



(Ninth Parliament - Fifth Session)

No. 6.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Thursday, February 22, 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. Jeevan Thondaman, Minister of Water Supply and Estate Infrastructure
Development

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

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

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

Hon. Vidura Wikramanayaka, Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural
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. 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. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake, State Minister of Primary Industries

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. 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. Janaka Wakkumbura, State Minister of Provincial Councils, Local
Government and Environment

Hon. Indika Anuruddha Herath, State Minister of Power and Energy

Hon. D. B. Herath, State Minister of Livestock Development

Hon. Amirthanathan Adaikkalanathan

Hon. A. L. M. Athaullah

Hon. Tissa Attanayake

Hon. Hector Appuhamy

Hon. Wajira Abeywardana

Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe

Hon. Thushara Indunil Amarasena

Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal

Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala

Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage

Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi

Hon. (Dr.) Major Pradeep Undugoda

Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna

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. Velu Kumar

Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda

Hon. Udaya Gammanpila

Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi

Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena

Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa

Hon. S. M. Chandrasena

Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana
Hon. M. S. Thowfeek
Hon. Duminda 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. Vasudeva Nanayakkara
Hon. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Kins Nelson
Hon. Buddhika Pathirana
Hon. Nimal Piyathissa
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. G. G. Ponnambalam
Hon. Johnston Fernando
Hon. Jagath Priyankara
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. Rohana Bandara
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen
Hon. Imran Maharroof
Hon. Imthiaz Bakeer Markar
Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law
Hon. Mohomad Muzammil
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara, Attorney at Law
Hon. Nipuna Ranawaka
Hon. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. (Dr.) Thilak Rajapakshe
Hon. Namal Rajapaksa, Attorney at Law
Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

Hon. (Dr.) V. Radhakrishnan
Hon. Nimal Lanza
Hon. Gamini Lokuge
Hon. Gamini Waleboda
Hon. Nayana Wasalathilake
Hon. Eran Wickramaratne
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. Jagath Samarawickrama
Hon. Jayantha Samaraweera
Hon. Dharmalingam Sithadthan
Hon. Jagath Kumara Sumithraarachchi
Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at Law
Hon. H. M. M. Harees
Hon. Abdul Haleem
Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath
Hon. Samanpriya Herath
Hon. A. H. M. Fowzie

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 Deputy Speaker made the following announcement:—

“I table in all three languages the lists of names of the members appointed to serve in the following Committees during the Fifth Session of the Ninth Parliament as per the motions agreed to by Parliament on 09 February 2024:-

1. Committee on Ethics and Privileges;
2. Committee on Public Accounts;
3. Committee on Public Enterprises;
4. Committee on Public Petitions;
5. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Defence;
6. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies;
7. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment;
8. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Investment Promotion;
9. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education;
10. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Mass Media;
11. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Health;
12. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Agriculture and Plantation Industries;
13. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation;
14. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms;
15. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Industries;
16. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Urban Development and Housing;
17. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Foreign Affairs;
18. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs;
19. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Power and Energy;
20. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment;
21. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Sports and Youth Affairs;
22. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Irrigation;
23. Ministerial Consultative Committee on Labour and Foreign Employment; and
24. Ministerial Consultative Committee on State Plantation Enterprises Reforms

Committee on Ethics and Privileges;

I wish to inform that notwithstanding the provisions of the Standing Order 118 of parliament, the following Members have been nominated by the Committee of Selection to serve in the Committee on Ethics and Privileges, as per the resolution adopted by Parliament on 09 February 2024:—

Hon. (Mrs.) Pavithradevi Wanniarachchi, Attorney at Law

Hon. (Dr.) Wijeyadasa Rajapakshe, PC

Hon. Vijitha Berugoda

Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya

Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne

Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa

Hon. Johnston Fernando

Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage
Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda
Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney at Law
Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Committee on Public Accounts;

I wish to inform that notwithstanding the provisions of the Standing Order 119 of parliament, the following Members have been nominated by the Committee of Selection to serve in the Committee on Public Accounts, as per the resolution adopted by Parliament on 09 February 2024:—

Hon. Mohan Priyadarshana De Silva, Attorney at Law
Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna
Hon. Prasanna Ranaweera
Hon. K. Kader Masthan
Hon. (Mrs.) Diana Gamage
Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake
Hon. Wajira Abeywardana
Hon. A. L. M. Athaullah
Hon. Wimalaweera Dissanayake
Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda
Hon. (Dr.) Major Pradeep Undugoda
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. M. W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana
Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney at Law
Hon. D. Weerasingha
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake

Committee on Public Enterprises;

I wish to inform that notwithstanding the provisions of the Standing Order 120 of parliament, the following Members have been nominated by the Committee of Selection to serve in the Committee on Public Enterprises, as per the resolution adopted by Parliament on 09 February 2024:—

Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. Janaka Wakkumbura
Hon. Lohan Ratwatte
Hon. Indika Anuruddha Herath
Hon. Shantha Bandara
Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage

Hon. Duminda Dissanayake
Hon. Rohitha Abegunawardhana
Hon. Nimal Lanza
Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura
Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna
Hon. Jagath Kumara Sumithraarachchi
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. M. Rameshwaran
Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe
Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara

Committee on Public Petitions;

I wish to inform that notwithstanding the provisions of the Standing Order 125 of parliament, the following Members have been nominated by the Committee of Selection to serve in the Committee on Public Petitions, as per the resolution adopted by Parliament on 09 February 2024:—

Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara
Hon. S. Viyalanderan
Hon. Ashoka Priyantha
Hon. A. Aravindh Kumar
Hon. (Mrs.) Geetha Samanmale Kumarasinghe
Hon. Gamini Lokuge
Hon. Wajira Abeywardana
Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda
Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. Nipuna Ranawaka
Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe
Hon. M. W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena

Ministerial Consultative Committees;

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Defence

Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa
Hon. (Dr.) Sarath Weerasekera
Hon. (Dr.) Major Pradeep Undugoda

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies

Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage
Hon. M. W. D. Sahan Pradeep Withana
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment

Hon. Jagath Kumara Sumithraarachchi
Hon. (Mrs.) Rajika Wickramasinghe
Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Investment Promotion

Hon. A. Aravindh Kumar
Hon. Dhammika Perera
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education

Hon. Anupa Pasqual
Hon. Wimalaweera Dissanayake
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Mass Media

Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff
Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda
Hon. Sanjeeva Edirimanna

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Health

Hon. Kanaka Herath
Hon. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. (Dr.) Major Pradeep Undugoda

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Agriculture and Plantation Industries

Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. Kulasingam Dhileeban
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation

Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake
Hon. Kapila Athukorala
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms

Hon. Sisira Jayakody, Attorney-at-Law
Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney-at-Law
Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam, Attorney-At-Law

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Industries

Hon. Premalal Jayasekara
Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura
Hon. Lalith Varna Kumara

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Urban Development and Housing

Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. Madhura Withanage, Attorney-at-Law

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Foreign Affairs

Hon. S. B. Dissanayake
Hon. Namal Rajapaksa, Attorney-At-Law
Hon. (Major) Sudarshana Denipitiya

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs

Hon. H. Nandasena
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha
Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Power and Energy

Hon. Gamini Lokuge
Hon. Duminda Dissanayake
Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment

Hon. S. M. Chandrasena
Hon. Isuru Dodangoda
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Sports and Youth Affairs

Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon
Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. D. Weerasingha

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Irrigation

Hon. D. Weerasingha
 Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena
 Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama

Ministerial Consultative Committee on Labour and Foreign Employment

Hon. D. B. Herath
 Hon. W. D. J. Seneviratne, Attorney-at-Law
 Hon. Jayantha Weerasinghe, P.C.

Ministerial Consultative Committee on State Plantation Enterprises Reforms

Hon. Sampath Athukorala
 Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
 Hon. M. Rameshwaran”

2. Presentation of Papers : (1) The Deputy Speaker presented the Report submitted by the Honourable President to the Hon. Speaker in terms of Section 15(8) of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka Act, No. 21 of 1996, pursuant to it being submitted to the Honourable President under the same section of the aforesaid Act by the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka regarding the non-implementation of the recommendations of the Complaint No. HRC/BD/215/22.

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

(2) The Deputy Speaker present the —

- (i) Ninth Installment – Part XXXVIII of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2018;
 - (ii) Second Installment – Part LIII of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2019;
 - (iii) Second Installment – Part XLIX, and Ninth Installment – Part XXXVIII of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2021; and
 - (iv) Second Installment – Parts XL and XLI and Ninth Installment – Part XXIV 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 to be printed.

(3) The Deputy Speaker presented the Eighth Installment – Part III of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General on Contribution of Consumer Affairs Authority in Protecting the Consumer 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 to be printed.

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

- (i) Order made by the Acting Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 3(3) of the Ports and Airports Development Levy Act, No. 18 of 2011 relating to Ports and Airports Development Levy and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2350/45 of 21st September 2023; and
- (ii) Order made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 2A of the Value Added Tax Act, No. 14 of 2002 as amended by Act, No. 6 of 2005 relating to Value Added Tax and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2363/22 of 19th December 2023.

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

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of Reports from Committees: (1) The Hon. Bandula Gunawardena, the Chair of the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Transport and Highways presented the Report of the said Committee on —

- (i) Regulations made by the Minister of Transport and Highways under Section 237 read with Part VII of the Motor Traffic Act (Chapter 203) and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2338/39 of 28th June 2023; and
- (ii) Regulations made by the Minister of Transport and Highways under Section 237 of the Motor Traffic Act (Chapter 203) read with sections 21, 22, 23, 24 and 24A of the Act and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2352/29 of 05th October 2023

which were referred to the Committee.

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

4. Sittings of the Parliament (No. 1) : 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 5.30 p.m. Mr. Speaker shall adjourn the Parliament without question put.

Question put, and agreed to.

5. Sittings of the Parliament (No. 2) : The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That this Parliament at its rising this day do adjourn until 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 05th, 2024.

Question put, and agreed to.

6. Select Committee of Parliament to look into whether the child malnutrition issue in Sri Lanka is aggravating and to identify short term, medium term and long term measures to be taken in that regard, as well as to oversee the speedy implementation of the identified measures : The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That the time period granted to the Select Committee of Parliament to look into whether the child malnutrition issue in Sri Lanka is aggravating and to identify short term, medium term and long term measures to be taken in that regard, as well as to oversee the speedy implementation of the identified measures, as specified in the Resolution passed by Parliament on 12 December 2023 be extended up to 05 June 2024 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.

7. Votes of Condolence : The Minister of Urban Development and Housing moved the Votes of Condolence on the late Hon. Sanath Nishantha, Member of Parliament.

The Minister of Industries and Minister of Health moved,— That Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 10.54 a.m. Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe took the Chair.)

The Minister of Water Supply and Estate Infrastructure Development moved,— That Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 11.56 a.m. Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama took the Chair.)

(At 1.00 p.m. Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

The State Minister of Piriven Education 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. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 3.17 p.m. Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law took the Chair.)

(At 4.15 p.m. Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

The Deputy Speaker announced that the Speaker and himself associated together with the sentiments expressed by both sides of the Parliament on the death of the late Hon. Sanath Nishantha - Member of Parliament and directed the Secretary-General of Parliament to send a copy of the Official Report (Hansard) containing proceedings of this day to the members of his bereaved family.

8. Adjournment : The Minister of Trade, Commerce and Food Security moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourned.

Question put, and agreed to; Parliament was at 5.09 p.m. adjourned by the Deputy Speaker until 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 05, 2024 pursuant to the Resolution of Parliament on this day.