



(Ninth Parliament - Second Session)

No. 19.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Thursday, March 24, 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT :

Hon. Ranjith Siyambalapitiya, Deputy Speaker and the Chair of Committees

Hon. Angajan Ramanathan, Deputy Chairperson of Committees

Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa, Prime Minister and Minister of Economic Policies & Plan Implementation, Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious & Cultural Affairs and Minister of Urban Development & Housing

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera, Minister of Environment

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, Minister of Transport

Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage, Minister of Agriculture

Hon. (Dr.) Bandula Gunawardana, Minister of Trade

Hon. S. M. Chandrasena, Minister of Lands

Hon. Janaka Bandara Thennakoon, Minister of Public Services, Provincial Councils & Local Government

Hon. Nimal Siripala de Silva, Minister of Labour

Hon. (Dr.) Ramesh Pathirana, Minister of Plantation

Hon. Johnston Fernando, Minister of Highways and Chief Government Whip

Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa, Minister of Irrigation, State Minister of Defence and State Minister of Home Affairs

Hon. Namal Rajapaksa, Minister of Youth & Sports, Minister of Development Co-ordination and Monitoring and State Minister of Digital Technology and Enterprise Development

Hon. Basil Rohana Rajapaksa, Minister of Finance

Hon. Gamini Lokuge, Minister of Energy

Hon. (Mrs.) Pavithradevi Wanniarachchi, Minister of Power

Hon. (Dr.) Sarath Weerasekera, Minister of Public Security

Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Seetha Arambepola, State Minister of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation

Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna, State Minister of Co-operative Services, Marketing Development and Consumer Protection

- Hon. Siripala Gamalath**, State Minister of Canals and Common Infrastructure Development in Settlements in Mahaweli Zones
- Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa**, State Minister of Urban Development, Waste Disposal and Community Cleanliness
- Hon. D. V. Chanaka**, State Minister of Aviation and Export Zones Development
- Hon. Sisira Jayakody**, State Minister of Indigenous Medicine Promotion, Rural and Ayurvedic Hospitals Development and Community Health
- Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne**, State Minister of Tanks, Reservoirs and Irrigation Development related to Rural Paddy Fields
- Hon. (Prof.) Channa Jayasumana**, State Minister of Production, Supply and Regulation of Pharmaceuticals
- Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara**, State Minister of Batik, Handloom and Local Apparel Products
- Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana De Silva**, State Minister of Coast Conservation & Low-Lying Lands Development
- Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Sudarshini Fernandopulle**, State Minister of Primary Health Care, Epidemics and COVID Disease Control
- Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya**, State Minister of Regional Co-operation
- Hon. Prasanna Ranaweera**, State Minister of Rattan, Brass, Pottery, Furniture and Rural Industrial Promotion
- Hon. Lohan Ratwatte**, State Minister of Gem & Jewellery related Industries and State Minister of Warehouse Facilities, Container Yards, Port Supply Facilities and Boats and Shipping Industry Development
- Hon. Shasheendra Rajapaksa**, State Minister of Promoting the Production & Regulating the Supply of Organic Fertilizer, and Paddy and Grains, Organic Foods, Vegetables, Fruits, Chilies, Onion and Potato Cultivation Promoting, Seed Production and Advanced Technology Agriculture
- Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura**, State Minister of Development of Minor Crops including Sugarcane, Maize, Cashew, Pepper, Cinnamon, Cloves, Betel Related Industries and Export Promotion
- Hon. Kanchana Wijsekera**, State Minister of Ornamental Fish, Inland Fish & Prawn Farming, Fishery Harbour Development, Multi day Fishing Activities and Fish Exports
- Hon. Shehan Semasinghe**, State Minister of Samurdhi, Household Economy, Micro Finance, Self Employment and Business Development
- Hon. Indika Anuruddha Herath**, State Minister of Rural Housing and Construction & Building Material Industries
- Hon. Kanaka Herath**, State Minister of Company Estate Reforms, Tea and Rubber Estates Related Crops Cultivation and Factories Modernization and Tea and Rubber Export Promotion
- Hon. D. B. Herath**, State Minister of Livestock, Farm Promotion and Dairy & Egg Related Industries
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Hon. Selvam Adaikkalanathan
Hon. A. L. M. Athaullah
Hon. Amarakeerthi Athukorala
Hon. Kapila Athukorala
Hon. (Mrs.) Thalatha Athukorala
Hon. Tissa Attanayake
Hon. Hector Appuhamy
Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe
Hon. Thushara Indunil Amarasena
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. M. Udayakumar
Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura
Hon. (Major) Pradeep Undugoda
Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna
Hon. Akila Ellawala
Hon. Lalith Ellawala
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Gayantha Karunatileka
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda
Hon. Lakshman Kiriella
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. Lalith Varna Kumara
Hon. (Mrs.) Geetha Samanmale Kumarasinghe
Hon. K. P. S. Kumarasiri
Hon. A. Aravindh Kumar
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena
Hon. Sivanesathurai Santhirakanthan

Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. Nalin Bandara Jayamaha
Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake
Hon. Mayantha Dissanayake
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte
Hon. H. Nandasena
Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. Asanka Navarathna
Hon. Manusha Nanayakkara
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. S. Noharathalingam
Hon. Buddhika Pathirana
Hon. Anupa Pasqual
Hon. Nimal Piyathissa
Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. Dilan Perera
Hon. Niroshan Perera
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. Nalin Fernando
Hon. Ashoka Priyantha
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. (Dr.) Susil Premajayantha
Hon. Sajith Premadasa, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament
Hon. Uddika Premarathne
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara
Hon. Rohana Bandara
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. S. M. Marikkar
Hon. K. Kader Masthan

Hon. Imran Maharroof
Hon. Imthiaz Bakeer Markar
Hon. Ajith Mannapperuma
Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff
Hon. Mohomad Muzammil
Hon. Anura Priyadharshana Yapa
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara
Hon. Nipuna Ranawaka
Hon. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. (Ven.) Athuraliye Rathana Thero
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Hon. Ali Sabri Raheem
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. Mujibur Rahuman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna
Hon. Ajith Rajapakse
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) Thilak Rajapakshe
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) V. Radhakrishnan
Hon. M. Rameshwaran
Hon. Eran Wickramaratne
Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe
Hon. C.V. Wigneswaran
Hon. (Mrs.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna
Hon. Chaminda Wijesiri
Hon. M. W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana
Hon. Madhura Withanage
Hon. Hesha Withanage
Hon. (Prof.) Tissa Vitarana
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Dilip Wedaarachchi
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Dharmalingam Sithadthan
Hon. Maithreepala Sirisena
Hon. M. A. Sumanthiran

Hon. Jagath Kumara Sumithraarachchi

Hon. Vadivel Suresh

Hon. (Dr.) Rajitha Senarathne

Hon. Rauff Hakeem

Hon. Kabir Hashim

Hon. H. M. M. Harees

Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath

Hon. Vijitha Herath

Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Hon. Marjan Faleel

Mrs. Kushani Rohanadeera, Acting Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Tikiri K. Jayathilake, Assistant Secretary-General

Parliament met pursuant to adjournment. The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.

1. Presentation of Papers : (1) The Minister of Highways presented the Proclamation made and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2272/09 of 21st March 2022 and Schedule thereto, by virtue of the powers vested with the President in terms of Section 2 of the Essential Public Services Act, No. 61 of 1979.

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

(2) The Minister of Highways presented present the—

- (i) Notification made by the Minister of Finance under Section 32 read with Sections 8 and 30 of the Excise Ordinance (Chapter 52) amended, regarding Security Features and Security Features Management System, and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2249/50 of 16th October 2021

(Excise Notification No. 10/2021);

- (ii) Notification made by the Minister of Finance under Section 25 read with Section 32 of the Excise Ordinance (Chapter 52) amended from time to time, and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2260/78 of 01st January 2022

(Excise Notification No. 01/2022);

- (iii) Notification made by the Minister of Finance under Section 25 read with Section 32 of the Excise Ordinance (Chapter 52) amended from time to time, regarding Annual Liquor License Fees, and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2260/79 of 01st January 2022

(Excise Notification No. 02/2022);

- (iv) Order made by the Minister of Finance under Section 3(3) of the Ports and Airports Development Levy Act, No. 18 of 2011 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2261/58 of 06th January 2022; and
- (v) Order made by the Minister of Finance under Section 3(3) of the Ports and Airports Development Levy Act, No. 18 of 2011 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2262/19 of 11th January 2022

and moved that those Notifications and Orders be referred to the Committee on Public Finance.

Question put, and agreed to.

(3) The Minister of Highways presented the Annual Report of the Superior Courts Complex Board of Management for the year 2020 and moved that the Report be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice.

Question put, and agreed to.

2. Presentation of Reports from Committees : Hon. Anura Priyadarshana Yapa, Chair of the Committee on Public Finance presented the Report of the said Committee on—

- (i) Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill; and
- (ii) Resolution under the Inland Revenue Act, No. 24 of 2017

which were referred to the Committee.

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

3. Presentation of Public Petitions :

- (1) Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage presented —
 - (i) a petition dated 21.01.2022 from Ms. A. M. Dilrukshi of Dostarawatta, 9 Ela, Minneriya;
 - (ii) a petition dated 21.01.2022 from Mr. B. A. M. Bandu Pradeep Athauda of C/O Ms. A. M. Dilrukshi, Dostarawatta, 9 Ela, Minneriya; and
 - (iii) a petition dated 14.12.2021 from Mr. D. M. Upul Bandara Disanayeka of No. 8/A, Gangoda, Bulukandegoda, Pilimathalawa.
- (2) Hon. Dharmalingam Sithadthan presented a petition dated 26.10.2021 from Mr. S. Nagarasa of No. 12, 2/2 Collingswood Place, Colombo 06.

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

4. Animal Welfare : The Minister of Agriculture presented,—“Bill to provide for Animal Welfare and to prevent cruelty to Animals; to repeal the prevention of cruelty to Animals ordinance (chapter 475); and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.”

The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday, April 05, 2022, be printed and be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Agriculture.

5. Select Committee of Parliament to identify appropriate reforms of the election laws and the electoral system and to recommend necessary amendments :

The Minister of Highways on behalf of the Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That the time period granted to the Select Committee of Parliament to identify appropriate reforms of the election laws and the electoral system and to recommend necessary amendments as specified in the Resolution passed by Parliament on 05th April 2021 be extended up to 31st May 2022 in terms of Standing Order 102 of the Parliament as the Committee needs further time to report its observations to Parliament.

Question put, and agreed to.

6. Leave to introduce Bill : Hon. Rohana Bandara seconded by Hon. Buddhika Pathirana moved,— That leave be granted to introduce the following Bill:—

“Bill to incorporate the Dr. S. S. Gunawardana Indigenous Ayurveda Development Foundation.”

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read the first time and ordered to be printed.

The Bill stood referred under Standing Order 52(6) of the Parliament to the Minister of Health for report.

7. Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill : Order for Second Reading read.

The Minister of Highways on behalf of the Minister of Finance moved,— That the Bill be now read a second time.

(At 11.28 a.m. the Deputy Chairperson of Committees took the Chair.)

Hon. Nalin Fernando seconded by Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe moved,—That Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 1.30 p.m. Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene took the Chair.)

The Minister of Energy moved,—That Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 2.30 p.m. Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara took the Chair.)

The Minister of Public Security moved,—That Hon. Ajith Rajapakse do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.33 p.m. Hon. Ajith Rajapakse took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

The Minister of Highways moved,— That the Bill be referred to a Committee of the whole Parliament.

Question put, and agreed to.

Parliament immediately resolved itself into Committee.

(In the Committee)

The Presiding Member took the Chair.

Clauses 1 and 2 were agreed to.

Clause 3

The Minister of Highways on behalf of the Minister of Finance proposed an amendment to leave out lines 19 to 21 (both inclusive) in page 1 and substitute the following:—

“hereby amended in paragraph (a) of PART II thereof as follows:-

(1) by the substitution in item (xxxi) of that”;

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

The Minister of Highways on behalf of the Minister of Finance proposed another amendment to leave out line 1 in page 2 and substitute the following:—

“(2) by the addition immediately after item (xxxi)”;

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

The Minister of Highways on behalf of the Minister of Finance proposed another amendment to leave out lines 17 to 35 (both inclusive) in page 2.

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

The Minister of Highways on behalf of the Minister of Finance proposed another amendment to leave out lines 1 to 37 (both inclusive) in page 3.

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

The Minister of Highways on behalf of the Minister of Finance proposed another amendment to leave out lines 1 to 29 (both inclusive) in page 4.

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

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

Clause 4 was agreed to.

New Clauses

The Minister of Highways on behalf of the Minister of Finance proposed to insert the following new Clauses immediately after line 29 in page 4:—

“Validation 4. Any person who is authorized to collect the Value Added Tax as provided for in this Act during the period commencing on or after January 1, 2022, ending on the date on which the Certificate of the Speaker is endorsed in respect of this Act, shall be deemed to have acted with due authority and such collection shall be deemed to have been, and to be, validly made and such person is hereby indemnified against all actions, civil or criminal, in respect of such collection:

Provided that, the aforesaid provisions shall not affect any decision or order made by any Court or any proceedings pending in any Court in respect of any tax collected as provided for in this Act during the said period.

Not to be 5. For the avoidance of doubt it is stated that, where deemed as a a specified Institution or other person has not paid the tax defaulter in accordance with the provisions of subsection (2) of Section 2 of this Act, for any period commencing on January 1, 2022 and ending on the date of the commencement of this Act, pays the amount of tax payable by such institution or person, on or before the twentieth day of the succeeding month of the date of the commencement of this Act, such specified Institution or person shall not be deemed to be a defaulter in terms of the provisions of the principal enactment.”.

Question that the Clauses be read a second time, put and agreed to.

Question that the Clauses be added to the Bill, put and agreed to.

Enacting Clause and Title

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

Bill reported with Amendments.

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

Question put, and agreed to.

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

8. Resolution under the Inland Revenue Act : The Minister of Highways on behalf of the Minister of Finance moved,— That this Parliament resolves, under Section 75(1) of the Inland Revenue Act, No. 24 of 2017 that the Agreement between the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Government of the Republic of Turkey for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Tax Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income entered into on 28th January, 2022, which was presented on 24.02.2022 be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

9. Adjournment (Granting the Right to Contest Elections to Field Officers) : The Minister of Highways moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourn.

Question proposed, and debated.

And it being past 5.30 p.m. Parliament was at 5.33 p.m. adjourned by the Presiding Member without Question put, pursuant to the Resolution of Parliament this day.

Parliament adjourned accordingly until 10.00 a.m. on Friday, March 25, 2022.