing compensation to the farmers for it with the assistance of the Agrarian Insurance Board and constructing elephant fences.

1.13.2 Monopoly of the pesticides and the varieties of agricultural seeds

The Director General of the Department of Agriculture informed the Committee that the prices of pesticides cannot be increased due to the fact that pesticides are imported using the gene name and that the increase of the use of pesticides due to the decrease of the prices may be hazardous.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that a programme is available to regulate the sale of agricultural seeds such as maize and other agricultural produce at different prices without any proper standard.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it is expected to produce all the mother seeds in this country as a lasting solution to these problems.

The Director General of Agriculture informed the Committee that the production of hybrid seeds has already been commenced using the modern technology.

1.13.3 Taking action to bring the Rahangala farm, which is used by the Department of Police, under the purview of the Ministry of Agriculture

The Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary to the Ministry to take action to get the farm released by submitting a written request to that effect to the Ministry of Defence.

1.13.4 Reducing the prices of agricultural products by enhancing the amount of harvest received per acre

The Director General of the Department of Agriculture informed the Committee that the harvest can be further enhanced by using technology.

1.14 Making gratuity payments to the employees of the Janatha Estate Development Board- Hon. Velu Kumar

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that there is a problem of getting allocations for it and that it is expected to pay at least half of the aforesaid amount next year.

1.15 Motions submitted by Hon. Angajan Ramanathan

1.15.1 The progress of the researches carried out in regard to the reduction of the grape harvest in Jaffna district and the introduction of new varieties of grapes

The Hon. Member inquired about the progress of the researches carried out in regard to the reduction of the grape harvest and also about the introduction of new varieties of grapes which suit the climate of this country.

The Director General of Agriculture informed the Committee that these research activities are carried out by the Research Institute situated in Kilinochchi and that discussions have been made under the Agricultural Modernization Project to introduce the varieties of grapes which suit this land.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that there is a problem in regard to the varieties which suit the climatic condition of this country and that it is a difficult task to bring such varieties to the commercial level.

1.15.2 Reconstruction of 56 tanks which are required to be reconstructed

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that contracts have been awarded for this task but the construction work is not able to be commenced until the time when the aforesaid tanks dry up.

1.16 Motions submitted by Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksa

1.16.1 The damages caused by pigs to the crops in Attanagalla area

The Director General of the Department of Agriculture informed the Committee that action has already been taken to issue guns and that action will be taken to issue guns with the approval of the District Agricultural Committee when requests are made for it.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that necessary action will be taken having discussed this matter with the Ministry of Defence.

1.16.2 Damages caused by the giant squirrel to the coconut cultivation

The Hon. Member requested that necessary action be taken to avoid the damages caused by the giant squirrel to the coconut cultivation in Attanagalla area and also that proper action be taken in connection with the increase of the population of peacocks, squirrels and pigs.

1.16.3 Taking necessary action to avoid the filling of paddy lands.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the filling of paddy lands including the paddy lands situated on both sides of the access road to the Varana Royal Temple is being carried out on a large scale.

The Commissioner General of the Agrarian Development Department informed the Committee that permission has not been granted to any filling activity in Colombo, Gampaha and Kalutara districts with effect from the year 2018.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to inform the relevant officers about such unauthorized filling activities

1.16.4 Taking action to renovate the Agrarian Service Centre in Gampaha district and providing necessary facilities for offices.

The Commissioner General of the Agrarian Development Department informed the Committee that necessary renovation activities are carried out and the machinery can be provided as allocations have been made to these centres by the budget of this year.

1.16.5 Providing roofing materials to the sales outlets in the Economic Centre of Veyangoda

The Hon. Member requested that plastic roofing materials be provided to the sales outlets in the Economic Centre of Veyangoda and that approval be granted to carry out renovation activities out of the funds of the Management Trust of the Economic Centre if the necessary allocations have not been made.

The Hon. Chairman gave instructions to grant the necessary approval to carry out the renovation activities out of the funds of the Management Trust of the Economic Centre.

1.16.6 Taking action to curb the cattle theft committed in Attanagalla area.

The Hon. Chair gave instructions to inform this in writing to the Deputy Inspector of Police of Gampaha.

1.17 Motions submitted by Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

1.17.1 Delay in the provision of fertilizer to the farmers in Vavuniya district and the Musali area in Mannar

The Secretary to the State Ministry informed the Committee that it has been decided to carry out the distribution of fertilizer in the Northern and North Central Provinces through the Lanka Fertilizer Company .

Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana de Silva, State Minister informed the Committee it is expected to distribute fertilizer in Colombo and its suburbs through the Colombo Commercial Company and to distribute fertilizer in outstation areas through the Lanka Fertilizer Company.

The Commissioner General of the Agrarian Development Department informed the Committee that delays occur due to the non-availability of warehouse facilities in each province to store fertilizer.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a programme will be implemented in the future to distribute fertilizer through trains and that priority will be given to the areas in which cultivation activities are mostly carried out.

1.17.2 Damages caused to the farming activities by wild animals.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to take necessary steps having appointed a committee together with the Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Conservation.

1.17.3 Taking action to provide fertilizer warehouses to Omantha and Thandikulam areas in Vavuniya district.

The Hon. Chair gave instructions to the Commissioner General of the Agrarian Development Department to include these places to the list of areas in which new fertilizer warehouses will be established next year.

1.18 Motions submitted by Hon. Madhura Vithanage

1.18.1 Identifying the paddy lands and fallow paddy lands in the urban areas in Colombo and Gampaha districts.

The Hon. Member requested that action be taken to conduct a census of the paddy lands and the fallow paddy lands in the urban areas in Colombo and Gampaha districts and the necessary information be provided to the local authorities.

The Commissioner General informed that permission is granted as per the circular upon a request and subsequent to conducting an investigation to fill the lands which are not paddy lands but the lands which are identified as Deniya, Ovita, Pillaava and Kamatha (threshing field)

1.18.2 Providing facilities to the Agrarian Service Centre in Kotte.

The Director General informed the Committee that instructions have already been given to release to the required places the excess staff who are serving currently.

The Hon. Chair gave instructions to take necessary action to renovate the aforesaid Agrarian Service Centre, provide transfers to the excess staff and also to provide necessary facilities to the Agrarian Service Centre.

1.19 Motions submitted by Hon. D.B. Herath

1.19.1 Enhancing the age limit for recruiting the Agricultural Research and Production Assistants

The Commissioner General of the Agrarian Development Department informed the Committee that this problem has been caused by the fact of issuing a Gazette Notification to recruit Agrarian Research and Production Assistants as per the Scheme of Recruitment of the year 2015 and that the amended Scheme of Recruitment has been submitted for obtaining the approval.

Accordingly the Commissioner General of the Agrarian Development Department informed the Committee that it has been requested from Public Service Commission in writing to extend recruitment age up to 45 years and also that it has been decided to postpone the gazette notification for making recruitments.

1.19.2 Remedies for the problems that arise in promoting Agricultural Research and Production Assistants to the post of Development Officer

It was informed by the Commissioner General of Agrarian Services that the Public Service Commission made a request to provide some relief to 47 Agricultural Research and Production Assistants after a case filed in the Court of appeal was dismissed.

It was further informed to the Committee that a Gazette Notification has been issued for conducting a competitive examination due to the fact that it has been informed by the Public Service Commission to make arrangements to hold a competitive examination even though it has been informed that it is agreeable to grant promotions to all the aforesaid 47 officers as vacancies exist.

2. The Committee was adjourned at 3:45 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. on 11th February 2021

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Fisheries
First Meeting - 25 November 2020**

Committee Members Present :

Hon. Douglas Devananda (Chair)
Hon. Kanchana Wijesekera (State Minister)
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

Non-Committee Members Present :

Hon. Angajan Ramanathan
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. Niroshan Perera
Hon. H. M. M. Harees
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

1. Discussion on the Ministerial Affairs

1.1. Motions submitted by Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

1.1.1. Indian fishing vessels entering the Northern maritime boundary

Hon. Member informed the Committee about the impact of Indian fishing vessels on the local fishermen.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a solution would be provided in this regard.

1.1.2. Night time fishing in the North Sea using cylinders

Hon. Member informed that the livelihoods of the small scale fishermen who engage in fishing during day time have been affected as sea cucumbers and conches are caught by a certain group using cylinders during night time in the area of the Northern Province except in Mannar and Mullaitivu.

The Director General of the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources informed the Committee that catching of fish using cylinders during the day and night times in the Northern Province has been banned.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that arrangements will be made to avoid the aforesaid situation through the intervention of the Navy Commander of the Northern Province.

1.2. Motions submitted by Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

1.2.1. Development of the Hambantota Harbor and Kirinda Fishery Harbor

Hon. Member inquired about the development of the Kirinda Fishery Harbor in Hambantota.

Moreover, Hon. Member requested that measures be taken to repair the breakwater of the Hambantota Fishery Harbor.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that arrangements will be made to expeditiously initiate the desilting of all the harbors.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that the desilting of the Kirinda harbor has been temporarily suspended, that a request has been received from the Hon. Namal Rajapakse to construct the harbor in some other location and that the relevant studies are underway at the moment.

1.2.2. Progress of the Crab City Project

Hon. Member inquired about the progress of this project.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that it has been informed that the Crab City Project is not suitable for crabs and therefore it will be implemented on prawn cultivation.

1.2.3. Obtaining a shelter for the Kudawella Fishery harbor

Hon. Member informed about this matter to the committee.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that this would happen in the next year and that it is expected to develop this harbor as a green harbor.

1.3. Motions submitted by Hon. Angajan Ramanathan

1.3.1. Development of Point Pedro and Gurunagar Harbors

Hon. Member requested about this matter from the Committee.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that it is expected to fulfill this request.

1.3.2. Restarting sea plants cultivation and aqua culture

Hon. Member requested that measures be taken to re-initiate the sea plants cultivation and aquaculture activities which have been suspended.

Hon. State Minister and the Hon. Chair informed the Committee that arrangements will be made to initiate these activities using the funds allocated by the budget 2021.

1.3.3. Indian fishermen engaging in fishing in Sri Lankan waters

Hon. Member requested that steps be taken to prevent these activities.

Hon. Chair informed that it is expected to provide multiday fishing vessels, relief and the required training to the local fishermen who encounter these issues.

1.3.4. Technical devices and training required by the Fishermen

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the essential technical devices and a training on these devices should be given to the Sri Lankan fishermen.

1.4. Motions submitted by Hon. Shantha Bandara

1.4.1. Obtaining freshwater fishing gear- Hon. Shantha Bandara

Hon. Member requested that the required fishing gear be provided to the fishermen who engage in freshwater fishing activities in the district of Kurunegala.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that arrangements will be made to implement a programme to provide concessionary loans through the state banks in integration with the private sector.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee to make arrangements to inform about the fish stocks expected to be deposited in the tanks as allocations have been made for depositing fish stocks.

1.4.2. Controlling the illegal fishing activities

Hon. Member requested that measures be taken to formulate a methodology in this regard.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that it is expected to establish a Raids Unit for these activities in view of regulating them.

1.5. Motions submitted by Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan

1.5.1. Removing the roller drowned in the Kiranchi sea area of the Kilinochchi district

Hon. Member requested that measures be taken to remove these rollers as the fishermen of the Sri Murugan Fisheries society of Kiranchi encounter inconveniences due to these rollers.

Hon. Chair informed that a decision will be taken after having consulted the relevant parties on the court determination issued in this regard.

1.5.2. Establishing an access road for the Fishing Port in the Iranamatha village of Iranathivu

Hon. Chair informed that this would be accomplished using the special budget provisions.

1.5.3. Desilting of Pallikuda and Pallikuda Kaleimagal fishing ports

Hon. Member requested that an access road to the sea be constructed to enable the people of Waleipadu to engage in fishing activities.

Hon. Chair informed that the people will be provided with this relief by obtaining allocations for the said access roads from the budget.

1.5.4. Issues faced by the Fishing community in the Kilinochchi district

Hon. Member stated that the fishing community of the Kilinochchi district lives in Punakari area and that the areas of Pallikuda, Waleipartu, Nachchikuda and Iranathivu also come under that and he requested that the relevant relief and allocations be provided to them.

Hon. Member requested that 10 kilometers from the sea line from Jaffna to Mullativu be provided to the fishing community of Chundikulum, Kallaru, Kandawalei, Puliampokkane and Dharmapuram area as they do not have a fishing area allocated for them.

Hon. Chair informed that a decision in this regard would be given after having discussed the matter in the District coordinating committee of Kilinochchi.

1.5.5. Issues faced by the Fishing community in Iranamadu

Hon. Member and Hon. Angajan Ramanadan inquired about the matter regarding the necessity to fix a net in Iranamadu sea as there is a tendency for fingerlings to get away through the stone bay in the Iranamadu sea area, of which the Hon. Prime Minister has been enlightened by the said Fishing folk.

1.5.6. Providing a fishing port for the fishing community in Nedunthiv

Hon. Member requested that attention be paid in this regard as well.

1.6. Motions submitted by Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

1.6.1. Relax the ban on Spear fishing

Hon. Member requested to take measures to liberalize the laws applicable to the above sport which has a high demand from tourists.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that measures would be taken to grant approval for this after introducing the required amendments to the amendments done in the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act.

1.6.2. Lifting the ban imposed on the Spear fishermen

Hon. Member stated that spear fishing has been banned at present and requested that spear fishing be allowed subject to a certain period.

1.7. Motions submitted by Hon. H. M. M. Harees

1.7.1. Developing the Oluvil harbor in Ampara district

Hon. Member informed the committee that certain issues have arisen as a result of the drawbacks in the breakwater constructed close to the Oluvil harbor of Ampara district.

Hon. Member requested that this harbor be developed in the form of a Fishing harbor utilizing the funds to be received from the government of Denmark.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that arrangements will be made to develop this harbor into a fully pledged fishing harbor once the approval for the cabinet paper prepared for this purpose is granted.

1.7.2. Developing the Ice Plant established in the Oluvil harbor

Hon. Member made a request to the effect that ice be provided to the fishermen at a reasonable price after developing the large scale temporary ice plant located in the Oluvil harbor.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that arrangements will be made to conduct the aforesaid activities as the agreement has been granted by the Ports Authority to provide cooling facilities.

1.7.3. Constructing Fishing huts in Kalmunei

Hon. Member informed the committee that although it had been planned to construct fishing huts in an extent of 65 meters in the Kalmune area, private buildings have been constructed there and requested that arrangements be made to construct two huts following the cluster method after having selected two locations for the same.

1.7.4. Substandard beach seines

Hon. Member requested that attention be paid towards the standard of the beach seines purchased by the fishermen as they are substandard.

Hon. Chair informed that solutions can be provided in this regard after getting updated about the firm from where these nets have been purchased.

1.8. Motions submitted by Hon. K. Kader Masthan

1.8.1. Lifting the ban on Scuba fishing

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the livelihoods of the fishing community of Mannar have been immensely affected by the ban imposed on scuba fishing.

Hon. Member requested that approval be granted for scuba fishing as it is limited only for a short duration of two months.

Hon. Chair informed that a decision will be given in this regard after discussing with the relevant parties.

1.8.2. Granting membership in Fishermen's Pensions Scheme

Hon. Member stated that the elderly fishermen have not been provided with the membership in the Fishermen's pension's scheme and requested to pay attention in that regard.

Hon. Chair informed that arrangements will be made to settle these pension payments as soon as possible.

1.8.3. Preventing the coastal erosion in the Mannar and Mullative sea limits

Hon. Member informed that a certain methodology is needed to prevent this situation.

Moreover, Hon. Member informed that fishing ports are not there in Mannar and Mullativu areas, that the fishing port in Erukkalampitti has been closed down, that there are certain issues regarding Pesalei as well and that it would be appropriate to name locations to construct fishing ports.

Hon. Chair informed to provide the information required for this purpose and that these requirements can be fulfilled on priority basis.

2. The Committee adjourned at 3.p.m. till 21st January 2021.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Plantation
First Meeting – 26 November 2020**

Committee Members present

Hon. (Dr.) Ramesh Pathirana (Chair)

Hon. Arundika Fernando (State Minister)

Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura (State Minister)
Hon. Kanaka Herath (State Minister)
Hon. Palani Thigambaram
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

Non – Committee Members present

Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Velu Kumar
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. M. Udayakumar
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. Marjan Faleel

Motions of Leave

Hon. M. Rameshwaran
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

1. Other Matters

1.1. Requirement to plant timber producing trees in the lands which are currently not taken for any use and other matters- Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

1.1.1. Requirement to plant timber producing trees in the lands which are currently not taken for any use

It was requested to pay attention to plant saplings of trees with a timber value in the lands which are currently not used for any purpose, deploying the workers of the State Plantation Corporation.

Hon. Chair informed that permission for felling trees has been already granted and reforestation measures would be taken simultaneously with the instructions of the Forest Conservation Department.

1.1.2. Timely amendment for the Tea Control Act

Hon. Member proposed about the requirement to amend the Tea Control Act enabling the estate owners to directly appear for tea auctions, after changing the current situation where it is mandatory for them to appear through the Tea Board.

Hon. Chair informed that action would be taken to promote the tea cultivation and that the Tea Board has been instructed to extend the required support to the new tea cultivators.

Hon. Chair informed to submit the Hon. Member's proposal to the ministry.

1.1.3. Proposal regarding the necessity to pay attention to the attempt of the Chinese and other foreign traders to acquire a substantial share in the export crop market.

Hon. Chair informed that the required attention would be paid in this regard.

1.1.4. Issues related to Employees' Trust Fund and the Employees' Provident Fund that came up in the Janatha Estate Development Board during the past period and the issues related to the legal concessions to be granted to members of the present director board.

Hon. Chair informed the committee that there is an arrangement to resolve these issues through an alternate proposal.

1.1.5. Discouraging the production of refuse tea.

Hon. Chair informed that certain action has been initiated to strictly regulate the production of refuse tea and that the required measures have been taken to discourage the production.

Further, it was informed that action would be taken to even amend the acts having introduced the concept of re-processed tea in place of refuse tea. It was also informed that the period given for transporting from the factory has been reduced from 07 days to 02 days.

1.2. Programmes of the Palmyra Development Board for the Northern Province in the year 2021 - Hon. Charles Nirmalanadan

1.2.1. The requirement to productively utilize the Palmyra toddy that run to waste.

Hon. State Minister Arundika Fernando informed that it is expected to develop the Palmyra Research Institute in Jaffna.

It was informed that action would be taken to develop this industry by training the toddy tappers in the districts of Kilinochchi, Mulative and Jaffna and to conduct programmes to raise the awareness on the ways to get the maximum use out of the existing Palmyra trees through the district secretaries and divisional secretaries.

Hon. State Minister Arundika Fernando informed that it is expected to construct a new distillery for Wanni District (Mannar) and to establish the second coconut triangle connecting Jaffna, Wanni, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu.

Hon. Arundika Fernando informed that it is expected by the Palmyra Research Institute to conduct soil related research for those who are interested in cultivating coconut.

Hon. State Minister Arundika Fernando further informed that it is expected to firmly re-establish the Palmyra toddy bars which have been currently closed down.

1.2.2. Obtaining good quality coconut saplings for Mannar district

The Chair of the Coconut Cultivation Board informed that high standard coconut saplings can be purchased from the Mannar coconut nursery and that they can be even provided free of charge for projects.

1.3. Motions submitted by Hon. Palani Digambaram.

1.3.1. Proposals regarding the requirement to increase the wages of the estate laborers.

Hon. Chair asked to submit the proposals regarding this matter and stated that it is expected to have consultations with the trade unions.

1.3.2. Resolving the wasp issue in estates

Hon. Chair informed that action would be taken to have discussions with the estate companies to inquire about the duties of the estate companies with regard to the measures that should be taken in this regard.

1.4. Motions submitted by Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

1.4.1. Law related to the partitioning of lands and felling rubber trees in the lands where coconut and rubber have been grown respectively.

Hon. Chair informed that it is expected to amend the relevant acts stipulating the need to get the approval when partitioning the lands exceeding the extent of 5 acres and that this situation can be prevented by inserting the laws on felling coconut trees into the Felling of Trees Act.

1.4.2. Regarding the cultivation of minor export crops

The State Minister Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura informed that granting of provisions can be considered if the locations with the plants recommended by

the said department registered under the Department of Export Agriculture, are properly informed.

1.4.3. The lands belonging to the Kurunegala estate company and the Land Reforms Commission located in the Attanagalle area.

Hon. Upul Manhendra Rajapakse informed that requests are made by the villages for constructing cemeteries and playgrounds.

1.4.4. Service issues of the workers serving in the rubber plant nursery located in the Welikadamulla village.

Hon. Member requested that attention be paid towards the issue of the these workers.

1.4.5. Public Resistance over the large scale waste collection center in the boundary of Welikadamulla, Kandegama.

Hon. Chair informed that the Minister of Lands and the Chairman of the Lands Reforms Commission would be enlightened in this regard as this belongs to the scope of Land Reforms Commission.

1.4.6. Request regarding the need to formulate a methodology to develop Rambutan and Duriyan cultivations in the Aththanagalle area.

Hon. Chair informed that assistance can be extended to Rambutan and Durian industries through the enterprises coming under the Department of Export Agriculture adopting the value addition method, although this does not directly belongs to the subject scope.

1.4.7. Proposal on obtaining arecanut saplings for promoting arecanut cultivation under the arecanut fence concept.

Hon. Chair informed to submit the proposals of the Hon. Member in this regard.

1.5. Motions submitted by Hon. Velu Kumar

1.5.1. Gratuity, Trust Fund and Provident Fund payments to be made to the workers of the Sri Lanka State Plantation Corporation.

Hon. Chair informed that it is expected to take the future measures in this regard.

1.5.2. Proposal regarding the increase of efficiency in the Waithalawa Waththa of Meda Mahanuwara re-acquired by the State Plantations Corporation.

Hon. Chair informed that this matter would be inquired and the necessary action would be taken and that discussions are done to adopt the Outgrow Model for the area which has not been cultivated.

1.5.3. Proposal regarding the requirement to adopt a proper project methodology for the different tourism projects implemented in the locations with tourist attraction in the estates.

Hon. Chair informed that action has been taken to regulate the administration, financial administration and the safety of these locations.

1.5.4. Non-operational status of the Wewathenna Division 5 (Goodshed waththa) coming under the State Planation Corporation.

Hon. Velu Kumar stated that it is appropriate to provide the required lands to develop the youth with cultivation skills residing in these estates, as entrepreneurs by converting into the corporative system and proposed that they can find an escape from the daily paid labor system through this.

Hon. Chair informed that it is expected to implement a long term program to convert estate laborers into entrepreneurs as the situation is such that the issue regarding their wages is beyond the control of the estate management currently.

1.5.5. Establishing Cabanas as a large scale program in the abandoned estates of Rangala, belonging to the State Plantation Corporation.

Hon. Chair informed that the required attention would be paid towards the matter.

1.5.6. Measures that can be taken at the ministry level regarding the impassive nature of the private sector on the welfare of the estate laborers

Hon. Chair informed that action would be taken with special attention to this matter in the future.

1.6. Motions submitted by Hon. Wasantha Yapa Bandara

1.6.1. To create an export village in the Medadumbara area of Goodside waththa

Hon. Chair informed that arrangements will be made to take the necessary steps after a field visit conducted by the officers in relation to the project proposed.

1.6.2. Proposal regarding the more productive use of the land extent of 2000 acres in Kirimetiawaththa

Hon. Chair informed that there is a case pending in the courts regarding the Kirimetiawaththa land.

1.6.3. Request for conducting an inquiry related to the misuse of certain lands in the Hanthanawaththa.

Hon. Chair informed that a request would be made from the Minister of Agriculture to implement the law related to unauthorized constructions and land acquisition as the Hanthanawaththa comes under the scope of the Ministry of Agriculture.

1.6.4. Proposal on the necessity to develop jaggery palm (Kithul) industry in the Kandy district with a view to encouraging the jaggery palm cultivation which generates export income by taking measures to stop felling of kithul trees, introducing new products and introducing new kithul varieties.

Hon. State Minister informed that the dearth of toddy tappers is a great obstacle for the development of Kithul cultivation.

It was further informed that action would be taken to promote the jaggery industry and to provide the equipment and technical knowledge required by the collection centers.

Hon. Chair informed that action would be taken in the future to provide the technical expertise needed for kithul industry focused on exports and local markets and to issue the Sri Lanka Standards Certification.

Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara was informed to form small societies connecting those who engage in the Kithul industry.

1.6.5. Obtaining the support needed for developing each home garden with an economic value.

Hon. Chair informed that it is possible to extend the required support for providing plants for the areas selected under the project to develop the rural infrastructure facilities.

1.6.6. Providing Driers (Dehydrators) for the cultivators of minor export crops.

Hon. Chair informed to submit a project proposal in this regard.

Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura, State Minister informed of the possibilities to grant these provisions for a group of people selected under a project currently implemented by the Ministry and to establish one drying center for each village for drying purposes.

1.6.7. The need for establishing a value addition process for minor export crops

Hon. Chair informed that the required assistance can be granted to those who already engage in the value addition process given the fact that they submit project reports.

Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura, State Minister stated that this process has been already started by establishing around 06 industries for pepper by now.

1.6.8. Withdrawing the lands of the Natha Devalaya, Kandy from the Pussellawa Estate Company.

Hon. Chair informed that this is a sub judice matter. The secretary was instructed to submit the relevant information to the Hon. Member within a week.

1.7. Motions submitted by Hon. Gunathilake Rajapakse

1.7.1. Proposal regarding the discussion to be conducted with the workmen of Harispaththuwa area of Kandy district.

Hon. Arundika Fernando, State Minister informed that an appointment can be given for this meeting.

1.7.2. Establishing a reasonable price for cultivations like nutmeg and cloves

Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura, State Minister informed that it is expected to ensure a reasonable price for the farmers by establishing the Spices Corporation and that it is targeted to provide the production to 14000 budget shops established under the Ministry of Trade.

It was also informed that action would be taken to establish a fair price for minor export crops through auction system.

1.8. Motions submitted by Hon. Madhura Withanage

1.8.1. Inquiries related to the private sector investment and dividends of the Galoya Plantations (private) company and the non-receipt of government dues.

The committee was informed that the Galoya Plantations (private) Limited incurs losses up until now and the private sector investor has to invest Rs.496 million for shares of 49%.

The State Minister further informed that the loan facility provided by Lanka Orix Leasing Company and Browns Companies at an interest rate of 28% is considered as an investment by them and that attention will be focused on the financial performance.

The secretary to the ministry informed that a forensic audit has been conducted on the financial performance of the companies recently and that the said information could also be applied in this regard.

Hon. Chair informed that it is expected to reformulate this agreement Hon. Chair informed that the information required by the Hon .Member be furnished within a week.

1.8.2. Formulation of a permanent methodology for government institutions that can make profit

Hon. Member requested to pay attention to this matter.

1.8.3. Formulating a program regarding the harassment caused by the officers of the estate companies targeting estate workers.

Hon. Chair informed that a certain evaluation on the management of estate companies would be done.

Hon. Chair informed the officers of the Ministry to pay attention to the need of the people of the Damro Femric Estate of Avissawella.

1.9. Motions submitted by Hon. Sudath Manjula

1.9.1. Arbitrary conduct of estate companies (rubber) and avoiding the welfare of estate workers.

Hon. Member informed that there is a possibility for an impending environment disaster when water sources dry up with the planting of oil palm trees when rubber prices drop and that the welfare of the laborers working in the estate companies has been completely neglected.

Hon. Chair informed that it has been requested from the secretary to HE the president to issue a gazette to ban the oil palm cultivation as per the stand of HE the president as a policy, not to allow oil palm re-cultivation.

1.9.2. A rubber related production for the district

Hon. Chair who stated that there is a good price for rubber at the moment informed that recently an agreement has been signed to establish a tire factory in Hambantota with an investment of 300 million USD.

It was also informed that the China Hainan Rubber Company is also ready for the biggest investment in the plantation industry sector in the year 2021.

1.9.3. Introduction and development of export villages that can directly nurture individual economy (such as Pepper, cardamom and Durian)

Hon. Member requested to develop this export crops industry outside the traditional methods.

1.10. Motions submitted by Hon. Waruna Liyanage

1.10.1. Lack of opportunity for tea small holders to cultivate tea with a higher productivity due to the absence of new clones introduced by the Tea Research Institute.

Hon. Chair informed that although a large number of new clone species have been introduced by now, there are certain issues regarding extracting planting materials

1.10.2. Increasing the amount of money provided for tea small holders up to five hundred thousand per acre.

Hon. Chair informed that action would be taken to increase the prices and that attention has been paid towards a program to reduce the timeframes through methodologies like Guatemala Methodology for soil conservation which enables fast re-cultivation.

1.10.3. Renovating the houses of estate workers in private firms.

Hon. Member requested to renovate the houses of estate workers.

1.10.4. Releasing the cemeteries located in estates

Hon. Chair informed that it is expected to take a decision regarding the lease agreement between the government and the companies having consulted the Attorney General.

1.10.5. The auction of an estate by a private estate owner in Balangoda and the arbitrary removal of the houses constructed for estate laborers.

Hon. Chair informed that it would be appropriate to provide a plot of land through the divisional secretary.

Hon. Kanaka Herath, State Minister stated that in future there will be a methodology to provide more houses with the support of the Housing Development Authority.

1.10.6. Obtaining houses to replace those destroyed by landslides that occurred in estates of the Kandy district

Hon. Member was informed to submit a proposal in this regard with a land identified for the same in order to proceed the matter.

2. The Committee adjourned at 11.00 a. m. *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Lands
First Meeting - 26 November 2020**

Committee Members present

Hon. S.M. Chandrasena (Chair)
Hon. Roshan Ranasinghe (State Minister)
Hon. Gayantha Karunatileka
Hon. Selvam Adaikkalanathan
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. Asanka Navarathna
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal

Non - Committee Members present

Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Ashoka Priyantha
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Sampath Athukorala
Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. H. Nandasena

Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Samanpriya Herath

1. Motions submitted by the Hon. Members

1.1. Providing freehold deeds for the lands for which permits have been issued and other matters - Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara

1.1.1. Avoiding the delay in providing freehold deeds for the lands for which permits have been issued

Hon. Chair informed that it is expected to amend the Land Development Ordinance to expedite this process.

The Surveyor General informed the committee that it is expected that in the future, people would be able to do surveying for a reduced fee in order to avoid surveying delays.

The Commissioner General of Lands informed the committee that a programme has been arranged to conduct the entire process in an efficient manner.

1.1.2. Amending the Lands Ordinance

Hon. Member inquired about the law governing the transfer of land ownership to the eldest child of a family following the death of the parents.

The Hon. Chair stated that this issue would be addressed when the Lands Ordinance is amended.

1.1.3. Establishing a database including the land ownership details

The Hon. Member proposed that the database, which includes the details of each person's lands, be prepared in collaboration with each divisional secretariat.

The Commissioner General of Lands stated that steps have already been taken to create a database in this regard.

1.2. Land Surveying done through the Bimsaviya Project and other matters- Hon. Milan Jayatilaka.

1.2.1. Land Surveying done through the Bimsaviya Project

The Hon. Member stated that due to the inaccuracy of land surveying conducted under the Bimsaviya program, the Pradeshiya Sabha would not approve the relevant land plan.

The Secretary to the State Ministry informed the Committee that the Survey Department is preparing a cadastral plan for a land that incorporates several basic points for the Bimsaviya program. However, he stated that when submitting a plan for approval to local government bodies, a more detailed survey plan is required.

The Secretary to the State Ministry informed that the development survey plan is not based on the cadastral survey plan and therefore as a solution, discussions are underway regarding introducing an amendment to the relevant act.

The Secretary to the State Ministry further informed that certain people ignore the accurate boundaries indicated in the initial survey plans and enjoy the possession of lands for a longer period of time. Then they submit survey plans which have been prepared including erroneous boundaries instead of the initial boundaries, which are not approved by the authorities leading to a serious problem.

The Hon. Chair informed that the amendment of the Lands Ordinance would be expedited in view of resolving all these issues.

1.2.2. Distribution of partitioned lands for the people residing in the lands belonging to the Land Reforms Commission.

The Hon. Member stated that for the time being, people living on lands owned by the Land Reforms Commission would be required to pay a fee for partitioning those lands.

The Hon. Member inquired about the possibility to provide certain relief to those who are experiencing a low economic level and are unable to make the above payment.

The Additional Secretary (Lands) informed the committee that it is expected to issue a circular by the Land Reforms Commission regarding the charge of a reasonable amount of money in this regard.

Hon. Chair informed that residential lands with an extent of less than 20 perches would only be considered here.

1.3. Illegal acquisition of lands in the District of Hambantota - Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

1.3.1. Illegal acquisition of lands in the District of Hambantota

Hon. Member informed that the maximum limit a person can possess as a manor land, is 50 acres and a certain individual in the Hambantota district is engaged in acquiring further lands indicating it as a manor land of 50 acres.

Hon. Member inquired about the registration of the said lands by the Department of Land Commissioner.

Hon. Member informed that this has happened as it has been registered without accurately indicating the extent of the land that can be possessed.

The Secretary to the State Ministry informed that it is expected to draw attention in this regard through the Registration of Title Act. The Secretary to the State Ministry further informed that this kind of unlawful acquisitions referred by the Hon. Member would not reoccur in the future as it is expected to register a land after visiting the particular site and after the surveying process.

The Secretary to the State Ministry informed that the information required for an inquiry regarding the issue mentioned by the Hon. Member would be furnished.

1.3.2. The programme for encouraging the village level entrepreneurs

The Hon. Chair instructed the officers to extend the deadline for applications for the land-related program to encourage entrepreneurs at the village level by one month at the request of the Hon. Member.

1.4. Amendment of the Land Development Act and other matters - Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

1.4.1. Amendment of the Land Development Act

The Secretary to the State Ministry informed that arrangements are already made in relation to amending this Act.

1.4.2. State Lands (Recovery of Possession) Act

Hon. Member informed that the possession of public property can be reacquired from the unauthorized tenants through a very simple methodology under the State Lands (Recovery of Possession) Act.

Hon. Member stated that in many instances it is observed that currently Buddhist Temporalities possess unlawful deeds and informed that it would be better to conduct the surveying activities under the Bimsaviya programme with the support of the Ministry of Justice.

1.4.3. Delay in providing the land deeds in the Nagasthenna area of Kandy

Hon. Member informed that there is a delay in providing deeds for 270 land slots in the Gangabadakoralaya divisional secretariat division of Nagastenna , Kandy although all the relevant work has been completed.

1.4.4. The project implemented by the Board of Investment in the Ambalamanawaththa area of Galaha

Hon. Member informed that as per the prevailing state of affairs, it is probable that the foreign investor may abandon this project due to the problematic situation which has arisen with regard to lease payments for the land provided by the Land Reforms Commission pertaining to this project.

The Hon. Chair requested that the Hon. Member provide him with the necessary information.

1.5. Recovery of Possession and other matters- Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal

1.5.1. Returning an alienated land to the initial owner

Hon. Member informed the committee that a certain individual has engaged in long term cultivation activities in a land with an extent of 217 acres in the Puttlam District defaulting the rent payments to be paid to the government.

Hon. Member further informed that legal action has been taken based on the complaints lodged in this regard and that currently arrangements are made to grant the said land to the same person following the court determination.

The Commissioner General of Lands informed that the possession is alienated only related to lands which cannot be systematized under the Recovery of possession Act and that with pertinence to a developed land it is mostly attempted to systematize instead of alienation.

The Secretary to the State Ministry informed that the inquiries related to the land located in the Puttlam District referred to by the Hon. Member are currently conducted.

Hon. Chair informed that attention would be paid to this matter.

1.5.2. Charging higher levies for residential lands within the same Divisional Secretariat.

Hon. Member inquired about charging a higher levy when the residence is shifted from one GN division to another within the same divisional secretariat division.

The Hon. Chair informed that attention would be paid to this matter.

1.5.3. Higher charges charged by the Land Reforms Commission for Surveying

Hon. Chair instructed the Land Commissioner General to pay attention to this matter.

1.6. The district level programme implemented by the government to distribute one hundred thousand land slots.- Hon. Selvam Adeikkalanadan

The Hon. Chairman informed that the plan to distribute one hundred thousand land slots would be implemented in all the 25 districts. Accordingly, it was informed that the program would be implemented in the Northern and Eastern provinces as well.

The Hon. Chair further informed that arrangements would be made to provide applications to the Hon. Members in Tamil language.

1.7. Deprivation of property rights related to the property of Buddhist Temporalities and other matters – Hon. Wasantha Yapa Bandara

1.7.1. Deprivation of property rights related to the property of Buddhist Temporalities

The Hon. Member stated that the property of the Buddhist temporalities which are administered under the Buddhist Temporalities Act number 19 of 1931 are possessed by the unauthorized settlers and that consequently the entitlements for the said property is no more with the Buddhist Temporalities.

Hon. Chair stated that this matter would be considered with regard to the amendment of the Buddhist Temporalities Act.

The Hon. Member inquired about the possibility to conduct the surveying under the Surveying Department.

The Secretary to the State Ministry stated that the surveying activities are done free of charge in the areas covered by the Act and that the relevant documents to prove the ownership should be presented by the guardians to when the relevant inquiries are conducted.

The Secretary to the State Ministry further stated that the relevant measures have been already initiated regarding the documents which had no specific decision on the property belonging to temples under the Buddhist Temporalities Act.

He further informed that the entitlement would be granted to the particular temple given the fact that it is administered under the Buddhist temporalities Act and that the ownership of a particular land would be granted to the said temple

subject to the connection with precise individual, if a certain individual connected to the temple resides in the particular land.

1.7.2. Land permits not being granted to the traditional residents considering their lands as lands belonging to Wildlife Conservation Department.

Hon. Member stated that land permits have not been issued for persons residing in the Hasalaka and Minipe areas traditionally considering the lands as lands coming under the Department of Wildlife and inquired about any methodology available for issuing permits for the said people.

The Hon. Chair informed that a circular has been issued with pertinence to the acquisition of residual forest areas by the Forest Conservation Department.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that arrangements will be made to re-acquire the lands belonging to the Department of Wildlife and to grant them for agricultural purposes.

1.7.3. Transfer of property located in a land belonging to the Sri Lanka Transport Board in the Hasalaka town.

Hon. Member inquired about the possibility to legally grant the relevant properties to the people who engage in business activities in the shop spaces located in a land belonging to the Sri Lanka Transport Board in the Hasalaka town.

The Secretary to the State Ministry informed that measures can be taken to grant these properties legally.

1.8. Transfer of the land belonging to the Vocational training authority in the Niyagama divisional secretariat division to another party and other matters - Hon. Sampath Athukorala

1.8.1. Providing the land belonging to the Vocational training authority in the Niyagama divisional secretariat division to a private party

The Hon. Chair informed that action would be taken to return the said land to the Vocational Training Authority

1.8.2. Land Issues in the Hiniduma area

Hon. Member requested that at least two offices be provided under the Bimsaviya Program to make arrangements to settle the large number of land issues prevailing in the Hiniduma area.

The Hon. Chair instructed to take action in the future to include the Hiniduma area as well in the Bimsaviya program when it is implemented.

1.9. Problematic situation related to the transfer of ownership (inheritance) of lands which have been provided under the Swarnabhumi deeds and other matters - Hon. Sudath Manjula

1.9.1. Problematic situation related to the transfer of ownership of lands which have been provided under the Swarnabhumi deeds

Hon. Member stated that several problems have occurred with regard to the transfer of inheritance of the lands granted under the Swarnabhumi deeds, to the eldest child of the family after the demise of parents and requested that attention be paid in this regard.

1.9.2. Collection of taxes from the residents of the lands belonging to the Land Reforms Commission

Hon. Member informed that exorbitant amounts are charged as rentals from the residents of the lands belonging to the Land Reforms Commission and that the people belonging to lower economic levels are severely inconvenienced due to this situation.

The Hon. Chair informed that attention will be drawn regarding this above matter at the amendment of Land Development Ordinance bill.

1.9.3. Providing lands to the landless people in the Kegalle District

Hon. Member informed that the work of the divisional secretariats is obstructed by the estate owners when lands are acquired under the programme to expand villages focused on the landless.

1.10. Obtaining crown lands for housing development purposes in the Wannu area - Hon. K. Kadar Masthan

1.10.1. Obtaining crown lands for housing development purposes in the Wannu area

Hon. Member stated that a problematic situation has arisen with pertinence to granting the crown lands which do not belong to the Forest conservation department for developing houses and requested to provide immediate solutions regarding the crown lands of the area through the district secretary.

The Hon. Chair requested the Hon. Member to submit a written request to the Ministry of Lands specifying the amount of lands required for the development purposes and Housing constructions in the Wannu district.

1.10.2. Providing land deeds to eight hundred individuals in Alakattukara area of Mannar.

Hon. Member stated that the particular land slots have not been partitioned and land deeds have not been provided and that therefore others have constructed houses in these locations. He requested that a committee be appointed and solutions be given to this issue.

The Hon. Chair instructed the officers to go on a field visit in the Wanni district as per the request made by the Hon. Member.

1.11. The waste project implemented in Welikadamulla of Aththanagalle and other matters - Hon. Gunethilake Rajapaksha

1.11.1. The environmental issues arising out of the waste project implemented in a land belonging to the Land Reforms Commission in Welikadamulla of Aththanagalle

The Hon. Chair requested the Hon. Member to discuss about this matter with the Hon. Minister of Industries as this area is identified as an industrial zone at present.

1.11.2. Utilizing the unutilized lands in the Aththanagalle area for constructing playgrounds

The The Secretary to the State Ministry informed that the relevant lands have been identified and listed by now and that a cabinet paper is to be submitted in the future in order to get a decision about the measures that should be taken regarding this type of lands.

1.11.3. Utilizing the lands belonging to the Land Reforms Commission in the Aththanagalle area for development purposes

The Hon. Member requested that action be taken to transfer ownership of these lands to the Divisional Secretary, stating a problem that arose as a result of the ownership of these lands not being properly determined during development activities on these lands.

2. The Committee adjourned at 3.30 p.m. *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education
First Meeting – 28 November 2020**

Committee Members present

Hon. (Prof.) G.L. Peiris (Chair)

Hon. Susil Premajayantha (State Minister)
Hon. Vijitha Berugoda (State Minister)
Hon. Piyal Nishantha De Silva (State Minister)
Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Seetha Arambepola
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Anupa Pasqual
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena
Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya

Non - Committee Members present

Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna
Hon. Sivagnanam Shriharan
Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. (Mrs.) Geetha Samanmali Kumarasinghe
Hon. M.W.D. Sahan Pradeep Vithana
Hon. Madhura Vithanage
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. S.M. Mushaaraff
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Ashoka Priyantha
Hon. Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayaka
Hon. A.L.M. Athaullah
Hon. Vidura Wickramanayaka
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. (Dr.) Suren Raghavan
Hon. Gevnidu Cumaratunga
Hon. B.Y.G. Rathnasekara
Hon. Nalin Fernando
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorale
Hon. Nimal Piyatissa
Hon. Wasantha Yapbandara
Hon. Johnston Fernando
Hon. (Mrs.) Dayana Gamage
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, PC
Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath
Hon. Anura Priyadarshana Yapa
Hon. Ali Sabri Raheem
Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka

Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon

1. Discussion on Ministerial Affairs

1.1 Motions submitted by Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna

1.1.1 Grade 5 scholarship examination and the Advanced Level examination of year 2020

Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna requested that an additional allowance be paid to the examination centre chiefs and to the teachers who were involved in conducting the Grade 5 scholarship examination and the Advanced Level examination of amidst quarantine curfew.

1.1.2 The issue of acting principals.

Hon. Minister requested that the senior teachers who were appointed as acting principals for many provincial councils schools as the examination to recruit principals had not been conducted for many years be confirmed in service as principals. Hon. Minister further requested that appointments be given to these principals without conducting examinations on the supernumerary basis taking into consideration their educational qualifications and competencies developed after being appointed to the post of acting principal.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that this issue will be addressed in due course by revising the rules and regulations relating to recruitment and by submitting a cabinet memorandum.

1.1.3 Establishing the Teacher Advisor Service

Hon. Minister informed the Committee that, despite receiving the cabinet approval for establishing the Teacher Advisor Services, this task has delayed as the concurrence for absorbing the Teacher Advisors has not been given by certain provincial councils where teacher advisors are in service at present.

1.1.4 School admissions for year 2021

Hon. Member inquired about the policy in this regard.

The secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that, as per the notice given by the court and as per the instructions of the Hon. Minister, permission has been requested to revise the number of students admitted to Grade 1 and to other grades.

1.2 Appointing Vice Chancellors for universities – Hon. (Prof) Charitha Herath

The Hon. Member inquired as to whether a circular has been issued in contravention of the existing act for the appointment of Vice Chancellors to universities.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action is being taken at present following a proper methodology in terms of the Act.

1.3 Giving the first appointment remote areas – Hon. Diana Gamage

Since teachers' initial assignments to schools in remote areas, the Hon. Member stated, their personal and family lives have been badly impacted, and as a result, 100 percent productivity cannot be expected from them. To address this issue, the Hon. Member proposed that newly appointed teachers be allocated to schools within their own divisional secretariat.

1.4 Motions submitted by Hon. (Dr.) (Miss.) Harini Amarasuriya

1.4.1 Issues that have arisen in university admissions relating to admission of students for year 2020

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that two folded methodology based on old & new syllabuses adopted to University admissions 2020 has become ambiguous.

The Hon. Chair of University Grant Commission informed that action was pursued in line with Supreme Court order delivered for same situation in the year 2012.

Hon. Member requested that a report be submitted to this Committee with regard to this matter.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it is expected to solve this issue taking into consideration the capacities of universities so that no injustice would be caused to students who are awaiting university admission.

1.4.2 Methodologies for universities to sign memorandums of understanding with foreign universities/organizations for research and other activities

Hon. Member informed the Committee of the need to avoid delays that occur due to the complexity of the methodology that universities have to follow in signing memorandums of understanding consequent to the decisions that have been made after Easter Sunday attacks.

1.5 Pre - school education system in the Northern Province and the Matters related to the University of Jaffna – Hon. Sivagnanam Sritharan

Hon. Member brought to the attention of the Committee the issues such as human resource development in Northern Province pre-schools, the establishment of an Arts faculty at the University of Jaffna, the development of various other sections in collaboration with other universities, the development of university students' thinking in Jaffna, the University of Jaffna's physical resource requirements.

1.6 Obtaining the proposed building for the Institute of Advanced Technology in Mannar – Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

Hon. (Dr.) Seetha Arambepola, State Minister, informed the Committee that, as provisions for this construction has already been granted, construction activities can be commenced.

1.7 Establishing a Professorial Unit in Kuliypitiya affiliated to the Wayamba University – Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Hon. Member informed the Committee that, a professorial unit has not been established in Kuliypitiya so far as per decision made when establishing the medical college affiliated to the Wayamba University.

The Hon. Chair of the University Grants Commission informed the Committee that a committee consisting of specialist doctors has been appointed to find a solution to this matter.

1.8 Motions submitted by Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

1.8.1 Grade 5 scholarship examination and the Advanced Level examination of year 2020

Hon. Member requested that, as some of the candidates who sat the examination had contracted COVID-19 and had to face various difficulties, their situation be taken into consideration sympathetically and a few marks be given to them as a relief.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the standards for conducting national level examinations cannot be deviated from.

1.8.2 Sanghabodhi National School, Nittambuwa

Hon. Member requested that appointment of teachers and the non-academic staff to fill the vacancies according to the approved carder in Sanghabodhi National School, Nittambuwa be expedited, and the necessary physical resources be provided.

1.8.3 Converting the schools that have been closed down due to lower number of students to vocational training institutes

Hon. Member stated that schools have been closed down in this manner in Attanagalla area and throughout the country, and requested that those schools be converted into vocational training institutes in order to prevent the destruction of resources.

1.9 Motions submitted by Hon. Ishak Rahuman

1.9.1 Shortage of buildings in Thalawa Muslim Central College in the Anuradhapura District

The Hon. Member stated that there are a number of shortages of buildings in this school and requested those shortages be filled.

1.9.2 Shortages in the schools that have been established in the Anuradhapura District

Hon. Member requested that the shortages of these schools be fulfilled.

1.10 Giving permanent appointments to volunteer school teachers – Hon. Anupa Pasqual

Hon. Susil Premajyantha, State Minister, informed the Committee that the volunteer teachers that had been recruited to schools have so far been given permanent appointments, and that a census should be conducted to find out whether there are any more volunteer teachers that have not been given permanent appointments, and then action should be taken accordingly.

1.11 Transfer of the Principal in Mullativu National School – Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

Hon. Member requested that the transfer that has been given to the principal of Mullaitivu National School, who worked there continuously for 14 years, to the post of Provincial Director be effected.

Hon. Susil Premajyantha, State Minister, directed the Additional Secretary (Education Services – Establishments) to pay attention to this matter.

1.12 Developing the Teachers' College of Aesthetic Education, Giragama – Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara

Hon. Member proposed that it would be appropriate to convert the Giragama Teachers' College, the only teachers' college of aesthetic education, which has buildings extending to an area of 18 acres, into a training school or a school.

1.13 Developing the physical resources of Ududivulwewa school in the Galgamuwa Electorate – Hon. B.Y.G. Rathnasekara

Hon. Member informed the Committee that Ududivulwewa school in Galgamuwa Electorate, which is a provincial council school, does not even have the minimum facilities.

1.14 Appointment of a Principal to Dammissara National School, Naththandiya – Hon. Ashoka Priyantha

The Hon. Member stated that the Principal of Dammissara National School in Naththandiya has been working on acting basis since 2016, and requested that a permanent principal be appointed to that school.

1.15 Construction of the swimming pool at Debarawewa National School - Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

Hon. Member requested that the construction work of the swimming pool of Debarawewa National School, which has been stopped halfway at present, be commenced again.

1.16 Issues prevailing in Ruwanwella Rajasinghe Central College and Wendala Primary school – Hon. Sudath Manjula

The Hon. Member requested that the injustice that is caused to the students of Wendala Primary School in getting admission to Ruwanwella Rajasinghe Central College be corrected.

Hon. Susil Premajayantha, State Minister, informed the Committee that this request can be fulfilled.

1.17 Establishing technology schools under Mahindodaya Vidyala secondary schools – Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake

The Hon. Member requested that one technology school be established for each of the electorates in the Kurunegala District.

Hon. Susil Premajayantha, State Minister, stated that studies are being carried out through Zonal Directors of Education to increase the number of classrooms for students to learn the technology curriculum, which has been introduced by the government.

Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Seetha Arambepola, State Minister, too, informed the Committee that this matter is being considered as education policies are to be reformed in future.

1.18 Issues prevailing in schools in the Moneragala District – Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Navananda

1.18.1 The Hon. Member requested that a three-storey building be provided to Sevanagala Maha Vidyalaya to teach the technology curriculum.

1.18.2 The Hon. Member requested that graduate teachers be attached to the national schools.

1.18.3 The Hon. Member requested that vacancies for teachers to teach the Advanced Level subjects and vacancies for principals be filled.

1.18.4 The Hon. Member requested that a building be provided to the Provincial Education Office in Thanamalwila.

Hon. Susil Premajayantha informed the Committee that this issue should be resolved in consultation with the Provincial Council.

1.18.5 The Hon. Member further informed the Committee that provisions have not been received for the promotions of the teachers in the province and for distress loans.

1.19 Request for establishing an education zone for Pottuvil in Ampara – Hon. S.M.M. Muszhaaraff

The Hon. Member made a request regarding this matter.

1.20 Shortages in schools in the Puttalam District – Hon. Ali Sabri Raheem

1.20.1 The Hon. Member stated that a two-storey building has been constructed in Madampe school in Chilaw, but the construction works have not been completed, and requested that action be taken to complete the construction works.

1.20.2 The Hon. Member requested that transfers of the teachers who have been working at Muslim National School in Puttalam for over 10 years be effected.

2. The committee at 04.30 p. m. adjourned till 02.00 p. m. on 21st January 2021.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Foreign
First Meeting – 30 November 2020**

Committee Members Present

Hon. Dinesh Gunawardena (Chair)

Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya (State Minister)
Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana
Hon. Gamini Waleboda
Hon. (Dr.) Suren Raghavan

Non-Committee Members present

Hon. A.L.M. Athaullah
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. G.G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanadan
Hon. Udayana Kiridigoda
Hon. Jagath Kumara
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. Milan Jayathilaka
Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. Asanka Nawarathna
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. Thawaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardene
Hon. Marjan Faleel
Hon. Diana Gamage

1. Motions submitted by Hon. Members

1.1 Private Member's Bill presented by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario - Hon. (Dr.) Suren Raghavan

Hon. (Dr.) Suren Raghavan informed the Committee of the attempts made to have the third reading of the Bill regarding Sri Lanka that has been moved in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Ontario, Canada.

The Hon. Member further stated that this Bill affects Sri Lanka as a country and the sovereignty of the country both locally and internationally as well, and therefore, requested that attention be paid to this matter.

1.2 Establishing an insurance scheme for the Sri Lankan workers in the Middle East countries and other matters - Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage

1.2.1 The incident of bringing a Japanese minor girl to Sri Lanka

Hon. Member inquired about the legal action that has been taken regarding the incident of a Sri Lankan youth abducting a Japanese minor girl and bringing her to Sri Lanka.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the law is being implemented regarding this incident, and that the Embassy of Japan has been informed of this matter.

1.2.2 Establishing an insurance scheme for the Sri Lankan workers in the Middle East

Hon. Member inquired about the possibility of entering into a bilateral agreement with the Middle Eastern Countries to establish an insurance scheme for the Sri Lankans employed in those countries.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it is expected to draft new laws in this regard as most of the Sri Lankan employees in the Middle East migrate to those countries through illegal channels.

1.2.3 Ensuring that the foreigners have not contracted the COVID-19 virus on their arrival.

The Hon. Member inquired whether foreigners visiting this country should submit a certificate stating that they have been vaccinated against Covid-19.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that, as no vaccine has been introduced for the COVID virus so far, there are no guidelines in this regard, but every foreigner who arrives in this country should have had a PCR test done.

1.2.4 Promoting the image of Sri Lanka in foreign countries

As it is observed that there is an insufficiency of the promotional activities carried out regarding Sri Lanka by the Sri Lankan diplomatic missions operating in foreign countries, the Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to this matter.

1.3 Trade relations between Sri Lanka and other countries, and other matters - Hon. Gamini Waleboda

1.3.1 Documentary film containing scenes from military camps in Sri Lanka

The Hon. Member inquired the Committee about the intervention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding a documentary film that has been shot in Sri Lanka including scenes from the military camps of this country, and has been published worldwide through YouTube.

1.3.2 Conducting debates in the British Parliament in favour of the LTTE

The Hon. Member inquired the Committee about the methodology adopted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding conducting of various pro-LTTE activities in British Parliament

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is already intervening in this matter and is acting diplomatically.

1.3.3 Updating the Chambers of Commerce of Sri Lanka with the other countries.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to restructure Sri Lanka's friendship associations with other countries, to update the Chambers of Commerce in Sri Lanka and thereby to focus on enhancing Sri Lanka's foreign relations.

Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister informed the Committee that attention should be paid towards the functioning of the recently established Chambers of Commerce for various fields.

1.3.4 Appointment of one Commercial Officer for each diplomatic center

The Hon. Member suggested that the Committee appoints one Commercial Officer to each State Diplomatic Mission and set a commercial target.

Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister informed the Committee that it is expected to set such commercial targets next year.

1.3.5 Providing foreign employment opportunities to professionals with a high level of professionalism

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to focus on creating a national programme to provide foreign employment opportunities to local professionals with a high level of professionalism.

Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister informed the Committee that attention has been paid in this regard.

1.3.6 Gem Exportation in Sri Lanka

The Hon. Member suggested that Sri Lanka should pay attention to earning a higher income by developing relationships with countries in which gem mining is done and with which Sri Lanka does not have diplomatic relationships.

Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister informed the Committee that discussions would be held with the Government of Nepal and the Government of China in this regard.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the Ministry of External Affairs should pay attention towards signing of double tax agreements with the 12 countries with which signing of such agreements has delayed.

The Hon. Member also informed the Committee of the need to adopt a national policy on trade agreements.

Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister informed the Committee that the process of formulating a Trade Policy is already underway, and that Free Trade Agreements should be entered into.

1.4 Repatriation of Sri Lankans living abroad - Hon. G.G. Ponnambalam

As Sri Lanka has completely stopped repatriation of its nationals, Hon. Member inquired the Committee about the measures that would be taken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the Sri Lankans who have gone to foreign countries on visits and for employment.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that flights have already been launched to bring back Sri Lankans mainly focusing on the Middle East and from other countries as well.

The Secretary to the Ministry further informed the Committee that a large number of Sri Lankan migrant workers are being brought back to Sri Lanka by the government on special flights arranged through embassies, and that they can also return at their own expense by airlines such as Etihad and Emirates.

1.5 Repatriation of Sri Lankan Refugees Residing in India - Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

1.5.1 Repatriation of Sri Lankan Refugees in India

The Hon Member requested the Committee to take action to repatriate the Tamils who migrated to India during the war in North-East and are not registered with the government of India, and also the Tamils living in refugee camps in that country.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that steps will be taken to expedite this task, and that this matter can be discussed in detail at the next meeting of the Committee.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to give recognition to the degrees that have been obtained by the Sri Lankan students who migrated to India during the war and have returned to Sri Lanka after completing their degrees and to give them suitable appointments.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the recognition given by the Government of Sri Lanka to the degrees obtained by Sri Lankan students from foreign universities cannot vary from person to person.

1.5.2 Indian fishing vessels engaged in fishing in the Sri Lanka waters

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the local fishing community would lose the opportunity to engage in their livelihood as Indian fishing vessels continue engage in fishing in Sri Lankan waters.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it is expected to discuss this matter the following week.

1.6 Repatriation of Sri Lankans - Hon. Sivagnanam Sritharan

The Hon. Member inquired the Committee as to whether the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would issue a letter to Sri Lankans stranded in Middle Eastern countries to enable them to return to Sri Lanka.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that an e-mail approval, not a letter, is issued to the passengers arriving on regular flights considering it to be a special occasion.

1.7 Receipt of funds for the Baticaloa University - Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardena

The Hon. Member inquired the Committee as to whether the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has conducted an internal inquiry into the incident of receipt of funds on behalf of the University of Baticaloa.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that an inquiry is being conducted by another department in this regard.

1.8 Conducting PCR tests on Foreigners and other matters - Hon. Faizal Cassim

1.8.1 Quarantining of foreigners who arrive in this country

The Hon. Member enquired the Committee as to whether the foreigners who arrive in this country should be placed under quarantine after they had been subjected to PCR tests.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that when Sri Lankan officials as well as international level officials arrive in this country, they should undergo a 14-day quarantine period after been subjected to PCR test, and that this has not been discussed so far with regard to foreign tourists.

1.8.2 Arrest and release of by the Government of India a person who had left to India illegally

As a person who had left the country illegally to India had been arrested and then been released by the Government of India, the Hon. Member inquired the Committee about the repatriation of that person.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that expeditious action would be taken in this regard.

1.9 Repatriation of a group of Sri Lankan teachers and students who are in the Maldives - Hon. Jagath Kumara

As a group of Sri Lankan teachers and students in the Maldives are expecting to come back to the country for their holiday, the Hon Member inquired about measures that can be taken in that regard.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that arrangements would be made to bring them back to Sri Lanka within a week at least in two groups.

1.10 Repatriation of Sri Lankans workers living in Middle East countries - Hon. A.L.M. Athaullah

As the Hon. Member had handed over a list of names of Sri Lankans who are waiting to return to this country from Middle East countries, he enquired the Committee about its progress.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that there had been extensive discussions regarding repatriation of Sri Lankans, and that he would intervene in this matter.

2. The committee at 12.00 noon adjourned *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Power
First Meeting – 30 November 2020**

Committee Members present

Hon. Dullaas Alahapperuma (Chair)
Hon. Duminda Dissanayaka (State Minister)
Hon. Sarathi Dushmantha
Hon. B.Y.G. Rathnasekara
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban

Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

Non- Committee Members present

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera
Hon. Rohana Dissanayake
Hon. M. S. Thowfeek
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

1. Motions submitted by Hon. Members

1.1 Uninformed power cuts – Hon. Shantha Bandara

The Hon. Member proposed that the Bundle System should be adopted in order to avoid uninformed power cuts and occasional power outages that take place in many areas.

The General Manager of CEB informed the Committee that it has been decided to systematically bundle all the LT overhead lines and that this system is being adopted for the high-tension (33KV) lines.

It was also informed that power cuts for maintenance works are notified through newspaper advertisements about one month in advance.

Hon. State Minister informed the officials to keep the public informed of such power cuts one week prior to the scheduled date.

1.2 Tracing the location of the power failure using technology in emergency power failure – Hon. Duminda Dissanayake

Hon. State Minister Duminda Dissanayake informed the Committee that, in an emergency power failure, the location of the power failure can easily be traced by networking the electricity distribution system.

The General Manager of CEB informed that it is expected to implement this proposal through the projects that are implemented under the Asian Development Bank.

1.3 Proposals for street lamps

1.3.1 Using solar panels for street lamps – Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Hon. Member proposed to the Committee that, as there are issues related to the supply, maintenance, and utilization of street lamps, which is an essential service to the public, action should be taken to provide solar panel systems to local government bodies.

Hon. Milan Jayathilake stated that solar-powered street lamps are very useful to areas without power supply, and proposed to the Committee that a proper methodology should be introduced for that as the price of such lamps is very high.

Hon. Madhura Withanage proposed to the Committee that criteria should be introduced regarding matters such as the power of a street lamp and the distance between two lamps.

1.3.2 Installing solar-powered street lamps – Hon. Duminda Dissanayake

Hon. Duminda Dissanayake informed the Committee that, given the expenditure incurred by the government annually on street lamps, the expenditure incurred on street lamps would be a long-term investment that does not require paying any costs.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that, by signing a maintenance agreement with the company that supplies solar-powered lamps itself, the system can be transformed into a long-term, low-cost system.

Hon. Chair explained to the Committee that the proposal that had been submitted to the Cabinet regarding this matter has been suspended because of the issue as to whether local government bodies will properly carry out the maintenance work if solar-powered street lamps are installed.

Hon. Minister and the State Minister stated that, as this is a very important proposal, the relevant criteria will be prepared and provided to the local government bodies promptly in consultation with the CEB and the LECO.

Director (Renewable Energy and Development) Ministry of Power, explained to the Committee the policies that are adopted with regard to street lamps.

1.4 Difficulties experienced on occasions where electricity poles have to be removed when implementing road development projects by local government bodies – Hon. Milan Jayathilake

Hon. Milan Jayathilake brought to the attention of the Committee the issue that, where road development projects are implemented, it is difficult to carry out the development works of roads without removing the electricity poles that are already erected in the roads.

1.5 Adding the electricity that is personally generated using solar-power to the national grid – Hon. Faizal Cassim

Hon. Faizal Cassim proposed to the Committee that, instead of the system that is in effect in our country at present, consideration should be given to the possibility of adding the power that is generated personally using solar power directly to the national grid as done in other countries.

1.6 Issues relating to the management of street lamps in the urban areas around Colombo – Hon. Madura Withanage

Hon. Madhura Withanage proposed to the Committee that, as switching on and switching off of street lamps in areas where electricity is supplied by Lanka Electricity Company Pvt. Ltd. are improper and dangerous, an audit should be conducted regarding this matter.

Hon. Madhura Withanage was informed that it would be more productive to assign the task of removing the trees, branches and other objects that are removed in maintenance activities as a contract to local government institutes.

Hon. Member further stated that it is also problematic that electricity poles have been erected in such a way that drains get blocked.

Hon. Chair directed the General Manager of CEB to carry out an investigation into these matters, and to submit a report on the same.

1.7 The issue relating to the grid sub-station in Mannar area – Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan informed the Committee that construction of the grid sub-station of CEB in Pudunkattam area in Mannar has been delayed.

In addition, the Hon. Member proposed to the Committee that, as the District Office of the CEB is housed in a very old and very small building, this building should be developed properly.

Hon. Chair directed the General Manager of CEB to carry out an investigation into the issues raised by the Hon. Member, and to submit a report on the same.

1.8 Intense lightning situations in the Kegalle District – Hon. Sarathi Dushmantha

Hon. Member requested that lightning conductors be provided to houses in the Kegalle area to prevent lightning strikes as there is a very high incidence of many houses in the area experiencing lightning strikes due to high rainfall and hilly environment.

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera informed the Committee that researches have been conducted on this matter by the Department of Meteorology and the Disaster Management Centre, and that it was discussed at the meeting of the Ministerial Consultative Committee of the relevant Ministry.

1.9 Insufficient power supply in the area by evening – Hon. D. Weerasinghe

Hon. Member stated that residents in the area complain that the electricity supply they get in the evening is not sufficient even to operate a radio, and requested that this situation be remedied.

1.10 Preparing some regulatory system for solar energy units – Hon. B.Y.G. Rathnasekara

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that all the equipment that is imported is regulated through the Renewable Energy Authority.

Hon. State Minister further stated that CEB does not get involved in installing energy panels of this nature.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that CEB does not provide any assistance for constructing solar power projects which require cutting down of coconut trees or any other type of trees.

1.11 Installing solar power panels at hospitals and other matters – Hon. Faizal Cassim

1.11.1 Installing solar power panels at hospitals

Hon. Member informed the Committee that discussions about an Indian loan scheme is underway for installing solar panels at public institutes. It was further informed that it has been proposed to bring down the electricity bill of those institutes to zero.

1.11.2 Introducing a pre-paid service for providing the electricity supply

Hon. Faizal Cassim proposed to the Committee that it would appropriate to introduce to the electricity consumers a pre-paid system as a strategy to reduce the loss that is caused to the Ceylon Electricity Board.

1.11.3 Providing LED bulbs to Members of Parliament as security electric lamps.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that, at present, there is no dire need of security lamps for Members of Parliament.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it would be more important that all the Members of Parliament give an example to the country by installing solar panels.

1.12 Obtaining a permanent building for the Office of the Electrical Superintendent in Kinniya area – Hon. M.S. Thowfeek

General Manager of CEB informed the Committee that there is a programme in place to provide permanent buildings for such offices that are operating from temporary buildings, but this programme is progressing very slowly due to the existing financial difficulties.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that priority will be given to this matter.

1.13 Inquiring about the methodology for the disposal of the electronic accessories that are imported to this country – Hon. Madura Vithanage

The Chairman, Sri Lanka Renewable Energy Authority, informed the Committee that the solar panels that are imported at present are imported on the agreement that those panels should be returned to the relevant company or to the relevant country when they have to be disposed of in future.

Hon. Rohana Dissanayake inquired about the action that would be taken in case the relevant companies did not exist by that time in the future.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that, in case of the 100,000 Houses Project only, if an insurance coverage is obtained, there is no need to depend on the existing company.

1.14 Obtaining electricity supply for the two villages, Kirinda and Weeraketiya – Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera requested the Committee to provide electricity supply to a village that has about thirty houses in Kirinda area and to the village adjoining the Broadcasting Corporation in Weeraketiya.

1.15 Enquiring about the “Vistas of Prosperity” set of policies and other matters – Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Navananda

1.15.1 The agreement between Ace Power Embilipitiya Company and Ceylon Electricity Board

The Hon. Member inquired about the agreement between Ace Power Embilipitiya Company and Ceylon Electricity Board and the related activities.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that there is an issue relating to the management as the annual increase in the requirement of power is greater than the capacity of public systems that are in place for that power requirement. It was further informed that, it is expected to bring the power generation using fossil fuels down to a minimum level by 2025.

Hon. Chair explained to the Committee the future plans of Ceylon Electricity Board including details of the future plans for the use of renewable energy.

1.15.2 Imposing penalties on officials of the CEB who are involved in corrupt deals

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that action would not be taken to extend to contractual period in any way without the approval of the Public Utilities Commission, which is the regulatory body of the Ceylon Electricity Board.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that no power plant will be allowed to be operated without calling for tenders in terms of Sri Lanka Electricity Act.

1.16 Proposal for generating electricity using rice husk – Hon. (Dr) Upul Galappaththi

Hon. (Dr) Upul Galappaththi informed the Committee that a rice mill owner in the Thissamaharama area has requested permission to generate 2.5 MW of electricity using rice husk, but approval has not been granted for that so far.

1.17 Preventing the irregularities that take place during procurement – Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that action would be taken to regularize the procurement process.

2. The committee at 4.00 p.m. adjourned *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Defence
First Meeting – 01 December 2020**

Committee Members Present

Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa (State Minister)
Hon. Anura Priyadarshana Yapa
Hon. (Major) Pradeep Undugoda

Non-Committee Members Present

Hon. C.B. Rathnayake
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. M.S. Thowfeek
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Ashoka Priyantha
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Asanka Nawarathna
Hon. Nimal Piyathissa
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. M.W.D. Sahan Pradeep Withana
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. Weerasumana Weersinghe
Hon. Gevindu Cumaratunga
Hon. Marjan Faleel
Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage

1. Discussion on the affairs of the Ministry

1.1. Providing a police station to the Elahera Divisional Secretary's Division and other matters - Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala

The Hon. Member requested that action be taken to upgrade the Diyabeduma sub-police station located in the Elahera Divisional Secretary's Division to a police station.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that attention will be paid to this matter.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to direct its attention to the problem of putting the people who are engaged in small-scale gem mining in the Elahera area under pressure by the Special Task Force.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that instructions have been issued to implement the law only with regard to people who are engaged in large-scale gem mining.

1.2. Allocation of funds for a new building for the Alawatugoda police station - Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksa

Hon. Member requested that, as the construction work of the aforesaid building has not been completed, attention be paid towards repairing the old building and using it for the activities of the police station.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that attention will be paid to this matter.

1.3. Exchange of a land between Matale Municipal Council and the police, and establishment of a police station in Kandenuwara - Hon. Rohana Dissanayake

1.3.1. Exchange of lands

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the land that was to be handed to the Matale Municipal Council pursuant to a 1997 agreement between the Municipal Council and the Police has not yet been transferred.

1.3.2. Request for establishing a police station in Kandenuwara area

The Hon. Member requested that a police station be established in Ukuwela - Kandenuwara area.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that attention would be paid to the request made by the Hon. Member.

1.4. Trafficking of drugs into the country and other matters - Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

1.4.1. Taking action against trafficking of drugs into the country

The Hon. Member requested that two naval checkpoints be set up at the Madu Ganga estuary and the Weligama – Pollathumodara estuary through which trafficking of drugs into the country takes place frequently.

1.4.2. Delimitation of police stations in a feasible manner

The Hon. Member requested that the three Grama Niladhari Divisions in Pitabeddara that have been transferred to the Panakaduwa Police Station be transferred back to the Pitabeddara Police Station.

1.4.3. Releasing of Matara-Kotapola Public Stadium

The Hon. Member requested that the Matara - Kotapola Public Stadium, which was given temporarily in 2010 for the establishment of an STF base, be released.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that special attention will be paid to this matter.

1.5. Cutting down of trees for timber in forest areas and other matters - Hon. C.B. Rathnayake

1.5.1. Cutting down of trees for timber in forest areas

The Hon. Minister requested that cooperation of the Ministry of Defense be extended to prevent cutting down of trees in forest areas.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the security forces are taking action to prevent cutting down trees in forests, and that instructions have been issued to the security forces to take action regarding cutting down of trees in forest areas in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

1.5.2. Natural Disasters in the Nuwara Eliya District

Hon. Minister also informed the Committee of the need for an efficient staff that can respond immediately in the event of natural disasters in the Nuwara Eliya District, and of the construction of houses for families in high-risk areas for which acquisition of land has become a problem despite receipt of provisions.

The Director General of the National Building Research Organization informed the Committee that the staff attached to the Nuwara Eliya District for immediate response in emergency disasters has been increased, and 5 officers have been attached to the five Divisional Secretariat Divisions.

Further, the Hon. Chair informed the Committee that discussions could be held with the estate-based companies and with the Land Reforms Commission to obtain the required lands.

1.5.3. Establishment of a police station for the Thispane area

The Hon. Minister requested to pay attention to this matter.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that steps will be taken to increase the number of Police Stations in consultation with the Hon. Minister of Public Security.

1.5.4. Implementing the law unfairly against the people engaged in the Kithul industry

The Hon. Minister informed the Committee that a formal methodology should be introduced to prevent this.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that steps will be taken to strengthen the Kitul industry in consultation with the Ministry of Plantations.

1.6. Appointment of lawyers to every police station and controlling drug trafficking - Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

1.6.1. Appointment of lawyers to each police station to handle cases

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that it would be appropriate to appoint lawyers to each police station in order to address a number of issues such as delays in court cases, and for proper handling of cases.

1.6.2. Prevention of drug trafficking

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that rehabilitation of drug users should be organized properly in order to reduce the number of drug users.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that arrangements are in place under the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board to rehabilitate a large number of persons.

1.7. Relocation of Ruwanwella police station , which is located in the Dutch Fort, and other matters - Hon. Sudath Manjula

1.7.1. Relocation of Ruwanwella police station , which is located in the Dutch Fort

The Hon. Member requested that this police station either be relocated or an agreement be reached with the Department of Archeology to get the assistance of the Department to run the police station in the current location itself.

1.7.2. Establishment of a police station centered around Galapitamada town

The Hon. Member requested that a police station be established centred around Galapitamada town, and suggested that the school in Uruwala, Galapitamada, Which has been closed down, can be used for this purpose.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that steps will be taken to establish a temporary police post at this location.

The Hon. Chair further informed the Committee that this situation will be brought to the attention of the Inspector General of Police

1.7.3. Establishing a Police for Dehiowita Divisional Secretariat

The Hon. Member requested that a police station be established for Dehiowita Divisional Secretariat.

1.8. Shortage of police officers in Akuressa Police Station - Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to this matter.

1.9. Shortage of Police Officers in Police Stations and Other Matters - Hon. Madura Withanage

1.9.1. Shortage of police officers in police stations

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to this matter.

1.9.2. Referring young drug addicts to a separate prison

The Hon. Member requested that action be taken to send such persons to a separate prison.

1.9.3. Tender for the supply of granite to Sandahiru Seya

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that this process has not been carried out following the proper methodology.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the entire tender procedure was carried out in a transparent manner.

1.9.4. Monitoring statements made by various parties on national security

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to this matter.

1.9.5. Re-delimitation of divisional secretariats, police divisions and Grama Niladhari divisions

The Hon. Member requested that attention be paid to this matter as the population density has changed by now.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action is being taken regarding this matter with the Delimitation Commission that has already been appointed.

1.10. Security issues in the Mannar District - Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

1.10.1. Acquisition of lands in the Mannar District for Army camps

The Hon. Member stated that, as 3,500 acres of land in the Manthai East Divisional Secretariat Division in the Mannar District has been acquired newly for military camps, people in those areas are faced with difficulties in continuing their livelihoods, and requested that attention be paid to this matter.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary to the Ministry to pay attention to this matter.

1.10.2. Acts of violence taking place in the Mannar District

The Hon. Member stated that some person residing in the Mannar District is engaged in acts of violence and other rackets in the area, and requested that strict legal action be taken against that person.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that he would personally look into in this matter.

1.10.3. Limiting the number of police checkpoints in the Northern Province

The Hon. Member requested that action be taken to limit the number of police security checkpoints located in the Northern Province as the public is faced with various difficulties due to the large number of such checkpoints.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the number of checkpoints required is determined only after carrying out an analysis of the security situation, but he would consider reducing the number of checkpoints paying attention to this request.

1.11. Releasing the land that has been allotted for the construction of a library in the Killinochchi town - Hon. Sivagnanam Sritharan

The Hon. Member stated that a portion of the land in Killinochchi that has been allotted for the construction of a public library is under the control of the military, and requested the Committee to release that land.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this portion of land should be released soon.

1.12. Relocation of the DIG's office located in the Galle Fort and other issues related to the Galle District - Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

1.12.1. The DIG's office located in the Galle Fort

The Hon. Member requested that the DIG's office located at the Galle Fort be relocated.

Senior DIG Priyantha Weerasuriya informed the Committee that it has been proposed to maintain this police station as a police museum.

1.12.2. Paying attention to architectural design when constructing buildings for the police

The Hon. Member requested that, when constructing buildings for police stations, the architectural design should be planned to suit the environment of the location.

1.12.3. Release of land to Urban Development Authority

The Hon. Member requested that the remaining portion of the land that has been allotted for the Habaraduwa police quarters be released to the Urban Development Authority.

The Hon. Chair instructed Senior DIG Priyantha Weerasuriya to pay attention to this matter at the relevant Divisional Coordinating Committee meeting.

1.12.4. Establishing the Habaraduwa police station

The Hon. Member requested that the construction works be carried out to establish the Police station on the land that has been allocated for the Habaraduwa police station.

1.12.5. Establishment of Unawatuna tourist police station

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that no construction work is being carried out at location that has been allocated for this purpose.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that attention will be paid to this matter.

1.12.6. Establishment of a police station in the vicinity of Hapugala area

The Hon. Member made a request in this regard.

1.12.7. Using Boossa Race Course in Galle as the Richmond College stadium

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that, as Richmond College, Galle, requires a stadium, Boossa Race Course can be used for that purpose.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that attention will be paid to this matter.

Since the land at the Sri Lanka Army Camp premises, Boossa, that has been handed over to the Ministry of Justice for the construction of the new court complex, is not being used for that purpose, Sri Lanka Army requested that the said land be returned to them.

1.12.8. Construction of Galle Auditorium

The Hon. Member inquired the Committee about the name of the institution under which construction work of the Galle Auditorium is being done.

Tharaka Liyanapathirana, Chief Financial Officer, informed the Committee that this work is being carried out under the “Mix Development Project” using the provisions that have been allocated to the District Secretariat.

The Hon. Chair instructed the officials of the State Ministry to submit a detailed report on this project.

1.12.9. Releasing to the Urban Development Authority the building complex that has been handed over to the Navy

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to release to the Urban Development Authority the building complex located in front of the Naval Base, Galle and has been handed over to the Navy.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that attention will be paid to this matter.

1.13. Establishment of a police station at Ballaketuwa and attaching a team of members of the Civil Defense Force to that police station to control COVID-19 - Hon. (Major) Sudharshana Denipitiya

1.13.1. Establishing a police station in Ballaketuwa town

The Hon. Member made a request in this regard.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that attention will be paid to this matter.

1.13.2. Affiliating members of the Civil Defense Force to police stations to control the spread of COVID-19

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that it would be appropriate to attach teams of members of the Civil Defense Force to police stations for controlling the spread of COVID-19 in Bandarawela and Badulla areas.

1.14. Enquiring about the Mahara Prison riot - Hon. M.W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that this riot was caused by the overdose of drugs given for mental disorders.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that an investigation is being carried out about the doctor at the Mahara Prison for maintaining such a large stock of these drugs, and that it is expected that the situation would be brought under control this day.

1.15. Decline in the maintenance of Ranminithenna Tele-Cinema Village and payment of fines for driving offences - Hon. (Mrs) Diana Gamage

1.15.1. Decline of the maintenance of Ranminithenna Tele-Cinema Village

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that there has been a decline in maintenance work of this Tele-Cinema Village due to the reduction of the number of Navy officers who had been deployed for that task.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that attention will be paid to this matter.

1.15.2. Payment of fines for driving offences

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that it would be more appropriate to refer the offenders to places close to their residential address to pay the fines for driving offences.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that it is expected to prepare an appropriate methodology for this.

1.16. Drug trafficking in Sammanthurai Police Division and roadblocks in Akkaraipattu Police Division - Hon. Faizal Cassim

1.16.1. Drug trafficking in Sammanthurai Police Division

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that, although complaints had been made to the Sammanthurai Police and to the relevant sections, no action has been taken in this respect.

1.16.2. Roadblocks in Akkaraipattu Police Division

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that many roadblocks have been set up due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but it disturbs the people who are engaged in their farming activities.

The Secretary to the Ministry directed the Chief of Staff of the Sri Lanka Army to inform the Commander of the Army of this issue.

1.17. The problematic situation that has arisen in the transport section of “Benji” factory in the Bingiriya Industrial Zone and providing a welfare center for the war heroes in the Kurunegala District - Hon. Asanka Navarathna

1.17.1. The problematic situation that has arisen in the transport section of “Benji” factory in the Bingiriya Industrial Zone

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to this situation.

The Secretary to the Ministry of Defence informed the Committee that this does not fall within the scope of the Ministry of Defence.

1.17.2. Providing a welfare center for the war heroes in the Kurunegala district

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to pay attention to this matter.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that attention will be paid to this matter.

1.18. Providing relief to the people of Maniarasankulam area with regard to judicial matters - Hon. S. Thowfeek

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that, if the Maniarasankulam police post is established under Kinniya police station, it will be convenient for the people in the Maniarasankulam area in their judicial matters.

Officials of the Ministry informed the Committee that this is a decision that should be made by the Judicial Services Commission.

2. The committee at 12.30 p.m. adjourned *sine die*.
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**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Trade
First Meeting - 01st December 2020**

Committee Members Present

Hon. (Dr.) Bandula Gunawardana (Chair)
Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna (State Minister)
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. Niroschan Perera
Hon. Nalin Fernando
Hon. Marjan Faleel

Non-Committee Members Present

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera
Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Sivagnanam Shriharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Lalith Ellawala
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. Anupa Pasqual
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

1. Announcements by Hon. Chair

Hon. Chair explained that Trade Ministry is comprised with 3 departments and 6 statutory bodies. He informed that he is expected to work out a National Trade Policy, reestablishing Export Cabinet Sabha, revising Intellectual Property Act No. 26 of 2003, Opening sales center named “Rajawasa” by developing show rooms of State Trade Corporation, establishing Q shop network throughout the country for distributing essential food items at concessionary prices, Planning to implement Q Delivery system for quick delivering consumer items to door

step, conducting Forensic audit in Lanka Sathosa, introducing E-wiz system to all Sathosa outlet network, appointing a Committee of professionals to get recommendations for total restructuring in cooperative sector to be undertaken in the years to come.

Hon. Chair replied questions raised by Hon. Members on establishing and running of proposed Queue Shops.

2. Other Matters

2.1 Motions submitted by Hon. Rohana Disanayaka

2.1.1 Closing the Matale, Madawala Sathosa Branch

Hon. Member inquired about reasons that led to closing down Sathosa branch in Madawala area, Matale which earned huge profits and agreed to find an alternate place with low rentals.

The Chairman of Lanka Sathosa reasoned out for closing down due to increasing monthly rental of the rented building by Rs. 40000/-.

2.1.2 Objective of Cooperative Movement

Hon. Member stated that the Cooperative movement's prime objective should be providing essential food items to people at concessionary prices amidst escalating prices in the open market.

Hon. Chair informed that an investigation of this issue to be conducted by a panel of experts.

2.2 Activities in Sathosa for two decade period –Hon. Nalin Fernando

Hon. Member revealed that he acted as the Chairman of Sathosa for around ten years.

Hon. Member informed the committee that though the number of outlets increased by 100 from 300, revenue has not changed, but the staff had grown by about 1500.

Hon. Member stressed that the need to work out long term new plans for developing this network as a business establishment.

He added that a large amount of money is wasted for catering more than one third of outlets in Western province from distributing items at Boossa main storage.

2.3 Deploable situation of Pitabeddara sathosa branch In Matara - Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

Hon. Chair assured that no any branch operated so far would not be closed down and in case of rental hiking is reported at any of such to be referred to Hon. Members in the area for alternate places.

Hon. Chair informed that serious attention would be paid in the future on a proposal of Hon. Members present in Committee for locating Sathosa branches when space are available in public institutes in the area.

2.4 Misusing Co-operative Act - Hon Udayana Kiridigoda

Hon. Member stressed that the Co-operative Act is amended to take actions against financial fraud by setting up societies in Vehicle Importers Society's name in Kandy district and capital financial banks in misusing the said Act in co-operative movement.

Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna, State Minister requested the Hon. Member to inform such misappropriations to the Committee through regional associations in the area.

Hon. State Minister informed the strategy to be followed to develop cooperative movement.

Hon. Chair said that the recruitments of Sathosa to be made from the same areas in the future.

2.5 Motions submitted by Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura

2.5.1 Reducing the price of brown sugar

Hon. Chair directed Chairman, Lanka Sathosa to sell a kilo of brown sugar at Rs. 135/= as its maximum price.

2.5.2 Issues in appointing and transferring officers in cooperative federations

Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura pointed out that the bureaucracy of the General Manager's post in Cooperative societies could be eliminated by amending Cooperative Act or Service Minute in appointing, transferring, retiring etc. of persons are so designated.

Hon. Chair directed Committee officials to refer appointment letters of these regional associations to the Cooperative Advisory Committee that consider appointments.

Hon. Chair directed Committee officials to call Cooperative societies from Members in writing and to hold a special Consultative Committee in the future for discussing with provincial commissioners, governors of provinces.

2.6 Motions submitted by Hon. Charles Nirmalanadan

2.6.1 Sathosa in Madu area, Mannar District

Hon. Member informed that Sathosa outlet in Madu area, Mannar district is on verge of closing down due to low profit margins.

2.6.2 Releasing Co-operative Training Centre in Northern Province

Hon. Member requested to take back North provincial cooperative training center in Vavuniya which is used as a center of misplaced persons.

Hon. Chair directed Commissioner, Cooperative Development to submit a request to regain said building to the Sri Lanka Army.

2.7 Director post issue in Wennappuwa Cooperative Society - Hon. Niroshan Perera

Hon. Member said that Election of Wennappuwa Cooperative Society to be held on following week pointed out unjustifiability in retaining deposit of Rs. 50,000/- by the persons who are selected as its Directors.

Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna, State Minister directed the Commissioner of Co-operative Development to discuss and resolve the matter.

2.8 Restructuring Ruwanwella Co-operative Society - Hon. Sudath Manjula

Hon. Member said that the Ruwanwella co-operative society had been in state of loss during the period under the administration of both Commissioner and Director Board, unable to meet salaries and requested to resuscitate it by appointing two development officers to the Director Board.

Hon. Chair directed Commissioner, Co-operative Development to conduct an inquiry on this matter.

2.9 Developing Hingurakgoda Marketing Complex and Rice Mill - Hon. Amara Keerthi Athukorale

Hon. Chair directed to call interests of investors for developing forlorn building of Hingurakgoda Market complex and renovating rice mill as requested by the Hon. Member.

3. The committee at 3.15 p.m. adjourned *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee Meeting on Ports and Shipping
First meeting – 02nd December 2020**

Committee members present

Hon. Rohitha Abeygunawardena (Chair)
Hon. Jayantha Samaraweera (State Minister)
Hon. Sujith Sanjaya Perera

Non-Committee members present

Hon. Rohana Dissanayake
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. Marjan Faleel

1. Discussion on Ministerial affairs

1.1 Closing down of Ports Training Institute of Matara District – Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

The Hon. Member informed the Committee if the Ports Training Institute of Matara district could be reopened it can be utilized to conduct training required for the Hambantota harbor and to gain foreign employment.

Since there is a proposal to train sailors with the support of the Ceylon Shipping Corporation and Merchant Shipping Unit and with the involvement of Mahapola Ports and Maritime Academy from January 2021, Hon. Chair instructed the Chairman of Ports Authority to conduct an on-site inspection and submit a detailed report to the next Ministerial Consultative Committee meeting to recommence the activities of this institute.

1.2 Motions submitted by Hon. Ajith Rajapakse

1.2.1 The legal status of the agreements reached with the Chinese government

The Hon. Member emphasized the committee that a state of uncertainty has been created over the lands in the agricultural settlements since there is a tendency of

aforesaid lands that had been identified by Chinese companies to be taken over when the Hambantota harbor was sold to a Chinese company, being utilized by various persons for other business purposes.

Hon. Chair informed that lands owned by Sri Lanka Ports Authority will be considered at a future meeting to be held with Hon. Ministers and government officials of the area.

1.2.2. Re-acquiring Hambantota harbor

The Hon. Member inquired from the committee on the possibility of implementing a certain programme to re-acquire the Hambantota harbor.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee since it is a matter regarding an agreement reached with another country re-acquisition cannot be considered at the moment.

1.2.3. Facilitating school children to visit Hambantota harbor

The Hon. Chair informed the committee since there is no restriction imposed preventing school children visiting Hambantota harbor requests in this regard can be forwarded to the Colombo office.

1.3. Motions submitted by Hon. Madhura Withanage

1.3.1 The legal status of the agreements reached with the Chinese government

The Hon. Member inquired whether the money received from leasing out the Hambantota Port has been deposited in the Treasury as it has not been used to settle any loan obtained.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee the money has been deposited in the Treasury and repayment of loan is being further carried out via the Ministry of Finance.

The Hon. Member inquired whether a review has been conducted on how the Sri Lankan government can intervene at diplomatic level during a problematic situation, an emergency or in the face of a disaster and the commercial impact on the country.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee that the Sri Lanka government can intervene to a certain extent with regard to Chinese companies but added necessary interventions can be made when required.

The Hon. Member inquired regarding the ownership of the island separately situated from the main land as per the aforesaid agreement.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee the ownership of the island has been given away from the agreement and a request will be made to reacquire it.

1.3.2. East Container Terminal of the Port

The Hon. Chair informed the terminal will be given to an investor while retaining 51% of the ownership by the Sri Lankan government.

Hon. Sujith Sanjaya Perera also requested the Hon. Chairman to make a clear statement regarding the future of this terminal.

Hon. Madhura Withanage informed the committee although the staff of SAGT and CICT of John Keels Company is less in comparison to the staff of Ports Authority the aforementioned institutions are earning a higher revenue.

The Hon. Chair stated the staff of the Ports Authority will be reduced gradually and a programme will be initiated to increase the efficiency of the institution.

It was also informed that the salaries of employees will be increased in year 2021 as per the tri-annual salary increment policy.

The Hon. Member inquired on how the project to assemble buses and other types of vehicles at Dambulla area, where a local company has expressed interest to implement the project with the involvement of Chinese companies, is being coordinated.

The Hon. Chair asked to submit a project proposal in this regard.

Further, the Hon. Chair informed all the Hon. Members that investors who are eager to invest at Trincomalee and Olivil harbors can submit project proposals.

1.3.3. Future measures regarding Kankasanthurei and Olivil harbors

The Hon. Member inquired on the future measures regarding Kankasanthurei Port that had earned Rs.18 million by year 2019 and Olivil harbor.

The Hon. Chair instructed to submit a detailed report on the future measures regarding Galle, Kankasanthurei and Olivil harbors to the next Ministerial Consultative Committee meeting.

The Hon. State Minister further pointed out the location where the Olivil port has been built is not suitable for a port and the Ports Authority should be released from this liability.

1.3.4. Problems faced by residents along the Kolonnawa railway line

The Hon. Member proposed that in order to prevent the heavy traffic caused due to container trucks being driven towards harbor, it is appropriate to build railway tracks using majority of the government owned lands in Meethotamulla, Kolonnawa and Bloemendhal areas.

Hon. Jayantha Samaraweera, State Minister informed that discussions have already been held with the Urban Development Authority which owns the aforesaid lands and the progress in this regard can be reported in the future.

1.4 Job opportunities of the Port City project – Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku

The Hon. Chair informed that this project is implemented under the supervision of His Excellency the President.

However, the Hon. Chair assured the committee priority would be given to Hon. Members when employment opportunities are available at CICT, SAGT and Port City.

1.5 Motions submitted by Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

1.5.1. Talaimannar – Rameswaram Ferry

The Hon. Member pointed out the need for constructing the Rameswaran Bridge for passenger and goods transportation and building a small harbor in the Batticaloa area.

The Director General of Merchant Shipping informed the committee that the goods transportation service conducted between Sri Lanka and Tuticorin city of India from year 2001 has come to a standstill and proposals will be made to recommence the aforesaid service.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee although the aforesaid service cannot be resumed at present due to the prevailing Covid pandemic, it will be considered in the future after holding discussions with the security forces.

1.5.2. Issues regarding the lands in the surrounding area of Trincomalee harbor

The Hon. Chair told the committee persons who have encroached lands in the surrounding area of Trincomalee harbor are being investigated and taking over of lands owned by government to the Ports Authority will be considered in the future.

1.6 Transporting of goods via Kelani River – Hon. Sudath Manjula

The Hon. Member informed the committee that the Dutch have transported goods to the upcountry and the low country using Kelani River in the past. The Hon. Member requested to draw the attention on using Kelani River to transport goods.

2. The Meeting was, thereafter, at 11.00 a.m. adjourned *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Tourism
First meeting – 2 December 2020**

Committee members present

Hon. Prasanna Ranatunga (Chair)
Hon. M. Udayakumar
Hon. (Mrs.) Geetha Samanmale Kumarasinghe
Hon. Diana Gamage

Non- Committee members present

Hon. Angajan Ramanathan
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake
Hon. Anupa Pasqual
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan

Leave of absence

Hon. Nipuna Ranawaka

1. Other matters

1.1. Motions submitted by Hon.Chandima Weerakkody

1.1.1. Developing the infrastructure facilities at the fascinating places even though they are not suitable for Tourism.

The Hon. Member made a request to develop places like “Devata”, which are frequented by tourists, in an attractive manner.

1.1.2. Naming the Pitiwella area that runs from the Gintota Bridge to Boossa, a tourist zone.

The Hon.Chairman instructed to develop this tourist area.

1.1.3. Issuing a license to the Kabalana area for an identified period (Seasonal Licensing).

The Chairwoman of the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Authority stated that there are certain issues on the legal requirements of the Coastal Conservation Department and the Tourism Authority and that attention is paid on it.

1.1.4. Introducing a certification system for Foreign Surfing Instructors.

Hon.Chair stated that it is expected to introduce regulations for Surfing Instructors and it is prudent to set up a system of issuing permits for foreign Surfing instructors.

1.1.5. Issues pertaining to the setting up of the Unawatuna Tourist Police Unit.

Hon.Chair stated that plans are being prepared to set up a Special Tourist Police Unit with the deployment of graduates recruited to the public sector.

The Chairwoman of the Tourism Promotion Authority stated that it is difficult to provide accommodation even though there is a possibility of making the infrastructure facilities available.

It was further stated that there is a shortage of woman Police officers to report about the harassment faced by the tourists and that it is a grave shortcoming that there is no avenue for the tourists who make a complaint and leave to follow up on it.

1.1.6. Drinking water problem in the Galle district.

The Hon.Member proposed that the next phase of the Mahagalla water supply scheme and the next phase of the Baddegama water supply scheme be implemented. He also requested to make the Hon. Minister of Water Supply aware of this.

Hon. Chair stated that he would pay attention to the issue.

1.1.7. Constructing the two By-pass roads Unawatuna.

The Director General of the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Authority stated that arrangements are being made to constitute an administrative Committee in collaboration with the other Ministries concerned in relation to developing the infrastructure facilities required for Tourism.

The Secretary to the Ministry stated that details of roads that are connected to tourism and are in a condition to be developed have been sought from the District Secretaries and requested the Hon.Member to provide details of the roads that he is aware of.

The Hon. Chair requested the Hon.Member to provide details of those roads as soon as possible as it is expected to develop these roads in collaboration with the Ministry of Highways.

1.1.8. Motions for updating the identification of Tourist Zones and naming Koggala and Thalpe as Tourist Zones.

The Hon Chairman directed the officials to act on the proposal.

1.2. Motions submitted by Hon. Diana Gamage.

1.2.1 The necessity of having Entry and Exit terminals for persons with First class or Business class tickets.

The Chairman of the Airport and Aviation Company stated that arrangements have already been made to assign reserved terminals for the passengers travelling in the VIP and First class or Business class and that once the Airport is opened in the future the reserved sections would be made available for the First and Business passengers.

It was also informed that the Red Channel for Repatriation which is an exclusive channel for the returnees at the Mattala Airport and the Green Channel which is an exclusive Channel for Tourists to be started at the Bandaranaike International Airport would start to function in the future.

1.2.2. Developing the attitudes of the Immigration and Emigration officers.

The Hon. Member stated that the image of the country is at stake owing to the manner of discharging duties by the Immigration and Emigration officers at the Airport and a productive solution to the problem could be arrived at by having discussions with the Ministry of Defense, Controller of Immigration and

Emigration and the Trade Unions representing the Immigration and Emigration officers.

1.2.3. Airport staff working with the Migrant workers.

The Chairman of the Airport and Aviation Services Company stated a special unit attached to the Foreign Employment Bureau to inquire into the plight of the Migrant workers has been established.

Hon.Chair stated that there are complaints of degrading treatment explained by the Hon.Member and that they have to be separately dealt with.

1.2.4. Ensuring the safety of Tourists and establishing Tourist Police units.

The Hon. Member, citing the incident of a foreign lady being harassed by a group of young people and the ensuing incidents that happened when she went to the police station to make a complaint, stated that the freedom and safety of the tourists who visit Sri Lanka should be ensured.

It was also stated that a woman Deputy Inspector General of Police has been appointed for Tourism for the first time in the history and an exclusive computer App for travel has been designed with an Emergency button to connect with the nearest Police station in case of an emergency.

1.2.5. The need to create a night economy in Sri Lanka, granting of Liquor licenses and making the facility available for tourists to obtain liquor.

The Hon. Member made a request to pay attention to this matter.

1.2.6. Inability for tourists to obtain night economy facilities.

The Hon. Member stated that there is a night economy for tourists in the major countries and in Sri Lanka no facility can be accessed after 9.00 p.m.

1.3 Motions submitted by Hon. (Mrs.) Geetha Samanmalee Kumarasinghe.

1.3.1 Provision of relief to the people engaged in Tourism and were affected during the period of Covid-19.

The Hon. Member stated that the economy of the people engaged in the field of Tourism is severely hampered and requested for some relief from the government.

Hon. Chair stated that the initiative of making a payment of R.s.10,000- 20,000 by the Tourist Board in addition to the Rs. 5000 allowance form the government, has been completed.

1.3.2 The drinking water problem faced by the people in Galle who support tourism.

The Hon.Member stated that there should be some coordination between the construction of roads and water supply schemes.

Hon. Chair stated that the Ministry of Highways has made funds available for the development of roads in the areas where tourism functions.

Hon. Chair instructed the Director General of the Tourism Development Authority of Sri Lanka to explore the possibility of providing drinking water through a project.

1.4 Motions submitted by Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanikam.

1.4.1 The need to formulate a strategic Tourism plan for Batticaloa district.

The secretary to the Ministry stated that the plans have already been drafted to develop the area around the Baticaloa harbour and the support of sponsors can be obtained for that.

Hon. Chair instructed the Chairman of the Tourism Promotion Authority to work on this by making a priority list from among the identified areas.

1.4.2 Appointing a committee to prepare a systematic tourism plan for the Northern Province.

Hon. Chair agreed to the proposal and said that arrangements are being made to promote nearly 4956 identified places of tourist attraction for tourists.

It was also informed that the large lands in the North and East areas can be managed properly for attracting tourists.

1.4.3. Establishing a Ferry service from Talaimannar to Ramesvaram in order to develop Tourism industry in the North and East areas.

The Hon Member stated that many tourists are reluctant to come to Baticaloa because of the difficulties to travel to Batticaloa.

The Hon. Member further stated that tourists can be attracted to the places of tourist attractions in the North and East by developing this marine transport route.

1.4.4. Establishing the Jaffna Airport properly and creating a Batticaloa branch.

The Hon. Member stated that the price of the Air ticket to Batticaloa is very high.

The Hon. Member stated that tourists can be attracted if the Batticaloa Airport can be developed for fairly large Aircrafts to land there.

1.4.5. Putting in place a methodology to sell Liquor without license.

The Hon. Member made a request to pay attention to this matter.

1.5 Motions submitted by Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon.

1.5.1. Providing relief to tour operators in relation to re- registration charges at the Tourist Board at a time when tourism has collapsed.

The Chairman of the Tourism Promotion Authority stated that re- registration charges have been suspended for one year.

The Hon. Chair further stated that the persons who have paid the registration fees for this year need not to pay the same for the next year.

1.4.2 Since many countries are ready to use the Covid-19 vaccine, we can use it for the advancement of tourism in our country.

Hon. Chair stated that discussions would be held in relation to reopening the Airport after obtaining the necessary advice from the Ministry of Health.

1.6 Referring Sri Lankans who return from various countries to hotels that charge high fees, for quarantine. - Hon. Madhura Withanage

The Chairman of the Airport and Aviation Company stated that it was a matter handled by the Army Commander and hotels with more rooms close to the Airport have been identified for this purpose.

Hon. Chair requested the Hon. Members of Parliament to attend the Covid Task Force Committee as these matters are discussed there.

1.7 Motions submitted by Hon. Angajan Ramanathan on Tourism in the Northern Province.

1.7.1. Reference to the closure of the Palali Airport.

The Chairman of the Airport and Aviation Company stated that flights to this Airport were terminated in March and only maintenance work is carried out until international flights resume.

The Secretary to the State Ministry stated that the Government of India has agreed to provide funds for the development of this Airport and discussions in this regard are underway. He also stated that an agreement has been prepared in this regard.

1.7.2. Tourism development plan for the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

Hon. Chair stated that a separate discussion should be held in this regard, as this is an area that requires attention.

1.8 Motions submitted by Hon. Mayadunne Chinthaka Amal

1.8.1. Developing the Kalipitiya Tourist Zone.

The Chairman of the Tourism Promotion Authority of Sri Lanka stated that an agreement for a High-End Hotel Project worth of 417 Million Swiss/ American Dollars is to be signed with the United Kingdom for the Kuchchamani area.

The Chairman of the Tourism Promotion Authority of Sri Lanka also stated that the Urban Development Authority is making a systematic plan for the Kalpitiya area, as it is an attractive tourist destination.

Hon. Chair instructed the Chairman of the Tourism Promotion Authority to act in a suitable manner as a specific plan needs to be prepared for the Kalpitiya area.

Hon. Chair instructed the officials to discuss the plan that has been already made with the Members of Parliament of the area with the participation of the officials of the Urban Development Authority.

1.8.2. Developing Palaviya as an Airport.

The Hon. Member stated that there has been a proposal to construct an Airport in this area for a long time.

1.9 Motions submitted by Hon. Sudath Manjula.

1.9.1 Developing the Ruwanwella area as a tourist zone.

The Hon. Chair requested the Hon. Member to submit the project proposal to the Ministry.

1.9.2 Establishing a Cable Car project in the Kitulgala area.

The Hon. Member stated that this would attract tourists.

1.10 Motions submitted by Hon. Anupa Pasqual.

1.10.1 Projects for tourism in the Sabaragamuwa Province.

The Hon. Chair informed the Hon. Member to prepare a development plan by discussing at the Provincial level with the coordination of the Tourism Promotion Authority and submit it to the relevant District Secretary.

1.10.2. Preparation of a Tourism plan for the Matugama, Agalawatta, Bulathsinghala area.

The Hon. Chair requested the Hon. Member to submit the proposal in writing so that it can be discussed at the next Consultative Committee meeting.

2. The meeting at 3.30 p.m. adjourned till 20th January 2021.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment
First Meeting – 03 December 2020**

Committee Members Present

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera (Chair)
Hon. Kins Nelson
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake

Non-Committee Members Present

Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura
Hon. D.B. Herath
Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Sivagnanam Shriharan
Hon. Velu Kumar
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. S.M.M. Muszhaaraff
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, PC

1. Announcements by the Hon. Chair

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a special project by the name of “Surakimu Ganga” would be started to ensure the cleanliness of 103 rivers throughout the island.

2. Motions submitted by Hon. Members of Parliament

2.1 Problems related to palm oil cultivation – Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

2.1.1 Palm oil cultivation

The Hon. Member made a request to take legal action to ban palm oil cultivation.

2.1.2 Protection of water sources

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to prepare a programme to conserve water sources.

2.2 Sand extraction and coconut land fragmentation in coconut lands in Wariyapola.- Hon. D. B. Herath

2.2.1 Sand extraction in Wariyapola coconut lands

The Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that the environment has been damaged severely due to sand extractions in valuable coconut lands in Wariyapola, in the North Western Province.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that such illegal activities should be addressed and the issuing of licenses to extract sand in coconut lands should be suspended.

2.2.2 Fragmentation of coconut lands

The Hon. State Minister informed the Committee to take action to stop the fragmentation and auctioning of coconut lands.

2.3 Problems related to the removal of pinus trees – Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that illegal activity is occurring in areas such as Hantana where the pinus trees are being cut down and the land is being abandoned.

The Hon. Member requested that the environmental organizations and regional committees be given the opportunity to begin intercropping and forest cultivation on such lands.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that there is a proposal to plant indigenous forest cultivation in the places where the pinus trees were removed and support from the Ministry would be given for the teams and District Development Committees engaged in these cultivation.

2.4 Sand Mining near Heda Oya – Hon. D. Weerasingha

The Hon. Member informed the Committee about the environmental and archaeological damage caused by unlawful extraction of sand near Heda Oya.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that the report of the Presidential Task Force that has been established to regulate the supply of raw material to construct buildings in Sri Lanka would be implemented in the future.

2.5 Problems related to sand mining in Potuvil area – Hon. S.M.M. Muszhaaraff

The Hon. Member informed the Committee about the environmental problem caused by sand mining in high places in Potuvil area.

The Chairman of the Central Environmental Authority informed the Committee that a report would be presented to the Committee within a week after conducting an on-site inspection.

2.6 High profits earned by intermediaries in the transportation of sand- Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that it is frustrating that the intermediaries get high profits when the sand is transported from Manampitiya to various parts of the country.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken to reestablish the ferry system instead of the priority system to regulate the sand transportation and to check the high profits earned.

2.7 Implementation of the water supply project in Kandy - Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that there is a big racket in the supply of soil to fill the drains in this project.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that attention would be paid to that.

2.8 Injustice caused to the small scale entrepreneurs - Hon. Ajith Rajapaksha

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the small-scale entrepreneurs face injustice as the lower level officers take decisions without studying the overall environmental problems.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken to study that matter.

2.9 The problem related to the giant mimosa plant in Nalanda and Pallepola areas, Matale - Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka

The Hon Member informed the Committee that the farmers have faced a huge problem as the thorny giant mimosa plant has invaded the paddy fields also.

The Chairman of the Central Environmental Authority informed the Committee that immediate action will be taken in this regard.

2.10 Sand mining in Kitulkote, Wellawaya, and Thanamalwila areas – Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the country has lost onion, B onion and capsicum yields due to the degradation of arable lands around reservoirs due to sand mining in such areas, and that there were weaknesses in the process of issuing sand mining licenses over the past 10 years.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the issuing of licenses should be suspended and that a report should be presented a thorough investigation.

2.11 Problems in the traditional clay industry and brick industry – Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake

2.11.1. Problems in the traditional clay industry and brick industry

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the people who are engaged in the traditional clay industry and the brick industry have faced difficulties in obtaining soil as a raw material from lands near the rivers.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that opportunity would be given in the future to get raw material without legal impediments.

2.11.2. Pollution in Kurunegala - Badagamuwa forest

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that this forest is being polluted.

The Hon. Member requested that a resting place should be established near the information center in the forest.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that Badagamuwa forest belongs to the Ministry of Wild life and Forest Conservation.

2.12 Problems related to Iranamadu Reservoir – Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that sand mining near Iranamadu reservoir has led to a serious problem with seawater entering the Thiriviar area.

The Hon. Chair informed the officers in the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau that a report on that problem should be submitted to the Hon. Member with a copy to the Committee within a week.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken to see whether the Police is intervening in these activities.

2.13 Problems faced by the Bio Energy Private Limited in Nindavur area

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that no solution has been provided to solve the environmental problems caused by the Bio Energy Private Limited that generate electricity.

The Hon. Chair informed the Chairman of the Central Environmental Authority to temporarily cancel the license of this project and to take necessary action after conducting an investigation.

2.14 Residual Forests

The Hon. Member requested about the instructions issued regarding the residual forests.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that a study is being conducted to specifically identify the residual forests.

3. The Committee was adjourned on 03.12.2020 at 11.30 a.m. *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife and Forest Conservation
First Meeting – 03rd December 2020**

Committee Members Present

Hon. C.B. Rathnayake (Chair)
Hon. Wimalaweera Dissanayake (State Minister)
Hon. Kapila Athukorala

Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayaka
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka

Non - Committee Members Present

Hon. Vijitha Berugoda
Hon. Roshan Ranasinghe
Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura
Hon. Siripala Gamalath
Hon. Thenuka Vidanagama
Hon. D. B. Herath
Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. M. S. Thowfeek
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. A. Aravindh Kumar
Hon. Velu Kumar
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Kins Nelson
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, P.C

1. Discussions on Ministry affairs

The Hon. Chair placed a detailed description on mission and liabilities on part of Ministry as well as problems encountered in maintaining large extent of lands with limited man power.

The Hon. Chair also explained about threats involving forest resource and environment at large and also on difficulties undergoing by officers.

The Hon. Chair described on the program to be implemented by himself in the future through the Ministry.

2. Motions submitted by Hon. Members

2.1 Difficulties with regard to grazing by cows in Sanctuary areas - Hon. D.B. Herath

Hon. Member requested to intervene in troubles with Wildlife Department in entering cows of local milk farmers into forest areas.

The Hon. Chair informed Committee that all arrangements were taken to initiate fodder by conducting an investigation on areas that could be released for feeding in Kandakaduwa farm under the Mahaweli Ministry.

The Hon. Chair directed Secretary to the Ministry to take action to investigate into this matter and remedy forthwith.

2.2 Construction of a mega hotel complex in Rawana Ella sanctuary in Ella - Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayaka

Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayaka requested to take action to prevent construction of unlawful mega hotel complex being done in Rawana Ella area, Ella.

The Hon. Chair directed Director General, Wild Conservation and Secretary to Ministry to report back by conducting an investigation in to this matter.

2.3 Motions submitted by Hon. Roshan Ranasingha

2.3.1. Road to reach Yakkure village

Hon. Member requested to take action to offer public the opportunity of using road leading to Yakkure village through jungle area.

The Hon. Chair directed Secretary to the State Ministry to get down the report within one week by appointing a Committee to look into this matter and to take expeditious action in paddy land requisition by having an investigation.

2.3.2 Releasing reservoir for inland fishing

Hon. Member informed the Committee that directive made by Hon. Minister at his recent observation tour for identifying reservoir area engaged by inland fishing community with GPS Technology and releasing such areas for fishing purposes had not yet materialized.

The Hon. Chair informed the Secretary to the State Ministry to pay attention on non-implementation of directives of this matter.

The Hon. Chair directed the Secretary the Ministry to submit a report on the issue.

2.3.3 Land ownership of paddy fields in wildlife zones

Hon. Member requested to grant claim of paddy lands in wildlife zones such as Welikanda and Godapoththa areas in Medirigiriya to people who traditionally engaged in farming.

2.4 Cultivation rights on lands in Alankulam area, Kuchchaweli DS division, Trincomalee - Hon. M.S. Thowfeek

Hon. Member pointed out that villagers who live solely on farming are in threat by demarcating farm lands in Alankulam area, Kuchchaweli DS Division, Trincomalee as wildlife zone. He proposed to suspend this move and reaching a workable solution through negotiations.

The Hon. Chair directed the Secretary to the Ministry to submit a report on this matter at the next committee meeting.

2.5 Obtaining an environmental report regarding opening of Yakkure road to public - Hon. D. Weerasingha

Hon. Member enquired whether an environmental appraisal report on this matter had been prepared by Environmental Organization or by the Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Conservation.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this matter would be investigated and necessary steps would be taken.

2.6 Accomplishment of elephant fence – Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala

Hon. Member requested to accomplish Elahera elephant fence by fixing poles in order to prevent presence of wild elephants into villages in Polonnaruwa district.

2.7 Resettlement of people evacuated from their own places of living due to North East war situation and other matters - Hon. Selvarajah Kagedren

2.7.1 Releasing Kanagar village in Pothuvil DS division in Ampara district

Hon. Member requested that lands of Karainagar villagers in Pothuvil DS division in Ampara district had evacuated their own places in year 190 due to

North East war situation have gone under jungles. He requested to take action to resolve this issue as entry in this area has been restricted by the Wild Conservation Department.

Hon. Member requested that to give the permission to the villagers to enter into the land area of Karainagar in Pothuvil DS division in Ampara district which has been restricted by the Wild Conservation Department.

2.7.2 Road to historical Siva temple in Vidiththanar Malai of Nedunkerny, Vavuniya

Hon. Member requested to grant permission for people to use this road where the entry was restricted by the Wild Conservation Department.

2.7.3 Completely releasing Wediwaiththal, Nawalar Pannai area in Vavuniya District

Hon. Member informed to the committee that Wediwaiththal, Nawalar Pannai area in Vavuniya District to be completely released.

2.7.4 People engaging in fishing at the Oya in Musali area in Mannar for about 40 years.

Hon. Member requested to resolve the matter that the said people had been arrested and convicted by Wild Conservation Department when they reside in this area after war era and engaged in fishing.

2.7.5 Including muddy lands in Mulative district into Wild Conservation department borders

Hon. Member requested to release muddy lands in Mulativu District as those had been included in to the borders of Wild Conservation Department.

2.7.6 Ancient burial ground in Punnai Neerawi village in Therawila area, Kilinochchi

Hon. Member requested to release ancient burial ground in Punnai Neerawi village in Therawila area, Kilinochchi from Wild Conservation Department.

2.8 Preventing animal slaughtering by brutal ways like trap setting - Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, P.C.

Hon. Member informed the committee that laws related to inhumane poaching and animal slaughtering to be made strict.

The Hon. Chair directed Secretary to the Ministry to seek support of Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, President Counsel and other parties for working out laws in this respect.

2.9 Elephant fence construction up to Illukpitiya, Okkampitiya and erecting trenches and other matters - Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka

2.9.1 Elephant fence construction up to Illukpitiya, Okkampitiya and ditching trenches

Hon. Member requested to provide allocations for construction of elephant fence from Okkampitiya to Illupitiya in extent of about 3.8 KM as soon as possible.

The Hon. Chair directed Secretary to the Ministry to take action to give a reply on this at next Committee meeting.

Hon. Member requested to meddle in support from the Wild Conservation Department in rehabilitating tanks in wild zone and outside.

The Hon. Chair informed Hon. Member to submit a request to the Ministry with the details to frame out required background for tank renovation activities.

2.9.2 Tank rehabilitations

Hon. Member requested to meddle in support from the Wild Conservation Department in rehabilitating tanks in wild zone and outside.

The Hon. Chair informed Hon. Member to submit a request to the Ministry with the details to frame out required background for tank renovation activities.

2.9.3 Chena cultivation in reserves

Hon. Member requested to pay attention on relocating of reserved posts in chena cultivation lands at a time of arrangements are underway to re-release the residual forest by a gazette notice.

The Hon. Chair directed the Secretary to the Ministry to call a report on these matters.

2.10 Updating the Tamed Elephant Act and othe matters – Hon. Wasantha Yapa Bandara

2.10.1 Updating Tamed Elephant Act

Hon. Member brought to the notice of the Committee regarding the necessity of having a tamed elephant pool in order to maintain cultural items such as Dalada procession and amending Tamed Elephant Act.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee that Tamed Elephant Act had not been amended and regulated so far but expressed his willingness to effect any amendments needed enabling to maintain cultural items accordingly.

2.10.2 Isolated Villages in the Mahanuwara District

Hon. Member informed the committee that people in isolated villages like Meemure, Udagala Debokka, Galamuduna, Yahangala have been ready to relocate themselves due to serious hardships faced by them.

Accordingly, the Hon. Chair directed Secretary to the Ministry to facilitate Hon. Member to discuss on releasing villages situated in forest areas and allocating lands for them in low level areas.

2.10.3 Monkey population

Hon. Member outlined the importance of well controlling the increase in monkey population.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee that this matter was being considered and asked Hon. Member to submit his proposals to the Ministry.

2.11 Clearing demarcations of wild land areas in Lahugala Pothuvil and allocating grazing lands – Hon. S.M.M. Muszhaaraff

2.11.1 Clearing demarcation of forest areas in Lahugala, Pothuvil

Hon. Member informed the committee that demarcations in Lahugala Pothuvil had not set correctly and final decisions had not taken in this regard so far.

The Hon. Chair directed Secretary to the Ministry to arrange meetings at district level to discuss Wild life and Wild Resources issued once a month. He directed Wild Conservation General to appoint a Committee on this regard and submit a report to Hon. Member at the next Committee meeting.

2.11.2 Lands for grazing

Hon. Member requested to provide lands for grazing.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee that allocation of lands to be regulated and expressed readiness to discuss this matter with three forces.

2.12 Releasing land of Maha Villuwa reservoir circuit bungalow and Illubakanda Cardamom cultivation - Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura

2.12.1 Releasing land of Maha Villuwa Reservoir circuit bungalow

Hon. Member requested to take action to release the land of circuit bungalow of Plantation Ministry located at nearby Mahawilluwa reservoir in Kundachchi area in Mannar district which has been acquired by the Wild Conservation Department.

The Hon. Chair informed Hon. Member to submit a request to Ministry along with a map indicating said locations.

The Hon. Chair directed the Secretary to the Ministry to submit a report by studying said maps.

2.12.2 Cardamom cultivation in Ilubakanda

Hon. Member requested to formulate a system to reap harvest from the cardamom cultivation, as proper benefit is not taken from the 1200 acre cardamom cultivation in Ilubakanda area in Kalawana presently.

The Hon. Chair directed the Hon. Member to compile a project report on this cardamom cultivation in Kalawana accordingly,

2.13 Releasing 06 acres from Mukkomban village in Poonakari DS Division, Kilinochchi District and other matters - proposal moved by Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan

2.13.1 Releasing 06 acres from Mukkomban village in Poonakari DS Division, Kilinochchi District and other matters

As 06 acre playground allocated for Cattle Touring Sports, considered as a long standing indigenous sport of people engaged in cattle breeding in Mukkomban village in Poonakari DS Division in Kilinochchi District has been included in demarcations of Wild Conservation Department, Hon. Member requested to release said land for people.

2.13.2 Releasing 02 acres for Iladthalir Sports Club in Wattakachchi DS division, Kilinochchi District

Hon. Member informed the Committee that land in extent of 06 acres given earlier to Iladthalir Sports Club in Wattakachchi DS division in Kilinochchi District has been included in boundaries of Wild Conservation Department and requested to release 02 acres out of it for people.

2.13.3 Releasing muddy lands of 300 acres in Anavillundankulam area in Kilinochchi district

Hon. Member requested to release 300 acres of muddy lands in Anavillundankulam area in Kilinochchi District to farmers.

2.13.4 Releasing Kariyalwayal paddy lands in between Sundikkulama and Jaffna

Hon. Member requested to release 280 acres of paddy lands earlier brought under cultivation out of Kariyalwayal paddy land lying in between Sundikkulama and Jaffna that had been acquired by Wildlife Department to farmers.

The Hon. Chair directed to discuss this issues with Army Commander, compiling a report and to take action needed.

2.14 Gazetting earmarked lands for proposed Managed Elephant Reserve (MER) in Hambantota and other matters - Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

2.14.1 Gazetting earmarked lands for proposed Managed Elephant Reserve (MER) in Hambantota

Hon. Member requested to early gazetting of the proposed lands owned by Mahaweli Ministry and government for the Hambantota Managed Elephant Reserve (MER) by holding discussion with Ministries of Mahaweli and Wildlife and Forest Conservation.

2.14.2 Traditional Chena Cultivation

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the temporarily allowing 6 month period to farmers in engaging Chena cultivation would not deny living rights of wild elephants.

He proposed the officers of Wild life to be vigilant in ensuring withdrawal of farmers from said areas at the end of 6 months period.

2.14.3 Sithulpawwa Sanctuary zone

Hon. Member requested to carpeting Sithulpawwa Kochchipathana / Katagamuwa road and to relocate the tusker, which possess a threat to road users from the Sithulpawwa zone.

Director General informed the committee that it was not ethical to remove the tusker as it is inherent in the said zone and could be intervened only at times of threat after observing its mobility by fixing an accessory.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee that Katagamuwa access in Yala to be renovated in January and Lunugamvehera zone to be renamed as Yala 5 zone for the convenience of tourists.

Also the Hon. Chair outlined that a desk of Online Booking system (inclusive of maps marking parks) Online Ticket Reserving system for visiting all five national parks to be opened at the airport for tourists.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee that it was expected to renovate and update facilities at circuit bungalows in the said sanctuary zones as a Private Public Partnership Project (PPP) and also to renovate a canteen at Patalangala.

2.15 Removal from farm lands - Hon. Kins Nelson

Hon. Member informed the committee that farmers who engaged in cultivating around 1500 acres of paddy lands in Thamankaduwa, Welikanda, Lankapura zones had been removed from said farm lands.

The Hon. Chair directed Secretary to Ministry to pay attention on the matter and report in advance to the next Committee meeting.

2.16 Removal of boutiques by Badagamuwa Reserve (Koskele) and inactive Information Centre of Wild Conservation Department and other matters - Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayaka

2.16.1 Removal of boutiques by Badagamuwa Reserve (Koskele) and inactive Information Centre of Wild Conservation Department

Hon. Member requested to take action regarding the economic and other difficulties of persons who carry out the boutique.

The Hon. Chair directed to find solution for this issue by referring to the District Coordinating Committee.

The Hon. Chair informed Secretary to the Ministry to construct a resting place by the Information Centre building without any damage to environment and also to set up a plant selling point.

2.16.2 Renovating Badagamuwa ancient tank

The Hon. Chair informed Hon. Member to include this into the Wari Saubagya program.

2.16.3 Construction of a multi-purpose tower on Dikgala hill in Talangamuwa division, Ibbagamuwa

The Hon. Chair directed the Wild Conservation General to grant permission for this subjective to the condition of environmental friendly (using natural flora).

2.17 Isolated villages around Moragahakanda reservoir - Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka

Hon. Member requested possibility of re-locating Moragolla and Galegoda villages by Moragahakanda reservoir which are threatned with elephant attacks.

Hon. State Minister informed that setting up colonies is coming under the purview of Irrigation Ministry and support could be given when relocating commenced.

2.18 Compensation for two persons who died by elephant attack in Peramaduwa area - Hon. Siripala Gamlath

The Hon. Chair directed Wild Conservation General to expedite this matter as said compensation could be given through the Compensation Committee.

2.19 Releasing Udu cultivation area in extent of 50 acres in Asikulam GN Division and other matters - Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

2.19.1 Releasing Udu cultivation area in extent of 50 acres in Asikulam GN Division

Hon. Member requested to suspend planting done by the Wild Conservation Department on about 50 acre area that had been under Udu cultivation for 30 years in Asikulam GN Division, Vavuniya City DS Division in Vavuniya District.

The Hon. Chair directed Forest Conservation General to enquire about this from the officer concerned.

2.19.2 Inclusion of Palli Munai, Parapankandal, Wangale villages in Mannar district into wild areas

Hon. Member informed the Committee that releasing villages of Pallimunai, Parapankandal and Wangale had been included into jungle zones had not yet implemented.

The Hon. Chair informed Committee that this matter would be enquired and reply would be given by January.

2.20 Dumping garbage on Puwakpele Reserve by Bibila Pradeshiya Sabha and other matters - Hon. Vijitha Berugoda

2.20.1 Dumping garbage on Puwakpele Reserve by Bibila Pradeshiya Sabha

Hon. Member requested to release 20 acre land that had been used for garbage dumping by the Bibile Pradeshiya Saba for 20 years for the proposed purpose.

The Hon. Chair informed the Hon. Member to submit the said proposal in writing.

2.20.2 Seeking areas for the garbage yard of Medagama Pradeshiya Sabha and 3rd post garbage yard of Thabana Pepiliyana

2.20.3 Getting a land for constructing a Funeral Aid Society from road leading to Akkara 60 in Thiththawel Kivula, Bediyawa division, Medagama

2.20.4 Getting approval for road construction leading to Abelanda village in Siyabalaanduwa

2.20.5 Reserving lots for Galahabedda cemetery in Alutehwela

2.20.6 Reserving lots for Kolongaskada cemetery in Thiththawel Kivula, Medagama

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee to also refer these matters to Land Utilization Committee and to take suitable action at the Ministry level.

2.21 Bogahapelessa Wild Reserve – Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi

Hon. Member informed the committee that the land which was declared as Bogahapelessa Reserve in Mahakanda GN Division in Haldummulla DS Division have been utilized for improper cultivation for unapproved cultivations and residing purposes.

Hon. Member requested to take action to offer these lands for cultivation and reservoirs.

The Hon. Chair informed the Hon. Member to submit a report to Forest Conservation Director and to Secretary to the Ministry regarding how to allocate the lands for the purpose.

The Hon. Chair directed said two officers to consider the contents of said report, compiling a report and for its submission.

2.22 Releasing lands for Cultivation purposes and other matters – Hon. Kapila Athukorala

2.22.1 Releasing lands for Cultivation purposes

Hon. Member sought intervention of the Wild Conservation Department in releasing lands for re-cultivating that had been given up in Trincomalee district due to terrorist activities.

2.22.2 Wild Conservation Departmental Office, Kantale

Hon. Member requested to create the access way of this office.

The Hon. Chair directed to submit this proposal for the “Kilo Meter Lakshe” program.

2.22.3 Reserving areas for cattle breeding in Kantale area

The Hon. Chair informed to select a suitable land for this purpose and submit a proposal.

2.22.4 Taking action for security of Trincomalee District Forest Conservation officers and providing vehicle facilities

The Hon. Chair ensured that action would be taken to provide vehicle facilities and other facilities from next year.

2.22.5 Salary increments of forest field officers and Beettu wild officers

The Hon. Chair informed that action would be taken to pay Risk Allowance to forest conservation officers on need.

He added that service appraisal system to be worked out for duty bound officers and also to take action against officer who neglects their duties.

2.23 Prolonged deforestation in Salgala Reserve in Kagalle District and liquor trafficking and other matters - Hon. Sudath Manjula

2.23.1 Prolonged deforestation in Salgala Reserve in Kagalle District and liquor trafficking

Hon. Member informed the Committee that Police Check Point should be set up based on the Galapitamada city for security of this Reserve.

Hon. Chair directed officers of the Ministry to send a request to establish a circuit police unit.

2.23.2 Preventing forest damage in Salgala area caused by monkeys

Hon. Member requested to chase away monkeys around Salgala to any other area due to damage caused by them to cultivation.

The Hon. Chair informed that this matter to be prioritized.

2.24 Area reserved for fodder cultivation in Udawalawa Reserve and other matters - Hon. Waruna Liyanage

2.24.1 Area reserved for fodder cultivation in Udawalawa Reserve

Hon. Member informed the Committee that a part of land from Udawalawa Reserve has been released for fodder cultivation in Hadagiriya area, Weligapola DS division. He requested to include it back to Reserve as the said area is not used and to refer elephants found in the village back to Reserve.

The Hon. Chair directed to take action to hold an investigation on this regard.

2.24.2 Request to open Eth Athuru Sevana in Udawalawa

The Hon. Chair directed to pay attention on possibilities of re-opening Udawalawa Eth Athuru Sevana following the health guidelines issued for Covid – 19.

2.24.3 Issuing tickets of access way from Pattipola to Ohiya

The Hon. Chair informed that scrapping of charging money could be considered after looking into matters related on ticket issue.

2.25 Elephant threats faced by farmers - Hon. Thawaraja Kalai Arasan

Hon. Member requested to construct elephant fences in Malliyathivu DS Division and Weerachchola in Navidamoli DS Division in Samanthurai.

Hon. Wimalaweera Dissanayaka, State Minister informed to submit a written request with this respect in order to pay attention on the same.

2.26 Non implementation of elephant fence and other matters - Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara

2.26.1 Non implementation of elephant fence in Hambegamuwa, Rathabalagama and Balaharuwa areas

Director General of forest Conservation informed the committee that maintenance of elephant fence could be done by now as human resource scarcity for maintenance has been partly resolved.

2.26.2 Food scarcity of wild elephants

Hon. Member enquired on the possibility of cultivating an area of 100 acres for elephant feeding in a way to find foods required by wild elephants and proposed to get practical solutions in this regard.

2.26.3 Jungle clearing by demarcating undeclared jungles

The Hon. Chair informed that a request to be made to IGP to conduct an investigation on forest destruction in Buththala area.

2.26.4 Dahaiyagala Sanctuary

Hon. Member requested to pay compensation to permit holders and to those having deeds who had lived on this place even at the time of gazetting Dahaiyagala Sanctuary in 2002

The Hon. Chair directed the Secretary to Ministry to conduct a site visit and take action.

3. The Committee at 2 p.m. adjourned till 10.30 a.m. on 08th January 2021.

Ministerial Consultative Committee Meeting on Transport First meeting – 04th of December 2020

Committee members present

Hon. Gamini Lokuge (Chair)
Hon. Dilum Amunugama (State Minister)
Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe
Hon. Mohomed Musammil
Hon. Madhura Withanage

Non-Committee members present

Hon. Angajan Ramanathan
Hon. Piyankara Jayaratne
Hon. S. Viyalanderan
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawaththa

Hon. H. Nandasena
Hon. Asanka Nawarathna
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiya Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. Manjula Dissanayake
Hon. Diana Gamage

1. Discussion on Ministerial Affairs

1.1. The Nittambuwa Bus Depot and other matters related to Aththanagalla divisional secretariat of Gampaha district - Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

1.1.1 Nittambuwa Bus Depot in Aththanagalla divisional secretariat of Gampaha district.

The Hon. Member requested that the unused land area belonging to the aforementioned bus depot be used for efficient development purposes, as well as to develop the bus depot itself.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed that the aforesaid bus depot will also be developed under the project to modernize bus depots.

1.1.2 Sri Lanka Transport Board

The Hon. Member requested to develop the infrastructure facilities of the institutions that come under the Sri Lanka Transport Board and to provide facilities for the welfare of the staff.

1.1.3 Developing bus services in the rural areas

The Hon. Member requested to deploy small buses to cater the transport requirements of the people in rural areas in Gampaha district namely, Aththanagalla, Dompe and Meerigama.

1.1.4 Electric Train Project

The Hon. Member inquired about the proposed electric train service that runs via Veyangoda town.

The General Manager of Railways informed that it has been planned to start an electric train service from Kalutara to Rambukkana including Veyangoda town.

1.1.5 Widening of narrow platform railway stations within Gampaha – Veyangoda area

The Hon. Member requested to widen and develop Heendeniya, Pattigoda and Daaraluwa railway stations situated within the aforesaid area.

1.2. Developing of Bus Depots and other matters - Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe

1.2.1. Developing of bus depots

The Hon. Member requested that actions be taken to improve the wellbeing of personnel working in bus depots and to develop depots island wide in a manner that maximizes staff efficiency.

1.2.2. Drafting a National Transport Policy

The Hon. Member requested that the work on National Transport Policy commenced in 2018 be completed and that action be taken to implement the National Transportation Policy.

1.2.3. Preventing political victimization

The Hon. Member requested to prevent political victimization in the institutions that come under the purview of the ministry, which takes place with the transition of power and to provide relief to the affected from the allocations made for the specific purpose.

The Hon. Chair informed that political victimization was not allowed during the transition of power that took place in year 2020.

1.2.4. Issues regarding the appointment of Board of Directors to the National Transport Commission

The Hon. Member inquired whether the cabinet approval has been granted for the Board of Directors appointed since the Board should be appointed under the approval of the cabinet.

1.2.5. Malpractices taken place when issuing route permits for private buses

The Hon. Member requested to conduct an investigation into the issuing of route permits for buses refraining from the tender procedure.

1.2.6. Modernization of Railway Stations

The Hon. Member requested to modernize the railway stations with the support of private institutions.

The Hon. Chair informed that measures have already been taken to obtain the support of the private sector for this purpose.

The Hon. Chair further stated that the Fort railway station will be modernized in a similar manner.

The Hon. Member also inquired about the Colombo Suburban Railway Project.

1.2.7. Establishment of a Railway Museum

The Hon. Member inquired about the current status of the construction of the Maradana Railway Museum of which the construction has commenced.

The General Manager of Railways informed Sri Lanka Navy is currently carrying out the construction.

The Hon. Chairman further informed that all the projects that have commenced except the Light Rail Transit System Project are being continued.

1.3. Developing Kebithigollewa bus depot of Anuradhapura district and other matters – Hon. H. Nandasena

1.3.1. Developing Kebithigollewa bus depot

The Hon. Member requested to develop the aforesaid bus depot under an expedited programme.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed that the Kebithigollewa bus depot will be developed under the bus depot modernization project.

1.3.2. Shortage of staff in bus depots of Anuradhapura district

The Hon. Member requested to recruit new employees as there is a shortage of drivers, conductors and engineering staff in the bus depots of Anuradhapura district.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee that District Transport Committees would be appointed with the involvement of Hon. Members to discuss issues related to transport sector and to provide solutions with the intervention of the Ministry.

1.3.3. Developing of Regional Workshop at Medawachchiya in Anuradhapura owned by Sri Lanka Transport Board

The Hon. Member requested to use the aforesaid premises for a productive cause since the aforesaid workshop, which manufactured buses earlier is no longer operational.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister disclosed that 400 persons have been trained to fill the existing driver and conductor vacancies.

The Hon. Chair informed a field survey will be carried out on the number of employees currently serving in depots and their positions, buildings, buses that are operational and discarded buses under the bus depot modification project.

The Hon. Chair further stated ten bus depots will be developed under the first phase based on the results of the survey.

1.4. Difficulties in obtaining information regarding ongoing and proposed projects in the transport sector including the modification of railway tracks and other matters – Hon. Madhura Withanage

1.4.1. Obtaining information regarding ongoing and proposed projects in the transport sector

The Hon. Member requested to prepare a proper mechanism to obtain information on ongoing and proposed projects in the transport sector.

1.4.2. The Meethotamulla Bus Depot of Colombo District

The Hon. Member requested that Meethotamulla bus depot be developed.

1.4.3. Implementing passenger transport service via waterways in Colombo city limits

The Hon. Member made a request from the committee to commence a transport service connected with waterways to ease the traffic congestion.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee the standard of the naval crafts that would be used for the purpose needs to be considered to ensure the safety of the passengers.

The Hon. Chair added discussions in this regard are to be held with the Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation and invited the Hon. Member to take part in the discussions as well.

1.4.4. Transporting goods using buses

The Hon. Member inquired whether there is a possibility of having a mechanism to transport goods using SLTB buses since there is a huge demand for private companies that provide freight forwarding services in the face of Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chairman of Sri Lanka Transport Board informed discussions have already been held with renowned private companies in this regard and plans are underway to implement the service with the support of bus depots.

1.4.5. Light Rail Transit System Project

The Hon. Member inquired about the aforesaid project.

The Hon. Chair informed the proposed project that links Battaramulla and Fort has been suspended, which was due to be carried out by the Urban Development Authority after conducting a feasibility study.

The Hon. Chair further stated that a policy decision is to be taken by the government regarding the construction method followed in the projects commencing from Moratuwa, Homagama, Kadawatha and Ragama.

1.4.6. Awarding promotions to the staff of bus depots

The Hon. Member informed that minimal cleaning and maintenance should be carried out in bus depots and offices while the attitudes of the employees need to be developed as well.

The Hon. Chair said promotions will be awarded after considering the education level and the experience.

1.5. Granting permanent appointments to railway gate keepers of Batticaloa district and other matters – Hon. Shanakiya Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

1.5.1. Issues faced by railway gate keepers of Batticaloa district

The Hon. Member inquired on the possibility of granting permanent appointments to the aforesaid employees who are serving from year 2013.

Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe informed three employees have been assigned for each gate on temporary basis under a shift system and an allowance is provided to them from the Police Department.

The General Manager of Railways further informed that there is no possibility of absorbing railway gate keepers to the department and they will lose their employment by year 2023.

1.5.2. Extending the train service from Fort to Polonnaruwa up to Batticaloa

The Hon. Member requested to look into the possibility of commencing the aforesaid train service from Batticaloa railway station which currently starts from Polonnaruwa railway station.

1.6. The double line railway track project of Kandy city in Kandy district and other matters – Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

1.6.1. The double line railway track project of Kandy city in Kandy district

The Hon. Member informed work on double line railway track development programme, of which only several intermediate sections have been completed, is being carried out in slow pace.

The General Manager of Railways stated as soon as the remaining work on a sewage line is completed development activities of this project will be carried out in an expedited manner.

1.6.2. The ‘Sarasavi Uyana’ railway station of Kandy district

The Hon. Member requested to develop the aforesaid railway station with ‘Park and Ride’ facility utilizing the available land as several government institutions including the University of Peradeniya are situated near the railway station.

1.6.3. Decentralizing the issuance of driving license

The Hon. Member requested to decentralize the issuance of driving license to several provinces to prevent malpractices and congestion.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed an extensive programme regarding the matter under a new plan will be implemented in the future.

Hon. State Minister further disclosed that printing of driving license is being carried out by the army as one of its measures.

Hon. State Minister added any person can apply online to obtain medical certificates.

1.6.4. Preparing a mechanism to regulate transportation of school children

The Hon. Member requested to prepare a suitable mechanism to provide transportation facilities for school children ensuring their safety and minimizing traffic.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed a suitable mechanism will be prepared in the future to regulate transportation of school children.

1.7. Developing the bus depot of Kilinochchi district and other matters – Hon. Sivagnanam Sritharan

1.7.1. Developing bus depot of Kilinochchi district

The Hon. Member informed that there is only one bus depot for the entire Kilinochchi district whereas number of facilities are unavailable in the depot and no permanent Manager has been appointed as well.

The Chairman of Sri Lanka Transport Board informed that the bus depot which is maintained at a building that has been damaged due to war has been examined and it has been planned to build a new building.

1.7.2. Not having a proper bus service in Kilinochchi district

The Hon. Member informed that there is no proper bus service operating inside the Kilinochchi district and that long distance bus services to Malayalapuram, Pallikuda, and Waleipadu are unavailable.

The Hon. Member pointed out by recruiting drivers and conductors for Kilinochchi bus depot from the same district would help to solve the issue and transport requirement of the area can be fulfilled by deploying single door buses.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed the buses required by the Kilinochchi bus depot will be provided from the 200 buses that were repaired in year 2020 according to a proposal of Hon. Minister of Transport.

1.7.3. Constructing a main bus stand for the Kilinochchi district

The Hon. Member requested to focus the attention on halting the construction of the Kilinochchi bus stand.

1.7.4. Development of the railway crossings of Kilinochchi district

The Hon. Member requested to fix gates for the railway crossings since the number of accidents reported at railway crossings in Kilinochchi district has increased.

1.8. The Head Office of the Sri Lanka Transport Board – Hon. S. Viyalanderan

The Hon. Member informed the Eastern Provincial Head Office of the Sri Lanka Transport Board is located in a building at Kalmunei area of Batticaloa district at a monthly rent of Rs.38,000/-.

The Hon. Member requested to establish the aforesaid office in the land within Batticaloa allocated for the purpose as required facilities can be provided.

1.9. Revision of train ticket fare between Colombo Fort and Jaffna and other matters – Hon. Angajan Ramanathan

1.9.1. Revision of train ticket fare between Colombo Fort and Jaffna

The Hon. Member inquired the possibility of reducing the train fare to Jaffna since it is very expensive in comparison to other destinations.

The General Manager of Railways informed there is no possibility of reducing the aforesaid fare.

1.9.2. Deploying a train with air-conditioned passenger carriages to operate between Colombo Fort and Jaffna

The Hon. Member requested to deploy a train with air-conditioned carriages for the convenience of the passengers.

The General Manager of Railways informed that the request would be fulfilled as soon as the Diesel Multiple Units that have been ordered are received.

1.9.3. Installing gates at the level crossings of the Colombo Fort to Jaffna railway track

The General Manager informed that although installation of gates at every level crossing would slow the speed of the train it would help to build roads parallel to the railway track from the level crossings that gates have been installed to the level crossings that gates are yet to be installed.

1.9.4. Deploying buses to fulfill the transport requirement of the residents of Delft, Analathivu and Elavativu islands of Jaffna district

The Hon. Member requested to provide buses to fulfill the transport requirement of the people living in aforesaid islands.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Chairman of Sri Lanka Transport Board to hold discussions with the Hon. Member on providing new buses in place of the old buses.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed that proposals and issues faced by Hon. Members can be presented to the coordinating officers who have been appointed to each district by the State Ministry.

1.10. Shortage of staff at Mannar, Vavuniya and Mulaitivu bus depots – Hon. K. Kader Masthan

The Hon. Member pointed out recruiting persons from the relevant districts to fill the vacancies in staff of buses and offices of the aforesaid bus depots would help to minimize the issues faced.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister stated recruitments are not taking place at present to fill the vacancies in the offices and asked the Hon. Member to send persons with proper qualifications from the same district as newspaper advertisements will be published in the future with regard to the matter.

Hon. State Minister also informed that the Hon. Members can submit their issues to the district coordinating officer who has been appointed by the State Ministry.

1.11. Appointing a permanent manager for the Northern Province depot and other matters – Hon. Selvarajah Kajendran

1.11.1. Appointing a permanent manager for the Northern Province depot

The Hon. Member requested the committee to appoint a permanent manager for the depot as the current manager has been appointed on a temporary basis.

1.11.2. Improper appointments made to the staff of Northern Province bus depots

The Hon. Member stated that although appointments made in the past on the basis of ineligibility have been suspended, those recruited in late 2019 as new appointments have also been ruled ineligible.

The Hon. Member further requested that appointments not be made for political purposes but on the basis of competence.

1.11.3. Issues related to conducting disciplinary inquiry against depot drivers and driver assistants of Northern Province

The Hon. Member informed that disciplinary inquiries be held against the depot drivers and driver assistants over the accidents and other improper actions are not being carried out in a proper way.

The Hon. Member requested that disciplinary inquiries be conducted independently of political interference since they take a long time to investigate and deliver the inquiry's ruling, while the offended party must also contend with language, time, and money constraints.

1.11.4. Transfers effective in Northern Province

The Hon. Member requested to conduct the staff transfers in a proper manner.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed that the Hon. Members could forward any issue pertaining to transport of their respective area to the District Coordinating Officer appointed by the State Ministry in order to find an expedited solution.

1.12. Proposed Dambulla - Habarana railway track and other matters – Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala

1.12.1. Proposed Dambulla - Habarana railway track

The Hon. Member informed that the residents have requested to carry out the construction according to the previous plan as large number of houses situated in Thimbirigaswewa and Habarana will be demolished due to the construction of this railway track.

1.12.2. Obstruction of Palugasdamana – Wadichchale area road in Polonnaruwa district by the railway department

The Hon. Member informed that the aforesaid road, which is being used for 50 years, has been obstructed using concrete pillars.

The General Manager of Railways informed the committee the relevant administrative institution can be asked to shift them to a separate place away from the railway track.

1.12.3. Difficulties experienced by the residents in the vicinity of Hingurakgoda railway station in paying tax

The Hon. Member requested to provide a solution to the matter as the aforesaid group of persons who live in the area for so many years are unable to pay tax due to financial difficulties.

1.12.4. Extending the Express Train from Fort to Polonnaruwa up to Batticaloa

The Hon. Member requested the train to be extended up to Batticaloa since the Venerable Maha Sangha and the Traders' Association have also made requests in this regard.

1.13. Proposed Kurunegala railway track and other matters – Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka

1.13.1. Proposed Kurunegala railway track

The Hon. Chair informed although the surveying has been completed after conducting a feasibility study, the government is yet to decide about the construction.

The Hon. Member requested to clearly outline the method that will be followed when providing compensation to the people who will lose their property due to the project.

The Hon. Chair informed the query will be answered at the next committee meeting after discussing with the treasury.

1.13.2. Obtaining lands owned by the Department of Railways on lease

The Hon. Member informed that there are issues with regard to obtaining lands of the reservation areas owned by the railway department on lease situated along the road that runs parallel to the Matale-Kandy railway track and along the roads that are being newly built.

The Hon. Chair informed the convenient method of intervening with regard to reservation areas situated along the aforesaid roads is through the relevant administrative institution.

1.13.3. District Development Committees

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed decisions regarding the transport issues prevailing in the area will be taken through the District Transport Committee.

1.14. Utilizing lands owned by bus depots and the railway department for a productive cause and other matters – Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara

1.14.1. Utilizing lands owned by bus depots and the railway department for a productive cause

The Hon. Member requested to utilize the lands owned by bus depots and the railway department for projects that are financially beneficial.

The Hon. Chair informed newspaper advertisements will be published in the future to open the properties owned by these institutions for investments on lease.

1.14.2. Using buses unsuitable for passenger transporting for a productive cause

The Hon. Member inquired the possibility of utilizing the aforesaid buses for the 'Q-Shop' project conducted by the Ministry of Trade.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister disclosed that aforesaid buses have been assembled as libraries and have been handed over to 12 schools already.

1.15. Malpractices that take place when awarding positions in bus depots and other matters – Hon. Milan Jayathilaka

1.15.1. Malpractices that take place when awarding positions in bus depots

The Hon. Member informed that, with the changes that take place in the state administration unsuitable persons are appointed for the administrative positions of bus depots.

The Hon. Chair informed no promotion has been granted based on political reasons recently. Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister stated that a proper mechanism will be introduced to grant promotions and salary increments.

1.15.2. Leasing out of shops of the Kirindiwela bus stop at Dompe divisional secretariat in Gampaha district

The Hon. Member requested to recall tenders to lease out shops as the earlier tender procedure had been carried out without transparency and in an unfair manner.

The Chairman of the Sri Lanka Transport Board informed new tenders are expected to be called soon and electricity for the upper floor would be provided as required.

1.15.3. Obtaining small buses for the rural areas of Gampaha district

The Hon. Member requested to provide small buses for passenger services in the routes of rural areas.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed measures will be taken to fulfill the request.

1.15.4. Preparing a mechanism to regulate three wheeler parks

The Hon. Member pointed out since there are large number of persons who carry out daily livelihood activities in three wheeler parks, a regulatory mechanism is required to ensure their job safety.

The Chairman further informed a mechanism to regulate three wheelers will also be included in the proposed convention on transport.

1.16. Obtaining medical certificates from hospitals for light motor vehicles' driver's license and other matters – Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

1.16.1. Obtaining medical certificates from hospitals for light motor vehicles' driver's license

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed medical certificates should only be obtained from the National Transport Medical Institute since a proper mechanism is yet to be introduced with the support of health units and applications can be submitted through the online system.

1.16.2. Beliatta - Katharagama railway track

The Hon. Chair informed future measures will be carried out resolving the existing issues.

1.17. Development of Kurunegala North and Kurunegala South bus depots of Kurunegala district and other matters – Hon. (Mrs) Manjula Dissanayaka

1.17.1. Development of Kurunegala North and Kurunegala South bus depots

The Hon. Member requested to develop these two bus depots creating required facilities as they are functioning with minimum facilities at present.

1.17.2. Obtaining new buses for rural roads

The Hon. Member requested to provide new buses to fulfill the transport requirement of the public as rural roads in these areas have been developed.

1.17.3. Providing permanent buildings for the persons who own shops in front of the bus depot

The Hon. Member inquired the possibility of providing permanent buildings from front of the bus depot in place of the shops that were located on the border of Badagamuwa reserve and had to be demolished due to road development.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed it has been proposed to establish filling stations in each of the lands owned by 107 bus depots and institutions that issue MOT certificates as bus depots cannot be maintained only through the revenue earned from bus operations.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee after the plans are prepared the remaining lands will be given for investors to be utilized for suitable commercial ventures on the basis of sharing profits.

1.18. Obtaining part of a land belonging to Galgamuwa railway station for the Pradeshiya Sabha on lease and other matters - Hon. Asanka Nawarathne

1.18.1. Obtaining the land belonging to Galgamuwa railway station for the Pradeshiya Sabha on lease

The Hon. Member requested to provide part of a land belonging to Galgamuwa railway station on lease as it has been developed as the public fair premises.

1.18.2. Development of Galgamuwa bus depot

The Hon. Member requested to develop the aforesaid bus depot.

1.18.3. Holding a discussion with the representatives of the school children transportation associations

The Hon. Member requested to give an opportunity to discuss issues faced by the school children transportation associations.

1.19. Puttalam Aruwakkalu railway track and other matters – Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal

1.19.1. Puttalam – Aruwakkalu railway track

The Hon. Member requested to acquire the aforesaid railway track to the government.

The General Manager of Railways informed that this track which is used to transport limestone has been leased for 30 years.

The Hon. Chair disclosed the railway track is to be extended by another two kilometers to transport waste.

1.19.2. Developing the Puttalam bus depot

The Hon. Member requested to develop the infrastructure facilities of the aforesaid bus depot.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed attention would be focused in this regard.

The Hon. State Minister requested all the Members who represent the area to include the total land area of bus depots that needs to be developed when

submitting proposals to prepare the land of each bus depot to the Ministry of Highways.

1.19.3. Issues faced when obtaining spare parts for buses

The Hon. Member requested to instruct depot managers to obtain spare parts without a delay in order to run the buses properly.

The Chairman of Sri Lanka Transport Board informed necessary instructions have been given to repair buses after obtaining required spare parts.

1.20. Implementing the Airport Taxi Service of the Katunayaka International Airport through the state sector and other matters – Hon. Diana Gamage

1.20.1. Implementing the Airport Taxi Service of the Katunayaka International Airport through the state sector

The Hon. Member inquired whether there is a possibility of maintaining the Airport Taxi Service with the intervention of the state sector since foreign nationals encountering abuses and malpractices due to the use of private Taxi Service can tarnish the image of the country.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister pointed out the Tourist Board should intervene to prevent such abuses and malpractices experienced by foreign nationals while the State Minister also informed that he hopes to hold a discussion with the Ministry of Tourism in this regard.

1.20.2. Strengthening the Public Transport Service

The Hon. Member inquired whether there is a possibility of deploying double decker buses to provide public transport services to minimize the traffic congestion and air pollution of Colombo city.

1.20.3. Restricting the entry of Lorries to the Colombo city limits

The Hon. Member inquired from the committee on the possibility of using railway service to transport vegetables and fish to Colombo city since around 15,000 Lorries enter the city limits daily to bring the goods.

The Hon. Chair stated measures in this regard will be taken in the future.

1.20.4. Using Trams for passenger transportation in Colombo city

The Hon. Member requested to commence a Tram service as investors for this purpose can be attracted.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister instructed the Hon. Member to direct the suitable investors to the Ministry.

1.20.5. Preparing a mechanism to identify three wheeler drivers in the Colombo city limit

The Hon. Member requested to issue an identity card and a uniform for the three wheeler drivers.

1.20.6. Making it mandatory to install a CCTV system when issuing a new route permit

The Hon. Member requested to make it mandatory to install a CCTV system in the bus when issuing a new route permit to minimize the difficulties faced by the passengers.

1.20.7. Transporting passengers according to the seating capacity of buses

The Hon. Member pointed out the need of having a suitable mechanism to prevent transporting passengers without proper ventilation in the bus.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed it is compulsory to transport passengers according to the seating capacity as the bus fares have also been increased in line with the move.

The Hon. State Minister further said all Police stations have been instructed to arrest bus drivers who violate this law.

1.21. Establishing a sub bus depot at Ruwanwella town in Avissawella and other matters – Hon. Sudath Manjula

1.21.1. Establishing a sub bus depot at Ruwanwella town

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed a decision in this regard will be taken after conducting a field study.

1.21.2. Introducing a transport service from Colombo to Ruwanwella via Kelani River

The Hon. Member inquired on the possibility of commencing a mode of transportation via Kelani River up to Ruwanwella.

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister informed the matter can be taken up for discussion at the District Transportation Committee to be appointed soon.

2. The Meeting was, thereafter, at 4.20 p.m. adjourned *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice
First meeting - 5 December 2020**

Committee Members Present

Hon. M. U.M. Ali Sabry (Chair)
Hon. Lohan Ratwatte (State Minister)
Hon. G. G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam

Non-Committee Members present

Hon. M.S. Thowfeek
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendran
Hon. Sivagnanam Sritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Gunathilake Rajapaksa
Hon. Madhura Vithanage
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, P.C.
Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage

1. Discussion on Ministerial Activities

**1.1. Ministerial regulations on the medicine given to prisons and other matters-
Hon. Lohan Ratwatte**

1.1.1. Ministerial control over the medicine given to prisons.

The State Minister, Hon. Lohan Ratwatte, informed the Committee that some form of regulation by the Ministry is required, as the Ministry of Health has been supplying medicine directly to the prison hospital.

The Commissioner General of Prisons informed that a mechanism should be established in this regard and medicine stores should be established outside the prison.

The Hon. Chair agreed to that and it was informed that it be presented as a written proposal.

1.1.2. Releasing the children in prisons

Hon. Lohan Ratwatte, State Minister informed the Committee to formulate a system to release the children in prisons.

The Chief Consultant of the Ministry of Justice, Mr. U. R. De Silva, P.C., informed the Committee that a methodology is being formulated in this regard.

1.1.3. Releasing the prisoners

Hon. Lohan Ratwatte, State Minister informed the Committee that arrangements are being made to release the prisoners after identifying those who can be released to lessen the overcrowding in prisons.

1.1.4. Incident in Mahara Prison

The Committee was informed about the courses of action taken to contain the incident that took place in Mahara prison and the future targets as well.

Hon. Lohan Ratwatte, State Minister informed the Committee that as reasonable doubts have arisen with regard to the conduct of the doctor in Mahara prison, an investigation is being conducted in this regard.

1.1.5. Imprisonments for drug offences.

Hon. Lohan Ratwatte, State Minister informed the Committee that a new methodology would be formulated to coordinate with the security sectors regarding the imprisonment of drug offenders, rehabilitation, or releasing them.

The Consultant of the Ministry informed the Committee that in the case of drug offenders, coordination would be done with the health authorities in the area and the department of health.

1.1.6. Community based Correction Act

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that they hope to direct people for community corrections even without the consent of the offenders by amending the section 7 of the Community based Correction Act.

1.1.7. Transfers for the prison officers

The Prison Commissioner informed the Committee that arrangements would be made to install technical equipment in the prisons and to transfer the officers who are serving in their service stations for a long period.

1.2. Arrests related to Heroin and other matters – Hon. Madhura Vithanage

1.2.1. Formulate appropriate laws for the misconduct of officers in relation to heroin arrests.

Hon. Madhura Vithanage proposed to the Committee that appropriate laws be formulated with regard to the officer's misconduct in relation to heroin arrests. Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, P.C., too, expressed his views in this regard.

Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam informed the Committee that instead of the ordinary laws, special laws should be formulated to punish the officers who commit offences.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the procedures in relation to the prisons are being carried out considering the construction of new rehabilitation centers, pardoning and formulation of new laws.

It was informed that the Attorney General's Department has been informed to study the courses of action taken in other countries to punish the officers who commit offences.

1.2.2. Local Authorities not receiving court fines

The Secretary to the Ministry of Justice informed the Committee that the relevant local authorities now receive money, and, the systems will be prepared to meet that requirement and the local authorities and the courts will get the money when the judicial system is digitalized.

1.2.3. Provide mediation powers to the local authorities

Hon. Madhura Vithanage informed the Committee that there are a number of cases in local authorities that can be solved through mediation and therefore it is appropriate to grant certain powers as mediation powers to the local authorities, and only if the mediation system fails, the relevant problems can be directed to the judiciary.

The Hon. Chair suggested submitting that in writing, as it was an important proposal.

1.2.4. Increase the efficiency in obtaining evidence from the government officers.

Hon. Madhura Vithanage informed the Committee that using technologically advanced systems like skype can increase the efficiency of the services as transportation takes a considerable time in the process of providing evidence by the government officers.

The Chief Consultant of the Ministry of Justice, Mr. U. R. de Silva, P.C., informed the Committee that this is a very important process and it is being implemented as a pilot project in the Colombo court with the UNDP.

1.3. Proposals related to the Judiciary in Matara district and other matters – Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

1.3.1. Proposals related to the Judiciary in Matara district

Hon. Weerasumana Weerasingha suggested to the Committee to take immediate steps to open the Matara Court Complex that has been completed and to take immediate steps to construct Morawaka court complex for which a land has already been allocated.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the court complex in Marara will be opened soon.

1.3.2. Establishing Matara prison in another place

Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe informed the Committee that a land in Pitabeddara has been acquired to establish the Matara prison but nothing has been done there.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that there is a plan to submit a cabinet paper that will address not only the prison but also other matters in the Ministry, and that a new plan has been prepared after having a discussion with the President regarding the construction of new prisons for prison reform.

1.3.3. Establishing Juvenile courts and hearing children's cases

As far as the Southern Province is concerned, Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe requested from the Committee that at least one juvenile court be established in each province, as it is not appropriate to keep orphans in orphanages, remanded children, and convicted children together in one place.

Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe requested from the Committee to allocate a specific day or half a day each month to hear the children's cases separately until such courts are established.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this is an important proposal that should be prioritized and that there is a proposal to establish juvenile courts in each province.

1.3.4. Justice of Peace posts for probation officers

Probation officers at the Department of Probation and Child Protection are engaged in the process of adopting a child, and therefore, they have requested JP

posts for that, and the Hon. Weerasumana Weerasingha requested the Committee to reconsider it and grant them JP appointments.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee to submit this as a proposal.

1.3.5. Proper functioning of the Department of Rehabilitation and Department of Community Correction.

Hon. Member informed the Committee that if the Department of Rehabilitation and Department of Community Correction function properly, the overcrowding in prisons could be reduced to a certain extent.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the magistrate should take action in this regard, and therefore, the Judicial Service Commission will be informed and that necessary laws be prepared in this regard.

1.4. Establishing a circuit court in Kinniya – Hon. M. S. Thowfeek

Hon. M. S. Thowfeek informed the Committee that the people of Kinniya have to travel 20 -25 km to the Trincomalee court to meet their judicial needs; therefore, a circuit court should be established to function at least two days per week, and the Hon. Member further informed the Committee that a suitable location has been identified.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee to submit a written proposal in this regard. The Hon. Chair informed the Director (Development) of the Ministry of Justice to consider that proposal when the new court is established.

1.5. Granting some relief to those who have been sued under the Prevention of Terrorism Act – Hon. Charles Nirmalanadan

Hon. Charles Nirmalanadan requested the Committee to have a discussion with the Minister of Justice, Attorney General, and His Excellency the President to grant some relief to those who have been held in remand custody for over a period of fifteen years due to the pending court cases that have been filed under the Prevention of Terrorism Act during the war.

Hon. G. G. Ponnambalam informed the Committee that this is political decision.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a written request be made in this regard and that a copy of the request be forwarded to the Hon. Prime Minister and himself. In addition to that, the Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this should be informed to the Judicial Service Commission as well.

1.6. Proposals with regard to the courts in Kandy district and other matters – Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

1.6.1. Improper maintenances in the Kandy court complex

Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda informed the Committee that maintenance in the Kandy court complex is not being done in a proper manner.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action will be taken in this regard.

1.6.2. Problems related to the judicial jurisdiction of Kandy and Teldeniya courts

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the former Chairman of the Kandy Bar Association had granted more juridical power to the Teldeniya court after having a discussion with the Judicial Service Commission without informing the bar association, and that the people were put under pressure as a result of this act.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a committee has already been appointed under the chairmanship of Justice Samayawardhana to review the judicial jurisdiction.

1.6.3. Appointment of an additional magistrate attached to prison cells

Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda informed the Committee that it would be more appropriate to appoint an additional magistrate attached to the prison cells instead of taking the prisoners to the courts for an extension of the remand period.

The Chief Consultant of the Ministry of Justice, Mr. U. R. De Silva, P. C., informed the Committee that arrangements are being made to connect the prisoners through Skype in a separate cell in prisons.

1.6.4. Releasing a land to construct an office complex for the junior lawyers in Kandy

Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda requested from the Committee to release the land that has been allocated to construct an official residence for the judges to construct an office complex for the junior lawyers in Kandy from their personal expenses.

Hon Lohan Ratwatte, State Minister informed the Committee that it would be appropriate to get another land for the lawyers since this land has been allocated for an official residence for the judges.

1.6.5. Appointing lawyers for Police stations

Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda requested from the Committee that only two lawyers should be appointed to suitable positions in Police Stations.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this is an important proposal and it would be discussed.

1.6.6. Appointing unofficial magistrates

Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda requested from the Committee to consider the appointing of unofficial magistrates.

The Hon. Chair agreed to it.

1.7. Cases in commercial high court and other matters – Mr. Sagara Kariyawasam

1.7.1. Problems with regard to the cases in the Commercial High Court

Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam informed the Committee that, though the Commercial High Courts have been established to accelerate the high level commercial activities and to develop the credibility of the investors, it has become a failure as the criteria to hear the cases in this court is the value of the case.

The Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam informed the Committee that this is not suitable for foreign investors, and therefore the need to formulate new criteria has arisen. The Hon. MP further informed the Committee that it would be appropriate to establish separate high courts for arbitration.

The Hon. Chair agreed to that proposal, and as an interim solution, the Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the cases can be heard depending on the importance of the case, as other high courts hear the cases and a special mechanism should be formulated to allow the Chief Justice to participate in the process.

1.7.2. Provide consulting spaces close to the court complex for the lawyers to meet their clients.

Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam proposed to the Committee to arrange some consulting rooms close to the court complex for the lawyers to meet their clients.

Hon. Madhura Vithanage informed the Committee that there is a proposal in the Urban Development Authority's Colombo Development Plan regarding the rooms that can be rented out to professionals and he further stated that he can submit his views in this regard.

1.8. Problems related to Coroners attached to the hospitals and any other matters. The Hon. Sudath Manjula

1.8.1. Problems related to the Coroners attached to hospitals.

Hon. Sudath Manjula informed the Committee that the Coroners attached to the hospitals have not been given any health guidelines or personal protective equipment during this pandemic.

The Secretary to the Ministry of Justice informed that the Director General of Health has issued a leaflet in this regard and that the procurement process has started to get personal protective equipment and those kits will be given immediately.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that arrangements would be made to provide those instructions through the Judicial Medical Officer in case that those instructions had not been conveyed to them.

The Additional Secretary (Legal) to the Ministry of Justice informed the Committee that personal protective equipment has been handed over to the Ministry of Justice by the Ministry of Health. The Hon. Chair informed the Committee to take immediate action to distribute the personal protective equipment and that it is appropriate to distribute it through registrars in the judiciary.

1.8.2. Problems in the Ruwanwella district court

Hon. Sudath Manjula informed the Committee that though the Ruwanwella district court was shifted to a new building, the court officers, lawyers and clients face various difficulties.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee to raise awareness among the officers in the Ministry.

1.9. Inform about an inmate – The Hon. Selvarajah Gajendran

The Hon. Member informed the Committee to consider a person named Selvarasa Udayasivam arrested in Wadamarachchi and imprisoned in Tangalle prison under the charges on cannabis.

The Hon. Chair informed that the Ministry could not intervene in this regard.

1.10. Appointing a Coroner – Hon. Gunatilaka Rajapakshe

The Hon. Gunatilaka Rajapakshe requested from the Committee that at least a temporary appointment be made, as there is no coroner for Harispattuwa area.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the gazette related to the relevant recruitment will be issued next January and if there is a need before that, a request should be submitted for a temporary appointment.

1.11. Appointing Justice of Peace- Hon. Sivagnanam Sritharan

Hon. Sivagnanam Sridharan informed the Committee that though requests have been made for the appointments of Justices of Peace, the appointments have not yet been granted.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that attention would be paid in this regard.

1.12. Problems related to the children living in prisons and other matters – Hon. Diana Gamage

1.12.1. Problems related to the Children living in prisons

Hon. Diana Gamage informed the Committee that children of incarcerated mothers have to live in prisons; that it is not an acceptable situation, and therefore, it would be more appropriate that such mothers be kept in a separate section.

The Commissioner General of Prisons informed the Committee that there are thirty-five children in prisons under court orders, and when no one can be appointed as the child's guardian, the children under the age of five are given the opportunity to stay with their incarcerated mothers for the best interests of the child.

The Commissioner General of Prisons informed the Committee that when these children reach the age of five, they are directed to children's homes. Though several prisons have daycare centers, it is an undesirable scenario for the children.

1.12.2. Take appropriate measures in the case of mothers who are imprisoned with their children for minor offences.

Hon. Diana Gamage informed the Committee that there are many mothers who are imprisoned with their children for minor offences such as failing to pay a fine.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a broad system has been identified in this regard.

The Chief Consultant of the Ministry of Justice, Mr. U. R. De Silva, P.C., informed the Committee that the Ministry's intervention to grant bail is

unacceptable and the Judicial Service Commission has already informed the magistrates to release those who have failed to pay fines after signing a bond.

Mr. U. R. De Silva further informed the Committee that the Police has been informed not to imprison women with children for minor offences and the OIC of the Police has been given the power to release such persons after signing a bond.

1.12.3. Lack of proper sanitary facilities for the women in prisons

Hon. Diana Gamage informed the Committee that the women in prisons have no proper sanitary facilities.

The Hon. Chair agreed to that.

2. The Committee was adjourned at 12.00 noon on 05.12.2020 *sine die*.
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Ministerial Consultative Committee on Finance First Meeting – 7th December 2020

Committee Members Present

Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa (Chair)
Hon. Shehan Semasinghe (State Minister)
Hon. Ajith Nivard Cabraal (State Minister)
Hon. Jagath Kumara
Hon. M. W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara

Non-Committee Members Present

Hon. Gamini Lokuge
Hon. S. Viyalanderan
Hon. Mohomad Muzammil
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. D. Weerasingha

1. Discussion on the Affairs of the Ministry

- 1.1 Mr. S.R. Attygalle, Secretary to the Ministry, informed that action has already been taken with regard to some of the proposals presented by the present Budget and action would be taken to implement the other proposals within the early part of the coming year itself.

He also described the programmes and projects that had been implemented by the Ministry during the year 2020.

1.2 “Vada Samaga Yali Gamata” (Back to the Village with Work) Programme and Other Matters – Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara

1.2.1 “Vada Samaga Yali Gamata” (Back to the Village with Work) Programme

The Hon. Member informed about the “Vada Samaga Yali Gamata” Programme to be commenced on 14th December this year with a view to uplifting the living conditions of rural and suburban populations from among the people of this country.

The Hon. Chair informed that people should be consulted, their true needs should be identified and priorities should be determined in implementing the programme concerned.

1.2.2 Concept Paper Titled “Sri Lankawe Sancharaka Kshethraye Punarjeevanaya” (Revival of Tourism Sector in Sri Lanka)

The Hon. Member informed that he had submitted a concept paper styled “Revival of Tourism Sector in Sri Lanka” to the Minister of Tourism describing contributions made by tourism towards the country’s income, problems existing in the industry, and proposal for solving those problems.

1.2.3 Appreciating Ministers and Officers

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that he wished to appreciate the Hon. Minister of Finance, Hon. State Ministers, Secretaries to Ministries, and Ministry’s officers and officers of various institutions functioning under the Ministry, who work successfully and efficiently amidst the difficult situation prevailing at present.

1.3 Uplifting of Tourism – Hon. Gamini Lokuge

The Hon. Minister informed that a methodology for enhancing tourism should be introduced as the industry had experienced a setback.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that attention would be focused regarding it.

1.4 Pension of Samurdhi Officers and Other Matters - Hon. Jagath Kumara

1.4.1 Pension of Samurdhi Officers

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that although efforts were made at giving pension rights to Samurdhi Officers since 2014, it had not been possible to achieve it thus far.

Hon. Shehan Semasinghe, State Minister informed the Committee that discussions had been held with the Hon. Minister of Public Services, Provincial Councils and Local Government and relevant officials regarding the issues related to the Samurdhi Officers and actions would be taken immediately to solve majority of them.

The Hon. State Minister further informed the Committee that final discussion would be held with the Hon. Prime Minister regarding the other issues.

1.4.2 Right to Contest Elections for Samurdhi Officers and Agriculture Field Officers

The Hon. Member requested that Samurdhi field officers and agriculture field officers be granted the right to contest at elections.

Hon. Shehan Semasinghe informed that a joint Cabinet Paper should be introduced by the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and the Hon. Minister of Finance for the purpose.

Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon informed that an amendment will be effected to the Local Authority Elections Ordinance with regard to granting the field officers the right to contest at elections.

1.4.3 Relief Given by the Previous Regime to Pensioners

Hon. Jagath Kumara requested that a clarification be given regarding the allegation leveled to the effect that the present regime deprived pensioners of the relief given to them by the previous government.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that the previous regime had stated that adjustments would be made to the pensions of those who would retire after the year 2016, treating them as if they had retired in the year 2020, in view of the decision taken to add a sum of Rs. 10,000/= to the salaries of public servants in instalments from the year 2016 to the year 2020.

The Secretary to the Ministry explained that it would create an anomaly as a large number of public servants had retired before the year 2016 and the government bears a huge burden in expenditure to pay the increased salaries of pensioners.

2. The Committee was adjourned at 11.00 a.m. on 2020.12.07 *sine die*.
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**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Highways
First session – 07 December 2020**

Committee Members present

Hon. Johnston Fernando (Chair)
Hon. Nimal Lansa (State Minister)
Hon. (Dr) V. Radhakrishnan
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. H. Nandasena

Non – Committee Members present

Hon. Roshan Ranasinghe
Hon. Thenuka Vidanagamage
Hon. Dilan Perera
Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala,
Hon. Fisal Cassim
Hon. Sivagnanam Sritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Sampath Athukorala
Hon. Thissakutti Arachchi
Hon. Jagath Kumara
Hon. (Major) Sudharshana Denipitiya
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Asanka Nawarathna
Hon. Nalin Fernando
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiyan Rasaputhiran Rasamanickam,
Hon. Gamini Weleboda
Hon. (Mrs) Rajika Wickramasinghe
Hon. Madura Withanage
Hon. D. Weerasinghe
Hon. Samanpriya Herath

1. Other matters

1.1 Motions submitted by the Hon. (Dr) Radhakrishnan

1.1.1 Developing the roads that have been started to develop in the Nuwara Eliya district but have come to a halt halfway.

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to develop such incomplete roads in the district of Nuwara Eliya.

The Hon. Chair informed the Hon. Member to give a list of the roads.

1.1.2 Developing the hanging bridge in Ketabulawa, Kotmale in the district of Nuwara Eliya

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to focus its attention on completing the rest of the reconstruction work that has been stopped halfway and to open it as soon as possible.

1.2 Motions submitted by Hon. Dilan Perera

1.2.1 Developing Badulla – Kandy Raja Mawatha

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to develop the 26 km from Uva Paranagama town to Kandy on this road.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that a feasibility study had been done on this road in 2014 that it had been checked and further steps would be taken.

1.2.2 Developing the roads under iROAD road development project in Badulla district.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to develop the parts of the roads that have been started to be developed under the iROAD road development project but have stopped halfway.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that problems arose due to the tenderers who got the tender to develop the road, and that immediate action would be taken to complete the development work.

1.3 Developing the roads within the jurisdiction of Yakkalamulla Pradeshiya Sabha in Galle district - Hon. Isuru Dodangoda

The Hon. Member requested the Committee that, since there are several dilapidated roads within the jurisdiction of Yakkalamaulla PS, such roads be developed for the convenience of the people.

1.4 Motions submitted by Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

1.4.1 Repairing the road that connects Roomassala and Unawatuna in the Habraduwa Divisional Secretariat Division

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to repair this road as it is connected to a tourist zone.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this road would be developed in the future.

1.4.2 Developing the roads in Fredduwatta Tsunami village in the district

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to repair the roads in Fredrukwatta Tsunami village, which has a population of approximately one thousand.

1.4.3 Repairing the Dodangoda bridge in the Galle district

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to take steps to repair the dilapidated Dodangoda Bridge and to look into the possibility of expanding the bridge.

1.4.4 Repairing the Wakwella Bridge in the Galle district

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to repair the bridge since the warranty period for the construction of the bridge has expired and to devise an appropriate system to remove the waste collected near the bridge.

1.4.5 Developing the road from Galle town to the Expressway Entrance

The Hon. Member stated that this entrance road is quite narrow and congested due to the shops along the road and requested to take action to expand the road and to establish those shops along the road, in another location.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary to the Ministry to have a discussion with the Urban Development Authority and the Ministry of Tourism about the plans, as the development of this road is essential since Galle is a centre for tourist attractions.

1.4.6 Repairing Imaduwa- Welivita road in Galle District

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to develop this road as the road is in a dilapidated condition.

1.4.7 Laying drinking water pipes before carpeting the roads

The Hon. Member requested that the Committee take steps to give the opportunity to lay the pipes for the people in that area without charging any

money, as the road is damaged when the pipes have to be laid in the future once the roads are developed.

1.4.8 Road near the Karapitiya Maternal Hospital in the Galle district

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to take action to expand the road near the maternal hospital since there is huge traffic congestion with the opening of the maternal hospital in Karapitiya.

1.4.9 Developing Gintota - Wakwella Road

The Hon. Member requested the Committee that priority be given to develop the 70 m distance of the road in the area in which the health center, Samurdhi office, and the church are situated.

1.5 Developing the access roads in the villages of Anuradhapura district – Hon. H. Nandasena

The Hon. Member requested to develop the access roads for each village as the roads in rural areas in the district of Anuradhapura have not been developed.

1.6 Motions submitted by Hon. Sampath Atukorala

1.6.1 Developing rural roads in Hiniduma Divisional Secretariat Division

The Hon Member requested the Committee that Neluwa, Thawalama, Nagoda in the Hiniduma Divisional Secretariat divisions are difficult areas and the roads in those areas should be developed.

1.6.2 Construct three bridges across Gin River

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to take further action to construct 3 bridges across the Gin River using Neluwa, Ketagoda, and Nagoda as the centres, as it would be a great help for the transportation of the people in that area.

1.6.3 The proposed Madhuwa bridge to be built across Madu river

The Hon Member requested the Committee to construct the proposed Madhuwa Bridge, which was planned to be built a long time ago.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers should be sought in this regard, and action will be taken to call tenders for the project in the future.

1.6.4 The shortage of raw material required for the development of roads

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that, road development activities will be delayed, as there is a shortage of ABC granite and gravel required in regional road development activities.

1.6.5 Maintenance difficulties due to the growth of bushes on both sides of the road

The Hon. Member submitted to the Committee the necessity to have an appropriate methodology to permanently destroy the invasive plants grown along the roads in his area, as these plants regrow after being destroyed.

1.6.6 Establishing regional level maintenance units to maintain the roads that have been developed.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee that, in addition to the road development authority, the Pradeshiya Sabhas find it difficult to maintain the roads on daily needs depending on their income, and therefore, to combine several Pradeshiya Sabhas and establish maintenance units by giving equipment and obtaining the service of the employees in those Pradeshiya Sabhas.

1.7 Complete the road that connect Battaramulla town and Koswatta - Hon. Jagath Kumara

The Hon. Member requested the Committee that the work on the road that is being constructed connecting Battaramulla town and Koswatta via Sethsiripaya and Udumulla has been stopped halfway, and the people in that area have to travel an additional distance as that road cannot be used, and therefore, to take immediate action to complete the work.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that land acquisition from Udumulla to Koswatta should be done to complete the work on this road.

The Hon. Chair instructed that the section of the road that is necessary for the transportation of people be developed until the land acquisition is completed.

1.8 Motions submitted by the Hon. Rajika Wikramasinghe

1.8.1 Developing the roads in Yatiyantota electorate

The Hon. Member requested the Committee that the 15 km road project given to the Yatiyantota Pradeshiya Sabha has not yet been estimated, and since it is a difficult area, that roads should be developed.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that development work will be started within a week.

1.8.2 Developing the Avissawella- Kegalle road that runs through Warawala town

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to complete the remaining development work on this road, which is used as a by - road that connects Kegalle and Avissawella via Warawala and Bulatkohupitiya towns.

The Hon Member informed the Committee that the landowners have agreed to grant the lands free of charge to expand the road, enabling two vehicle to pass simultaneously, and therefore, to take action to expand the road.

1.8.3 Developing the B grade roads

The Hon. Member requested the Committee that when the B grade roads are developed, action be taken to widen the road, enabling two vehicles to pass simultaneously.

1.8.4 Repairing the Bridge in Yatiyantota town in Kegalle district

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to repair the main bridge in Yatiyantota, which is in a dilapidated condition.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that this bridge will be examined and necessary action will be taken in this regard.

1.9 Removing the dilapidated old bridges from the places in which new bridges are constructed – Hon. Nalin Fernando

The Hon. Member requested about the policy decision made regarding old bridges that have not been removed in areas where new bridges are constructed, as people have developed the habit of using the old bridges.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that there are old bridges in certain areas as it is not economically viable to remove the bridges, and the parts that have been removed have been used to construct the bridges in other places.

1.10 Motions submitted by the Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

1.10.1 Expanding the roads in Attanagalle in the Gampaha district

In the Attanagalle area, there are several narrow roads coming under the Road Development Authority, and the Hon. MP requested the Committee that roads should be developed by adding two lanes to facilitate transportation and minimize accidents.

As this problem could be seen in the iROAD project and roads in hilly areas, the Hon. Chairman instructed the Secretary to the Ministry to take action to develop this road with double lanes after identifying the places with enough width.

1.10.2 Building a flyover bridge at Pasyala Junction on Colombo – Kandy road

Constructing a flyover bridge at the Payasaya Junction on the Colombo – Kandy road. The Hon. Member requested the Committee to build a flyover at the Pasyala Junction on Colombo – Kandy road to minimize the traffic congestion.

1.10.3 Prevent erosion on the sides of the roads that are developed.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that constant complaints have been received regarding the risk faced by passengers owing to soil erosion in the layer of soil laid to even the carpeted level, as the carpet is laid at a certain height when the roads are carpeted.

Therefore, the Hon. Member informed the Committee about the need to have an appropriate methodology to conserve the sides of roads.

1.10.4 Inconvenience faced by the drivers at the bridge entrances when the roads are developed.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the drivers face inconveniences, as the vehicles coming from the opposite side are not clearly visible as the bridge is narrow and the entrances on either side are at a low level.

1.10.5 Attanagalle, Urupola – Dikkanda road in Gampaha District (Bus No. 231)

Despite the fact that this road has been carpeted since 2014, the Hon. Member requested that the development of the road be completed with a proper width, the culverts be expanded properly, and that the natural boulders on either side of the road be removed.

1.10.6 Halgampitiya regional road in the district of Gampaha developed by the Western Provincial Council

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee that this road, developed by the Western Provincial Council, be widened as accidents occur frequently owing to the narrowness of the road.

Since problems occur when the lands are acquired to expand the roads, the Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary to the Ministry, that when the narrow roads are expanded, designated passing places be developed by selecting areas with enough width to expand the road, allowing two vehicles to pass one another.

1.10.7 The development activities in the Attanagalle area in the Kadawatha – Kandy expressway

Hon. Member requested information about the present condition of the development activities in the Attanagalle area.

Hon. Member informed the Committee that the road was proposed to be constructed on pillars as the area up to Mirigama is subjected to flooding frequently.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that there is a certain delay in the work in the area mentioned by the Hon. MP, payments have also been suspended, and there is an audit query too.

1.10.8 Constructing shelters for passengers in Yakkala area of the Kandy – Colombo main road

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to construct shelters for passengers to minimize the inconveniences faced by the passengers in the area.

1.10.9 Constructing a jogging path parallel to the Warana Raja Maha Vihara road Gampaha District.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to construct a jogging path parallel to this road.

1.11 Motions submitted by the Hon. Sivagnanam Sridharan

1.11.1 Transport facilities for the islanders in the Jaffna district

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to provide a new vessel as the navy vessel deployed to provide transport facilities to the islanders in Eluvative and Neduntive islands for the 12 sea mile is regularly inoperative.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the matter had been discussed at the Jaffna District Secretariat and that dilapidated vessels will be repaired as soon as possible and used in navy transportation because purchasing a new vessel costs a huge amount of money.

1.11.2 Project to construct bridges

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to conduct an investigation into the complaints made regarding the irregularities of the contractors and the standard of 12 bridges constructed in the district of Kilinochchi.

1.12 Motions submitted by the Hon. J.C. Alawatuwala

1.12.1 Developing the Mawathagama, Barandawa B - grade road in Kurunegala District.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to take action to accelerate the construction work on this road because it has become stalled.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken to complete the development work on this road.

1.12.2 Developing the Kumbukgete - Wariyapola road through Ganewatta in the Kurunegala district

The Hon Member requested the Committee to develop this 22 km long B grade road, which is in a dilapidated condition.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that procurement process had begun.

1.13 Motions submitted by the Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

1.13.1 Construction of a new bridge for Mandoor town in Batticaloe

The Hon Member inquired about the status of the construction of a road connecting Mandoor islands, with a population of about 35,000, with the district of Batticaloa.

1.13.2 Obtaining two new ferries to replace the outdated ferries now in service owing to the unavailability of Mandoor Bridge.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to deploy new two ferries as the ferries now in use for Mandhoor islanders are in an irreparable condition.

1.13.3 Transportation between Taleimannar island

The Hon. Member inquired about the possibility of constructing the road as a joint programme of the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Ports and Shipping for passenger and cargo transportation.

1.13.4 Road development in the district of Batticaloe

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to develop the roads in the Batticaloe district under the 100,000 km road development programme.

1.14 Motions submitted by Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara

1.14.1 Wellawaya- Siyambalagama – Randeniya road in the district of Moneragala

Since the development work on this road has come to a halt, the Hon. MP requested from the Committee to complete the remaining work.

1.14.2 Pelawatta – Hingurakaduwa road in Moneragala District.

The Hon. Member requested that since there are 17 km to be developed, the development work of the B grade road be completed.

The Hon. Member further requested the procurement procedure with regard to the P 57 road.

1.14.3 Extending the road up to Tanamalwila Welioya up to Balangoda

The Hon Member informed the Committee that by extending this road which was constructed under the iRoad project, travelling to Kataragama will become easier and, therefore, the Committee should focus its attention on that.

1.15 Motions submitted by Hon. Amarakeerthi Atukorala

1.15.1 Aralaganwila- Kandegama road in Polonnaruwa

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that there are 15 km of this route, which are in terrible state, and that the development work has now been stopped owing to legal problems with the contractor.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that legal action was taken on the failure of the contractor to complete the work, and that action would be taken to complete the work immediately by entering into an agreement with the contractor.

1.15.2 Welikanda –Somawathiya Road

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to repair this road as 15 km of this road are in a terrible state.

1.15.3 Irregularities of the road development contractors in Polonnaruwa District.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that road development work is moving at a snail's pace owing to the negligence of the contractors who have undertaken the development work.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that there are 4 roads in the Elahera division and 3 in the Hingurakgoda division and that there is a shortage of gravel, according to the contractors.

The Hon. Member was instructed to intervene in the road development activities in an active manner and that the problems would be solved and action will be taken to develop those roads immediately.

1.16 Motions submitted by Hon. D. Weerasingha

1.16.1 Development work in Kandy Road, Ampara

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that 27 km of this road from Mangalagama to Maha oya should be developed.

Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam informed the Committee that this road is important for the people in the Batticaloe district and therefore it should be developed.

1.16.2 Development work in Bibila – Ampara road

The Hon. Member requested that 13 km of this road from Polwatta junction be developed.

1.16.3 Expanding the width of the roads in the iRoad project up to 12 feet

As the carpet is laid for the roads with a width of 9 feet, The Hon. Member inquired about the possibility of expanding the width of the roads up to 12 feet, allowing two vehicles to pass simultaneously.

The Hon. Chair informed that roads with a width of 9 feet are developed under the iRoad project.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that despite the fact that Dambana, Kinnawatta road in Ampara is 12 feet wide, it was developed as a 9 feet road under the iRoad project, and the residents in the area resisted that.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that if the road width is 10 or 12 feet, the same width should be developed under the iRoad project.

1.17 Motions submitted by the Hon. Madhura Vithanage

1.17.1 Establishing a beautification unit for urban beautification

The Hon. Member informed the Committee of the need to establish a unit by the authority for urban beautification, as the local authorities have no power over the areas owned by the authority.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that despite the fact that allocations have been made for the beautification of the area under the Rajagiriya flyover, it has not been done properly.

1.17.2 Granting an allowance for the employees in Local Authorities for maintaining the drainage system coming under the Road Development Authority

The Hon. Member requested the possibility of granting a daily allowance for the employees of the local authorities who clean and maintain this drainage system on daily basis in response to public complaints and to clear the blocks.

1.17.3 Establishing a unit to prevent harm caused to the roads by institutions and people.

The Hon. Member inquired about the possibility of establishing a separate unit as part of the current employment creation programme to investigate and check the harm caused to developed roads by private advertising agencies and individuals including other government institutions.

The Hon. Member further informed the Committee that this unit could be used to stop the release of wastewater and waste into the drains.

1.17.4 Using the reserves and lands belonged to the institutions and the Road Development Authority by other parties.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to prepare a proper methodology to prevent other people or institutions from acquiring the reserves and lands that belonged to the Authority or doing other work by entering into that property.

The Hon. Member informed that the Urban Development Authority has encroached a reserve that belongs to the Road Development Authority, near the HSBC building in Rajagiriya- Buthgamuwa road in the district of Colombo.

1.18 Motions submitted by the Hon. (Major) Sudharshana Denipitiya

1.18.1 iRoad projects in Badulla district

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee that a proper programme be formulated to speed up the road development activities as the road development work under the iRoad project in the Badulla district has come to a halt.

1.18.2 Conduct of the contractors engaged in road development activities

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that road development has decelerated and sometimes been crippled due to the incapacity and the

negligence of contractors who are engaged in road development activities in the Badulla district.

1.18.3 Ballakaduwa- Dodangodda road in the Badulla district

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to develop the Ballakatuwa – Dodangoda road up to Buttala.

1.18.4 Project to construct bridges

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee about the implementation of decisions of the project with regard to the construction and the development of bridges. The Hon. MP further requested about the contribution of the Provincial Council for those projects.

1.18.5 Add the drainage system to the estimates when the road development estimates are prepared.

Most of the roads in the Badulla district are hilly, and, to prevent the harm caused to the roads by soil erosion, proper water drainage is essential, and the Hon. Member requested that the drainage systems be included in the road development estimates.

1.18.6 Harms caused to the developed roads by other institutions.

The Hon. Member inquired about the need to have a joint programme with other institutions as the developed roads are damaged by the water board to lay water pipes and by other private communication institutions.

1.19 Motions submitted by the Hon. Faizal Casim

1.19.1 Kalmunai Central Camp road in the Batticaloe district

The Hon. Member requested that Kalmunai Central Camp road, with a small bridge, is now in a dilapidated condition and inundated during the floods and therefore it should be repaired.

1.19.2 Repairing Kalmunai – Samanturai bridge

One of the two bridges in Samanturai town that needed to be repaired has been repaired, and the Hon. Member requested from the Committee to expand the road over the other bridge, allowing two vehicles to pass.

1.20 Motions submitted by the Hon. Gamini Waleboda

1.20.1 Roads that are being developed under the iRoad project in Ratnapura

A request was made from the Committee to take action to complete the work of the roads started under the iRoad project but has come to a halt in the Ratnapura district.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that action will be taken to complete the work of the roads started under the 100,000 km programme.

1.20.2 Balangoda - Kaltota road

The Hon. Member requested that a proper course of action to be taken regarding this road to complete the development work.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that action will be taken immediately to develop this road under the 100,000 km road development project.

1.21 Motions submitted by Hon. Roshan Ranasingha

1.21.1 Polonnaruwa, Aralaganwila- Kandegama road

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that legal action was taken against the contractor for his inability to complete the work and that action would be taken to complete the work after coming to a consensus with the contractor.

1.21.2 Polonnaruwa – Habarana road

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken to complete the development work on this road.

2. The Committee was adjourned at 3.30 p.m. *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Tourism
9 February 2021- Second Meeting**

Committee Members present

Hon. Prasanna Ranatunga (Chair)
Hon. D. V. Chanaka (State Minister)
Hon. M. Udayakumar

Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Geetha Samanmalee Kumarasinghe
Hon. Diana Gamage

Non-Committee Members present

Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana de Silva
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. Manusha Nanayakkara
Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda
Hon. Sivagnanam Sritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Sampath Athukorala
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Ajith Rajapaksa
Hon. Gunathilake Rajapaksa
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Marjan Faleel

1. Consideration of Annual Reports

The Ministerial Consultative Committee on Tourism, after consideration agreed on the following Annual reports referred to it and decided that the report on them should be presented to Parliament by the Chair of the Committee, Hon. Prasanna Ranatunga.

- 1.1** Annual Report and Accounts of Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority for 2018.
- 1.2** Annual Report and Accounts of Tourism Development Fund for 2018.
- 1.3** Annual Report of Sri Lanka Convention Bureau for 2018.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

2.1. Drinking water problem faced by the people who support tourism in Galle - Hon. (Mrs.) Geetha Samanmalee Kumarasinghe

The Hon. Chair instructed the Acting Director General of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority to notify the Ministry of Water Supply regarding the prevailing situation, obtain a response, and submit it to the next committee meeting.

2.2. Lack of a Tourism Development Strategic Plan for Batticaloa district and the necessity of creating one - Hon. Shanakkiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanikkam

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that even though there had been an issue with financial provisions for implementing the entire project, selected sections of the project were implemented with the provisions of the Ministry.

3. Other Business

3.1 Motions submitted by Hon. (Mrs.) Geetha Samanmalee Kumarasinghe

3.1.1. Japanese Project proposed for Dedduwa

The Hon. Member inquired about the progress of the water scheme project proposed for this area, to be implemented with support from the Japanese government. It was informed by the Hon. Chair that as approval had been received for an area less than 1700 acres, it would be implemented once approval had been received for the entire area.

3.1.2. The area near the Benthota bridge where garbage had been dumped

The Hon. Member sought the necessary assistance to beautify the broad area between the two bridges at Benthota under a new municipal beautification plan after eliminating the waste thrown there.

3.1.3. Tourist Shopping Complex constructed in Benthota

The Hon. Member requested the residents in the area be given priority when shops at the shopping complex in Benthota were provided.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary and staff of the Ministry to find a solution and inform the next meeting of the Committee.

3.2. Motions submitted by Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana de Silva

3.2.1. Naming Hikkaduwa as a tourism city

The Hon. Member requested a meeting with the Urban Development Authority and the Ministry of Tourism to discuss the possibility of turning Hikkaduwa into a tourism city.

It was informed by the Secretary to the Ministry of Tourism that 5 locations had been identified by the Tourism Development Authority for the above purpose, and Hikkaduwa could also be included among those 5 locations.

3.2.2. Request to inform the political authority of the relevant area about tourism development activities

The Hon. Member requested that steps be taken to inform the political authorities of the relevant area about activities relevant to tourism development. Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththy requested the same.

The Hon. Chair instructed to keep the relevant authorities informed.

3.3. Motions submitted by Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

3.3.1. Registration with the Tourism Development Authority and the existing rules and regulations there

The Hon. Member stated that most of the tourist accommodations in Galle had been constructed as houses and it was not possible to register those places with the Tourism Development Authority due to the strict rules and regulations of the Authority.

A clarification in this regard was provided by the Acting Director General.

3.3.2. Electricity Bill of Tourist Hotels

The Hon. Member requested taking action to introduce and promote solar power for tourist hotels to reduce their electricity bills as they had to bear a huge cost.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a request had been made to the Ministry of Finance regarding the formulation of a bank loan scheme to facilitate the cost incurred when installing solar power systems in the tourist hotels and the Secretary to the Ministry was instructed to make known to those who are engaged in the tourism industry about the said Cabinet Paper.

3.3.3 Repairing the road from Rumassala Hill to Unawatuna Beach

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the road from Rumassala Hill to Unawatuna Beach, for which funds had been allocated, had yet to be completed.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that, as per the written assurance given by the Chief Secretary, Southern Provincial Council, above road could be included in the 100,000 km road development program.

3.4 Motions submitted by Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

3.4.1. Issues related to tourism in Central Province

The Hon. Member stressed the strategic importance of regions that affect the tourism industry, such as the vicinity of Muthukeliyawa Tank in Belwood, Hewaheta, the area surrounding the Loolecondera Estate, and Meemure, and recommended that they be developed.

The Hon. Chair informed to draft a tourism plan for Kandy district including the above areas and to take action to forward it to the Ministry of Tourism.

3.4.2. Updating the Web Portals and Websites that inform tourists about Sri Lanka

It was requested that a suitable mechanism be implemented to monitor websites/web portals of tourists hotels and villas that had not been updated recently, such as www.booking.com.

3.5 Motions submitted by Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda

3.5.1. Issues in obtaining liquor licenses for tourist hotels in Wadduwa

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that since the relevant officials are acting in a bias manner in issuing liquor licenses to the hotels in Wadduwa area, they have been facing difficulties.

3.6 Motions submitted by Hon. Gunathilake Rajapakse

3.6.1. Providing sponsorship for the Kandyan Dance School (Kalayathana)

The Hon. Member requested government sponsorship for the Kandyan Dance School (Kalayathana) in Harispaththuwa which is also a tourist attraction.

3.6.2. Support for the tunnel connecting Dambulla Raja Maha Vihara with Harispaththuwa

The Hon. Member requested to develop this historical place.

The Hon. Chair requested to submit the above request through the District Development Committee as well.

The officials were advised by the Hon. Chair to get tourism development plans for all 25 districts through the relevant District Development Committees. It was also informed that the political representatives of the relevant areas would be given the opportunity to express their views.

3.7 Motions submitted by Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

3.7.1. Deniyaya Tourism Zone

The Hon. Member requested for a preparation of a plan required to develop Deniyaya as a tourism zone.

It was informed by the Additional Secretary to the Ministry that a development plan had been submitted by the Urban Development Authority.

3.7.2. Mirissa Tourism Zone

The Hon. Member requested to consider the unfair charges by the Department of Wildlife.

It was informed by the Additional Secretary to the Ministry that the Department of Wildlife had been requested to develop a plan for Mirissa.

The Hon. Chair instructed to provide all the information to the Chairman of the District Committee and the District Secretary.

3.8. Motions submitted by Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya

3.8.1 Development activities carried out in Ella without any plan

The Hon. Member brought to the notice of the committee the uncontrolled and unplanned tourism development in Ella, and asked some intervention or advice in this regard.

3.9 Motions submitted by Hon. Sampath Athukorala

3.9.1. Issues related to developing tourism industry in Lankagama and Neluwa areas

The Hon. Member requested that steps be taken to develop the Lankagama and Neluwa areas in order to keep tourists in Gall District for longer and to designate Gin River, Lankagama and Sinharaja as a separate tourism Zone.

The Hon. Chair directed Tourist Sub-Committee of the District Development Committee to prepare a separate tourism plan for the Galle District in consultation with the Provincial Tourism Authority.

3.10. Motions submitted by Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala

3.10.1. Polonnaruwa Tourism Hotel School

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the building belonging to Urban Development Authority constructed under the “Pibidemu Polonnaruwa” programme could be used for a tourism hotel school.

The Hon. Chair directed the officials of the Ministry to send a written request to the Urban Development Authority to obtain this building for the Ministry of Tourism.

3.10.2. Angamedilla access road

The Hon. Member requested intervention for getting the Angamedilla access road to Wasgamuwa Wild Life Park released from the Department of Wild Life as it had not been possible up to then.

The Secretary to the Ministry stated that if all pertinent information is provided in writing, the Wildlife Department can be notified and action taken.

3.10.3 Obtaining a walking path for Girithale lake round

The Hon. Member requested that a walking path be built around the Girithale Lake.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that an area of 1500 acres had been provided to the Ministry of Tourism by the Mahaweli Authority with the Moragahakanda project and that action was being taken to develop that area as a tourism zone.

3.10.4. Regarding the development of Danigala (Alien Mountain) in Kandegama area as a tourism city

It was requested to pay attention to develop the area with this mountain range as a tourist attraction zone.

3.10.5. Regarding the presentation created for promoting tourism in Polonnaruwa.

The Hon. Member mentioned that a presentation had been created by Thamankaduwa Pradeshiya Sabha to promote tourism in Polonnaruwa and requested assistance to give it publicity via web sites like YouTube.

The Secretary to the Ministry requested to send it to the Ministry of Tourism through the Director of the Provincial Tourism Authority.

3.10.6. Regarding the large building in Habarana

The Hon. Member requested guidance to complete the construction of the super luxury building constructed in Habarana by the Provincial Council.

The Hon. Chair advised to take a decision at the district development committee to complete the construction of this building by providing it to a private investor.

3.11. Motions submitted by the Hon. Waruna Liyanage

3.11.1. Problems faced by the jeep drivers who transport tourists at Uda Walawa.

The Committee was informed of the problem encountered by safari jeep owners in the Udawalawa area as a result of the imposition of a fine by the police for vehicle modification and was requested to solve this issue through discussion with relevant police stations.

The Secretary to the Ministry stated that a selection will be taken after informing this issue to the DIG (Tourism).

3.11.2. Fine charged when using the road from Nuwara Eliya to Haputhale

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the Wildlife Department is charging a fee for using the Road Development Authority Road from Nuwara Eliya to Haputale and Lokantha via Ohiya.

The Hon. Chair informed that the problem should be solved through discussion at the District Development Committee.

3.11.3. Regarding the issue created by clearing the Dahaiyagala reserve

The Member informed that elephants entering the Lahugala Bogahapattiya area through the Udawalawe Dahaiyagala Reserve have been severely inconvenienced due to the deforestation of the Dahaiyagala Reserve and requested to prevent new deforestation of the reserve through the Department of Wild Life.

3.11.4. P.C.R. tests done for tourists coming to Sri Lanka

Hon. Member informed the Hon. Chairman that the tourists had requested to lower the number of PCR tests or quarantine days in the hotel where the visitors were staying.

The Hon. Chair informed that even though health guidelines provided by the Ministry of Health had to be followed to prevent the transmission of the virus

from the tourists to the public and vice versa, certain regulations had been relaxed by now.

3.12. Motions submitted by the Hon. Faizal Cassim

3.12.1. Issues of lands received as Jayabhoomi grants

The Hon. Member informed that tourist guest houses in Arugambay on lands received as Jayabhoomi grants could not be registered with the Tourism Authority.

The Acting Director of the Tourism Development Authority informed that criteria followed in registration had been relaxed and that land ownership was not considered for registration.

3.12.2. Liquor licenses

The Hon. Member requested to take action to provide a license to tourist hotels so that at least 50 bottles of liquor per day could be sold.

The Acting Director General informed that this proposal had already been provided to the Excise Department.

3.12.3. Regarding the docking of boats in Arugambay

The Hon. Member requested a separate place for docking boats in Arugambay tourism zone.

As a tourism plan had been prepared for Arugambay tourism zone, the Hon. Chairman requested participation at the discussion conducted regarding that matter.

3.12.4. Regarding coastal erosion taking place at Arugambay

The Hon. Member informed that the people engaged in tourist industry in coastal areas at Arugambay were in serious difficulty because of coastal erosion.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken in that regard by informing the Director General of the Marine Environment Protection Authority.

4. The Committee adjourned at 12.15 p.m. *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice
Second Meeting -10th February 2021**

Committee Members present

Hon. M.U.M. Ali Sabry (Chair)
Hon. Lohan Ratwatte (State Minister)
Hon. Susil Premajayantha
Hon. G. G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam

Non – Committee Members present

Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna
Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. K. P. S. Kumarasiri
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. Gevindu Cumaratunga
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe PC
Hon. Marjan Faleel

1. Hon. Chair welcomed all Members of Parliament including Committee members, Prof. Diyanath Samarasinghe, Dr. Neranji Wijewardana, Senior Lecturer, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice , University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Mr. M. A. M. Hakeem, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Colombo and Mrs. Shashini Kulanayake, Technical Specialist of UNDP and officers representing Ministry and other institutes and briefed on the objectives and mission of this Committee.

1.1. Mr. Tikiri Jayathilake - Assistant Secretary – General

The Assistant Secretary General of Parliament explained that the Article 4 of the Constitution vests Legislative and Judicial powers of the people with Parliament whereas Minister of Justice represents the Executive.

Mr. Jayathilake stated that the attention of this committee has already been drawn to the “sentencing” process due to the rapidly growing public concerns.

Furthermore, the Assistant Secretary - General stated that one of the five objectives of sentencing is rehabilitation which has not been considered as important as other aspects of Criminal Justice System. He also added that traditional sentencing methods proved to be unsuccessful in rehabilitation. Consequently, he claimed that the community based correction orders would be more effective in relation to minor offences compared to the traditional sentencing methods. In conclusion, the Assistant Secretary General proposed that a special Committee be formed.

1.2. Hon. M.U.M. Ali Sabry, Minister of Justice

For the transformation of criminal justice system, three ministerial sub committees have been formed: one of which is assigned to Criminal law Reform.

Hon. Minister expressed his concern over growing congestion in Prisons. He added that majority of them are remand prisoners. He further stated that 52% of the prisoners who are on remand have been accused of drug-related offences and 90% out of them are either drug users or drug addicts.

He stated that the Ministry has been exploring the possibilities for rehabilitation by the means of community based correction system.

Hon. Chair then inclined to express his views that there has been slowing down in delivery of Justice to the general public due to the piling up of drug related cases in High court in addition to delay and negligence in relevant institutions.

Moreover, Hon. Minister also mentioned that Parliamentary Consultative Committee would be vital in this context to make more people involve in decision making process.

At the beginning of the transformation of Criminal Justice System, he added that sentencing process will be reformed. Therefore, Hon. Minister said that as the initial step, the committee will be looked into strengthening and popularizing of community based correction system and to use this as an alternative to imprisonment and as part of rehabilitation.

1.3. Hon. Lohan Ratwatte, State Minister

Hon. State Minister informed that the arrangements have been made to shift the Welikada prison complex to Horana. Hon. State Minister said that the new prison complex in Horana will comprise of security prisons, remand prisons, vocational training center, rehabilitation center, Sports center and a women remand prison.

1.4. Hon. Susil Premajayantha

Hon. State Minister pointed out that delay in Government Analyst's Department should also be looked at because the cases in Magistrate's courts are being

clogged as a charge sheet cannot be filed at Magistrate's Court without the report of Government Analyst.

He said that "as far as my knowledge concerns, neither privy council nor supreme court has never made an innocent person an accused".

Apart from the two tiers comprising of political leaders and officials, he suggested including one more tier comprising of legal experts.

1.5. Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, PC

The Hon. Member said that criminal convicts are made from a cycle in society and therefore, it is necessary to stop this cycle at some point.

1.6. Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

Hon. Member proposed to include law, crime and punishment as a subject into the school syllabus from Grade 6 to 13.

He further added that as a result, the rehabilitation process of child and young offender can also be included in this community based correction system.

2. Matters related to Ministerial Affairs

2.1. Motions submitted by Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksa

2.1.1. Congestion at courts

Hon. Member informed that courts are always overcrowded as people don't know the exact time in which the case is taken up.

2.2. Motions submitted by Hon. K.P.S. Kumarasiri

2.2.1. Regarding bail under Assistance to and Protection of Victims of Crime and Witnesses Act No. 4 of 2015

Hon. Member stated that the power to grant bail has been given to Court of Appeal in relation to an offence committed under this act.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that necessary actions are being taken to amend the relevant provisions of this act and Legislative Sub Committee of the Cabinet chaired by Prof. G. L. Pieris unanimously recommended giving Magistrate's the power to grant bail under this Act.

2.2.2. Relocation of Anuradhapura Prison Complex

Hon. Member stated that a huge congestion exists in Anuradhapura prison likewise in Welikada and Mahara. Therefore, Hon. Member proposed to move the Anuradhapura prison complex to Oyamaduwa area.

2.3. Motions submitted by Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

2.3.1. Acquiring of adjacent land of Galle Court complex

Hon. Member inquired about the status of acquiring process of the adjourned land of Galle court complex.

Hon. Minister informed that a meeting took place with the participation of group of lawyers in Galle and with UDA. In that meeting, it was decided to acquire the said land by Ministry and Hon. Member asked to expedite the process.

2.3.2. Proposed second High court in Galle

The Hon. Chair asked from Hon. Member to suggest a place to temporarily locate the second High Court in Galle until new premises is built for the above purpose.

Hon. Member suggested using the famous Amarasooriya Bungalow in Galle after cleaning the premises. The Hon. Chair directed the Secretary to the Ministry to make a site visit to the proposed place.

2.3.3. Relocation of Galle prisons in Boossa

Hon. Member stated that the place identified for relocation of Galle prison in Boossa was a former race course ground. Therefore, Hon. Member requested to consider the possibility of releasing the race course ground in Boossa to use it as a school playground as none of the schools in Galle have a proper playground.

Hon Minister said that if the request is made through the Divisional Coordinating Committee, it can be considered.

2.3.4. Regarding bail under Assistance to and Protection of Victims of Crime and Witnesses Act No. 4 of 2015

Hon. Member inquired whether any amendment will be brought in the future to the provisions of the above act especially regarding granting of bail.

Hon. Chair informed the Committee that an amendment will be brought to the relevant provisions of this act and Legislative Sub Committee of the Cabinet chaired by Prof. G. L. Pieris unanimously recommended giving Magistrate's the power to grant bail under this Act.

2.3.5. Accommodation facilities for Judges and State Counsels of Attorney General's Department

Hon. Member pointed out the lack of accommodation facilities for Judges and state counsels at Attorney General's Department working in rural areas. Hon. Member requested to build apartment complexes for them.

Hon. Minister informed that the ministry has already decided to build smart houses for them.

2.4. Motion submitted by Hon. G. G. Ponnambalam

2.4.1. Relocation and consolidation of prisons

Hon. Member inquired whether prisons other than Welikada prison will also be relocated.

Hon. Minister explained that the main focus now is on the building of Horana Project.

2.5. Motions submitted by Hon. Wasantha Yapa Bandara

2.5.1. Regarding "One Law: One Country" policy

Hon. Member highlighted the differences in personal laws i.e. Kandyan Law, Thesawalamai Law and Muslim Law. Hon. Member suggested that the discrepancies in our legal system with regard to marriages should be removed. He also inquired about an amendment to the minimum age of marriage which is applicable to the entire island irrespective of these customary laws. Hon. Member also wants to know about the non- appointment of women as quazis.

Hon. Chair informed that a cabinet paper has been forwarded in November regarding the minimum age of marriage. Legislative Sub Committee of the Cabinet chaired by Prof. G.L. Pieris, has recommended 18 years of age as minimum age for marriage. Muslim society has also agreed to the appointment of women as quazis and this minimum age limit for marriages.

2.6. Motion submitted by Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara

2.6.1. Requesting to establish a Magistrate court in Thanamalvila area

Hon. Member mentioned that people in Thanamalvila have to come to Magistrate's Court in Balangoda which is 72 km away from Thanamalvila. Therefore, Hon. Member requested to establish a Magistrate's Court in Thanamalvila.

2.7. Motions submitted by Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

2.7.1. Relocation of Magistrate Court in Morawaka

Hon. Member stated that a place has been proposed by the Divisional Secretary to relocate Morawaka Magistrate's Court without any agreement of Bar Association and without any approval of National Building Research Organization. This proposed place is 200 meters away from the historic "Gatabaruwa" Rajamaha Viharaya and during its annual Esala Perahara, court proceedings will be highly disturbed. However, a land with an extent of about 3.5 to 4 acres has also been proposed for relocation of Morawaka Magistrate's Court. Therefore, Hon. Member requested to use this land for the building of Morawaka court complex.

Hon. Minister, in consultation with the Secretary to the Ministry, informed to obtain the approval from Divisional Coordinating Committee in a meeting with the participation of Bar Association as well to use this land for the relocation of Morawaka Magistrate Court.

2.7.2. Shifting of Matara Prison

Hon. Member informed that a land in Morawaka has been acquired 7 years ago for the above purpose and has been given to Department of Prisons.

Hon. Minister directed the Hon. State Minister to use the land in Morawaka in order to shift Matara prisons.

2.8. Motions submitted by Hon. Rohana Dissanayake

2.8.1. Regarding frequent Police arrests of the same person

Hon. Member mentioned that a person who became accused in one case, get arrested again without any basis due to the targets given to Police Officers in relation to excise, traffic and drug related cases.

Hon. Chair directed the Deputy Inspector General of Police to look into this matter.

2.9. Motion submitted by Hon. Gevindu Kumaratunga

2.9.1. Conducting Law College Exams in English Medium

Hon. Member inquired about the decision to conduct Law College exams only in English medium.

Hon. Chair stated that Council of Legal Education which is chaired by the Hon. Chief Justice is empowered to make rules in relation to legal education and the

Minister of Justice will only give the concurrence to the Rules made by the Council.

Hon. Minister further informed that no changes have been made to Law College entrance exam. In Law College, lessons are always conducted in English medium. However, final exams are conducted in Sinhala, English and Tamil mediums.

Hon. Minister also said that about 1200 New Attorneys at Law are getting enrolled every year and majority is from foreign universities. These foreign universities offer some tailor made courses for Sri Lankan students and the quality of these courses is a question. Therefore, Hon. Chair said that this decision was taken bona fide to protect children of free education system and to improve their standards as well.

Hon. Susil Premajayantha also joined this discussion mentioning that it is needed to advise University Grants Commission to check the quality of the L.L.B. degree offered by the Open University as the students complain about the change of results which have already been released.

2.10. Motion submitted by Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda

2.10.1. Building of court complex and office complex for lawyers in Kandy

Hon. Member requested to resolve the matter of the land in which it is proposed to build court complex and office complex for lawyers in Kandy as the valuation fee is increasing when it is getting delayed.

3. Appointment of a Working Committee

Hon. Chair moved on to the appointment of the working committee. He appointed Mr. Tikiri Jayathilake, Assistant Secretary – General, as ex-officio Secretary to advise the Minister/ Chair on the procedure and way forward, to guide and mobilize officials & stakeholders towards the common purpose and to call for documentary and oral evidence and other necessary information for the purpose of the committee.

Hon. Chair then asked the officials to appoint representatives from Attorney General's Department, Sri Lanka Police, Ministry of Justice, Judicial Service Commission, State Ministry of Prison Management & Prisoners' Rehabilitation, Department of Prisons, Department of Community based correction, Legal Draftsman Department, National Authority for the Protection of Victims and Witnesses of Crimes and Bar Association of Sri Lanka.

He also appointed Prof. Diyanath Samarasinghe, Mr. Prasantha Lal de Alwis, PC, Dr. Neranji Wijewardena and Mr. M.A.M. Hakeem and UNDP for the technical advice.

Hon. Chair further instructed the Working Committee to give its report within two months and in the meantime, to submit an interim report.

Hon. Minister asked the Hon. Members to send their suggestions in writing to the Ministerial Consultative Committee Office via email.

4. The Committee at 12.45 p.m. adjourned *sine die*.
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**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Agriculture
Second Meeting-11th February 2021**

Committee Members present

Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage (Chair)
Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana De Silva (State Minister)
Hon. S. Viyalanderan (State Minister)
Hon. D.B. Herath (State Minister)
Hon. Shasheendra Rajapaksa (State Minister)
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

Non- Committee Members present

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Sampath Athukorala
Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna
Hon. Lalith Ellawala
Hon. K. P. S. Kumarasiri
Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Asanka Navarathna
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gamini Waleboda
Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake
Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage

1. Consideration of Annual Reports

The Committee agreed on the following Annual reports referred to it by Parliament and decided that the Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage, Chair of the Committee should present the report on them to Parliament.

- 1.1** Annual Report of Sri Lanka National Freedom From Hunger Campaign Board for 2015
- 1.2** Annual Report of Sri Lanka National Freedom From Hunger Campaign Board for 2016
- 1.3** Annual Report of Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute for 2018

2. Matters arising from the minutes

2.1 Not receiving subsidy for potato seeds – Hon. Douglas Devananda

The Director General of the Department of Agriculture informed the Committee that as part of the seed potatoes obtained by the Department had rotted, action had been taken to pay financial subsidy instead.

2.2 Acquisition of Rahangala Farm by Ministry of Agriculture – Hon.Nimal Siripala de Silva

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that action has been taken to acquire this farm.

2.3 Stop soil filling of paddy lands – Hon.Upul Mahendra Rajapakse

The Committee considered this matter.

2.4 Refurbish Agrarian Services Center, Gampaha - Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapakse

The Hon. Chair instructed Additional Secretary (Administration) of the State Ministry to expedite the development of this center.

Hon. Chair instructed Commissioner General, Department of Agrarian Services to develop all the Agrarian Services Centres in the country.

2.5 Prevent stealing of cattle in Attanagalla– Hon.Upul Mahendra Rajapakse

The Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary to the Ministry to arrange a discussion with the Inspector General of Police.

2.6 Providing facilities for Agrarian Services Centre in Kotte – Hon. Madhura Vithanage

Hon. Chair instructed Commissioner General of the Department of Agrarian Services to take speedy steps to transfer excess staff and to provide the necessary facilities.

3. Motions of the Hon. Members

3.1 Request to establish 20 fruit farming villages in the Divisional Secretariat Divisions of Alawwa and Narammala (Motion No -50) –Hon. Shantha Bandara

The Hon. Chair instructed to send a copy of the report prepared in this regard to the Hon. Member.

It was informed that the proposal for establishing fruit cultivation villages was expected to be implemented according to the provisions received within this year.

4. Other matters

4.1 Motions of Hon. Upul Mahaendra Rajapakse

4.1.1 Permission to fill a paddy land to construct a playground

The Hon. Member requested permission to fill a paddy land owned by the Pradeshiya Sabha that had not been cultivated for a long time in order to construct a playground.

The Hon. Chair asked the Hon.Member to submit a written request.

4.1.2 Develop 200 acre Pethiyakanda land owned by the Land Reform Commission as a farm

The Hon. Chair informed that necessary steps would be taken to develop the said land.

The Hon. Chair requested all the Hon. Members to inform about any bare lands owned by the government in their respective areas so that they could be utilized for cultivation.

4.1.3 Providing necessary machinery facilities for the Agrarian Services Centres

The Hon. Member requested taking action to provide the necessary harvester machines, drying machines, Backhoes etc. to the Agrarian Services Centres.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken to provide the necessary facilities to 47 selected Agrarian Services Centres.

4.1.4 Building permanent stalls for those engaged in selling rambutan fruits on either side of the road at Kalagedihena

The Hon. Chair asked the Hon. Member to submit a written request in this regard.

4.1.5 Developing a formal programme to protect the betel farmers

The Hon. Chair informed that after discussions with the Agricultural and Agrarian Insurance Board, an insurance scheme would be introduced for betel farmers and advised the Director General of the Agricultural and Agrarian Insurance Board to obtain necessary information from the farmers by discussing with them in that regard.

4.1.6 Transferring Agricultural Research and Production Assistants

The Hon. Member requested to cancel transfers of the said officers.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that it could not be changed as action had been taken to transfer officers in urban areas to agricultural areas.

4.1.7 Regularizing the Economic Centre at Veyangoda

The Hon. Member informed that the Economic Centre at Veyangoda is not functioned as an Exchange Centre.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken to regularize all the Economic Centres in the island.

4.1.8 Unauthorized construction at the Varana road

The Hon. Chair instructed the Commissioner General of the Department of Agrarian Development to direct the Development Officer to observe and report information about this place.

4.2 Permission to cultivate coconut on fallow paddy fields – Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Liyanage

The Hon. Chair informed that even though a proposal had been submitted to cultivate coconut in paddy fields in the Southern Province where sea water stagnated, it was not applicable to other parts of the island.

4.3 Developing the seed farm at Ambepussa, Mirigama – Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardhana

The Hon. Chair informed that action would be taken to allocate the provisions required to develop this farm within this year.

4.4 Motions submitted by Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

4.4.1 Developing the Weerapana government farm as a seed farm

The Hon. Chair informed that if action could be taken to provide information of about 100 unemployed youths, they could be provided all facilities for cultivation and the Ministry could purchase their seed produce.

4.4.2 Using bare lands in Deniyaya for cultivation

Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe further requested taking action to cultivate appropriate crops on the large extent of uncultivated bare lands in Deniyaya where the weather was similar to that of the upcountry.

The Hon. Chair advised the Director General of the Department of Agriculture to take steps to test the soil and introduce suitable crops for cultivation.

4.5 Obtaining pension rights for the staff confirmed in service at Bathalagoda farm - Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayaka

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a Cabinet Memorandum regarding this matter had already been submitted.

4.6 Motions submitted by Hon.K.P.S. Kumarasiri

4.6.1 Developing a mechanism to purchase maize

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken to develop a mechanism for this.

4.6.2 Using uncultivated lands in Wilachchiya Divisional Secretariat for agriculture

Hon. Chair requested to provide details of the identified lands and he informed the Committee that action would be taken to provide all facilities for using those lands for cultivation.

The Hon. Chair advised the Additional Secretary (Agro Technology) to obtain all information about such lands and plan necessary action under the modernization project.

4.7 Obtaining an Agrarian Services Centre for Diyabeduma, Polonnaruwa – Hon.Amarakeerthi Athukorala

The Hon. Chair instructed the Commissioner General of the Department of Agrarian Development to pay attention to this and take action to build the centre.

4.8 Obtaining a new Agrarian Services Centre for Bulathkohupitiya and addressing the shortcomings at the existing centres - Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe

The Hon. Chair advised the Commissioner General of the Department of Agrarian Development to pay attention to this.

4.9 Motions submitted by Hon. Samanpriya Herath

4.9.1 Damages to paddy cultivation in Horombawa, Kuliypitiya

The Hon. Chair instructed the Director General of the Agricultural and Agrarian Insurance Board and the Commissioner of Agrarian Services to check about damages to paddy cultivation in Kurunegala district and take necessary steps.

4.9.2 Utilizing the fallow paddy fields in Kurunegala district for development purposes

The Hon. Chair advised the Commissioner General of the Department of Agrarian Development to take action to send a circular informing the Development Officers that fallow paddy fields not used for development purposes should be taken over immediately and used for agricultural purposes.

Hon. Milan Jayathilake also requested to develop a method for acquisition of uncultivated fallow paddy fields by the government.

4.10 Motions submitted by Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna

4.10.1 Introducing economic crops exclusive for Kalutara district

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that soil testing kits were due to be provided to all the Agrarian Services Centres in the island and that after providing health soil cards to farmers subsequent to testing soil, crops to be cultivated according to the soil could be identified.

4.10.2 Empowering the regional officers to address the farmers' issues in rural areas

The Hon. Member requested to develop a system for addressing farmers' issues at regional level as coming to the Ministry directly for solving them was difficult.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that fallow paddy fields were protected because it was not possible to obtain permission for filling paddy fields as power had been retained at Ministry level and that filling paddy fields could happen without a limit if power was delegated to regional level like that.

4.10.3 Making all the Agrarian Services Centres in the island model cultivation sites

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that action would be taken in due course to develop Agrarian Services Centres properly as provisions had been allocated for development of them.

4.11 Motions submitted by Hon. Wasantha Yapa Bandar

4.11.1 Using fire arms to minimize the damages to cultivations caused by animals such as monkeys, toque macaques and pigs

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that in addition to providing fire arms, methods such as neutering animals, building huge cages and scaring off animals by sending rays were used.

4.11.2 Minimizing damages caused to cultivations by animals by using civil security force

The Hon. Members requested to take action to minimize damages caused to cultivations by engaging the army or the civil security force.

4.12 Providing necessary facilities for the agriculture training centre in Palamuna, Ampara – Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that as the necessary land area and other resources were not available despite the moving of Adalachchaina

agriculture training centre in Ampara district that operated under the central government to Palamunai, the Sawalkkadai government land where a rice mill had stood was suitable for this purpose.

The Hon. Chair advised the Director General of the Department of Agriculture to take the necessary steps.

4.13 Opening an Economic Centre in Vavuniya – Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban

The Hon. Member requested to take action to open the building of the Economic Centre in Vavuniya as a long time has lapsed since its construction.

The Hon. Chair instructed the State Minister Hon. Shashindra Rajapakse to take the necessary steps.

Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan also requested to provide shops to wholesale traders.

4.14 Developing the Agrarian Services Centre at Settikulam, Vavuniya - Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

The Hon. Member requested dividing the area of Agrarian Services Centre at Settikulam in Vavuniya district into two parts.

Hon. Chair instructed the Commissioner of the Department of Agrarian Services to take the necessary steps.

4.15 Motions submitted by Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage

4.15.1 Promoting Jasmine cultivation and Alphonso mango cultivation in Welioya

The Hon. Member requested taking action to promote Jasmine cultivation and Alphonso mango cultivation under the existing climatic condition.

4.15.2 Government sponsored cultivation of cannabis

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that if the government sponsor cannabis cultivation and exportation, foreign exchange could be boosted, and it could also be utilized for Ayurveda.

The Hon. Member also requested not to burn and destroy the stocks of illegal cannabis plantation seized but to take action to hand them over to the Department of Ayurveda.

The State Minister Hon. Shashindra Rajapakse informed the Committee that seized cannabis was not burnt and destroyed but handed over to the Department of Ayurveda even by then.

4.15.3 Plant propagation using modern methods

The Hon. Member indicated that the costs might be cut by employing contemporary propagation methods for potato and fruit production, as there are modern ways that allow for the propagation of millions of plants from a single plant, as discovered through study.

4.15.4 Existence of a monopoly in strawberry cultivation in Nuwara Eliya district

The Hon. Chair advised the Director General of the Department of Agriculture to look into the matter mentioned by the Hon. Member and take the necessary steps.

4.16 Motions submitted by Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya

4.16.1 Shortage of water for cultivation in Bandarawela and Welimada owing to the Uma Oya project

The Hon. Member requested to provide water required for plantations because water sources were under the threat of drying up as cracks had formed in cultivation lands owing to the Uma Oya project.

Hon. Shashindra Rajapakse, State Minister instructed the Commissioner General of the Department of Agrarian Development to investigate the matter through the Development Officers of that area and develop a system to provide water.

The Additional Secretary (Agro Technology) informed the Committee that solutions for this problem could be provided by using the drip irrigation system.

4.16.2 Developing the Kahagolla Agricultural Research Institute

The Committee was informed by the Director General of the Department of Agriculture that agriculture utility tests could be conducted at that institute with the participation of farmers.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that its development could be done once the legal action was concluded.

4.17 Difficulties in paying back the loans owing to breakdown of Japanese hand tractors

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the hand tractors distributed among the farmers of Ampara district had become inoperative due to broken cog wheels and that the farmers were not given the fertilizer subsidy due to non-payment of those loans.

The Hon. Chair asked the Hon. Member to submit that in writing.

4.18 Motions submitted by Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

4.18.1 Establishing fruit cultivation villages in Habaraduwa, Galle.

The Hon. Member requested that measures be taken to plant vegetables in paddy areas and fruit on grounds not impacted by floods in Habaraduwa.

The Hon. Chair asked the Hon. Member to provide all the information and instructed the Director General of the Department of Agriculture and the Commissioner General of the Department of Agrarian Development to look into that matter.

4.18.2 Construction of Habaraduwa liquid milk centre

The Hon. Chair instructed the Additional Secretary (Livestock Development) to take necessary steps regarding this matter.

4.19 Motions submitted by Hon. Sampath Athukorala

4.19.1 Taking action to develop Weerapana farm

The Hon. Chair informed the Hon. Member that assistance would be provided to develop the farm.

4.19.2 Obtaining a new Agrarian Services Centre through Neluwa Divisional Secretariat Division

The Hon. Member requested the provision of an Agrarian Services Centre at Neluwa as a huge area was covered by Neluwa Divisional Secretariat Division.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a new Agrarian Services Centre could be established if a land was provided.

4.20 Motions submitted by Hon. Selvaraja Kajendran

4.20.1 Reclamation of the agricultural tank in Vavuniya town

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that, despite the fact that the Deputy Director (Water Supply) had informed the Urban Council in writing about the Urban Council's plans to reclaim the agricultural tank in Vavuniya town to establish a park, the appropriate procedures had not been implemented.

The Hon. Chair instructed Hon. S. Viyalendran, State Minister and the Commissioner General of the Department of Agrarian Development to look into the matter and take necessary steps.

4.20.2 Obtaining compensation for damages to red onion cultivations

The Hon. Member requested for payment of insurance for damage to red onion cultivation caused by the recent Jaffna floods.

The Hon. Chair advised the Director General of the Agricultural and Agrarian Insurance Board to look into the matter and take necessary steps.

The Director General of the Agricultural and Agrarian Insurance Board informed the Committee that red onion was not among the crops for which compensation was paid.

4.20.3. Disruption to agricultural activities in Jaffna

The Hon. Member requested that required action be taken since poor drainage caused by illegal building and road development has disrupted agricultural activity in Jaffna.

Despite the fact that this fell under the Ministry of Irrigation's purview, the Hon. Chairman instructed the Commissioner General of the Department of Agrarian Development to investigate the situation and take appropriate action.

4.21 Motions submitted by Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan

4.21.1 Developing the Wattakachchi Government Farm

The Director General of the Department of Agriculture informed the Committee that it was a farm belonging to the Provincial Council and that part of it was maintained by the Civil Security Force by that time.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Additional Secretary (Agro Technology) to take necessary steps to develop this farm and the farms in Galle and Matara districts.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Director General of the Department of Agriculture to take action to start new farms engaging the youth in the North and the East.

4.21.2 Attaching Agriculture Research and Production Assistants to the North

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that Gazette notifications had already been issued for new recruitments.

4.22 Developing the farm at Undugoda, Kegalle – Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilake

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the farm could be developed if necessary lands were provided.

4.23 Providing fertilizer to the fertilizer outlet maintained by the Cooperative Society of Bandarawela – Hon. Lalith Ellawala

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a fertilizer shortage was created because fertilizer was stored by large scale companies and that fertilizer would be available in open market in required amounts under the new system.

5. The Committee was adjourned at 03.30 p.m. until 2.00 p.m. of 09th of March 2021.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Foreign Affairs
Second Meeting-11th February 2021**

Committee Members Present

Hon. Dinesh Gunawardana (Chair)
Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya (State Minister)
Hon. Shanakkiyan Rajapuththiran Rasamanikkam
Hon. Gamini Waleboda
Hon. (Dr.) Suren Raghawan

Non - Committee Members Present

Hon. John Senevirathna
Hon. Dilan Perera
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha De Silva
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. M.S. Thoufeek
Hon. K. Kader Masthan

Hon. Sivagnanam Srithran
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Ajith Rajapaksa
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. Gevidu Kumarathunga
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardana
Hon. (Mrs.) Dayana Gamage

1. Matters arising from the minutes

1.1 Repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees in India - Hon. Charles Nirmalanadan

The Committee was informed by the Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that those who agree to come to Sri Lanka bearing the expenditure themselves could come to Sri Lanka after the issue of “Exit Permit” by the relevant District Revenue Officers and that others could come under the general system of funding by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

He further informed the Committee that even though arrangements had been made to repatriate about 40% of the refugees, the attempt failed due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

At the same time, the Committee was informed by the Secretary to the Ministry that the Sri Lanka’s Deputy High Commissioner’s Office in Chennai saw to the resolving of issues caused by the short comings in their documents when passports were issued for these people.

Hon. (Dr.) Suresh Raghavan requested the Committee to make necessary arrangements to repatriate these people by sea vessels in groups to avoid the difficulties in returning with their belongings.

1.2. Indian fishing vessels fishing in Sri Lanka waters – Hon. Charles Nirmalanadan

Hon. Charles Nirmalanadan informed the Committee that the Sri Lankan fishermen’s activities were disrupted by the large number of Indian fishing vessels in Sri Lankan waters.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this matter should be paid attention by the Sri Lanka – India joint commission with the participation of Indian Fisheries Ministry of India and Defence Ministry of Sri Lanka.

1.3 Indian government arresting and releasing a person who had illegally migrated to India after defrauding – Hon. Faizal Cassim

The Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (South Asia and SAARC Division) informed the Committee that the Police Headquarters had been asked to take steps to conduct the investigation speedily as repatriation of this person had to be done through the Ministry of Justice on a court order.

2. Other matters

2.1. Presentation of Progress Review Reports

The Hon.Chair informed the Committee that:

2.1.1. Cabinet approval had been received for establishing embassies in Spain and Romania, a Consular General's Office in Madagascar and to maintain diplomatic relations with Liechtenstein

2.1.2. Sri Lanka had been nominated for Vice Chairmanship of "IORA" (Indian Ocean Rim Association) for the period from 2021 to 2023

2.1.3. A Regional Consular Office would be established in Getambe, Kandy for the convenience of the public.

2.2 Ferry service between Rameshwaram of Tamilnadu and Thalaimannar – Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

The Hon. Member inquired the Committee about the progress of the diplomatic level discussions commenced to start a ferry service between Rameshwaram of Tamilnadu and Thalaimannar.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that he would report to the Committee after checking about the said matter.

2.3 Appointing an officer to coordinate Ministerial Consultative Committee affairs - Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

The Hon. Member requested appointing an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Hon. Members to contact for inquiries.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that action would be taken to appoint an officer and provide the information speedily.

2.4 Passing an Armed Forces Act for the members of the armed forces of Sri Lanka - Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

The Hon. Member proposed to the Committee that an Armed Forces Bill similar to the UK Overseas Operation Draft Bill (Service Personnel and Veterans) should be passed to deliver justice for unfavourable situations that arise owing to operations by members of the armed forces of Sri Lanka.

The Hon. State Minister Tharaka Balasooriya informed the Committee that the said matter did not come within the scope of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2.5 Providing an efficient service to those who seek consular services -Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that service recipients had to remain in queues for a long time because the automated system of the Consular Affairs Division had been removed.

The Director General of the Consular Affairs Division informed the Committee that such crowding was created because customers who booked a time online as well as other service recipients came to the office at the same time.

He further informed the Committee that with the aim of minimizing crowding, steps had already been taken accordingly to establish a branch system island-wide, some branches had already been established in other areas outside Colombo and that some more had been proposed for establishment.

Hon.(Dr.) Harsha de Silva proposed to the Committee that a more productive and efficient service could be provided by encouraging the service recipients to book times online using a four-digit telephone number.

2.6 Appointing a High Commissioner for the High Commission of Sri Lanka in New Delhi - Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva

The Hon. Member inquired about appointing a High Commissioner for the High Commission of Sri Lanka in New Delhi.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the High Commissioner was due to assume duties.

2.7 Exempting the tourists and Sri Lankans after receiving the COVID vaccine from 14-day quarantine – Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to consider exempting the tourists and Sri Lankans after receiving the COVID vaccine from 14-day quarantine, when new health guidelines regarding the COVID 19 virus were developed.

The Hon. State Minister Tharaka Balasooriya informed the Committee that the said request had already been referred to the Presidential Task Force.

2.8 Summoning back to Sri Lanka the officers of Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau who had served attached to the foreign embassies – Hon. Dilan Perera

The Hon. Member questioned regarding the abrupt recall of officers of the Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau who had been sent to foreign embassies.

The Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Human Resources and Mission Management) informed the Committee that those officers had been summoned back owing to a financial provision issue that arose with the spread of the COVID 19 virus but necessary arrangements were being made to develop a recruitment procedure and recruit officers for foreign embassies.

2.9 Building consensus between the government and the opposition regarding the foreign policy of Sri Lanka – Hon. Gamini Waleboda

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that it was essential for the government and the opposition to reach a consensus regarding the foreign policy.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that as criticizing the foreign policy of one's country abroad was damaging to a country both the government and the opposition should act on agreement in relation to foreign policy and that the initial steps were being taken to reach such consensus.

3. The Committee was adjourned at 03.30 p.m. until 24th of March.

**Joint Meeting of the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education and
Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice
10th March 2021**

Committee Members present

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education

Hon. (Prof.) G.L. Peiris (Chair)
Hon. Vijitha Berugoda (State Minister)
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Anupa Pasqual
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena
Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice

Hon. M. U.M. Ali Sabry (Chair)
Hon. G. G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam

Non - Committee Members present

Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna
Hon. S. Viyalanderan
Hon. Rauff Hakeem
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. Govindan Karunakaram
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Sivagnanam Shriritharan
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Kapila Athukorala
Hon. Akila Ellawala
Hon. K. P. S. Kumarasiri
Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. H. Nandasena
Hon. Asanka Navarathna
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. Ali Sabri Raheem
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gamini Waleboda
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. Gevindu Cumaratunga
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake
Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage

1. “Including Sri Lankan Law as a subject in the school curriculum”- Mr. Tikiri K. Jayathilake, Assistant Secretary General of Parliament

The Assistant Secretary General explained to the committee about the beginning of the Parliament Committee system in Sri Lanka and the necessity of implementing this Committee system to suit the present.

He further explained that in addition to discussion of proposals presented by Hon. Members at the Committee, attention had to be paid by the Committee to

the implementation of certain state policies. Accordingly, the Assistant Secretary General proposed through his presentation that the Committee was the best place for the process of paying attention to a certain subject within the scope of the relevant Ministry and improving it to suit the present situation.

He explained the objective of holding this Committee meeting as directed by the Hon. Minister of Education and the Hon. Minister of Justice as a beginning of that process.

2. Explaining the objective and the necessity of the Committee meeting – Hon. M.U.M. Ali Sabry, Minister of Justice

The Hon. Minister of Justice informed the Committee, emphasizing the important implications of including in knowledge of law in school curriculum.

The Hon. Minister informed that implementing this proposal had been commenced in 2018 as well and that it had been decided accordingly to include law as a subject in the curriculum from Grade 6 to Grade 11. The Hon. Minister also informed that road rules, laws on child protection, laws on fundamental rights, environmental laws and laws on public property, primary penal laws, laws on human trafficking, laws on underage sexual crimes and laws relevant to flora and fauna had been identified as sectors on which basic knowledge should be provided.

The Hon. Minister proposed that action on implementation of such policy matters should not be limited to the relevant Minister and the officers but it should be done with the views and proposals of the Hon. Members of Parliament.

3. Explaining the objective and the necessity of the Committee meeting – Hon. (Prof.) G. L. Pieris, Minister of Education

The Hon. Ministers of Education and Justice stated to the Committee that an appropriate mechanism for executing the proposal to include law as a subject in the school curriculum needed to be determined, as agreement on that proposal had been obtained.

Accordingly, a sub - committee for “Including Sri Lankan Law as a subject in the school curriculum” was appointed by the Committee.

4. Views and proposals of the Hon. Members and discussion about the way forward

4.1 Discussion about the way forward

Hon. Susil Premajayantha, State Minister of Education Reforms, Open Universities and Distance Learning Promotion, Hon. Rauf Hakeem, Hon. Sivgnanam Shritharan, Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala, Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya, Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe, Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam and Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage were appointed as members of the

sub - committee on “Including Sri Lankan Law as a subject in the school syllabus”.

At the same time, Mr. Tikiri K. Jayathilake, Assistant Secretary General was appointed as the secretary to that subcommittee. Further, the Committee advised to get the secretary to the Ministry of Education and the secretary to the Ministry of Justice involved in the affairs of this subcommittee.

The Committee agreed to present the report of the subcommittee within two months and to obtain Cabinet approval subsequently and appoint a committee of experts for future action.

The Hon. Minister of Justice informed that action would be taken to provide the documents presented earlier in this regard to the Hon. Members of the subcommittee.

4.2 Views and proposals of the Hon. Members

4.2.1 Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasekiriya

The Hon. Member informed that when this new process was implemented it would be appropriate to teach law in a practical manner as Civic Education had already been included as a subject in the school syllabus.

4.2.2 Implementing this methodology for private schools – Hon. Mrs. Diana Gamage

The Hon. Member inquired about introducing law as a subject in the school syllabus to private schools as well.

The Hon. Minister of Education informed that there was no obstacle for that.

At this point, the Hon. Minister of Justice and the officials of that Ministry left the meeting to allow the Hon. Minister of Education continue with the rest of the business in the agenda.

5. Consideration of Annual Reports

After considering the following Annual Reports referred to the Committee by Parliament, the Committee agreed about the reports and decided that the report of the Committee in that regard should be presented to Parliament on 8th April 2021 by the Chairman of the Committee Hon. (Prof.) G. L. Pieris, Chair of the Committee.

5.1 Annual Report and Accounts of Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka for 2018

- 5.2** Annual Report and Accounts of Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya for 2018
- 5.3** Annual Report and Accounts of University of Colombo School of Computing for 2018
- 5.4** Annual Report and Accounts of University of Moratuwa for 2018
- 5.5** Annual Report and Accounts of Postgraduate Institute of Science of University of Peradeniya for 2018
- 5.6** Annual Report and Accounts of South Eastern University of Sri Lanka for 2018
- 5.7** Annual Report and Accounts of Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology of University of Kelaniya for 2018
- 5.8** Annual Report and Accounts of Wayamba University of Sri Lanka for 2018
- 5.9** Annual Report and Accounts of Gampaha Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Institute of University of Kelaniya for 2018
- 5.10** Annual Report and Accounts of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka for 2018
- 5.11** Annual Report and Accounts of Postgraduate Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences of University of Peradeniya for 2018
- 5.12** Annual Report and Accounts of Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka for 2018
- 5.13** Annual Report and Accounts of Eastern University of Sri Lanka for 2018
- 5.14** Annual Report and Accounts of the Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology of University of Colombo for 2018
- 5.15** Annual Report and Accounts of *Swami Vipulananda* Institute of Aesthetic Studies of Eastern University of Sri Lanka for 2018
- 5.16** Annual Report and Accounts of University of Jaffna for 2018
- 5.17** Annual Report and Accounts of University of Ruhuna for 2019
- 5.18** Annual Report and Accounts of Open University of Sri Lanka for 2019
- 5.19** Annual Report and Accounts of Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture of University of Peradeniya for 2019
- 5.20** Annual Report and Accounts of Postgraduate Institute of Medicine for 2019
- 5.21** Annual Report and Accounts of University of Sri Jayawardenepura for 2018
- 5.22** Annual Report and Accounts of the University Grants Commission for 2018
- 5.23** Annual Report of Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka for 2019
- 5.24** Annual Report of University of Peradeniya for 2019
- 5.25** Annual Report and Accounts of the Institute of Technology of Moratuwa University for 2019
- 5.26** Annual Report of the Institute of Indigenous Medicine of University of Colombo for 2019

6. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 28.11.2020

**6.1 Issue of the acting principals – Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna
(Item No.4.1.2 of the minutes dated 28.11.2020)**

Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka inquired about the current situation regarding this matter.

The Secretary to the Ministry of Education stated that he intends to follow the decision of Public Service Commission after Cabinet decision after it is submitted to the Public Service Commission.

Hon. H. Nandasena inquired regarding the actions taken to solve anomaly incurred when recruiting the Principals on the basis of super numeracy on 08.08.2012.

It was informed by the Secretary to the Ministry of Education that action would be taken on the advice given by the Hon. Minister of Education to submit a Cabinet Memorandum after discussions with all relevant parties about the problematic situation that had arisen.

6.2 Establishing the Teacher Advisors Service – Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna

(Item No. 4.1.3 of the minutes dated 28.11.2020)

The Additional Secretary (Establishment) of the Ministry informed the Committee that for absorbing Teacher Advisors, out of the personal files of the Teacher Advisors serving in each Provincial Council, files of Western, Sabaragamuwa, Southern and North Central Provinces had been submitted and that the process of checking them was going on.

**6.3 Issues that have come up in university admissions when students are enrolled for 2020 – Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Harini Amarasekiriya
(Item No.4.4.1 of the minutes dated 28.11.2020)**

The Hon. Chair informed that a case was pending at the Court of Appeal regarding that issue and action had to be taken according to the determination of that case.

The Hon. Chair further informed that he and the Chairman of the University Grants Commission had had a discussion with the Vice Chancellors of the relevant universities and the Deans of the relevant faculties within that context and as a result of that they had agreed to enroll 540 extra students to universities due to this very issue.

The Chairman of the University Grants Commission informed that the said number would include 110 for Medicine, 30 for Dental Surgery, 100 for Engineering, 150 for Science subjects related courses and 150 for Management.

It was informed by the Chairman of the University Grants Commission that the existing national methodology for selection of students to universities could not be changed.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that ways of providing government sponsored facilities at non-government universities for students who suffered injustice in university admissions were being studied.

The Chairman of the University Grants Commission informed that the Department of Examinations had decided not to hold the G.C.E. (A/L) examination under two question papers for one subject in future.

Hon. Yadamini Gunawardene requested appointing a committee consisting of Hon. Members of Parliament to discuss and report the views and proposals of the Hon. Members to prevent the occurrence of such situations in relation to university admissions in future. The Hon. Chair agreed to that.

The Hon. Chair informed that 500 academic posts within the university system had been approved for the first time and that financial provisions required to fill those posts as well as posts in non-academic staff had been obtained from the treasury.

**6.4 Establishing a professorial unit in Kuliapitiya attached to Wayamba University – Hon. Samanpriya Herath
(Item No. 4.7 of the minutes dated 28.11.2020)**

The Chairman of the University Grants Commission informed that Kuliapitiya hospital had been made a teaching hospital by that time and that necessary steps would be taken to establish a professorial unit after doing the improvements of the hospital accordingly.

**6.5 Confirming the volunteer teachers at schools in service – Hon Anupa Pasquel
(Item No. 4.10 of the minutes dated 28.11.2020)**

Hon. H. Nandasena, Hon. K.P.S. Kumarasiri and Hon. Kapila Athukorala requested recruiting into Teachers Service the officers of the Civil Security Department serving as teachers in schools in difficult areas as they had been doing so for a long time.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that a Cabinet paper could be submitted for recruitment of those serving as volunteer teachers into Teachers Service in batches step by step, provided that they had the required educational qualifications.

**6.6 Transfer of the principal of the Mullaithivu National School – Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
(Item No. 4.11 of the minutes dated 28.11.2020)**

Mr. W.M.N.J. Pushpakumara, Additional Secretary (Educational Services Establishment) informed that necessary action was being taken regarding this.

7. Motions submitted by the Hon. Members

- 7.1** The child of Mrs. A.M.A.Maheesha Nuwangi Sumanadasa residing at No.3, 4th Lane, Richmond Hill Road, Galle not being granted admission to Grade One of Richmond College, Galle.
Hon.Chandima Weerakkody (Motion No. 20)
- 7.2** Request from Mr. D.M. Rohitha Kumara residing at Kirigampamunuwa, Polgasowita about not being granted appointment to Education Administrative Service
Hon. (Dr.) Bandula Gunawardene (Motion No. 32)
- 7.3** Request from Mrs. W.G. Samya residing at Wadudoowa, Gonapeenuwala for admission of her child to Grade One of Richmond College, Galle.
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody (Motion No. 37)
- 7.4** The Hon. Member's request for provision of necessary equipment for the auditorium of Alawwa National School
Hon. Shantha Bandara (Motion No. 51)
- 7.5** The Hon. Member's request for construction of an auditorium for Nrammala Mayurapada National School
Hon. Shantha Bandara (Motion No. 52)
- 7.6** The Hon. Member's request for developing a proper arrangement for the external degree and implementing that again
Hon. Shantha Bandara (Motion No. 53)
- 7.7** The Hon. Member's request for developing a new system of education
Hon. Shantha Bandara (Motion No. 54)
- 7.8** The Hon. Member's request for increasing and regularizing the Mahapola Scholarship
Hon. Shantha Bandara (Motion No. 55)
- 7.9** The Hon. Member's request for provision of necessary equipment for the auditorium of Nakkawaththa Mahinda National School
Hon. Shantha Bandara (Motion No. 56)

- 7.10** Appeal by Mr. H.N. Sri Rangika residing at Randagoda Temple Road, Adaganthota, Benthota to admit his two children to Grade 3 and Grade 9 of G/Gamini National School.
Hon. Chandima Weerakkodi (Motion No. 65)
- 7.11** Request presented by Mrs. S.T. Nayana Lumbini, an Assistant Teacher of English of Provincial Public Service, residing at Yatadolawaththa, Mathugama for a transfer to a National School
Hon. Chandima Weerakkodi (Motion No. 66)
- 7.12** Request of Ven. Siyambalagoda Sumanasara Thero, Pariwenadhipathi of M/ Sri Wipulasara Pirivena, Gorakawela, Pitabeddara for granting again the provisions amounting to Rs.15 million that had been allocated for the Pirivena
Hon. Buddhika Pathirana (Motion No. 80)
- 7.13** The Hon. Member's request for finalizing the establishment of Teacher Advisors Service
Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna (Motion No. 96)
- 7.14** The Hon. Member's request regarding the Cabinet Paper decided to be submitted for the issue of the acting principals
Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna (Motion No. 97)
- 7.15** The Hon. Member's request inquiring about educational reforms
Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna (Motion No. 99)
- 7.16** The Hon. Member's request inquiring about matters mentioned in the circular on school admissions
Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna (Motion No. 100)
- 7.17** The Hon. Member's request for taking necessary action to provide human resources and physical resources to Nittambuwa Sangabodhi Vidyalaya and Henegama Central College
Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna (Motion No. 101)

The Hon. Chair informed that the reports in reply to those motions had been sent to the Hon. Members who submitted those proposals.

8. Other Matters

8.1 Decision taken regarding schools with a small number of students – Hon. Yadamini Gunawardene

The Hon. Member inquired about the possibility of ensuring that no decision would be taken in future to close down even one out of the schools with less than 50 students.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that no decision had been taken to close down any school due to the small number of students. He further stated that the Ministry would take action to provide physical and human resources required by schools.

8.2 Conducting the competitive examination for recruitment of teachers – Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene

The Hon. Member stated that it had been informed that the validity of the results of the competitive examination held for recruitment of teachers for Western Province in 2017/2018 would expire by January that year.

The Hon. Member proposed that it would be appropriate to conduct a new examination for the vacancies created anew only after recruiting all who had earned the pass mark as conducting a competitive examination was costly.\

On the request of the secretary to the Ministry, the Hon. Chair granted permission to summon the 9 Provincial Directors of Education and the 9 Provincial Secretaries of Education to the future meetings of the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education. On the request of Hon. Yadamini Gunawardene, the Hon. Chair informed that the Hon. Governors could be summoned to these committee meetings as required.

8.3 Granting teaching appointments in schools for bhikkus who had had Piriven Education – Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal

Hon. Vijitha Berugoda, State Minister informed that bhikkus who had had Piriven Education would not be granted the opportunity to serve at schools or any other institution on any occasion as Piriven education would deteriorate through that.

8.4 Filling the vacancies for teachers – Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala

The Hon. Member requested paying attention to the shortage of teachers that existed in the Tamil and Muslim schools in Polommaruwa district.

Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayaka informed that even though a large number of vacancies stood within Ibbagamuwa Educational Zone in Ridigama, not a single appointment of teachers passing out of Colleges of Education had been received within that year.

It was informed by the secretary to the Ministry that speedy action would be taken to fill the vacancies for teachers.

The secretary to the Ministry also requested the Hon. Members to intervene for balancing the excesses and shortages in the National schools, Provincial Council schools and inter provincial schools within each province.

8.5 Increasing the age limit of the Diploma holders recruited into Teachers Service – Hon. Kapila Athukorala

The Hon. Member informed that teachers from other districts who were staying in Trincomalee and serving took action to get transfers due to lack of facilities for them and pointed out that it was fair.

As a solution for this, the Hon. Member proposed that it was appropriate to increase the age limit of Diploma holders from 35 years to 40 years to recruit Diploma holders into Teachers Service from that district itself.

The Hon. Chair agreed to increase the age limit of Diploma holders recruited into Teachers Service to 40 years not as a common policy but only to be applicable to specific situations like that.

Accordingly, the Secretary to the Ministry informed that a Cabinet Paper would be submitted for that and action would be taken after obtaining approval of the Public Services Commission.

8.6 Vacancies for principals and filling those vacancies.

The following schools were mentioned by the following Hon. Members as schools with vacancies for principals: Medawachchiya Maithreepala Senanayake National School by Hon. H. Nandasena, Godakawela Rahula National School in Rakwana electorate of Ratnapura district by Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi, Moneragala Royal National School by Hon. Kumarasiri Ratnayake and Hingurakgoda Ananda Balika National School by Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala.

Accordingly they requested to appoint suitable principals to those schools.

At the same time, Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene mentioned that the principal of Mirigama D.S.Senanayake National School, Mirigama was due to retire in a few months and requested taking action to fill that vacancy.

Further, Hon. Samanpriya Herath requested giving the opportunity for the principal serving at Nakkawaththa National School at present to continue service in that school.

Mr. W.M.N.J. Pushpakumara, Additional Secretary (Educational Services Establishment) informed that interviews had been held for the posts of principal and that appointments to some schools would be granted in early April.

It was mentioned by the Secretary to the Ministry that the relevant appointments were granted by the Public Services Commission and that those appointments had to be accepted. Still, he informed that if a suitable person was to be named

to cover the duties at a school where the post of principal had become vacant, the relevant principal should be informed to submit a request for that.

It was informed by Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya that when a post of principal was due to become vacant soon, many issues could be avoided by attaching a new principal for that vacancy at least one month earlier.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed in this regard.

8.7 Converting institutions that operate as campuses into universities – Hon.Kapila Athukorala

The Hon. Member requested the provision of facilities required to convert the campus in Trincomalee into a university. He further informed that attention could be paid to convert that into a university later as only two faculties were operative there.

Hon. Yadamini Gunawardene informed about the necessity of converting the campus that had been operative in Vavuniya for 25 years into a university.

The Chairman of the University Grants Commission informed that separating the campus in Vavuniya district from Jaffna University and making that a separate university had been concluded.

At the same time, Hon. Yadamini Ginawardene and Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayake requested making Buttala campus a university as it had all necessary facilities required.

8.8 Obtaining space for the Regional Centre of Open University in Kurunegala – Hon, Asanka Navarathna

The Hon. Member informed that an agreement had been reached about obtaining a land of the Paddy Marketing Board for the Regional Centre of Open University in Kurunegala as the space for that for not sufficient.

8.9 Conducting only the final year examinations of universities and other matters – Hon Gamini Waleboda

8.9.1 Conducting only the final year examinations of universities

The Hon. Member informed that only the final year examinations of universities were held at all universities by then and the students who failed at certain subjects in the first, second or third year would not get an opportunity to repeat that subject. The Hon. Member informed that due to the said situation there was a delay for those students to pass out as graduates.

8.9.2 Admission of students who passed the scholarship examination to National Schools on residence at close proximity basis.

The Hon. Member requested the introduction of some method for students who were between the pass mark at the Grade Five scholarship examination and the cut off mark for admission to a national school to be admitted to national schools on the basis of being children of residents in close proximity.

8.9.3 International School charging the whole fee amidst the COVID pandemic.

The Hon. Member informed that even though many international schools were not operative in the recent past due to the COVID pandemic, they charged the entire amount as the fee.

8.10 Students of catchment schools not being admitted to the secondary school – Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Hon. Samanpriya Herath informed that a serious injustice was caused because out of the students of catchment schools only those who passed the scholarship were admitted to the closest secondary school while those who failed were not admitted.

Mr. L.M.D. Dharmasena, Additional Secretary (School Affairs) informed that this problematic situation had to be provided a solution through a review committee.

8.11 Establishing National Schools – Hon. Isuru Dodangoda

Hon. Isuru Dodangoda inquired about the progress of implementing the decision to establish National Schools in 123 Divisional Secretariat Divisions as the first phase of establishing National Schools.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that the decision was being implemented very well as the first phase.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that there were requests to add more schools to the 673 National Schools decided to be established under the second phase. The Hon. Chair informed that all Chairmen of the District Coordinating Committees had therefore been advised to come to an agreement at Divisional Development Committees when National Schools to be newly established were identified.

Hon. H. Nandasena informed that discussions were held with all relevant parties accordingly and that Hon. Channa Jayasumana had requested to make Pandarellawa Vidyalaya and Kapugollewa Vidyalaya in Horowupathana electorate National Schools.

Hon. Rauf Hakeem informed that a certain problematic situation had arisen as no Muslim school had been included when 123 National Schools were established.

The Hon. Chair informed the committee that the second phase is scheduled to commence on 27th of April, 2020 and the discussions relevant to the inclusion of Muslim schools could be held afterward.

8.12 Ampara Padiyathalawa National School – Hon. D. Weerasinghe

The Hon. Member mentioned that while there were 4 parallel classes for Grades 4 and 5 at Ampara Padiyathalawa National School, there were only 3 parallel classes for Grade 6 and requested to add one more parallel class for Grade 6.

8.13 Obtaining approval of the Director of National Schools when students are admitted to Grades 2, 3 and 4 of National Schools – Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna

The Hon. Minister inquired about the delay in obtaining the approval of the Director of National Schools when students are admitted to Grades 2, 3 and 4 of National Schools.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that admission of students to additional classes of National Schools had been concluded on 28th of February.

He further stated that an analysis of vacancies in all grades in all National Schools would be done in due course, they would be posted on the websites and that it would be decided to grant the principals the authority to fill the vacancies subject to certain limits.

8.14 Construction of a media unit at Jaffna University and other matters – Hon. Selvarajah Kajendran

8.14.1. Construction of a media unit at Jaffna University

The Hon. Member inquired about the proposal submitted to the Minister of Mass Media for the construction of a media unit at Jaffna University for Rs.232 million.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that the proposal had to be submitted to the University Grants Commission first and after obtaining its approval it should be submitted with the recommendation of the secretary to the Ministry of Education to the Department of National Planning for approval.

8.14.2. Appointing Mass Media graduates as Development Officers

The Hon. Member mentioned that Mass Media graduates were granted appointments as Development Officers and requested to grant them teaching appointments relevant to their subject.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that granting Development Officer appointments to graduates had been done on a national policy and that they could apply for teaching appointments based on their qualifications when vacancies occur.

8.14.3 Issuing to the media the report of the committee appointed to investigate the problematic situation at Jaffna University

The Hon. Member informed that the students were requesting an investigation about the release of the report of the committee appointed to investigate the problematic situation at Jaffna University to the media as it had caused the students great inconvenience.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed that the Chairman of the University Grants Commission would be advised to look into the matter.

8.14.4. Conducting examinations relevant to the promotions of the teachers at National Schools in Jaffna district

The Hon. Member informed that the examinations relevant to the promotions of the teachers at National Schools in Jaffna district were not conducted regularly according to the Circular.

At the same time, the Hon. Member requested to pay attention to teach Tamil language to the principals and teachers of Jaffna district.

8.15 The shortage of desks and chairs that exists within the school system – Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayaka

The Hon. Member requested to pay attention to the shortage of desks and chairs that exists within the school system.

The Hon. Members informed that it was a common situation throughout the island.

8.16 Attaching an Officer of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service for the post of Additional Provincial Director of Education of North Central Province – Hon. H. Nandasena

The Hon. Member informed that a problematic situation had been created as a result of attaching an officer of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service for the post of Additional Provincial Director of Education of North Central Province.

- 9.** The Committee was adjourned at 2.15 p.m. until 11.00 a.m. on 21st April 2021.
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**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment
Second Meeting – 25th March 2021**

Committee Members Present

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera (Chair)
Hon. Kins Nelson,
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake

Non - Committee Members present

Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana De Silva
Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Kapila Athukorala
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan

1. Matters arising out of the minutes dated 03.12.2020

**1.1 Problems associated with sand mining in the Pottuwil area – Hon. S.M.M. Muzsharaff
(Item No. 4.5 of the minutes dated 03.12.2020)**

The Hon. Chair of the Committee informed the Chairman of the Central Environment Authority to send the report relating to the matter to the Hon.Member.

**1.2 The problem with regard to the invasive Giant Mimosa plant in the Matale, Nalanda and Pallepola areas - Hon. Rohana Dissanayake
(Item No. 4.9 of the minutes dated 03.12.2020)**

The Hon. Chair directed the Chairman of the Central Environment Authority to send to the Hon. Member of the measures that have been taken in that regard so far, in writing.

**1.3 Sand Mining in the Kithulkote, Wellawaya and Thanamalwila areas and other matters – Hon. Jagath Pushpa Kumara
(Item No. 4.10 of the minutes dated 03.12.2020)**

The Director General of the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau informed the Committee that the Bureau conducted a joint inspection and that no incident of violation of conditions of the permits issued so far has been reported.

The Hon. Chair of the Committee directed the Director General of the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau to send special teams to those areas to take legal action against the people who violate the conditions of the permits and ban the permits.

The Hon. Chair of the Committee instructed the Director General of the Central Environment Authority to visit those areas and engage in a fact-finding mission and submit a report in relation to the measures taken in that regard.

The Hon. Chair further stated that sand mining activities would be done in accordance with the report submitted by the Presidential Task Force on sand mining.

1.4 Violation of the conditions of sand mining permits – Hon. Jagath Pushpa Kumara

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that a huge environmental damage is caused owing to the rehabilitation work on the lands where permission has been granted to mine sand in violation of the conditions of the sand mining permits, not taking place according to a proper standard.

The Hon. Chair directed the Director General of the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau to make the necessary arrangements to issue permits subject to a substantial guarantee hereafter and not to issue permits to the persons who act in violation of the permit conditions again.

1.5 Obtaining the recommendations of the Central Environment Authority when issuing permits for excavation purposes - Hon. Jagath Pushpa Kumara

The Hon. Member inquired about the activities that require and do not require the recommendations of the Central Environment Authority.

The Director (Mineral Rights) of the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau stated that permits are issued by the Central Environment Authority in relation to the projects of which the depth is over 25 meters according to the definition of the Central Environment Authority and projects which require explosions to be done on a land with an extent of over 10 hectares.

The Hon.Chair informed the Committee that arrangements would be made to educate the Hon.Members about the institutions that are authorized to provide recommendations in issuing permits for excavations.

1.6 Problems related to the Iranamadu tank - Hon.Sivagnanam Sritharan (Item No. 4.12 of the minutes dated 03.12.2020)

The Hon.Chair informed the Committee that a detailed report in this regard has been sent to the Hon.Member.

1.7 Problems of the Natural Energy Company at Nindavur - Hon. Faisal Kassim (Item No. 4.13 of the minutes dated 03.12.2020)

The Acting Deputy Director (Environment Pollution Control) of the Central Environment Authority informed the Committee that no permit has been issued for this project since 2017 and the relevant institution has not yet implemented the order given by the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka to stop the project as it causes environmental pollution.

However, he informed the Committee that the Board of Investment cannot continue with this project any longer as the Ceylon Electricity Board does not accept it.

2. Other matters

2.1 Banning the sachet packets containing agro - chemicals after 31.03 2021 - Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana de Silva

The Hon. Member made a request to find a solution to the problem of banning the sachet packets containing agro- chemicals after discussing it with the farmers

along with an alternative method of destroying them as the decision to ban them after 31.3.2021 has put the ordinary farmers in severe difficulty.

The Hon. Member further informed the Committee that the Business community has expressed its willingness to fund the project to collect the discarded packets or destroy them.

The Director General of the Central Environment Authority informed the Committee that it has been decided to grant a grace period of two seasons to the decision to ban sachet packets after 31.12.2021, conduct awareness programmes till 31.12.2021 and implement the decision to ban sachet packets containing agro-chemicals after 31.12.2021.

2.2 An Australian Company making excavations for Ilmenite in the Mannar district – Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

The Hon. Member inquired whether the Titanium Sands Limited which is in the process of doing excavations for Ilmenite in the Mannar Island of the Mannar district has obtained an approval for such excavations.

Hon. Faizal Cassim too informed the Committee that a similar project is being carried out by an Australian company from the Oluvil harbour to Thirukkivil, Potuvil.

The Director General of the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau stated that permits have been issued by the Bureau only for exploration activities and further steps would be taken after the report of the special investigation being conducted, in relation to this matter, is received.

2.3 Recruiting workers for the Ilmenite excavation activities in the Thirukkivil area - Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that even though Ilmenite excavation activities in the Thirukkivil area were halted three years ago, once again workers are recruited these days for those activities.

The Director General of the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau informed the committee that permits have been issued only for exploration activities in this regard and if an excavation permit is issued it will be done only upon the consideration of the Environment Impact Assessment Report of the Coastal Conservation Department.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that no permit would be issued without the approval of the Coastal Conservation Department in relation to projects connected to the coast.

2.4 Establishing a Media unit under the Ministry of Environment – Hon.Wasantha Yapa Bandara

The Hon.Member stated that there should be a strong Media unit functioning under the Ministry of Environment that can disseminate the updated information on the involvement of the government in relation to the protection of environment.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the necessary action in relation to the establishment of a Media unit for the Ministry of Environment, is being taken at present and detailed information on the programmes aimed at the conservation of the environment are taken to the people through the public and private media in the country.

2.5 Motions submitted by Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara

2.5.1 Ensuring the safety of the people living within the Dahayyagala Forest Reserve

The Hon.Member informed the Committee that he has proposed to His Excellency the President to make arrangements to alter the boundaries of the Electric fence that has been erected between Bogahapattitya and Udawalawa within the Dahayyagala forest reserve in order to minimize the harassment being caused to the people living in the licensed lands therein by wild elephants.

2.5.2 Marking boundaries showing ownership by various people within the Dahayyagala forest reserve

The Hon.Member informed the Committee that people from Balangoda area have marked the trees in this forest reserve in a bid to demarcate borders but have not cleared the forest.

2.5.3 Converting the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment into an Inter - Ministerial Consultative Committee

The Hon. Member inquired about the possibility of summoning all institutions concerned with the responsibility of protecting the environment and constituting an Inter- Ministerial Consultative Committee as environment protection is a multi- institutional obligation.

The Secretary to the Ministry of Environment informed the Committee that the Hon. Minister of Environment has made arrangements to establish an Inter-Ministerial Committee through a Cabinet Memorandum and discuss the relevant matters in it.

2.6 Motions submitted by Hon. Kapila Athukorala

2.6.1 Extending the period of Validity of the Sand and Stone permits issued for the Trincomalee district

The Hon. Member made a request to extend the period of validity of the Sand and stone permits which are due to lapse on the 31st of March by one more month and issue at least a few permits for sand anew.

The Hon. Chair directed the Director General of the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau to make arrangements to extend the period of validity of the permits which are due to lapse on the 31st of March till the 30th of April as per the decision of the Ministerial Consultative Committee as the power of issuing permits has been decentralized to the District Secretaries, and convey the decision to the Forest Conservation Department forthwith.

2.6.2 Issues that arise in implementing the three-day law of the Sand permits

The Hon. Member made a request to formalize the criteria of the three-day law that has been imposed for Sand permits so as to prevent the injustices being caused to the permit holders in its implementation.

2.6.3 Reforestation project

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that there are bare lands in the Trincomalee district which could be used for cultivating trees with a lifespan of around five years which could be used as wood.

The Hon. Chair stated that the projects of this nature which should be initiated by the Timber Department, have already been started by the Ministry of Environment and requested the committee to inform the Ministry of such lands in the Trincomalee district.

2.6.4 Problems arising owing to arresting the Tippers that transport Sand

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that many problems arise as a long time is taken to enforce the law in relation to the arrested Tippers that transport Sand and made a request to expedite those cases or introduce a Spot- Fine system.

The Hon. Chair stated that the new methodology which is about to be implemented in relation to issuing Sand permits will find proper solutions to these issues.

2.6.5 Giving priority to the persons who already run quarries, when issuing permits for running quarries in the district

The Hon.Member made a request to give priority to the people in the district of Trincomalee when issuing permits to run quarries in Trincomalee.

The Director General of the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau stated that the Bureau only issues permits based on the recommendations provided by other institutions and a decision in this regard should be taken by those institutions.

2.6.6 Conveying the decisions of the Ministerial Consultative Committee

The Hon. Member made a request to make arrangements to convey the decisions taken by the today's meeting to the State Ministry and relevant officials.

The Hon.Chair informed the Committee that arrangements would be made to convey the decisions to the relevant officials and institutions.

3. The Committee was adjourned at 12.45 on 25.03.2021 *sine die*.
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**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Fisheries
Second Meeting – 26 March 2021**

Committee Members Present

Hon. Douglas Devananda (Chair)
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

Non-Committee Members Present

Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Amaraakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Naseer Ahamed
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte
Hon. H. Nandasena
Hon. Ali Sabri Raheem
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

1. Consideration of annual reports

After considering the following annual reports submitted to the Committee by Parliament, the Committee agreed to those annual reports and decided those annual reports be submitted to Parliament by the Hon. Douglas Devananda, the Chair of the Committee.

1.1 The Annual Report of Sri Lanka National Aquaculture Development Authority for the year 2018.

1.2 The Annual Report of the National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency for the year 2017.

1.3 The Annual Report of the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation for the year 2015

2. Matters arising out of the minutes of the meeting held on 25.11.2020:-

**2.1. Entering of Indian fishermen's boats into the northern border of the sea – Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
(Item No. 3.1.1 of the minutes dated 25.11.2020)**

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that solutions would be given after having discussions with the Ministry of Fisheries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant parties regarding the prevention of entering of Indian fishing boats into the territorial waters of Sri Lanka.

**2.2. Fishing in the northern sea using cylinders - Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
(Item No. 3.1.2 of the minutes dated 25.11.2020)**

The Deputy Director (Operations) of Sri Lanka Navy informed the Committee that, despite the fact that using cylinders to catch fish in the northern sea at night has been strictly prohibited, it is still taking place.

He further informed that necessary action would be taken in the future after conducting a special investigation into this, and the fishermen who catch fish violating the law are frequently arrested using the Sri Lanka Navy's limited resources.

**2.3. Problems faced by fishermen in the district of Kilinochchi – Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
(Item No. 3.5.4 of the minutes dated 25.11.2020)**

It was decided to take this matter up at the next meeting.

2.4. Lift the ban on using Scuba system to catch fish – Hon. K. Kader Masthan (Item No. 3.8.1 of the minutes dated 25.11.2020)

It was decided to take this matter up at the next meeting.

3. Motions submitted by the Hon. Members

**3.1. Request to obtain fishing gear to the fishermen's society in Siyambalangamuwa, Usgala, Galgamuwa in Kurunegala.
Hon. Shantha Bandara (Motion No. 87)**

The Hon. Chair informed that the relevant report regarding this motion has been sent to the Hon Member.

4. Other matters

4.1. Getting the necessary facilities to develop the freshwater fishing industry in the Anuradhapura district – Hon. H. Nandasena

4.1.1. Ban the importation of nylon nets

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to take necessary steps to prevent the importation of nylon nets, which are proscribed for use in fishing.

The Secretary to the Ministry of Fisheries informed that immediate action would be taken to halt the importation of nylon nets.

4.1.2. Providing facilities to fishing community to buy nets

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to set up a place in the Anuradhapura district that facilitates the purchasing of nets through the Fisheries Corporation.

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that a proper methodology would be developed to supply nets to the fishermen in the Anuradhapura district.

4.1.3. Providing necessary facilities to establish a fish breeding centre.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to make necessary arrangements to establish a fish-breeding centre in Yan Oya.

The Director General of the Sri Lanka National Aquaculture Development Authority informed the Committee that plans would be prepared to establish that centre and necessary technical support would be given.

4.1.4. Providing necessary facilities to increase fish seed production

The Hon. Member requested to concrete the mud ponds in which fish seeds are produced.

The Director General of the National Aquaculture Development Authority informed the Committee that necessary action would be taken in this regard.

4.1.5. Providing official residences for the officers in the fisheries sector in the district of Anuradhapura.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to take action to provide official residences to the fisheries officers who work in the vicinity of Anuradhapura district's 06 main tanks.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a special discussion would be conducted with the participation of the Hon. Member and necessary steps would be taken to provide the necessary facilities.

4.2. Motions submitted by Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala

4.2.1. Utilizing the land owned by Minneriya Fisheries Corporation for a productive course.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to take action to utilize the degrading land, which had a large ice factory, owned by the Minneriya Fisheries Corporation, for a productive course.

The Chairman of the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation informed the Committee that basic steps have been taken to establish an ice factory on this land.

4.2.2. Getting fishing gear for the people in Minneriya area

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to provide the canoes and nets for the fishermen as soon as possible and to increase the number of fingerlings added to the tanks.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that such facilities would be given after having a discussion with the Hon. Member.

4.3. Motions submitted by Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatta

4.3.1. Providing the opportunity to engage in fishing along the Bolgoda lake

The Hon. Member requested the Committee that the low-income earners in the area be given the opportunity to engage in fishing activities without any

hindrance by amending the gazette issued by the Environmental Authority prohibiting fishing along the Bolgoda Lake.

The Director General of the Sri Lanka National Aquaculture Development Authority informed the Committee that a separate discussion would be conducted at the ministerial level in this regard and a separate zone would be reserved for fishing along the Bolgoda lake.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a discussion would be held with the participation of representatives from the Sri Lanka National Aquaculture Development Authority, Ministry of Fisheries and Environmental Authority and the Hon. Member.

4.3.2. Projects that are proposed to be implemented in Moratuwa area in the Colombo district.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee about the projects that are proposed to be implemented in Moratuwa in the Colombo district under the provisions of the Ministry of Fisheries.

The Secretary to the State Ministry informed the Committee that monetary aid, technical know-how and training would be given to those who start ornamental fish farming under the livelihood development programme, and those who are already in the industry will be given monetary aid, technical know-how, and training.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this matter would be taken up in the meeting to be conducted on fishing activities in the Bolgoda Lake.

4.4. Motions submitted by Hon. Faisal Cassim

4.4.1. Prepare banks of the canal in Konawatta in Addalachchnei for boat parking

The Hon. Member requested that the banks of the canal in Konawatta, Addalachchnai, be developed to park the boat.

The Deputy General Manager of the Ceylon Fishery Harbours Corporation informed the Committee that action would be taken after studying this matter.

4.4.2. Oluwil Harbour problem

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that Oluwil Fishery Harbor should be developed as a complete harbour after a proper study.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a private company had submitted a report after examining the Oluwil Harbour and action would be taken to take back Oluwil harbour from the Port Development Authority.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the Hon. Member would be invited for the discussion to be held on this matter.

4.5. Motions submitted by Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren

4.5.1. Regain the Mailletti Fishery Harbor in Jaffna district for the Ministry of Fisheries.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the fishermen in the area cannot engage in fishing activities as the Mailletti Harbour in the Jaffna district, which was taken over by the Ports Authority, has not been handed over to the fishermen even the reconstruction work of the first stage of this harbour had been completed.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to take action to take over the Harbour to the Ministry of Fisheries and to hand it over to the fishermen's society.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the completion of the new harbours proposed to be constructed at Point Pedro, Gurunagar, and Pesalai- South would take 1-3 years.

The Hon. Chair further informed the Committee that suitable fishermen would be identified and training would be given in deep water fishing. The Hon. Chair also informed tax-free boats would be provided and the training would be given by the Ocean University in Jaffna.

4.5.2. Problems related to Fishery Harbours in Jaffna Peninsula

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to remove the sand that had accumulated in fishery harbours in the Jaffna peninsula since the fisherman cannot engage in fishing activities due to that.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that it would be appropriate to construct a metal wall from Point Pedro, Keerimale to Karainagar as the boats anchored in those places are damaged due to the wind entering the fishery harbours.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that Rs. 19 million has been allocated to remove the sand that had accumulated in the harbours and to construct a metal wall, and action will be taken to complete that after discussing this matter with the Assistant Directors in Jaffna, Kilinochci, Mannar, and Mullativu areas and identifying the priorities.

4.5.3. Getting permission to travel to Iranativ Island

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the displaced people of Iranathivu Island, which is entirely populated by fishermen, now live in Iranamatha town and obtaining permission from the Navy whenever they need to travel to Iranathivu Island on a regular basis has become a problem.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to amend the laws enabling the Ministry of Fisheries to grant that permission instead of the Navy.

The Deputy Director (Operations) of the Sri Lanka Navy informed the Committee that even though permission is required for the multiday fishing vessels to enter this island, the registered residents of the island could enter the island without any special permission. He also informed those who have not registered need permission to enter the island.

The Hon. Chair directed the Director General of the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to look into this matter further and inform the Member in this regard.

At the same time, the Hon. Chair informed the Committee that there is a proposal to construct a Police station in this place and that the Navy has also agreed to that.

4.5.4. Problems faced by the fishing boats entering and leaving the Pasyoor Fisheries landing site

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that fishermen face inconveniences when the boats entering the sea and coming back to the shore as the Pasyoor fisheries landing site is shallow and the boats get damaged owing to the wind.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to repair the Colomboturairi landing site, which had been abandoned for a long period of time.

The Hon. Chair informed that action would be taken on a priority basis after having discussions with the relevant officers as the allocations have been made to repair the fishery harbours.

4.6. Getting sales outlets of the Fisheries Corporation for the main 03 towns under the Kandy electorate in the Kandy district - Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha

The Hon. Member requested from the Committee to provide 03 sales outlets of the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation for the 03 main cities under the Kandy electorate in the Kandy district.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that one stall would be given immediately at the initial stage and action would be taken to give the other two stalls as soon as possible.

The Hon. Chair informed the Hon. Member to submit a written request in this regard.

4.7. Motions submitted by Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

4.7.1. Granting permission for fishing in the harbour in the district of Trincomalee

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that about 400 families have lived in the area called the harbour area in the Trincomalee district for a long period and are engaged in fishing using small nets, but they have been prohibited from entering that area for a period of about three months.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to grant permission again for fishing in that area, as the fishermen who have lost their livelihood have faced difficulties.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee to conduct an investigation in this regard.

4.7.2. Prohibiting Ilmenite mining in the shores of Ampara – Thirukkivil.

The Hon. Member informed that an Australian company has been assigned the task of preparing an evaluation report on the environmental impact of ilmenite mining on the shores of Thirukkivil – Ampara and requested the Committee not to give approval of the Ministry of Fisheries for that, taking into consideration the huge environmental damage that occurs due to mining activities.

The Hon. Chair directed the Director General of the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to take necessary steps after conducting a proper study in this regard.

4.7.3. Remove sands from the Valachchanei harbor in the Batticaloa district

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that a private company has been assigned the task of removing and cleaning the sands from Valachchanei harbour in the Batticaloa district and that company is engaged in sand mining in that harbour.

The Hon. Member requested to clarify whether an environmental impact assessment report has been obtained for sand mining, and, if so, to take necessary action to do this in a proper manner according to the existing laws.

The Hon. Chair informed the facts will be presented after conducting a proper study.

4.7.4. Damages caused to the environment by the ice factories by obtaining water from tube wells in the Valachchenei area.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that ice factories in Valachchnai cause damages to the environment by obtaining water from tube wells for their operational activities.

4.7.5. Using the abandoned buildings in the Batticaloe district owned by the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation for a productive course.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that several buildings belonged to the Fisheries Corporation in Kaluwankerny and Kallaru area have been abandoned.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to take the necessary action to repair those buildings and the small dilapidated bridge in the Kaluwankerni area.

The Hon. Chair informed that an answer would be given before the next Ministerial Consultative Committee meeting.

4.7.6. Establishing fish stalls in the Batticaloa district

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to establish a fish stall of Ceylon Fisheries Corporation in the Batticaloa district as the district gets a sufficient catch for consumption in the area.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Chairman of the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation to take necessary action to establish those fish stalls.

4.8. Accelerate the sand removing activities in Hambantota and Kirinda Fisheries harbours – Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

The Hon. Member requested to focus the attention of Ministry of Fisheries to accelerate the sand removing activities in these two fisheries harbours.

The Chairman of the Ceylon Fishery Harbours Corporation informed the Committee that as Cabinet approval has been given for sand mining in fisheries harbours, discussions are being held with necessary institutions to bring the situation back into normalcy as soon as possible.

The Deputy General Manager (Engineer) of the Ceylon Fishery Harbours Corporation informed the Committee that there was a plan to construct a special breakwater for the Hambantota harbour.

4.9. Engage in fishing using trawlers – Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that fishing using trawlers has been completely banned in Sri Lanka recently, but as per a proposal presented at that time, permission was granted for 28 feet long vessels with 30 horsepower. The Hon. Member informed that accordingly such activities are taking place in the Puttalam, Mannar, and Jaffna areas.

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that the Attorney General has informed that permission can be given to catch fish using trawlers once a report is submitted by the NARA marking the corals after examining the site.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that further action will be taken in this regard as the NARA has submitted their report.

4.10. Motions submitted by Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren

4.10.1. Establish a fisheries landing site in Sally fishing village in Trincomalee.

The Hon. Member requested the Committee that a landing site be prepared for the people in Sally – Trincomalee as their fishing vessels and equipment are being destroyed due to the lack of a fishing harbor.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that a waterway could be formed as an alternative because the rocks in the area cannot be removed as it may cause environmental problems.

4.10.2. Titanium sand mining in Mannar island

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that fisheries in the Mannar Island would be affected as Titanium sand mining is being carried out by an Australian company without proper approval.

The Hon. Chair informed that a request including the above facts be submitted to the Ministerial Consultative Committee and afterwards action can be taken in this regard.

4.11. Motions submitted by Hon. Naseer Ahamed

4.11.1. Repair the vessels in Valachchena area

The Hon. Member requested the Committee that a place be established to repair the vessels, as there are more than 600 vessels in the Valachchena area.

The Hon. Member requested that some relief be granted to the fishermen as they have obtained loans because an order has been issued for them to get vessel observation systems within a certain period.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that vessel observation systems will be given free of charge with Australian government aid, and the aforesaid fishermen will be included in that and relief can be obtained by submitting it under the recommendations of the Ministry of Fisheries.

4.11.2. Construction of Eravur Lagoon dam

The Hon. Member requested the Committee to resume construction work on the Eravur Lagoon dam under some project as it has been stopped halfway and is deteriorating.

The Director General of the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources was instructed to study this and answer at the next Ministerial Consultative Committee meeting.

4.12. Motions submitted by Hon. Ali Sabri Raheem

The Hon. Member informed the Committee that he had not been summoned or informed about the development work of the fisheries activities in the Kalpitiya and Puttalam areas, though he is the District Chairman on the fisheries activities in that area.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that this matter would be studied and an answer would be given at the next Ministerial Consultative Committee meeting.

5. The Committee was adjourned at 12.00 *sine die*.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Mass Media
Second meeting – 20 July 2021**

Committee Members present

Hon. Keheliya Rambukwella (Chair)

Hon. Shantha Bandara

Hon. Uddika Premarathne

Non – Committee Members present

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera

Hon. Chandima Weerakkody

Hon. Govindan Karunakaram

Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren

Hon. (Mrs.) Geetha Samanmale Kumarasinghe

Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage

1. Consideration of Annual Reports

After the Committee has considered the following Annual Reports referred to the Committee by Parliament, the Committee expressed its agreement to them and decided that those reports should be presented to Parliament.

- 1.1. Annual report of Selacine Rupavahini for the year 2017
- 1.2. Annual report of Selacine Rupavahini for the year 2018
- 1.3. Annual report of the Independent Television Network Limited for the year 2017
- 1.4. Annual report of the Independent Television Network Limited for the year 2018
- 1.5. Annual report of the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation for the year 2016.

2. Motions of the Hon Members

2.1. Request to release the land belonging to Mr. W. Palitha De soyza Gunasekara, residing at Rathgama, Katudampe, which was acquired for the Boossa post office.

(Hon. Chandima Weerakkody – Motion No. 67)

The Hon. Member informed that no arrangement has been made to construct the Post Office despite the above land being acquired by the government nearly fourteen years ago.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the necessary steps would be taken after exploring the possibility of meting out justice to Mr. Gunasekara.

2.2. The request made by the Hon Member in relation to making the necessary arrangements to make constructions in the identified lands belonging to the Pelawatta Post Office and the Divisional Secretariat.

(Hon. Jayantha Samraweera – Motion No. 112)

The Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary to the Ministry to take steps to construct a building which is sufficient for the Post Office as a Public- Private project since a land with an extent of 20 perches is not required to construct a Post Office.

2.3. The request made by the Hon. Member regarding the telecasting of foreign Teledramas and films by the local media.

(Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna – Motion No. 156)

Hon. Geetha Samanmalee Kumarasinghe inquired about the taxes levied by the government when telecasting foreign teledramas within the country while making a request to take the steps required to safeguard the local teledrama industry.

Mr. Ruwan Sathkumara, Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Mass Media informed the Committee that even though the levying of taxes on telecasting foreign teledramas had been put on hold owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, steps would be taken to impose the taxes again from February 2021.

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that steps would be taken to formulate the laws required to safeguard the local teledrama industry.

2.4. The request made by a group of officers attached to the Government Press in relation to an injustice being meted out to the employees therein.

(Hon. Buddhika Pathirana – Motion No. 149)

The Hon. Chair informed the Committee that the reply to the above request has been referred to the Hon. Member.

2.5. The request of Mr. L.G. Karunaratne residing at No. 145, Pushparama Mawatha, Pahala Biyanwila in relation to not receiving his pension.

(Hon. Buddhika Pathirana – Motion No. 264)

The Hon. Chair informed that the reply to the above proposal has been referred to the Hon. Member.

2.6. The request made by the Hon. Member in relation to the injustice that has been caused to Mrs. K.W. Wasana Jayamali residing at No. 387A, Kudagammana ½, Left bank, Beralihela, Tissamaharama by not giving her the post of Post Mistress.

(Hon. Vijitha Berugoda – Motion No. 282)

The Hon. Chair informed that the reply to the above proposal has been referred to the Hon. Member.

- 2.7. The request made by Mr. Trevin Clinton residing at No. 60/9/53, Sahaspura Housing Scheme, Baseline Road, Borella, Colombo 08, who had worked at the Central Mail Exchange, requesting that he be reinstated.**
(Hon. Wimal Weerawansa – Motion No. 356)

The Hon. Chair informed that the reply to the above proposal has been sent to the Hon. Member.

3. Other matters

- 3.1. Regularizing the media coverage activities in this country and other matters – Hon. Keheliya Rambukwella (Chair)**

3.1.1. Regularizing the matters relating to media coverage

The Hon. Chair stated that discussions are underway with academics including lawyers with a view to making the background needed to regularize the matters pertaining to the handling of media in this country and the Ministry thinks that it is its responsibility to protect those who are engaged in the field of media and make the necessary arrangements to transmit accurate information to 22 million citizens of the country through that move.

The Hon. Chair further stated that journalists should exercise self-discipline in reporting information. He also pointed out that information should not be reported with the motive of taking personal revenge. The Hon. Chair reiterated the need to have sufficient laws and a censorship to regulate these matters.

3.1.2. Granting the ownership of Television channels.

The Hon. Chair stated that the methodology to formalize the matters pertaining to granting Television Channel ownership within the legal framework is being prepared as a non-formal methodology has prevailed in that regard.

- 3.2. Correct media coverage and other matters – Hon. Diana Gamage**

3.2.1. Correct media coverage

The Hon. Member stated that some media institutions of this country engage in the kind of reporting that is detrimental to the social fabric of the country as well as the privacy of the people, which is a very unhealthy phenomenon.

3.2.2. Minimizing the telecast of foreign Teledramas by local media

The Hon. Member requested to provide more space in the Television channels of the country to telecast local Teledramas by minimizing the telecast of foreign Teledramas.

3.2.3. Telecasting more educational programmes for school children by the Television channels.

The Hon. Member requested for arrangements to be made to telecast more educational programmes by the Television channels and get the private television channels too to follow suit.

The Hon. Member further requested for regulations to be imposed to make it mandatory for educational programmes to be telecast when issuing permits for Television channels.

3.2.4. Telecasting Teledramas by the Independent Television Network that belong to its Chairman.

The Hon. Member inquired about the allegations that other artists lose the opportunity of telecasting their Tele dramas as the Independent Television Network telecasts Teledramas belonging to its Chairman.

Mr. W.P.A.M. Wijesinghe, General Manager of the Independent Television Network stated that the above-mentioned Tele dramas are produced by a private institution according to the accepted policies of the ITN and the approval of the relevant committee has been obtained to telecast them. Mr. Wijesinghe further stated that the Chairman of the institution has only directed those Tele dramas.

Hon. Uddika Premarathna stated that care should be taken in relation to the standard when writing scripts for Teledramas.

3.2.5. Administering the Covid-19 vaccine to journalists.

The Hon. Member made a request to make the necessary arrangements to administer the Covid-19 vaccine to all registered and unregistered journalists regardless of their age.

3.2.6. Providing the opportunity to women Parliamentarians to take part in the political debates over the media channels.

The Hon. Member requested to provide sufficient opportunity for the women Parliamentarians to take part in the political debates over media channels.

3.3 Making the necessary arrangements to register the websites that publish news in the Internet and other matters - Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

3.3.1. Making arrangements to register the websites that publish news in the Internet.

The Hon Member made a request to make the necessary arrangements to register the websites that publish news of this country in the Internet, as there is a large number of such sites.

The Hon. Chair stated that it has been already decided on policy to register those websites.

3.3.2. Publishing news by media reporters on personal contacts.

A request was made to regulate the practice of some media personnel reporting news on personal relationships.

The Hon. Chair informed that necessary actions will be taken.

3.4. Establishing a Multiple Communication Center at the University of Jaffna – Hon. Selvarajah Kajendran.

The Hon. Member made a request to establish a multiple communication center in the Department of Communication of the University of Jaffna.

The Hon. Chair directed the secretary of the Committee to refer the above request as a request of the Committee since this is a matter that comes under the purview of the Ministry of Higher Education.

Mr. Mahinda Pathirana, Chairman of the Press Council informed the Committee that arrangements are underway to amend the Press Council Act.

4. The meeting was adjourned at 3.30 p.m. sine die.

**Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife and Forest Conservation
Second Meeting – 21 September 2021**

Committee Members Present

Hon. C.B. Rathnayake (Chair)
Hon. Wimalaweera Dissanayake (State Minister)
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayaka
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Non - Committee Members Present

Hon. Angajan Ramanathan
Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera

Hon. Piyanakara Jayaratne
Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura
Hon. Kanaka Herath
Hon. (Prof.) Tissa Vitarana
Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. Harin Fernando
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. Manusha Nanayakkara
Hon. Ashoka Priyantha
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Akila Ellawala
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. W. H. M. Dharmasena
Hon. H. Nandasena
Hon. Kins Nelson
Hon. Anupa Pasqual
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. (Dr.) Thilak Rajapakshe
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. Gamini Waleboda
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage

1. Consideration of Regulations and Annual Reports

1.1 Regulations under Section 22A, read with Section 71 of the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance (Chapter 469)

Regulations made by the State Minister of Wildlife Protection, Adoption of Safety Measures including the Construction of Electrical Fences and Trenches and Reforestation and Forest Resource Development under Section 22A, read with Section 71 of the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance (Chapter 469) and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2241/41 of 19th August 2021. (Presented to the Parliament on 07th September 2021)

The Committee approved presentation of the above regulations to Parliament.

1.2 Consideration of Annual Reports

1.2.1 Annual Report of the State Timber Corporation for the year 2017

1.2.2 Annual Report of the State Timber Corporation for the year 2018

2. Matters Arising from the Previous Minute

The Secretary to the Ministry informed the Committee that the Director General of Wildlife Conservation Department or the Conservator General of Forest Conservation Department had already been sent the relevant replies for the proposals presented by Hon. Members.

3. Other Matters

3.1 Motions submitted by Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka

3.1.1 Constructing Elephant fence and ditching trenches up to Illukpitiya, Okkampitiya

Hon. Member requested to complete the construction of elephant fence from Okkampitiya to Illupitiya in extent of about 3.8 KM as soon as possible.

3.1.2 Constructing ditching trench in Anapallama

Hon. Member inquired regarding the possibility of acquiring the allocation needed to complete the construction of ditching trench in Anapallama.

Hon. Chair informed that the necessary actions will be taken regarding this matter.

3.2 Motions submitted by Hon. Piyanara Jayaratne

3.2.1 Elephant-human conflict in Puttalam District.

Hon. Member requested to launch a ditching trench project within Puttalam District.

Hon. State Minister informed the Committee that the necessary actions will be taken to start this project after having discussions with the institutions engaged in road constructions to remove the soil.

3.2.2 Chasing away the elephants and tuskers in Anamaduwa area to Wilpattuwa Sanctuary.

Hon. Member informed the committee to take necessary actions to chase away the elephants and tuskers in Anamaduwa area to the Wilpattuwa Sanctuary which is located in the border of the said area.

Hon. Chair instructed the Director General of the Department of Wildlife and Forest Conservation to hold a preliminary discussion with the relevant institutions and officials regarding this program.

3.3 Implementing the Methodology presented by Dr. Prithviraj Fernando to prevent the elephant-human conflict – Hon. (Prof.) Tissa Vitharana

Hon. Member proposed to experiment the Methodology presented by Dr. Prithviraj Fernando which was done after a long term study to prevent the elephant – human conflicts.

Hon. Chair informed that the aforesaid method is currently being in operation.

3.4 Motions submitted by Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

3.4.1 Providing grasslands for dairy farmers in Hambantota District.

Hon. Member requested to take immediate actions to provide grasslands located within the forest reserve regions to the dairy farmers in Hambantota district as planned.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Conservator General of Forest Conservation Department to take immediate actions to provide a solution without further ado.

3.4.2 Getting Permits to the quarries situated within the Managed Elephant Reserve (MER)

Hon. Member informed the committee that the development activities are being disturbed because of the delay in extending the validity period of the permits of quarries in the reserve as establishing of Elephant Managing Units had not been completed.

Director General of Wildlife and Forest Conservation Department informed that the above mentioned quarries could proceed under the prevailing law as only the responsibility has been changed which was assigned for the law enforcement institutions by gazetting the Managed Elephant Reserve (MER).

Hon. Member informed the Hon. Member that act necessarily after discussing about this matter in the Divisional Coordinating Committee based on the matters that discussed in the Ministerial Consultative Committee held on today.

3.5 Constructing an Elephant fence around the Kumbukkana plant bed in Monaragala District - Hon. Kanaka Herath

Hon. Member inquired about the ongoing construction activities of elephant fence around Kumbukkana plant bed in Monaragala District.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary that the officers of the Industrial Technology Institute to be called to the next Ministerial Consultative Committee meeting to discuss about the possibility of getting the necessary energizer from the Industrial Technology Institute to finish up the construction.

3.6 Improving Gopalugala Reserve – Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

Hon. Member requested to take necessary actions to improve and conserve the Gopalugala Reserve land in Kotapala DS, Matara district.

Conservator General informed that the land is currently belongs to the Land Reforms Council and the necessary actions will be taken for the land acquisition as a reserve after including it to the Forest Conservation Boards.

The Hon. Chair informed the Hon. Member to present a proposal through District Development Committee to acquire this land as a reserve.

3.7 Obtaining owner deeds to the dwellers living in the lands of Forest Conservation Department in Meerigama area – Hon. Kokila Gunawardhana

Hon. Member requested to give the permanent ownerships of the lands who built houses and lived on the lands for more than 50 years which belong to the Forest Conservation Department in Meerigama area.

The Hon. Chair informed the Hon. Member to present a proposal through District Development Committee regarding this matter.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Conservator General of the Department of Forest Conservation to present a report regarding the possibility of giving the ownerships for the houses as per the proposal.

3.8 Motions submitted by Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

3.8.1 Getting the opportunity to cultivate crops in the lands belong to Forest Conservation Department of Gampaha District.

Hon. Member requested that the people who had been cultivating lands for many years be given the opportunity to continue cultivating the lands which included in the boarders of the Forest Conservation in Gampaha District.

Hon. State Minister informed to make a written request including the details of those lands to check the possibility of releasing those lands.

3.8.2 Getting 2 baby tuskars for the temples in Attanagalla area

Hon. Member requested 2 baby tuskars for Attanagalla Raja Maha Viharaya and Warana Raja Maha Viharaya.

Hon. State Minister stated that it is not possible to give baby tuskars for the temples in permanent basis, but to give the elephants and tuskars in the times of conducting processions.

3.9 Motions submitted by Hon. Angajan Ramanadan

3.9.1 Issues in the districts of Jaffna and Kilinochchi

Hon. Member requested to release the lands belong to the Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Conservation to the people who lived in those lands long termly.

The Hon. Chair informed that to provide a solution for this matter after conducting a location observation and a discussion with Hon. Member and the Hon. Members who represent Jaffna district.

3.9.2 Regarding the letter issued by the Ministry of Lands

Hon. Member informed the committee that the officers of the Forest Conservation Departments of Jaffna and Kilinochchi districts had not been informed regarding the letter issued informing that the authority of gazzeting new lands have been transferred to the District Secretariat's Office.

3.10 Handing over the lands in the border of Ampara Batticaloa which belong to Forest Conservation Department to Civil Security Force for Cashew Cultivation – Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam

Hon. Member informed the committee that the lands of Kewiliyamadu Mangalagama area which belongs to the Forest Conservation Zone in Ampara Batticaloa border had been given to the Civil Security Force to cultivate cashews.

The Hon. Chair informed that a report will be provided to the Hon. Member after looking into this matter.

3.11 Motions submitted by Hon. Diana Gamage

3.11.1 Studying the measures taken by the African Countries to prevent wild elephants entering the villages

The Hon. Member proposed to formulate a program to adopt methods to suit Sri Lanka after studying the successful measures taken by African countries to prevent wild elephant poaching.

3.11.2. Allocation of a forest area for the cultivation of food required for wild elephants

Hon. Member stated that the wild elephants' food cultivated in a separate area in the forests with government sponsorship could be used to prevent wild elephant encroachment by directing wild elephants to those areas.

Moreover, Hon. Member suggested a program should be made to build the paddy stores to protect the paddy harvest in the areas where wild elephants roam and to protect those stores.

The Hon. Chair informed that the paddy collecting and protecting activities had already been started by the State Ministry and the necessary steps will be taken to implement the proposal of Hon. Member regarding the wild elephants' food cultivation.

Hon. Member requested that the actions be taken to provide the fruits and vegetables to the elephants which are being disposed by the economic centers and preferred to be eaten by the elephants.

3.12 Granting lands belong to the Wildlife and Forest Conservation Zone of Anuradhapura district for cultivation – Hon. Ishak Rahuman

Hon. Member requested to give a chance for the people to re-cultivate the lands belong to the Wildlife and Forest Conservation Zone of Anuradhapura district.

Hon. State Minister informed the committee that the permission has already been granted for the people who previously cultivated the lands belong to reserve zones to cultivate again.

3.13 Motions submitted by Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara

3.13.1 Deforestation by demarcating the residual forests

Additional Conservator General informed that in the discussion chaired by Hon. Chair and with the participation of the IGP, it was decided to carry out the raids on unauthorized clearings in the lands belong to Forest Conservation Department with the assistance of the Police Department.

Hon. State Minister informed that the necessary actions will be taken to deploy a team of officers to conduct a further inspection regarding this matter.

3.13.2 Dahaiyagala Sanctuary

Hon. Member requested to re-issue a new gazette paper confirming residency of the people who lived in the land at the time of gazetting Dahaiyagala as a sanctuary in the year 2002 by amending the borders belong to the Sanctuary.

Hon. State Minister instructed the Director General of Wildlife and Forest Conservation Department to take necessary steps expeditiously to settle afore said issue by discussing it with the relevant Divisional Secretary.

3.14 Settling the Forest boundaries of Lahugala Potuvil – Hon. S.M.M. Muszhaaraff

Hon. Member requested to take immediate actions to complete the settling up of the forest boundaries of Lahugala Potuvil in Wegamam area.

Director General of Wildlife and Forest Conservation Department informed that the data collection is in process for the confirmation of land ownerships.

3.15 Motions submitted by Hon. Shantha Bandara

3.15.1 Making program to protect the people from elephant threats.

Hon. Member requested whether a program has been made to protect the people of Polpithigama area from the elephant threat which was separated for Polpithigama Elephants corridor according to the decision of returning the region to the initial owners.

Director General of Wildlife and Forest Conservation Department informed the committee that the plans have been made and the lands have been regularized in the way that the elephants could reach the Hakwatuna Reservoir along the Hakwatuna Oya to get water for the wild elephants.

3.15.2 Issues regarding the facilities of the officers of Wildlife and Forest Conservation in Galgamuwa area.

Hon. Member informed the Committee regarding the Scarcity of officers of Wildlife and Forest Conservation and the absence of transportation facilities for the officers to engage in their duties.

The Hon. Chair informed that necessary actions are being taken to provide facilities needed for the officers and that actions will be taken to implement it as a national policy.

Hon. Member inquired about the process of issuing elephant shots and the issuing amount.

Hon. State Minister informed that the elephant shots are issued by the Divisional Secretariat Offices and Wildlife Offices and the issuing amount was increased from 08 lakhs to 12 lakhs.

3.16 Motions submitted by Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala

3.16.1 Providing deeds to the people residing within the wildlife sanctuary of Bakamuna city.

Hon. Member requested to speed up the deeds providing program to the people residing within the wildlife sanctuary of Bakamuna city in Elahera Divisional Secretariat.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Director General of Wildlife and Forest Conservation Department to take necessary actions in this regard.

3.16.2 Releasing the land provided for the manufacturing of organic fertilizer in Atharagalla Kirioya area.

Hon. Member requested to release afore said land, belongs to wildlife zone which was allocated to manufacture organic fertilizer for the operations.

Director General of Wildlife and Forest Conservation Department informed that the instructions were given to the relevant Additional Director regarding the releasing of the land.

The Hon. Chair informed to proceed the upcoming activities according to the decisions made by the Ministerial Consultative Committee today.

3.17 Motions submitted by Hon. Waruna Liyanage

3.17.1 Re-adding the land of Udawalawa reserve given for grass cultivation to the reserve

Hon. Member requested to re-add the land of Handagiriya area in Weligepola Divisional Secretariat to Udawalawa reserve which was released for grass cultivation.

The Hon. Chair instructed to construct the electric fence including the said area in to the reserve.

3.17.2 Issuing Tickets on the route from Pattipola to Ohiya.

Hon. Member informed that it's unfair to issue tickets for the visitors who are not going to visit World's End using this route.

The Hon. Chair instructed Director General of Wildlife and Forest Conservation to provide a report to Hon. Member within a week after considering this matter.

3.17.3 Giving permanent appointments to the temporary (substitute) employees recruited in 2014.

Hon. Member requested to make a process to give permanent appointments to the casual workers recruited in 2014.

The Hon. Chair informed that the necessary actions would be taken regarding this matter.

3.17.4 Providing opportunities to the tourists for mountain climbing and camping in Belihuloya Tourists area belongs to Forest reserve zone.

Hon. Member requested to prepare a program to provide the opportunity to the tourists for mountain climbing and camping in this area.

The Hon. Chair instructed Conservative General to take necessary actions to establish a tourist check point by involving all the relevant sectors regarding this matter.

3.18 Granting the ownership to the residents of the houses built in the Padaviya Sanctuary belongs to Wildlife zone – Hon. H. Nandasena

Hon. Member requested to grant the permanent ownership of the houses to the residents lived for a long time before gazetting this sanctuary.

The Hon. Chair informed to give the information of those houses to the Director General of the Wildlife and Forest Conservation Department.

3.19 Deforestation in Hambantota district – Hon. Mahinada Amaraweera

Hon. Member requested to consider about the illegal deforestation of lands in the forest conservation zone in Hambantota district.

Hon. State Minister instructed Wildlife and forest conservative officers to impose maximum punishments for offenses in taking legal actions for such illegal activities.

The Hon. Chair instructed Director General of Wildlife & Forest Conservation Department to specially consider this matter according to the decision made by the Ministerial Consultative Committee today.

3.20 Motions submitted by Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal

3.20.1 Issues faced by the dwellers in Thabbowa Reserve

Hon. Member informed that the residents in the Thabbowa Karuwalagaswewa area face various issues due to the non-mapping of the borders of Thabbowa Karuwalagaswewa reserve orderly.

Hon. Member further informed that a system of punishment is in operation not only for the offences committed but also for other offences that haven't committed.

Hon. State Minister instructed the Director General to direct the wildlife and forest conservative officers and Divisional Secretariat into those places when marking the borders.

Hon. State Minister instructed the relevant officers to limit the punishments only for the offences on wildlife when punishing the illegal activities occurred within the reserve.

3.20.2 Reserving the Thambapanni Rajamaha Vihara land premises.

Hon. Member requested to accelerate the reserving the land of Thambapanni Rajamaha Viharaya located in the wildlife and forest reserve zone.

The Hon. Chair instructed Director General of Wildlife and Forest Conservation Department to act necessarily regarding this matter.

3.21 Regarding the Galle Kottawa Reserve – Hon. Isuru Dodangoda.

Hon. Member inquired regarding whether the Galle Kottawa Reserve has been published by a gazette.

Conservative General informed that the Kottawa has already been gazetted as a Reserve.

3.22 Constructing a new tank adjacent to Lenagala Grama Niladhari division belongs to Salgala Reserve – Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka

Hon. Member requested to grant the approval to build a tank using the barren land located in the upper area of Salgala Natural Reservoir in Lenagala Grama Niladhari Division belongs to Salgala Reservoir in Kegalle District.

Hon. State Minister informed that the necessary actions will be taken regarding this matter after a consideration.

3.23 Motions submitted by Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan

3.23.1 Completing the construction activities of Kurrei Reservoir built in the area of Mulaitivu Mannar

Hon. Member requested to grant the approval to complete the construction of Kurrei Reservoir which the construction was temporally on hold according to the order of Forest Conservation Department.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Forest Conservator (Environment Management Earth Resources) to take necessary actions after considering the facts of the Environmental Impact Report of this project.

3.23.2 Re-granting the land of 10 acres of Mulathivu Murugandi Grama Seva Division which belongs to forest conservation zone.

Hon. Member requested to consider about the re-granting of a land of 10 acres to the people who lived there, which is located in forest conservation zone.

3.23.3 Re-granting the paddy field lands in Kurundukulan tank area in Mulativu district.

Hon. Member informed the committee that the Department of Forest Conservation has informed not to continue the cultivating the paddy fields of Kurundukulam tank area which belongs to forest conservation zone in Mulativu district.

The Hon. Chair instructed Forest Conservative General to get a report after conducting an on-site inspection.

3.23.4 Including the villages of Palli Munei, Parapankandal, Wangalei in Mannar districts into the wildlife zones.

Hon. Member requested to speed up the program of re-granting the Palli Munei, Parapankandal and Wangalai villages of Mannar District which belong to wildlife zone to the people who live there.

Director General of Wildlife and Forest Conservation Department informed that the relevant officers have already been instructed to take necessary actions in the process of re-granting the villages of Parapankandal and Wangalai to the people.

Director General further informed that the instructions should be sought in Ministerial Level as a land disposal need to be done regarding the Pallimunai village.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Director General to take necessary actions immediately to re-grant the 2 villages excluding Pallimunai.

3.24 Motions submitted by Hon. Selvarajah Kajendran

3.24.1 Opening the Vavuniya, Nedunkeni, Wedukkunari Malei Shiva Kovil Road to public.

Hon. Member stated that the 4.7.2 of the Minute of the meeting held on 03.12.2020 must be amended as “**Vavuniya, Nedunkeni, Wedukkunari Malei**”.

Hon. Member requested to release the above mentioned road allowing the devotees and vehicles to travel.

Director General of Department of Wildlife and Forest Conservation informed that it was informed not to do any other activities as this kovil is situated within the archeological reserve.

The Hon. Chair instructed the Secretary to the Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Conservation to summon the officers of Department of Archeology to the next Ministerial Consultative Committee Meeting on Wildlife.

3.24.2 Releasing a paddy land of 2500 acres in Mulativu district from Forest Conservative zone.

Hon. Member requested that actions be taken to release aforesaid land which included into the borders of the Forest Conservation Department.

3.24.3 Releasing agricultural lands belong to Andiya Puliyankulama 207 division of Vavuniya Settikulama District Secretariat from the Forest Conservative zone.

Hon. Member requested that actions be taken to release afore said agricultural lands which included into the Forest Conservation Zone.

3.24.4 Granting a land of about 05 acres which belongs to Keviliyamadu, Batticaloa district to the Home Guard Officers to cultivate grapes.

Hon. Member requested to pay attention into the fact that this land which has been given to Home Guard Cultivation for grapes cultivation appears to be using it to change the population ratio of the area.

Hon. State Minister instructed the officers of the Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Conservation to present a report to the next meeting after examining the facts presented by the Hon. Member.

The Hon. Chair instructed the officers of the Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Conservation to present a report to the Hon. Member including the answers for these issues.

4. The Committee was adjourned at 04.30 p.m on 21.09.2021 *sine die*.
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