



(Ninth Parliament - Fifth Session)

No. 25.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, May 22, 2024 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 and Plantation Industries

Hon. Tiran Alles, Minister of Public Security

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.) Ramesh Pathirana, Minister of Industries and Minister of Health

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

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 and Minister of Irrigation

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

Hon. Dilum Amunugama, State Minister of Investment Promotion
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. Siripala Gamalath, State Minister of Highways
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. Premalal Jayasekara, State Minister of Ports and Aviation
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. Anupa Pasqual, State Minister of Social Empowerment
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. 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. 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. Tissa Attanayake
Hon. Hector Appuhamy
Hon. Wajira Abeywardana
Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya
Hon. Thushara Indunil Amarasena
Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal
Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala
Hon. Dullas Alahapperuma
Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi
Hon. U. K. Sumith Udukumbura
Hon. (Dr.) Major Pradeep Undugoda
Hon. Akila Ellawala
Hon. Lalith Ellawala
Hon. Selvarajah Kajendren
Hon. Govindan Karunakaram
Hon. Gayantha Karunatileka
Hon. Jayantha Ketagoda
Hon. Lakshman Kiriella, Attorney at Law
Hon. Lalith Varna Kumara
Hon. Gevindu Cumaratunga
Hon. K. P. S. Kumarasiri
Hon. Velu Kumar
Hon. Karunadasa Kodithuwakku
Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda
Hon. Mano Ganesan
Hon. Weerasena Gamage
Hon. Udaya Gammanpila
Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi
Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka
Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene
Hon. Yadamini Gunawardena
Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa
Hon. S. M. Chandrasena

Hon. Milan Jayathilake
Hon. Nalin Bandara Jayamaha
Hon. Piyanakara Jayaratne
Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana
Hon. (Prof.) Channa Jayasumana
Hon. M. S. Thowfeek
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva
Hon. Palani Thigambaram
Hon. Anura Dissanayaka
Hon. S. B. Dissanayake
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. (Dr.) Gayashan Nawananda
Hon. Asanka Navarathna
Hon. S. Noharathalingam
Hon. Buddhika Pathirana
Hon. Nimal Piyathissa
Hon. (Prof.) G. L. Peiris
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. Johnston Fernando
Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Sudarshini Fernandopulle
Hon. Jagath Priyankara
Hon. Rohana Bandara
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. S. M. Marikkar
Hon. Imran Maharoof
Hon. Imthiaz Bakeer Markar
Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law
Hon. Anura Priyadharshana Yapa, Attorney at Law
Hon. Wasantha Yapabandara, Attorney at Law
Hon. Patali Champika Ranawaka

Hon. (Ven.) Athuraliye Rathana Thero
Hon. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Hon. C. B. Rathnayake
Hon. Ali Sabri Raheem
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. Mujibur Rahuman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna
Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. M. Rameshwaran
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. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. (Dr.) Sarath Weerasekera
Hon. Dilip Wedaarachchi
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Jayantha Samaraweera
Hon. Maithreepala Sirisena
Hon. Vadivel Suresh
Hon. W. D. J. Seneviratne, Attorney at Law
Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at Law
Hon. H. M. M. Harees
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. Chaminda Kularathne, 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. Announcements by the Speaker: The Speaker made the following announcements:—

I

“I wish to inform Parliament that I have received two copies of petitions filed at the Supreme Court under Article 121(1) of the Constitution in respect of the Bill titled ‘Gender Equality’ ”.

II

“The question of privilege raised by the Hon. Anuradha Jayaratne, M.P. in Parliament on 09 January 2024 will be referred to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges.”

III

“The question of privilege raised by the Hon. Prasanna Ranathunga, M.P. in Parliament on 22 February 2024 will be referred to the Committee on Ethics and Privileges.”

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 2022; and
- (ii) First Installment – Part II of the Report of the Auditor-General for the Financial Year 2023

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 Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the Sugarcane Research Institute for the year 2022 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Economic and Physical Plans.

Question put, and agreed to.

(3) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Regulations made by the President under Section 27 read with Sections 7(3), 8, 10, 11 and 12 of the Welfare Benefits Act, No. 24 of 2002 and Article 44(3) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, relating to Welfare Benefits and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2382/02 of 29th April 2024 and moved that those Regulations be referred to the Committee on Public Finance .

Question put, and agreed to.

(4) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Proclamation made and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2385/11 of 21st May 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

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

(5) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka for the year 2022 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 Annual Report of the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute 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.

(7) 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 the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment and the Institutions coming under its purview in the reports of the Committee on Public Accounts which were presented to Parliament and moved that this Report be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Presentation of Reports from Committees : (1) Hon. Ajith Rajapakse, the Deputy Speaker and the Chair of the Legislative Standing Committee presented the Report of the said Committee on the Bill titled, “Matara Season Organization (Incorporation)” together with the Minutes of proceedings which were referred to the said Committee.

Bill, as reported by the Legislative Standing Committee, to be considered on Tuesday, June 04, 2024.

(2) The Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva, the Chair of the Committee on Public Finance presented the Report of the Committee on Resolution under Section 33 of the Coconut Development Act, No. 46 of 1971 which was referred to the said Committee.

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

4. Presentation of Public Petitions:

- (1) Hon. Chamara Sampath Dasanayake presented a petition dated 25.03.2024 from Mr. J.M. Senadheera of No. 10/ A, Sri Rathanapala Mawatha, Kailagoda, Badulla.
- (2) Hon. Chandima Weerakkody, Attorney at Law presented a petition dated 08.03.2024 from Mr. J.C. Sanjeewa of No. 29, Kapu Ela Road, Randonbe, Ambalangoda.
- (3) Hon. Sarathi Dushmantha presented a petition dated 23.10.2023 from Mr. Nimal Satharasingha of Near Sinhala College, Haldummulla.
- (4) Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal presented a petition dated 28.12.2023 from Mr. K.D.A. Priyantha Jayasundara of No.67, Sri Dewananda Road, Nawinna, Maharagama.
- (5) Hon. D. Weerasingha presented a petition dated 03.01.2024 from Mrs. H.K.W. Lakshika Kumari of No. 17/54/02, Sandanadapura, Digamadulla, Weeragoda.

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

5. Public Financial Management: The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies presented,— Bill to make provisions to Strengthen Accountability, Oversight, Management and control of public funds in the Public Financial Management framework with the view to improving Fiscal Policy for better macroeconomic management; to clarify institutional responsibilities related to financial management; to strengthen budgetary management, to facilitate public scrutiny of fiscal policy and performance; to repeal the sections 8 and 14 of part II of the Finance Act, No. 38 of 1971; to repeal the Fiscal Management (Responsibility) Act, No. 3 of 2003 and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday, June 04, 2024, be printed and be referred to the Committee on Public Finance.

6. Economic Transformation: The Minister of Urban Development and Housing on behalf of the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies presented,— Bill to provide for the National Policy on Economic Transformation and for the establishment of the Economic Commission of Sri Lanka, Investment Zones Sri Lanka, Office for International Trade, National Productivity Commission, and Sri Lanka Institute of Economics and International Trade; for the repeal of the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka Law, No. 4 of 1978 and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday, June 04, 2024, be printed and be referred to the Committee on Public Finance.

7. 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 9.45 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.

8. 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, 04th June, 2024.

Question put, and agreed to.

9. Leave to introduce Bill (No.1) : Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Sudarshini Fernandopulle, seconded by Hon. (Mrs.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna 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.

10. Leave to introduce Bill (No.2) : Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Sudarshini Fernandopulle, seconded by Hon. (Mrs.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna moved,— That leave be granted to introduce the following Bill:—

“Bill to amend the Parliamentary Elections Act, No. 1 of 1981.”

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.

11. Adjournment (Establishment of Rule of Law and Creation of a Corruption-free Country): The Minister of Urban Development and Housing moved,— That this Parliament do now adjourn.

Question proposed, and debated.

The Minister of Transport and Highways and Minister of Mass Media moved,— That Hon. Heshu Withanage do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 10.58 a.m. Hon. Heshu Withanage took the Chair.)

The Non Cabinet Minister of State Plantation Enterprises Reforms and State Minister of Finance moved,— That Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 11.08 a.m. Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna took the Chair.)

The State Minister of Finance moved,— That Hon. Velu Kumar do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 11.58 a.m. Hon. Velu Kumar took the Chair.)

The Hon. Kabir Hashim, seconded by Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at Law moved,— That Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 12.39 p.m. Hon. (Mrs.) Kokila Gunawardene took the Chair.)

The Minister of Agriculture and Plantation Industries moved,— That Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 2.41 p.m. Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law took the Chair.)

The Minister of Agriculture and Plantation Industries moved,— That Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama do take the Chair.

Question put, and agreed to.

(At 2.49 p.m. Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama took the Chair.)

And notice being directed that a Quorum was not present, Parliament was counted and a Quorum not being present, Parliament was at 4.25 p.m. adjourned by the Presiding Member without Question put, in terms of the Standing Order 11 of Parliament until 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, June 04, 2024.