



(Ninth Parliament - Fourth Session)

No. 54.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, September 06, 2023 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT :

Hon. Mahinda Yapa Abeywardana, Speaker

Hon. Ajith Rajapakse, Deputy Speaker and the Chair 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. (Dr.) Bandula Gunawardana, Minister of Transport and Highways and Minister
of Mass Media

Hon. Jeevan Thondaman, Minister of Water Supply and Estate Infrastructure
Development

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

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

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

Hon. (Mrs.) Pavithradevi Wanniarachchi, Attorney at Law, Minister of Wildlife
and Forest Resources Conservation

Hon. Kanchana Wijsekera, Minister of Power and Energy

Hon. M .U. M. Ali Sabry, PC, Minister of Foreign Affairs

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. (Mrs.) Geetha Samanmale Kumarasinghe, State Minister of Women and Child Affairs
Hon. A. Aravindh Kumar, State Minister of Education
Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage, State Minister of Tourism
Hon. Sivanesathurai Santhirakanthan, State Minister of Rural Road Development
Hon. D. V. Chanaka, State Minister of Power and Energy
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. 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. 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. Vijitha Berugoda, State Minister of Piriven Education
Hon. K. Kader Masthan, State Minister of Rural Economy
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. Thenuka Vidanagamage, State Minister of Urban Development and Housing
Hon. S. Viyalanderan, State Minister of Trade
Hon. Shehan Semasinghe, State Minister of Finance
Hon. Indika Anuruddha Herath, State Minister of Power and Energy
Hon. Kanaka Herath, State Minister of Technology
Hon. D. B. Herath, State Minister of Livestock Development

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. Rohitha Abegunawardhana
Hon. Wajira Abeywardana

Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya
Hon. Thushara Indunil Amarasena
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. Akila Ellawala
Hon. Lalith Ellawala
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Govindan Karunakaram
Hon. Gayantha Karunatileka
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam, Attorney at Law
Hon. Faizal Cassim
Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda
Hon. Lakshman Kiriella, Attorney at Law
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda
Hon. Lalith Varna Kumara
Hon. Gevindu Cumaratunga
Hon. K. P. S. Kumarasiri
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda
Hon. Udaya Gammanpila
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena
Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa
Hon. S. M. Chandrasena
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. Nalin Bandara Jayamaha
Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana

Hon. (Prof.) Channa Jayasumana
Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban
Hon. Janaka Bandara Thennakoon
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake
Hon. Wimalaweera Dissanayake
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law
Hon. W. H. M. Dharmasena
Hon. H. Nandasena
Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. Asanka Navarathna
Hon. Vasudeva Nanayakkara
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Kins Nelson
Hon. Buddhika Pathirana
Hon. Nimal Piyathissa
Hon. (Prof.) G. L. Peiris
Hon. Dilan Perera
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. G. G. Ponnambalam
Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Sudarshini Fernandopulle
Hon. Uddika Premarathne
Hon. Rohana Bandara
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara
Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. S. M. Marikkar
Hon. Imran Maharoof
Hon. Imthiaz Bakeer Markar
Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law
Hon. Mohomad Muzammil
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara, Attorney at Law

Hon. Patali Champika Ranawaka
Hon. Nipuna Ranawaka
Hon. (Ven.) Athuraliye Rathana Thero
Hon. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. C. B. Rathnayake
Hon. Ali Sabri Raheem
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Namal Rajapaksa, Attorney at Law
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) V. Radhakrishnan
Hon. M. Rameshwaran
Hon. Nimal Lanza
Hon. Gamini Lokuge
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. Wimal Weerawansa
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, PC
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. (Dr.) Sarath Weerasekera
Hon. Dilip Wedaarachchi
Hon. Kumara Welgama
Hon. Jayantha Samaraweera
Hon. Jagath Kumara Sumithraarachchi
Hon. W. D. J. Seneviratne, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Dr.) Rajitha Senarathne
Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at Law
Hon. H. M. M. Harees

Hon. Abdul Haleem

Hon. Kabir Hashim

Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath

Hon. Vijitha Herath

Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Hon. A. H. M. Fowzie

Mrs. Kushani Rohanadeera, Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Hansa Abeyrathne, Assistant Secretary-General

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

1. Presentation of Reports from Committees : (1) The Hon. Patali Champika Ranawaka, the Chair of the Committee on Ways and Means presented the First Report of the Committee on Ways and Means for the Fourth Session of the Ninth Parliament.

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

(2) The Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva, the Chair of the Committee on Public Finance presented the Report of the said Committee on the —

- (i) Social Security Contribution Levy (Amendment) Bill ;
- (ii) Order under the Foreign Exchange Act, No. 12 of 2017; and
- (iii) Regulations under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969

which were referred to the said Committee.

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

2. Sittings of the Parliament : The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order 8 of the Parliament, the hours of sitting of Parliament on this day shall be 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 1.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.. At 7.30 p.m. Mr. Speaker shall adjourn the Parliament without question put.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Business of the Parliament : The Leader of the House of Parliament moved, — That the proceedings on item No. 5 of Public Business appearing on the Order Paper be exempted at this day's sitting from the provisions of Standing Order 121 of the Parliament.

Question put, and agreed to.

4. Privileges (No.1) : The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That the question of privilege arising out of the matter raised by the Hon. (Dr.) Susil Premajayantha, Attorney at Law, M.P. on 25th August, 2023 in Parliament to the effect that privileges of Parliament and the Members of Parliament have been infringed, be referred to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges in terms of the provisions of Standing Order 118 of the Parliament.

Question put, and agreed to.

5. Privileges (No.2) : The Hon. Lakshman Kiriella, Attorney at Law seconded by the Hon. Gayantha Karunatileka moved,— That the question of privilege arising out of the matter raised by the Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya on 18th July, 2023 in Parliament to the effect that her privileges have been infringed, be referred to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges in terms of the provisions of Standing Order 118 of the Parliament.

Question put, and agreed to.

6. Leave to introduce Bill : The Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna, seconded by the Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara, Attorney at Law moved,— That leave be granted to introduce the following Bill:—

“Bill to incorporate the Hesha Friendship 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 Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment.

7. Order 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 Order made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 22 of the Foreign Exchange Act, No. 12 of 2017 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2338/40 of 28th June 2023, which was presented on 22.08.2023, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

8. Regulations under the Imports and Exports (Control) 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 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. 2341/38 of 20th July 2023, which were presented on 22.08.2023, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

9. Chartered Institute of Transport of Sri Lanka (Incorporation) (Amendment) Bill : Order for consideration read.

Bill, as amended in the Legislative Standing Committee Considered.

The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That the amendments made by the Legislative Standing Committee be agreed to.

Question put, and agreed to.

The Leader of the House of Parliament 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.

10. Vote of No Confidence against Hon. Keheliya Rambukwella, Minister of Health: The Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana, seconded by the Hon. S. M. Marikkar moved,—Whereas solutions have not been put forward so far for the crisis that has arisen in the health sector at present;

And whereas the opinion of the experts is that most of the sorrowful incidents that are reported from hospitals day by day are deaths and impairments caused due to the use of drugs which either substandard or are low in quality;

And whereas he is accountable as the Minister of Health for not duly appointing the Board of Directors of the National Medicines Regulatory Authority, for the importing of low quality drugs, for the importing of drugs deviating from the tender procedure, for the importing of drugs at exorbitant prices, for the scarcity of essential drugs and shortage of laboratory equipment in the hospital system and for the purchasing of unregistered drugs on the pretext of emergency purchases thereby resulting in deaths and impairments due to their use;

And whereas the Minister of Health has neglected to duly regulate the process of importing drugs to this country in a manner not inconsistent with the guiding principles of State Policy stipulated in Article 27 of the Constitution regardless of the fact that the government is bound to uphold the Principles therein;

And whereas the Minister has acted ruining the safe health service available for people, thereby breaching the pledge he has given in terms of Article 53 of the Constitution;

And whereas the Minister has neglected his fundamental duties required by Article 28 of the Constitution and people have to pay the price of his irresponsible conduct with their lives;

That this Parliament resolves that it has no confidence in the competence of Hon. Keheliya Rambukwella, Minister of Health to function as a Minister of the Cabinet of Ministers any longer.

(At 11.21 a.m. the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

The Minister of Plantation Industries and Minister of Industries moved,— That Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara, Attorney at Law do take the Chair.

Question put and agreed to.

(At 1.54 p.m. Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara, Attorney at Law, took the Chair.)

The Minister of Plantation Industries and Minister of Industries moved,— That Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law do take the Chair.

Question put and agreed to.

(At 3.26 p.m. Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law, took the Chair.)

(At 6.26 p.m. the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

And it being 4.30 p.m. the debate stood adjourned; debate to be resumed on Thursday, September 07, 2023.

11. Inland Revenue (Amendment) Bill : Order for Second Reading read.

The Minister of Education on behalf of the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies moved,— That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and agreed to.

And it being 7.30 p.m. the debate stood adjourned; debate to be resumed on Thursday, September 07, 2023.

12. Social Security Contribution Levy (Amendment) Bill : Order to be second reading read.

The Minister of Education on behalf of the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies moved,— That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and agreed to

And it being 7.30 p.m. the debate stood adjourned; debate to be resumed on Thursday, September 07, 2023.

13. Adjournment : And it being 7.30 p.m. Parliament was adjourned by the Deputy Speaker without Question put, pursuant to the Resolution of Parliament of this day.

Parliament adjourned accordingly until 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, September 07, 2023.