



(Ninth Parliament - Third Session)

No. 55.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT :

Hon. Mahinda Yapa Abeywardana, Speaker

Hon. Ajith Rajapakse, Deputy Speaker and the Chair of Committees

Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Hon. Dinesh Gunawardena, Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera, Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation

Hon. Naseer Ahamed, Minister of Environment

Hon. (Dr.) Bandula Gunawardana, Minister of Transport and Highways and Minister of Mass Media

Hon. Nimal Siripala de Silva, Attorney at Law, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Aviation

Hon. Douglas Devananda, Minister of Fisheries

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

Hon. Nalin Fernando, Minister of Trade, Commerce and Food Security

Hon. (Dr.) Susil Premajayantha, Attorney at Law, Minister of Education and Leader of the House of Parliament

Hon. Prasanna Ranatunga, Minister of Urban Development and Housing and Chief Government Whip

Hon. Keheliya Rambukwella, Minister of Health and Minister of Water Supply

Hon. (Dr.) Wijeyadasa Rajapakshe, PC, Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms

Hon. Vidura Wikramanayaka, Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs

Hon. Kanchana Wijsekera, Minister of Power and Energy

Hon. Sajith Premadasa, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament

Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Seetha Arambepola, State Minister of Health
Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna, State Minister of Transport
Hon. Sisira Jayakody, Attorney at Law, State Minister of Indigenous Medicine
Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne, State Minister of Justice and Prison Affairs
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake, State Minister of Primary Industries
Hon. Piyal Nishantha De Silva, State Minister of Fisheries
Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana De Silva, Attorney at Law, State Minister of Agriculture
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka, State Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs
Hon. Sanath Nishantha, State Minister of Water Supply
Hon. Anupa Pasqual, State Minister of Social Empowerment
Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara, State Minister of Foreign Employment Promotion
Hon. Arundika Fernando, State Minister of Urban Development and Housing
Hon. Ashoka Priyantha, State Minister of Home Affairs
Hon. Shantha Bandara, State Minister of Mass Media
Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister of Foreign Affairs
Hon. Lohan Ratwatte, State Minister of Plantation Industries
Hon. (Dr.) Suren Raghavan, State Minister of Higher Education
Hon. Shasheendra Rajapaksa, State Minister of Irrigation
Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura, State Minister of Provincial Councils and Local Government
Hon. Ranjith Siyambalapitiya, State Minister of Finance
Hon. Shehan Semasinghe, State Minister of Finance
Hon. Kanaka Herath, State Minister of Technology
Hon. D. B. Herath, State Minister of Livestock Development

Hon. A. L. M. Athaullah
Hon. Sampath Athukorala
Hon. Tissa Attanayake
Hon. Rohitha Abegunawardhana
Hon. Wajira Abeywardana
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala
Hon. Dullas Alahapperuma
Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura
Hon. M. Udayakumar
Hon. (Dr.) Major Pradeep Undugoda

Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna
Hon. Govindan Karunakaram
Hon. Gayantha Karunatilleka
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam, Attorney at Law
Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda
Hon. Lakshman Kiriella, Attorney at Law
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. Lalith Varna Kumara
Hon. Gevindu Cumaratunga
Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda
Hon. Udaya Gammanpila
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena
Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa
Hon. S. M. Chandrasena
Hon. Nalin Bandara Jayamaha
Hon. Piyanakara Jayaratne
Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana
Hon. (Prof.) Channa Jayasumana
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva
Hon. Anura Dissanayaka
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake
Hon. Mayantha Dissanayake
Hon. Sarathi Dushmantha
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law
Hon. W. H. M. Dharmasena
Hon. H. Nandasena
Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. Vasudeva Nanayakkara
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Kins Nelson
Hon. Nimal Piyathissa
Hon. (Prof.) G. L. Peiris
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Sudarshini Fernandopulle

Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. Uddika Premarathne
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara
Hon. Imthiaz Bakeer Markar
Hon. Mohomad Muzammil
Hon. Anura Priyadharshana Yapa, Attorney at Law
Hon. Patali Champika Ranawaka
Hon. Nipuna Ranawaka
Hon. (Ven.) Athuraliye Rathana Thero
Hon. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. Mujibur Rahuman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa
Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) V. Radhakrishnan
Hon. Nimal Lanza
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. Eran Wickramaratne
Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe
Hon. (Mrs.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna
Hon. Chaminda Wijesiri
Hon. M. W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana
Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney at Law
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody, Attorney at Law
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, PC
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. (Dr.) Sarath Weerasekera
Hon. Kumara Welgama
Hon. Maithreepala Sirisena
Hon. M. A. Sumanthiran
Hon. Jagath Kumara Sumithraarachchi

Hon. Vadivel Suresh

Hon. John Seneviratne

Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at Law

Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath

Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

Mrs. Kushani Rohanadeera, Chief of Staff and Deputy Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Tikiri K. Jayathilake, Assistant Secretary-General

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

1. Announcements by the Speaker : The Speaker made the following announcements:—

I

“I wish to inform Parliament that I have received the Determination of the Supreme Court in respect of the Bill entitled ‘Regulation of Election Expenditure’ which was challenged in the Supreme Court in terms of Article 121(1) of the Constitution.

The Supreme Court has examined the other provisions of the Bill and is of the opinion that subject to the amendments stated in the Determination, none of the provisions in the Bill are inconsistent with the Constitution and the Bill can be passed by a simple majority in Parliament.

I order that the Determination of the Supreme Court be printed in the Official Report of today’s proceedings of the House.”

II

“I wish to inform Parliament that I have received copies of four petitions filed at the Supreme Court under Article 121(1) of the Constitution in respect of the Bill entitled ‘Licensing of Shipping Agents, Freight Forwarders, Non-Vessel Operating Common Carriers and Container Operators (Amendment)’.”

III

“I wish to inform that the Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at Law, Member of Parliament, has been nominated to serve in the Committee on Public Finance by the Committee of Selection on 13th January 2023, in terms of provisions of the Standing Order 130(3) of the Parliament to fill the vacancy occurred due to the resignation of the Hon. Mujibur Rahuman, Member of Parliament, from the Membership of the said Committee.”

2. Presentation of Papers : (1) The Speaker presented the—

- (i) Fourth Installment – Part XXVII of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2019;
- (ii) Fourth Installment – Parts XXII, XXIII and XXIV of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2020; and
- (iii) First Installment – Parts XXIV, XXV, XXVI and XXVII, Fourth Installment – Parts XVII, XVIII, XIX and XX, Fifth Installment – Parts I, II, III and IV and Sixth Installment – Parts XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV and XXV of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2021

in terms of Article 154(6) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Ordered that the said Reports do lie upon the Table and to be printed.

(2) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the—

- (i) Regulations made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 20 of the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969 amended by Acts, No. 48 of 1985 and No. 28 of 1987 read with Sections 4(1), 6 and 14 of the aforesaid Act and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2309/40 of 09th December 2022;
- (ii) Regulations made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 20 of the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969 amended by Acts, No. 48 of 1985 and No. 28 of 1987 read with Sections 4(1) and 14 of the aforesaid Act and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2311/08 of 19th December 2022; and
- (iii) Regulations made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 20 of the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969 amended by Acts, No. 48 of 1985 and No. 28 of 1987 read with Sections 4(1) and 14 of the aforesaid Act and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2311/18 of 21st December 2022

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

Question put, and agreed to.

(3) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the National Council for Elders for the year 2020 and moved that the Report be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment.

Question put, and agreed to.

(4) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the—

- (i) Annual Performance Report of the Department of Social Services for the year 2021;

- (ii) Annual Performance Reports of the Department of Meteorology for the years 2020 and 2021; and
- (iii) Order made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 19A of the Customs Ordinance (Chapter 235), as amended by the Customs (Amendment) Law No. 35 of 1974 and the Customs (Amendment) Act, No. 83 of 1988, relating to Customs Import Duty and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2309/20 of 08th December 2022.

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

(5) The Minister of Education presented the—

- (i) Annual Report of the National Centre for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (NCAS) for the year 2020;
- (ii) Annual Report & Accounts of the Wayamba of University of Sri Lanka for the year 2020;
- (iii) Annual Report & Accounts of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka for the year 2020;
- (iv) Annual Report of the Eastern University of Sri Lanka for the year 2020; and
- (v) Annual Report and Accounts of the University of Jaffna for the year 2020

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education.

Question put, and agreed to.

(6) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the Urban Settlement Development Authority for the year 2021 and moved that the Report be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Urban Development and Housing.

Question put, and agreed to.

(7) The Minister of Fisheries presented the Annual Report of the CeyNor Foundation Limited for the year 2018 and moved that the Report be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Fisheries.

Question put, and agreed to.

(8) The Minister of Health and Minister of Water Supply presented the—

- (i) Annual Reports of the Sri Lanka Thripasha Ltd for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020; and
- (ii) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Ayurvedic Drugs Corporation for the year 2020.

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Health.

Question put, and agreed to.

(9) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the—

- (i) Annual Report & Statement of Accounts of the Rehabilitation Authority for the year 2018;
- (ii) Annual Reports & Statements of Accounts of the Office for Reparations for the years 2019 and 2020; and
- (iii) Annual Reports of the Office on Missing Persons for the years 2020 and 2021

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms.

Question put, and agreed to.

(10) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the—

- (i) Annual Performance Report of the Ministry of Labour for the year 2021; and
- (ii) Annual Performance Report of the Department of Manpower and Employment for the year 2021

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

(11) The Minister of Trade, Commerce and Food Security presented the—

- (i) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Accreditation Board for Conformity Assessment for the year 2019; and
- (ii) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka State Trading (General) Corporation Ltd for the year 2020/2021

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Trade, Commerce and Food Security.

Question put, and agreed to.

(12) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the National Sports Fund for the year 2020 and moved that the Report be referred to the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Sports and Youth Affairs.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of Reports from Committees : (1) Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva, Chair of the Committee on Public Finance presented the Report of the said Committee on—

- (i) Regulations under the Welfare Benefit Act, No. 24 of 2002;
- (ii) Regulations under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969; and
- (iii) Regulations under the Foreign Exchange Act, No. 12 of 2017

which were referred to the Committee.

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

(2) Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara, Chair of the Committee on Public Enterprises presented the First Report of the Committee on Public Enterprises for the Third Session of the Ninth Parliament.

Ordered that the said Report do lie upon the **Table** and be printed.

4. Presentation of Public Petitions :

Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva presented a petition dated 04.11.2022 from Mrs. W.A.I. Wimarshani Mihirani de Silva of No. 181, Nobandi Mawatha, Robert Gunawardane Mawatha, Thalangama South, Battaramulla.

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

5. Regulations under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act (No.1) : The Minister of Education on behalf of the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government moved,—That the Regulations made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 20 of the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969 amended by Acts, No. 48 of 1985 and No. 28 of 1987 read with Sections 4(1) and 14 of the aforesaid Act and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2307/12 of 23rd November 2022, which were presented on 05.01.2023, be approved.

(At 11.52 a.m. the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

The Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation moved,—That Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney at Law do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 1.13 p.m. Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney at Law took the Chair.)

Hon. Kins Nelson seconded by Hon. Sarathi Dushmantha moved,—That Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 2.28 p.m. Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law took the Chair.)

The Minister of Urban Development and Housing moved,—That Hon. Samanpriya Herath do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 4.00 p.m. Hon. Samanpriya Herath took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

6. Regulations under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act (No.2) : The Minister of Education on behalf of the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government moved,— That the Regulations made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 20 of the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969 amended by Acts, No. 48 of 1985 and No. 28 of 1987 read with Sections 4(1) and 14 of the aforesaid Act and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2308/26 of 01st December 2022, which were presented on 05.01.2023, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

7. Regulations under the Foreign Exchange Act : The Minister of Education on behalf of the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government moved,— That the Regulations made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 29 read with Section 7 of the Foreign Exchange Act, No. 12 of 2017 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2308/51 of 02nd December 2022, which were presented on 05.01.2023, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

8. Local Authorities Elections (Amendment) Bill (No. 126) : Order for Second Reading read.

The Minister of Education on behalf of the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms moved,— That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time and referred by the Presiding Member to the Legislative Standing Committee under Standing Order 53(3) of the Parliament.

9. Local Authorities Elections (Amendment) Bill (No. 160) : Order for Second Reading read.

The Minister of Education on behalf of the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms moved,— That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time and referred by the Presiding Member to the Legislative Standing Committee under Standing Order 53(3) of the Parliament.

10. Adjournment : The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourn.

Question put, and agreed to; Parliament was at 4.40 p.m. adjourned by the Presiding Member until 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 18, 2023.