



(Ninth Parliament - Fifth Session)

No. 5.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT :

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

Hon. Harin Fernando, Minister of Tourism and Lands and Minister of Sports and
Youth Affairs

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

Hon. Kanchana Wijesekera, Minister of Power and Energy

Hon. Sajith Premadasa, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament

Hon. Ranjith Siyambalapitiya, Non Cabinet Minister of State Plantation
Enterprises Reforms and State Minister of Finance

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. Sivaneshathurai Santhirakanthan, State Minister of Rural Road Development
Hon. D. V. Chanaka, State Minister of Power and Energy
Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne, State Minister of Justice and Prison Affairs
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake, State Minister of Primary Industries
Hon. Rohana Dissanayaka, State Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs
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. Vijitha Berugoda, State Minister of Piriven Education
Hon. K. Kader Masthan, State Minister of Rural Economy
Hon. Prasanna Ranaweera, State Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises Development
Hon. Shasheendra Rajapaksa, State Minister of Irrigation and Water Supply
Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura, State Minister of Provincial Councils, Local Government and Environment
Hon. D. B. Herath, State Minister of Livestock Development

Hon. A. L. M. Athaullah
Hon. (Mrs.) Thalatha Athukorala, Attorney at Law
Hon. Tissa Attanayake
Hon. Hector Appuhamy
Hon. Rohitha Abegunawardhana
Hon. Wajira Abeywardana
Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe
Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasureiya
Hon. Thushara Indunil Amaraseena
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan
Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala
Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura

Hon. M. Udayakumar
Hon. (Dr.) Major Pradeep Undugoda
Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna
Hon. Lalith Ellawala
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Gayantha Karunatilleka
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam, Attorney at Law
Hon. Faizal Cassim
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. Yadamini Gunawardena
Hon. S. M. Chandrasena
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. M. S. Thowfeek
Hon. Anura Dissanayaka
Hon. Duminda Dissanayake
Hon. S. B. Dissanayake
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law
Hon. W. H. M. Dharmasena
Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. Asanka Navarathna
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Kins Nelson
Hon. Buddhika Pathirana
Hon. Nimal Piyathissa

Hon. (Prof.) G. L. Peiris
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. G. G. Ponnambalam
Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Sudarshini Fernandopulle
Hon. Jagath Priyankara
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. Rohana Bandara
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen
Hon. Sudath Manjula
Hon. S. M. Marikkar
Hon. Seyed Ali Zahir Moulana
Hon. Imran Maharroof
Hon. Imthiaz Bakeer Markar
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. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. (Dr.) Thilak Rajapakshe
Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) V. Radhakrishnan
Hon. Nimal Lanza
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. Gamini Lokuge
Hon. Nayana Wasalathilake
Hon. Eran Wickramaratne
Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe
Hon. (Mrs.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna
Hon. M. W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana
Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney at Law
Hon. Hesha Withanage
Hon. Chandima Weerakkody, Attorney at Law
Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, PC
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe

Hon. (Dr.) Sarath Weerasekera
Hon. Dilip Wedaarachchi
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama
Hon. Jayantha Samaraweera
Hon. Dharmalingam Sithadthan
Hon. M. A. Sumanthiran
Hon. Jagath Kumara Sumithraarachchi
Hon. W. D. J. Seneviratne, Attorney at Law
Hon. H. M. M. Harees
Hon. Abdul Haleem
Hon. Kabir Hashim
Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath
Hon. Jayarathna Herath
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. A. H. M. Fowzie
Hon. Field Marshal Sarath Fonseka

Mrs. Kushani Rohanadeera, Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Chaminda Kularathne, Chief of Staff and Deputy Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Hansa Abeyrathne, Assistant Secretary-General

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

1. Announcements by the Speaker: The following announcement made by the Deputy Speaker:—

“A motion may be moved to refer the question of privilege raised by the Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne, M.P. in Parliament on 09 February 2024 to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges.”

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

- (i) Ninth Installment – Part XL of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2020;
- (ii) Second Installment – Part XLVIII, and Ninth Installment – Parts XXXVI and XXXVII of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2021; and
- (iii) Second Installment – Part XXXIX and Ninth Installment – Parts XXII and XXIII of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2022

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 be printed.

(2) The Deputy Speaker presented the Eighth Installment – Part I of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General on Contribution of Tourism Development Areas and Tourism Development Projects to the Tourism Industry in terms of Article 154(6) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

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

(3) The Deputy Speaker presented Eighth Installment – Part II of the Audit Report of the Auditor-General on Performance of the Institutions Responsible for the Management of Losses and Damages Caused by Natural Disasters in Sri Lanka in terms of Article 154(6) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

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

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

- (i) 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 the National Police Commission in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament;
- (ii) 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 the Finance Commission in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament; and
- (iii) 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 the Department of Samurdhi Development, Department of Social Services, Department of Probation and Child Care Services and the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-Schools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services of the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment in the reports of the Committee on Public Accounts which were presented to Parliament.

and move that those Reports be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

(5) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the Postgraduate Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Peradeniya for the year 2021 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education.

Question put, and agreed to.

(6) 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 the Ministry of Transport and Highways in the report of the Committee on Public Accounts which was presented to Parliament and moved that this 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 Land Reform Commission for the year 2022 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Food Security & Agriculture.

Question put, and agreed to.

(8) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation for the year 2022 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Energy & Transport.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of Reports from Committees: Hon. (Dr.) Wijeyadasa Rajapakse, PC, the Chair of the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms presented the Report of the Committee on —

- (i) Rules made by the incorporated Council of Legal Education with the concurrence of the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms under Section 7 of the Incorporated Council of Legal Education Ordinance (Chapter 276) and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2332/02 of 15th May 2023;
- (ii) Regulations made by the Minister of Justice with the concurrence of the Chief Justice under Section 60 read with Section 61 of the Judicature Act, No. 2 of 1978 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2238/34 of 30th July 2021;
- (iii) Regulations made by the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms with the concurrence of the Chief Justice under Section 60 read with Section 61 of the Judicature Act, No. 2 of 1978 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2303/23 of 26th October 2022; and
- (iv) Regulations made by the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms with the concurrence of the Chief Justice under Section 61 read with Section 60 of the Judicature Act, No. 2 of 1978 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2362/67 of 14th December 2023.

which were referred to the Committee.

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

4. Banking (Amendment): The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies presented,—Bill to amend the Banking Act, No. 30 of 1988.

The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on Wednesday, March 06, 2024, be printed and be referred to the Committee on Public Finance.

5. Sittings of the Parliament: The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of 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 5.30 p.m.. At 10.30 a.m. Standing Order 8(5) of the Parliament shall operate. At 5.30 p.m. Mr. Speaker shall adjourn the Parliament without question put.

Question put, and agreed to.

6. Business of the Parliament: The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That the proceedings on Item Nos. 1 and 2 of Public Business appearing on the Order Paper be exempted at this day's sitting from the provisions of Standing Order 27 of the Parliament.

Question put, and agreed to.

7. Leave to introduce Bill: Hon. Udaya Gammanpila, seconded by Hon. Mohamad Muzammil moved:— That leave be granted to introduce the following Bill:—

“Bill to amend the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.”

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 Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms for report.

8. Resolution under the Essential Public Services Act, (No.1) : The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government moved,— That this Parliament resolves that the Proclamation made and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2371/11 of 13th February 2024 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, which was presented on 20.02.2024, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

9. Resolution under the Essential Public Services Act, (No.2) : The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government moved,— That this Parliament resolves that the Proclamation made and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2371/16 of 13th February 2024 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, which was presented on 20.02.2024, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

10. Regulations under the Judicature Act (No.1): The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms moved,— That the Regulations made by the Minister of Justice with the concurrence of the Chief Justice under Section 60 read with Section 61 of the Judicature Act, No. 2 of 1978 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2238/34 of 30th July 2021, which were presented on 09.01.2024, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

11. Regulations under the Judicature Act (No.2): The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms moved,— That the Regulations made by the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms with the concurrence of the Chief Justice under Section 60 read with Section 61 of the Judicature Act, No. 2 of 1978 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2303/23 of 26th October 2022, which were presented on 09.01.2024, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

12. Regulations under the Judicature Act (No.3): The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms moved,— That the Regulations made by the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms with the concurrence of the Chief Justice under Section 61 read with Section 60 of the Judicature Act, No. 2 of 1978 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2362/67 of 14th December 2023, which were presented on 12.01.2024, be approved.

Question put, and agreed to.

13. Adjournment (Solutions to present hardships faced by the public): The Minister of Ports, Shipping and Aviation moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourned.

Question proposed, and debated.

Hon. Thushara Indunil Amarasena, seconded by Hon. Rohana Bandara moved,— That Hon. Kins Nelson do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 11.38 a.m. Hon. Kins Nelson took the Chair.)

The State Minister of Women and Child Affairs moved,— That Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 12.52 p.m. Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya took the Chair.)

The State Minister of Power and Energy moved,— That Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney at Law do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 1.42 p.m. Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney at Law took the Chair.)

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

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.12 p.m. Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law took the Chair.)

The State Minister of Primary Industries moved,— That Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 4.01 p.m. Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama took the Chair.)

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

Parliament adjourned accordingly until 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, February 22, 2024.