



(Ninth Parliament - Fifth Session)

No. 35.]

MINUTES OF PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 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 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. Jeevan Thondaman, Minister of Water Supply and Estate Infrastructure
Development

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

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. Lasantha Alagiyawanna, State Minister of Transport

Hon. Sivanesathurai Santhirakanthan, State Minister of Rural Road Development

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

Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon, State Minister of Defence

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. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister of Foreign Affairs
Hon. K. Kader Masthan, State Minister of Rural Economy
Hon. Prasanna Ranaweera, State Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises
Development
Hon. (Dr.) Suren Raghavan, State Minister of Higher Education
Hon. Shasheendra Rajapaksa, State Minister of Irrigation and Water Supply
Hon. Thenuka Vidanagamage, State Minister of Urban Development and Housing
Hon. S. Viyalanderan, State Minister of Trade and Environment
Hon. Shehan Semasinghe, State Minister of Finance
Hon. D. B. Herath, State Minister of Livestock Development

Hon. Amirthanathan Adaikkalanathan

Hon. A. L. M. Athaullah

Hon. Kapila Athukorala

Hon. Tissa Attanayake

Hon. Hector Appuhamy

Hon. Wajira Abeywardana

Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe

Hon. Thushara Indunil Amarasena

Hon. Mayadunna Chinthaka Amal

Hon. Thavaraja Kalai Arasan

Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala

Hon. Dullas Alahapperuma

Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage

Hon. Thisakutti Arachchi

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. Lakshman Kiriella, Attorney at Law
Hon. Udayana Kirindigoda, Attorney at Law
Hon. K. S. Kugathasan
Hon. Lalith Varna Kumara
Hon. Gevindu Cumaratunga
Hon. K. P. S. Kumarasiri
Hon. Velu Kumar
Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda
Hon. Mano Ganesan
Hon. Weerasena Gamage
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. Piyanakara Jayaratne
Hon. (Dr.) Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana
Hon. Dayasiri Jayasekara
Hon. M. S. Thowfeek
Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva
Hon. Anura Dissanayaka
Hon. Duminda Dissanayake
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. Charles Nirmalanathan
Hon. Kins Nelson
Hon. S. Noharathalingam
Hon. Buddhika Pathirana
Hon. Nimal Piyathissa
Hon. (Prof.) G. L. Peiris
Hon. Niroshan Perera
Hon. K. Sujith Sanjaya Perera
Hon. (Dr.) (Mrs.) Sudarshini Fernandopulle
Hon. Jagath Priyankara
Hon. (Mrs.) Muditha Prishanthi
Hon. Rohana Bandara
Hon. R. M. Ranjith Madduma Bandara
Hon. (Prof.) Ranjith Bandara
Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen
Hon. S. M. Marikkar
Hon. Imran Maharoof
Hon. Ajith Mannapperuma
Hon. S. C. Muthukumarana
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. Patali Champika Ranawaka
Hon. Nipuna Ranawaka
Hon. B. Y. G. Rathnasekara
Hon. Kumarasiri Rathnayaka
Hon. Ishak Rahuman
Hon. Mujibur Rahuman
Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna
Hon. Gunathilaka Rajapaksha

Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa
Hon. (Dr.) Thilak Rajapakshe
Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa
Hon. Upul Mahendra Rajapaksha
Hon. (Dr.) V. Radhakrishnan
Hon. M. Rameshwaran
Hon. Shanakiyan Rajaputhiran Rasamanickam
Hon. Nimal Lanza
Hon. Waruna Liyanage
Hon. Gamini Lokuge
Hon. Gamini Waleboda
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. D. Weerasingha
Hon. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Hon. (Dr.) Sarath Weerasekera
Hon. Dilip Wedaarachchi
Hon. Kumara Welgama
Hon. Sivagnanam Shritharan
Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama
Hon. Jayantha Samaraweera
Hon. Maithreepala Sirisena
Hon. M. A. Sumanthiran
Hon. Jagath Kumara Sumithraarachchi
Hon. Vadivel Suresh
Hon. W. D. J. Seneviratne, Attorney at Law
Hon. (Dr.) Rajitha Senarathne
Hon. H. M. M. Harees
Hon. Abdul Haleem

Hon. Kabir Hashim

Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath

Hon. Vijitha Herath

Hon. Samanpriya Herath

Hon. Marjan Faleel

Hon. A. H. M. Fowzie

Mrs. Kushani Rohanadeera, Secretary-General of Parliament

Mr. Chaminda Kularatne, 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. Presentation of Papers: (1) The Minister of the Urban Development and Housing presented the —

- (i) Annual Report of the Regional Development Bank for the year 2020;
- (ii) Annual Report of Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka for the year 2021;
- (iii) Annual Report of the State Mortgage and Investment Bank for the year 2022;
- (iv) Annual Report of the Colombo Port City Economic Commission for the year 2022; and
- (v) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation for the year 2022

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

Question put, and agreed to.

(2) The Minister of the Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Performance Report of the Department of Social Services for the year 2023 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Alleviating the Impact of the Economic Crisis.

Question put, and agreed to.

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

- (i) Annual Performance Report of the Department of Sri Lanka Coast Guard for the year 2023; and
- (ii) Annual Performance Report of the Ministry of Defence for the year 2023

and moved that those Reports be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Security.

Question put, and agreed to.

(4) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Performance Report of the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption for the year 2023 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on An Open & Accountable Government.

Question put, and agreed to.

(5) The Minister Education presented the —

- (i) Annual Report of the Skills Development Fund Limited for the year 2022; and
- (ii) Annual Performance Report of the Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka for the year 2023

and moved that those Reports 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 Performance Report of the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing for the year 2023 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Economic and Physical Plans.

Question put, and agreed to.

(7) The Minister of Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Performance Report of the Department of Agriculture for the year 2023 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 the 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 Health 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.

(9) The Minister of the Urban Development and Housing presented the Annual Report of the Lanka Mineral Sands Limited for the year 2021 and moved that this Report be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Economic and Physical Plans.

Question put, and agreed to.

(10) The Minister of the Urban Development and Housing presented the Report on the submission of observations and steps taken in terms of the Standing Order 124(6) of the Parliament with regard to the matters mentioned on the Ministry of Public Security in the report of the Committee on Ways and Means which was presented to Parliament and moved that this Report be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Question put, and agreed to.

2. Presentation of Reports from Committees: (1) Hon. Ajith Rajapakse, Deputy Speaker and the Chair of Legislative Standing Committee presented Report of the Legislative Standing Committee on the Bill titled, 'Penal Code (Amendment)' together with the Minutes of proceedings.

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

Bill, as reported by Legislative Standing Committee, to be considered on Thursday, 11th, July 2024.

(2) Hon. Mahindananda Aluthgamage, the Chair of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Economic and Physical Plans presented the Report of the Committee on —

- (i) Annual Performance Report of the Department of Meteorology for the year 2022;
- (ii) Annual Reports of the National Insurance Trust Fund Board for the year 2020 and 2021;
- (iii) Annual Reports of the National Lotteries Board for the year 2021 and 2022;
- (iv) Final Budget Position Report – 2022 in terms of Section 13 of the Fiscal Management (Responsibility) Act, No. 3 of 2003;
- (v) Annual Reports of the Lanka Sathosa Limited for the year 2020 and 2021;
- (vi) Performance Report and Annual Accounts of the Measurement Units, Standards and Services Department for the year 2021;
- (vii) Annual Report of the National Design Centre for the year 2020;
- (viii) Annual Performance Report of the Department of National Botanic Gardens for the year 2022; and
- (ix) Annual Reports of the Sri Lanka Standards Institution for the years 2018 and 2019

which were referred to the said Committee.

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

(3) Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva, the Chair of the Committee on Public Finance presented the Report of the Committee on Public Finance on the Regulations under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, No. 1 of 1969 which were referred to the said Committee.

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

(4) Hon. Mayantha Dissanayake, Chair of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Health presented the Report of the Committee on —

- (i) Annual Report of the Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital & Postgraduate Medical Training Center for the year 2021;
- (ii) Annual Report of the Ayurveda Medical Council for the year 2022;
- (iii) Annual Report of the National Authority on Tobacco and Alcohol for the year 2022; and
- (iv) Performance Report of the Department of Ayurveda for the year 2022

which were referred to the said Committee.

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

(5) Hon. Nalaka Bandara Kottegoda, the Chair of the Committee on Energy and Transport presented the Report of the Committee on —

- (i) Annual Report of the Ceylon Petroleum Storage Terminals Limited for the year 2021;
- (ii) Annual Report of the Ceylon Petroleum Storage Terminals Limited for the year 2022;
- (iii) Annual Report of the Lanka Coal Company (Pvt) Ltd for the year 2021; and
- (iv) Annual Report of the Sri Lanka Energies (Pvt) Ltd for the year 2017

which were referred to the said Committee.

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

3. Presentation of Public Petitions :

- (1) Hon. Nalin Fernando presented a petition dated 19.01.2024 from Mr. A.G.M. Prema Kumara of No. 125/2, Minuwangoda Road, Ekala.
- (2) Hon. Lakshman Kiriella, Attorney at Law presented a petition dated 05.06.2024 from Mr. K.G. Senevirathne of No. 333, Gadaladeniya, Pilimathalawa.
- (3) Hon. Ashok Abeysinghe presented —
 - (i) A petition dated 06.01.2024 from Mr. B.B.M. Sunil Atapattu of Udabadalawa, Kurunegala; and
 - (ii) A petition dated 12.12.2023 from Mr. J.B. Manthilaka Arachchi of Hunukotugama, Mahaudagama, Gampola.
- (4) Hon. Harshana Rajakaruna presented a petition dated 26.05.2024 from Mr. Y.R. Wajira Premawardhana of No. 545/5, Obawaththa, Heiyyanthuduwa.
- (5) Hon. D. Weerasingha presented a petition dated 07.05.2024 from Mr. S.H.N.R. Samarathunga of No. 54/B, Suger Factory Place, Hingurana.
- (6) Hon. Jagath Samarawickrama presented a petition dated 04.06.2024 from Mr. A.L.W.K. Amarasinghe of No. 595/146/1, Kuruppu Junction, Polonnaruwa.

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

4. Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment): The Minister of Education on behalf of the Minister of Justice, Prisons Affairs and Constitutional Reforms presented,— Bill to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure Act, No. 15 of 1979.

The Bill was ordered to be read a second time on Wednesday, July 24, 2024, be printed and be referred to the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Just and Law-Abiding Society.

5. Business of the Parliament: The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That the proceedings on Item No. 6 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.

6. Select Committee of Parliament to Investigate Causes for Financial Bankruptcy declared by the Government and to Report to Parliament and Submit its Proposals and Recommendations in this regard: The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That the time period granted to the Select Committee of Parliament to Investigate Causes for Financial Bankruptcy declared by the Government and to Report to Parliament and Submit its Proposals and Recommendations in this regard, as specified in the Resolution passed by Parliament on 22 March 2024 be extended up to 18 October 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. Select Committee of Parliament to investigate into and to make suitable recommendations relating to the disasters caused by New Diamond and X-press Pearl Vessels in the Maritime Zone of Sri Lanka: The Leader of the House of Parliament moved,— That the time period granted to the Select Committee of Parliament to investigate into and to make suitable recommendations relating to the disasters caused by New Diamond and X-press Pearl Vessels in the Maritime Zone of Sri Lanka, as specified in the Resolution passed by Parliament on 14 May 2024, be extended up to 20 October 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.

8. Leave to introduce Bill: Hon. Samanpriya Herath, seconded by Hon. K. P. S. Kumarasiri moved,— That leave be granted to introduce the following Bill:—

“Bill to incorporate the Mahawilachchiya Education Centre for Children.”

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 Education for report.

9. Notification under the Excise Ordinance (No. 1): 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 Notification made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 25 read with Section 32 of the Excise Ordinance (Chapter 52) as amended from time to time, regarding Annual Excise License Fees, and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2366/38 of 12th January 2024, which was presented on 18.06.2024, be approved.

(Excise Notification No. 01/2024).

The State Minister of Irrigation and Water Supply moved,— That Hon. Samanpriya Herath do take the Chair.

Question put and agreed to.

(At 11.03 a.m. Hon. Samanpriya Herath took the Chair.)

Hon. Maithreepala Sirisena, seconded by Hon. Kumara Welgama moved,— That Hon. Mayantha Dissanayake do take the Chair.

Question put and agreed to.

(At 11.32 a.m. Hon. Mayantha Dissanayake took the Chair.)

(At 1.00 p.m. the Deputy Chairperson of Committees took the Chair.)

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

Question put and agreed to.

(At 2.05 p.m. Hon. S. M. M. Muszhaaraff, Attorney at Law took the Chair.)

The Minister of Transport and Highways and Minister of Mass Media moved,— That Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law do take the Chair.

Question put and agreed to.

(At 2.46 p.m. Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Attorney at Law took the Chair.)

Hon. Udayakantha Gunathilaka, seconded by Hon. (Dr.) Upul Galappaththi moved,— That Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake do take the Chair.

Question put and agreed to.

(At 3.44 p.m. Hon. (Mrs.) Manjula Dissanayake took the Chair.)

(At 4.52 p.m. the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

Question put and agreed to.

10. Notification under the Excise Ordinance (No. 2): 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 Notification made by the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies under Section 25 read with Section 32 of the Excise Ordinance (Chapter 52) as amended from time to time, regarding Excise License Fees, and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2369/32 of 01st February 2024, which was presented on 18.06.2024, be approved.

(Excise Notification No. 03/2024).

Question put and agreed to.

11. 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. 2384/34 of 17th May 2024, which were presented on 18.06.2024, be approved.

Question put and agreed to.

12. Order under the Strategic Development Projects 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 Investment Promotion under Section 3(4) of the Strategic Development Projects Act, No. 14 of 2008 relating to “Dedicated Textile Manufacturing Zone” in Eravur, Batticaloa District and published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2377/41 of 28th March 2024, which was presented on 14.05.2024, be approved.

Question put and agreed to.

13. Resolution under the Essential Public Services 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 that the Proclamation made and Published in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2391/27 of 04th July 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 09.07.2024, be approved.

Question put and agreed to.

14. Adjournment: And it being past 5.30 p.m., Parliament was at 5.32 p.m. adjourned by the Deputy Speaker without Question put.

Parliament adjourned accordingly, until 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, July 11, 2024.