



(Ninth Parliament - Fourth Session)

No. 27.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Thursday, May 25, 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT :

Hon. Mahinda Yapa Abeywardana, Speaker

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

Hon. Angajan Ramanathan, Deputy Chairperson of Committees

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

Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera, Minister of Agriculture

Hon. Tiran Alles, Minister of Public Security

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. Manusha Nanayakkara, Minister of Labour and Foreign Employment

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

Hon. Kanchana Wijesekera, 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. A. Aravindh Kumar, State Minister of Education

Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage, State Minister of Tourism

Hon. Siripala Gamalath, State Minister of Highways

Hon. Sivanesathurai Santhirakanthan, State Minister of Rural Road Development

Hon. Sisira Jayakody, Attorney at Law, State Minister of Indigenous Medicine

Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne, State Minister of Justice and Prison Affairs
Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon, State Minister of Defence
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake, State Minister of Primary Industries
Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana De Silva, Attorney at Law, State Minister of Agriculture
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. Ashoka Priyantha, State Minister of Home Affairs
Hon. Shantha Bandara, State Minister of Mass Media
Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister of Foreign Affairs
Hon. Vijitha Berugoda, State Minister of Piriven Education
Hon. K. Kader Masthan, State Minister of Rural Economy
Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura, State Minister of Provincial Councils and Local Government
Hon. Thenuka Vidanagamage, State Minister of Urban Development and Housing
Hon. S. Viyalanderan, State Minister of Trade
Hon. Ranjith Siyambalapitiya, State Minister of Finance
Hon. Shehan Semasinghe, State Minister of Finance
Hon. Indika Anuruddha Herath, State Minister of Power and Energy
Hon. D. B. Herath, State Minister of Livestock Development

Hon. Selvam Adaikkalanathan
Hon. A. L. M. Athaullah
Hon. Kapila Athukorala
Hon. (Mrs.) Thalatha Athukorala, Attorney at Law
Hon. Sampath Athukorala
Hon. Tissa Attanayake
Hon. Hector Appuhamy
Hon. Wajira Abeywardana
Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe
Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya
Hon. Thushara Indunil Amarasena
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala
Hon. Dullas Alahapperuma
Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura

Hon. (Dr.) Major Pradeep Undugoda
Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna
Hon. Akila Ellawala
Hon. Lalith Ellawala
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. Gevindu Cumaratunga
Hon. K. P. S. Kumarasiri
Hon. Velu Kumar
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Mano Ganesan
Hon. Udaya Gammanpila
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena
Hon. S. M. Chandrasena
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana
Hon. (Prof.) Channa Jayasumana
Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban
Hon. Janaka Bandara Thennakoon
Hon. Shan Vijayalal De Silva
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva
Hon. Duminda Dissanayake
Hon. S. B. Dissanayake
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake
Hon. Mayantha Dissanayake
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. Asanka Navarathna

Hon. Vasudeva Nanayakkara
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. (Prof.) G. L. Peiris
Hon. Niroshan Perera
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. G. G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Uddika Premarathne
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. Imran Maharroof
Hon. Imthiaz Bakeer Markar
Hon. Ajith Mannapperuma
Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law
Hon. Mohomad Muzammil
Hon. Anura Priyadharshana Yapa, Attorney at Law
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara, Attorney at Law
Hon. Nipuna Ranawaka
Hon. (Ven.) Athuraliye Rathana Thero
Hon. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Hon. Ali Sabri Raheem
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa
Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) V. Radhakrishnan
Hon. M. Rameshwaran
Hon. Gamini Lokuge
Hon. Gamini Waleboda
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. Hesha Withanage
Hon. (Prof.) Tissa Vitarana
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody, Attorney at Law
Hon. Wimal Weerawansa
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, PC
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. Kumara Welgama
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama
Hon. Jayantha Samaraweera
Hon. M. A. Sumanthiran
Hon. Jagath Kumara Sumithraarachchi
Hon. W. D. J. Seneviratne, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Dr.) Rajitha Senarathne
Hon. H. M. M. Harees
Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath
Hon. Vijitha Herath
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. Marjan Faleel
Hon. A. H. M. Fowzie
Hon. Field Marshal Sarath Fonseka

Mrs. Kushani Rohanadeera, Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Tikiri K. Jayathilake, Chief of Staff and Deputy Secretary - General of Parliament

Mr. Hansa Abeyrathne, Assistant Secretary-General

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

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

I

“I wish to inform that the Hon. Nimal Piyathissa, Member of Parliament, has been nominated to serve in the Committee on Public Petitions by the Committee of Selection on 24th May 2023, in terms of the provisions of the Standing Order 130(3) of the Parliament, to fill the vacancy occurred due to the resignation of the Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe, Member of Parliament from the Membership of the said Committee.”

II

“A motion may be moved to refer the question of privilege raised by the Hon. (Dr.) Wijeyadasa Rajapakse, PC in Parliament on 21st October 2022 to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges.”

2. Presentation of Papers : (1) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Report on the submission of observations and steps taken in terms of the Standing Order 119(4) of the Parliament with regard to the matters mentioned on Department of Railways, Sri Lanka Transport Board, Department of Motor Traffic and Ministry of Transport in the reports of the Committee on Public Accounts which were presented to Parliament and moved that the Report be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

(2) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Council for Agricultural Research Policy for the year 2021 and moved that the Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Food Security & Agriculture.

Question put, and agreed to.

(3) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Reports on the submission of observations and steps taken in terms of the Standing Order 119(4) of the Parliament with regard to the matters mentioned on Ministry of Tourism and Department of National Botanic Gardens in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament and moved that the Report be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

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

- (i) Annual Reports of the Palmyrah Development Board for the years 2018 and 2019;
- (ii) Annual Report of the Industrial Development Board of Ceylon for the year 2020; and
- (iii) Annual Report and Accounts of the Sri Lanka Cement Corporation for the year 2021.

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Economic and Physical Plans.

Question put, and agreed to.

(5) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Report on the submission of observations and steps taken in terms of the Standing Order 119(4) of the Parliament with regard to the matters mentioned on Ministry of Industries in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament and moved that the Report be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

(6) The Minister of Power and Energy presented the Report on the submission of observations and steps taken in terms of the Standing Order 119(4) of the Parliament with regard to the matters mentioned on Ministry of Power and Energy in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament and moved that the Report be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

(7) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Accreditation Board for Conformity Assessment for the year 2021 and moved that the Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Economic and Physical Plans.

Question put, and agreed to.

(8) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Report on the submission of observations and steps taken in terms of the Standing Order 119(4) of the Parliament with regard to the matters mentioned on Ministry of Water Supply in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament and moved that the Report be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation from Reports from Committees: (1) Hon. Sisira Jayakody, Attorney-at-Law, Member of the Committee on behalf of the Hon. Keheliya Rambukwella, the Chair of the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Health presented the Report of the said Committee on —

- (i) Annual Report of the Ayurveda Medical Council for the year 2021;
- (ii) Annual Report of the Homoeopathic Medical Council for the year 2018;
- (iii) Annual Reports of the State Pharmaceuticals Corporation of Sri Lanka for the years 2019 and 2020;
- (iv) Annual Reports of the Sri Lanka Thripasha Ltd for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020;
- (v) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Ayurvedic Drugs Corporation for the year 2020;
- (vi) Annual Reports of the Homoeopathic Medical Council for the years 2019 and 2020;
- (vii) Annual Report of the National Authority on Tobacco and Alcohol for the year 2020;
- (viii) Annual Report of the State Pharmaceuticals Manufacturing Corporation of Sri Lanka for the year 2021;
- (ix) Annual Report of the Wijaya Kumaranatunga Memorial Hospital for the year 2020;
- (x) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Ayurvedic Drugs Corporation for the year 2021;
- (xi) Annual Report of the National Medicines Regulatory Authority for the year 2017;

- (xii) Annual Report of the Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital & Postgraduate Medical Training Center for the year 2020;
- (xiii) Annual Reports of the National Medicines Regulatory Authority for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020; and
- (xiv) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Thripasha Ltd for the year 2017

which were referred to the Committee.

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

(2) Hon. Kapila Athukorala, Member of the Committee on behalf of the Hon. Harin Fernando, the Chair of the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Tourism and Lands presented the Report of the said Committee on the Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau for the year 2021 which was referred to the Committee

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

(3) The Hon. Duminda Dissanayake, Member of the Committee on Public Finance presented the Report of the said Committee on —

- (i) Regulations under the Finance Act, No. 11 of 2004;
- (ii) Orders under the Finance Act, No. 35 of 2018; and
- (iii) Resolution under the Inland Revenue Act, No. 24 of 2017

which were referred to the said Committee.

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

4. Presentation of Public Petitions:

- (1) Hon. Kumara Welgama presented —
 - (i) a petition dated 12.12.2022 from Mr. Asuramuni Titas Silva of Pangirimanna watta, Doova temple road, Kalutara South; and
 - (ii) a petition dated 06.02.2023 from Mr. P. D. Lalith Kumara of Wedagewatta, Pahala Naragala, Govinna.
- (2) Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda presented a petition dated 06.04.2023 from Mr. Y. M. Chandrasekara Banda of No. 122/2B, Poojagoda, Handessa.
- (3) Hon. M. W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana presented a petition dated 21.03.2023 from Mr. U. G. S. S. Bandara of D 17, Aura Blish Home, Pansala Watta, Gerepathgama, Aranayake.

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

The Speaker with the leave of the House instructed the Serjeant-at-Arms to escort Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, former Secretary-General of Parliament, into the Chamber.

Whereupon Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake entered the Chamber and took his seat.

5. Vote of Appreciation - Secretary-General of Parliament : The Leader of the House of Parliament, the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament moved,—That Mr. Speaker be requested to convey to Mr. Waruna Bandara Dhammika Dasanayake on his retirement from the Office of the Secretary-General of Parliament, an expression of the deep sense of appreciation of this Parliament of the valuable services rendered by him as Assistant Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General of Parliament and Secretary-General of Parliament over a period of 29 years, particularly in regard to his wide knowledge of Parliamentary Procedures and Practices; their sincere thanks for the assistance and advice given by him and their recognition of the unswerving dedication with which he has discharged his responsibilities and the noteworthy contribution he has made as the Regional Secretary to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Asia Region from 2010 to 2012 and from 2022 to 2023 and also to various Associations of Parliamentarians both within, as well as, outside the Commonwealth.

(At 11.15 a.m. Hon. Deputy Speaker took the Chair)

Question put, and unanimously agreed to, *nemine contradicente*.

Suspension of Sitzings

At 1.09 p.m.

The Sitting was then suspended until 1.30 p.m.

At 1.30 p.m.

The Sitting was resumed. The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.

6. Order under the Finance Act : The Minister of Education on behalf of the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government,—That the Order made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 2(1) of the Finance Act, No. 25 of 2003 regarding Embarkation Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2314/16 of 11th January 2023, which was presented on 09.05.2023, be approved.

The State Minister of Highways moved,—That Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 1.32 p.m. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law took the Chair.)

The Minister of Ports, Shipping and Aviation moved,— That Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.46 p.m. Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya took the Chair.)

The Minister of Ports, Shipping and Aviation moved,—That Hon. Samanpriya Herath do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 4.20 p.m. Hon. Samanpriya Herath took the Chair.)

Question put, and agreed to.

7. Regulations under the Finance 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 22 read with Section 26 of the Finance Act, No. 11 of 2004 regarding International Telecommunications Operators Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2312/80 of 01st January 2023, which were presented on 09.05.2023, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

8. Order under the Finance 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 Order made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 51 read with Section 19 of the Finance Act, No. 35 of 2018 relating to Luxury Tax on Motor Vehicles and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2312/69 of 31st December 2022, which was presented on 09.05.2023, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

9. Orders under the Finance 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 Orders made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 51 read with Section 19 of the Finance Act, No. 35 of 2018 relating to Luxury Tax on Motor Vehicles and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2318/53 of 10th February 2023, which were presented on 09.05.2023, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

10. Resolution under the Inland Revenue 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 this Parliament resolves under Section 75(1) of the Inland Revenue Act, No. 24 of 2017 that the Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Tax Evasion with respect to taxes on income entered into on 03rd February, 2023 between the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Government of the Republic of Czech which was presented on 11.05.2023, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

11. Adjournment (Attempt at Declaring Mahaweli “J” Zone) : The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourned.

Question proposed, and debated

And it being 5.30 p.m. Parliament was adjourned by the Presiding Member without question, put.

Parliament adjourned accordingly until 9.30 a.m. on Friday, May 26, 2023.