

බන්ධනාගාර දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව  
சிறைச்சாலைகள் திணைக்களம்

**Department of prisons**

ණය සහනදායක මණ්ඩලීය දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව  
கடன் நிவாரண சபை திணைக்களம்

**Department of Debt Conciliation**

ප්‍රජා පාදක වීශේෂිත දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව  
சமுதாயஞ்சார் சீர்திருத்த திணைக்களம்

**Department of Community Based Corrections**



පාර්ලිමේන්තු ප්‍රකාශන මාලා - අංක 95

பாராளுமன்ற வெளியீட்டுத் தொடர் - இல. 95

**Series of Parliamentary Publication - No. 95**

පාර්ලිමේන්තුවේ රජයේ ගිණුම් පිළිබඳ කාරක සභාව විසින් සහාගත කරන ලද වාර්තා සම්බන්ධයෙන්  
ස්ථාවර නියෝග අංක 119(4) යටතේ ගරු අමාත්‍යවරයාගේ නිරීක්ෂණ හා ගනු ලබන පියවර  
පාර්ලිමේන්තුව වෙත ඉදිරිපත් කිරීම

பாராளுமன்றத்தின் அரசாங்க கணக்குகள் பற்றிய குழுவினால் சபாபீடத்தில் வைக்கப்பட்ட அறிக்கைகள் தொடர்பில்  
நிலையியற் கட்டளை இலக்கம் 119(4) இன கீழ் கௌரவ அமைச்சரின் அவதானிப்புக்கள் மற்றும் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்ட நடவடிக்கைகளை பாராளுமன்றத்தில் சமர்ப்பித்தல்

**Submission of observations of Hon. Minister and steps taken with regard to the reports  
Tabled by the Committee on Public Accounts in terms of Standing Order No.119 (4)**

**Present Performance of the Progress in Implementation of the Orders Given in the Working Committee on Public Accounts of Previous Government**

**Calling for Details of - Parliamentary Publication Series No. 95 - Department of Prisons**

No.	Subjects Discussed	Recommendations /Orders of the Accounts Committee	Actions Taken so Far	
			Current Stat	Future Plan
01	Preparing a New Act	<p>Having observed presented matter, Committee directed the Chief Accounting Officer/Accounting Officer of the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms to submit a report including the time frame for the new Prison Act to be prepared and submitted to the Parliament before July 10, 2023.</p> <p>Relevant report has been submitted to the Committee by the letter No.: MOJ/AC/37/11/2023 dated 10.07.2023. of the Secretary of Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reform.</p>	<p>Prison Administrator Bill drafted by the Legal Draftsman was referred to the Attorney General's Department for obtaining the Attorney General's Certificate of Constitutionality. After studying recommendations given by the Attorney General's Department in relation to said draft, the bill and recommendations have been forwarded to the Commissioner General of Prisons to obtain further necessary recommendations/ clarifications. After receiving the report, final draft containing relevant recommendations will be forwarded</p> <p>To the legal draftsman and final bill is due to be received.</p>	A discussion is to be held between the Department of Prisons and the Ministry regarding observations on new bill.
02	Answering audit queries	As per the Audit Act, an audit query should be answered within 21 days, but it has been observed that more than three months have passed to provide answers regarding some audit queries.	Accordingly, answers to the audit queries received for the year 2024 are as following:	
			Subject	No. of Audit Queries
			No. of audit queries to be answered on 01.01.2024	11
			No. of audit queries received in the year 2024	15
			No. of audit queries answered as on 31.07.2024	20
			No. of audit queries to be answered in the year 2024	06
			Answers have been drafted for 02 audit queries out of the 06 audit queries to be answered above and information has been called for the remaining 04 audit queries.	

03	Cadre vacancies	<p>Chief Accounting Officer was instructed to fill existing vacancies as per the approved cadre of the department, and if approved cadre is not adequate the staff should be increased for necessary positions.</p>	<p>After 31.08.2023, following vacancies at the Department of Prisons were to be filled.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By the letter of the Director General of Combined Services No. : 75/10/3970 dated 14.02.2024, the vacancy of Commissioner of Prisons (Human Resource) in Sri Lanka Administrative Service has been filled from 22.02.2024.</li> <li>2. Four officers have been promoted to the post of Commissioner of Prisons by the letter of the Public Service Commission Secretary No.: PSC/APP/07/1286/2018 dated 12.07.2024.</li> <li>3. Six officers have been promoted to the post of Special Grade Superintendent of Prisons by the letter of Public Service Commission Secretary No. : PSC/PRO/07/1945/2023 and dated 16.02.2024.</li> <li>4. Five officers have been promoted to the post of Superintendent of Prisons by the letter of Public Service Commission Secretary No.: PSC/APP/07/2020/2023 and dated 09.08.2024.</li> <li>5. Sixteen officers have been promoted to the post of Assistant Superintendent of Prisons by the letter of Public Service Commission Secretary No: PSC/APP/8/5/106/2019 and dated 02.02.2024.</li> <li>6. Two officers have been promoted to the post of Assistant Superintendent of Prisons (Rehabilitation) by the letter of Public Service Commission Secretary's no: PSC/APP/8/5/78/2021 dated 21.06.2021</li> <li>7. 19 posts of Chief Jailer have been filled by the letter of the Commissioner General of Prisons No: D2/P.J./Appointments dated 05.12.2023.</li> <li>8. Two male and one female officer have been promoted to the post of Chief Rehabilitation Officer by the letter of Commissioner General of Prisons No:D14/P.S.N.(V) and dated 13.03.2024.</li> <li>09. Thirty male and one female officers have been promoted to the post of Jailer Grade 1 by the letter of the Commissioner General of Prisons No: D2/Jailer Appointments/1 (7) dated 06.08.2024.</li> <li>10. Four male and one female officers have been promoted to the post of Rehabilitation Officer Grade 1 by the letter of the Commissioner General of Prisons No: D14/Graden1 promotion to Rehabilitation Officer dated 13.03.2024.</li> <li>11. In addition, below appointments have been made. <table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Class II Jailer</td> <td style="width: 20%;">Male 14 - Female</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">01</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sergeant -</td> <td>Male 30 Female</td> <td style="text-align: right;">02</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Karyala Karya Sahayaka</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">07</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Labour</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">07</td> </tr> </table> </li> </ol>	Class II Jailer	Male 14 - Female	01	Sergeant -	Male 30 Female	02	Karyala Karya Sahayaka		07	Labour		07	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As per the letter of the Commissioner General of Prisons No: D1/70/2001 dated 15.12.2023, my letter no: Moj/PrisonAd/Ad06/ Commissioner / Sri Lanka S.L.A..S.dated 02.01.2024, has referred the Ministry of Public Administration to requests to fill vacancies in the Assistant Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner (Sri Lanka Administrative Service). Since no reply was received to the letter, a another letter was sent on 27.08.2024.</li> <li>2. Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture and Plantation informed by his letter dated 04.01.2024 that an officer will be provided to the Department of Prisons with an approved post of Assistant Director/ Deputy Director (Agriculture,) grade III post of the Sri Lanka Agricultural Service when recruiting new officers of the Sri Lanka Agricultural Service.</li> <li>..</li> <li>3. Applications have been invited as per the approval of my number: PSC/APP/11/8/1/2024 and letter dated 18.06.2024.</li> <li>4. Report has been prepared with recommendations to be submitted to the Public Service Recruitment Review Committee to fill 05 posts of Sub-work Inspector and 05 posts of Work Inspector at the Department of Prisons.</li> <li>5. Future plan regarding recruitment of Prison Guards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conducting physical fitness test.</li> <li>- Processing the results of the physical fitness test.</li> <li>- Conducting Fitness assessment interview.</li> <li>- Sending Results of Fitness-assessment</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Class II Jailer	Male 14 - Female	01														
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		<p>Watcher 08  Motor Drivers 06  Tractor Drivers 01  Three wheel drivers 01</p> <p><b>12. Post of Prison Guard Post- Filling Vacancies</b></p> <p>(i) Gazette notice inviting applications for competitive examination for recruitment of 347 Prison Guards (Male-300, Female-47) as approved by my letter No :MOJ/E008/RECR.CRU/PROCESS and dated 04.01.2023 was forwarded to the Department of Examination on 31.08.2023.</p> <p>ii) Having published in the Government Gazette dated 15.09.2023 and conducted the examination by the Department of Examination on 16.03.2024, the name list of 723 applicants who obtained the highest marks in the examination has forwarded by the Department of Examination.</p> <p>(iii) The practical test for those 723 applicants is scheduled to be conducted on 07 and 08.09.2024 at the Center for Research and Training in Correction, Anuradhapura, Pallekele and Agunukolapalassa Prisons covering Colombo, Anuradhapura, Kandy and Hambantota Districts.</p> <p><b>13.</b> (i) A Cabinet Memorandum was submitted on 10.11.2023 proposing to recruit 500 men and 75 women serving in the Army Volunteer Force for the Emergency Response Tactical Force of the Department of Prisons.</p> <p>(ii) The approval of the Cabinet has been received by the letter of the Secretary to the Cabinet No.: AMPA/24/0237/614/012 dated 20.02.2024. Although approval was sought from the Director General of Management Services by the letter D21/Staff/2012 (Volume 111) dated 28.03.2024 for recruitment of these 575 posts out of sanctioned posts of the Department of Prisons, the Director General of Management Services by his letter no. DMS/114 IX (Provisional iv) dated 27.05.2024 has informed to request after filling existing 417 male posts and 55 female posts in the post of Prison Guard.</p> <p>(iii) Accordingly, only for this occasion , the Public Service Commission Secretary's letter No: PSC/EST/03-07/01/2024 and dated 05.08.2024 has informed for recruitment to the post of Prison Guard outside of the recruitment procedure.</p> <p><b>14.</b> Notice of calling applications for filling following vacancies from Government Service and Semi-Government Service has been forwarded on 31.08.2023to the line ministry to obtain the approval of the Public Service Commission.</p> <p>i .Nursing Officer I  ii. Dispenser  iii. Class II Vocational Instructor  iv. Agriculture Overseer</p>	<p>Test to the Examination Departments  -Recruitment to the post of Prison Guard as per the final result list of the Commissioner General of Examinations.</p> <p>- Call for Prison Apprentice Training.  - Attachment to prison institutions.</p> <p>6. Future plan to recruit officers to the Prisons Emergency Action and Tactical Force of the Department of Prisons.</p> <p>(i) In accordance with the approved recruitment procedure, prepared notice of calling application and the application with the approval of the Commissioner General of Prisons should be prepared and submitted to the Commanding Officer of the Sri Lanka Army Volunteer Corps.</p> <p>(ii) Inviting applications from the Commanding Officer of the Sri Lanka Army Volunteer Corps through internal communication methods. Bringing all applications to the Prison Headquarters after recommendation of the Commanding Officer of the Sri Lanka Army Volunteer Corps.</p> <p>(iii) Screening and computerization of the applications received from the Volunteer Corps and conducting a physical fitness test or endurance test for those applicants</p> <p>(iv) Conducting a fitness assessment interview only for those applicants who pass the Physical Fitness Test or Endurance Test.</p> <p>(v) Selection of the candidates who</p>
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			<p>Accordingly, its progress is given below.</p> <p>(i). Dispenser. Public Service Commission Secretary's letter No. : PSC/EST/03-05/02/2023 and dated 09.03.2024 has approved the recruitment under the limited competitive stream in accordance with the provisions of the recruitment procedures. .Accordingly, by the letter of the Commissioner General of Prisons No.: 14/19.05.2024 and dated 19.05.2024, application notice has been forwarded to all prison institutions, and 10 applications have been received.</p> <p>(ii) Agri Overseer Public Service Commission Secretary's letter No. : PSC/EST/03-05/02/2023 and dated 03.04.2024 had informed that the recruitment should be limited to officers from Government Service and Provincial Government Service only. Accordingly, revised call for applications and model application form have been forwarded to the Ministry by the letter no. 5/23.06.2023 of the Commissioner General of Prisons to forward to the Public Service Commission. Therefore, my No :SMPR&amp;PR/Pr.Ad/02/PrHq/24.07.2024 has informed the Commissioner General of Prisons to call applications for recruitment as per the decision of the Public Service Commission.</p> <p>(iii) Class II Vocational Instructor. Public Service Commission Secretary's letter No.: PSC/EST/03-05/02/2023 and dated 03.09.2024 had informed that recruitment should be limited to the Public Service and Provincial Public Service officers only, and steps were taken again to inquire about the Decision of the Cabinet and the decision of Public Service Commission.</p> <p>(iv) Nurse Public Service Commission Secretary's letter No. : PSC/EST/03-05/02/2023 and dated 09.03.2024 has approved the recruitment under the limited competitive stream in accordance with provisions of the recruitment procedures.</p>	<p>have secured the highest marks in the Fitness Assessment Interview and appointment to the post of Prison Guards.</p> <p>(vi)Providing Prison Guards Apprentice Training</p> <p>(vii)Attachment of officers to Prisons Emergency Action and Tactical Force of the department of Prisons</p> <p>7. Future plan regarding filling up of Nursing Officer vacancies <b>(i) Nursing Officer</b> Applications will be invited from all Prisons. As per the recruitment procedure, 11 vacancies can be filled on a limited basis.</p>
04	Lack of Personnel and Goods Detector Equipments	Chief Accounting Officer /Accounting Officer has been instructed by the Working Committee to prepare statistics /data on technical requirements required to procure for the Prison System as soon as the necessary allocations are available.	<p>(i) . Having identified risks related to existing capacity and security of prison institutions and made an assessment on the requirement of security equipment, a project proposal to be implemented as phase 1 and 2 along with an estimate has been submitted to the Committee on Public Accounts on 25.10.2023.</p> <p>(ii) Also by the letter of the Commissioner General of Prisons No: CGP/04/04/55/2024 and dated 06.08.2024, a proposal with the requirement of security equipment has been forwarded to this Ministry as well steps have been taken to enter into 2025 budget estimate of Department of Prisons.</p>	

05	05. Mobile Phone Signal Jamming System	Committee asked the Chief Accounting Officer/Accounting Officer to do the necessary work with the Army and Telecommunication Regulatory Commission to get the technology to block telephone signals aiming a specific location.	At the Ministry of Defense, the Chief of State Intelligence, Telecommunication Regulatory Commission and all telephone service providers were informed.																																																																																												
06	06. Present State of Relocating Welikada Prison to Another Location		Preliminary work for this project was being carried out by the Urban Development Authority from the year 2021 and by that time the gross estimate was Rs. 26 B. therefore instructions were given to plan to relocate the Colombo Prison Complex so as not to burden the Treasury. As the assessed value of the land where the Colombo prison complex is located was lower than the gross estimated value of the project, the project has been delayed due to the extremely problematic situation regarding the financing of the project.																																																																																												
07	Steps Taken to Reduce Prison Overcrowding	Chief Accounting Officer/ Accounting Officer was advised by the committee to submit a report prepared to the committee showing the prisoners detained in the prisons for not being able to pay the fines separately according to the amount of fines they have to pay and to prepare the necessary legal provisions to direct the prisoners released under the presidential amnesty to community correction.	<p>The report on numerical information of the inmates who are unable to pay the fine as at 20.08.2024</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1104 968 2329 1936"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name of the Institute</th> <th>Less than Rs:5,000/-</th> <th>Between Rs:5,000/- to Rs.10,000/</th> <th>Between Rs.:10,000- to Rs.15,000/</th> <th>Between Rs. 15,000- to Rs.20,000/</th> <th>Over Rs. 20,000/-</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Welikada</td> <td>76</td> <td>84</td> <td>11</td> <td>11</td> <td>28</td> <td>210</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mahara</td> <td>1</td> <td>40</td> <td>4</td> <td>1</td> <td>15</td> <td>61</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bogambara</td> <td>1</td> <td>8</td> <td>15</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Anuradhapura</td> <td>2</td> <td>20</td> <td>6</td> <td>4</td> <td>9</td> <td>41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Magazine</td> <td>20</td> <td>26</td> <td>11</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>58</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Colombo Remand</td> <td>9</td> <td>7</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Angunakolapelessa</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>3</td> <td>0</td> <td>3</td> <td>41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trincomale</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>1</td> <td>5</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kalutara</td> <td>1</td> <td>4</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>3</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kuruvita</td> <td>3</td> <td>97</td> <td>63</td> <td>13</td> <td>7</td> <td>183</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Badulla</td> <td>1</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Galle</td> <td>12</td> <td>11</td> <td>22</td> <td>0</td> <td>12</td> <td>57</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name of the Institute	Less than Rs:5,000/-	Between Rs:5,000/- to Rs.10,000/	Between Rs.:10,000- to Rs.15,000/	Between Rs. 15,000- to Rs.20,000/	Over Rs. 20,000/-	Total	Welikada	76	84	11	11	28	210	Mahara	1	40	4	1	15	61	Bogambara	1	8	15	4	2	30	Anuradhapura	2	20	6	4	9	41	Magazine	20	26	11	1	0	58	Colombo Remand	9	7	2	0	1	19	Angunakolapelessa	17	18	3	0	3	41	Trincomale	4	5	6	1	5	21	Kalutara	1	4	6	6	3	20	Kuruvita	3	97	63	13	7	183	Badulla	1	6	7	0	0	14	Galle	12	11	22	0	12	57	
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Matara	1	4	7	11	2	25
Negombo	6	9	3	2	17	37
Kegalle	0	4	0	2	7	13
Jaffna	0	2	0	1	7	10
Boossa	4	7	0	2	9	22
Monaragala	6	10	1	0	5	22
Pallekele	4	5	0	1	4	14
Polonnaruwa	24	9	1	3	8	45
Weeravila	33	26	1	1	4	65
Pallansena	237	297	33	1	18	586
Thaldena	58	68	13	2	10	151
Vauniya	5	4	0	1	4	14
Ambepussa	43	45	12	0	13	113
Batticolao	1	12	0	3	4	20
Wariyapola	37	23	28	39	12	139
Watareka	29	32	17	3	8	89
Kadurugasara	11	3	0	0	5	19
Total	646	886	272	113	222	2139

1. Amended bill drafted by the legal draftsman to amend Community Correction Act has been submitted to the Attorney General's Department for obtaining the Attorney General's certificate of constitutionality to make necessary legal provisions to direct the prisoners who are released under the presidential amnesty to community correction.

2. Based on the committee's report on home arrest of inmates, the bill drafted by the legal draftsman has been forwarded to the chairman of the relevant committee, the Supreme Court Judge and President's Attorney Mr. Yasanta Kodagoda for supervision.

08	Inability to take judicial action due to not-receiving Analyst's Report	The committee stated that due to the delay in the Analyst's reports, the suspects are not able to get bail and have to remain in remand prison for a long time and therefore, Chief Accounting Officer to the Ministry of Justice has been instructed to discuss with the Treasury to allocate necessary allocation to fill vacancies at Government Analyst's Department by preparing salary scales as suited .	<p>2. Nine vacancies existed in the posts of Government Assistant Annalist -Grade III in Sri Lanka Scientific Service at the Annalist Department, have been filled on 02.09.2024. Related appointment letters have been issued by the Secretary to the Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs Provincial Councils and Local Government by his letter no. MPA/SSD/11/RECRU-2024 dated 21.08.2024.</p> <p>3. Cabinet Memorandum dated 10.09.2024 with no. 2024/Cab Memo/J/ADM/101 was submitted to obtain the approval of the Cabinet for recruitment based on results of a written examination conducted by the Sri Lanka Development Administration Institute, apart from the system of common competitive examinations, for the expeditious filling of 21 vacancies in sixteen (16) posts of Government Assistant Analyst and in five (05) posts of Government Assistant Analyst on Suspicious Documents) in Grade III posts in the Sri Lanka Scientific Service.</p>	
09	The Department does not have a scientific method to ensure recidivism of inmates.	Chief Accounting Officer has been instructed by the Working Committee to pay attention since it is essential to maintain the Prison Information Management System properly, if it is difficult to deploy the necessary provisions for the purchase of the necessary equipment for that system, the committee should choose alternative such as obtaining them on a rental basis.	<p>1. Currently, the prison information management system is active in all prisons. However, to get the expected results from this system, the system must provide real time information. Therefore, necessary arrangements are being made to implement it from 1<sup>st</sup> of September.</p> <p>2. Implementation of basic work required for installation of the Bio-Metrics System to identify prisoners who are repeatedly imprisoned and analysis of necessary equipment is being done.</p> <p>3. Analysis of Information on installation under other Service Provider on which the Prison Information Management System is installed is being under way.</p> <p>4. Selecting a suitable organization to get the necessary support for maintenance of computer network and repairing unserviceable computer networks.</p>	<p>1. Purchase of computers and necessary devices required for the implementation of the Prison Information Management System and distribution to those computer institutions.</p> <p>2. Arranging necessary computer training for the officers working in the prison information management system.</p> <p>3. Installation of Biometric System in prison information management system.</p>
10	Provision of non substandard food to prisoners	The Committee emphasized that in addition to the inquiries conducted by the Auditor General, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Prisons to investigate such matters. The committee pointed out the need to prepare a formal procedure for that.	<p>The following proposals are being implemented to streamline the supply of quality food to prisoners.</p> <p>1. Regular inspection by public health inspectors on raw and dry food items brought by suppliers and food prepared for inmates.</p> <p>2. Arrangements to buy branded food items such as meat and tea leaves.</p> <p>3. Allowing organizations made up of independent public representatives (Prison Inspection Board, Regional Inspection Board) to inspect food and report any deficiencies to the administration.</p> <p>4. In addition, it is expected to carry out a study on existing possibilities to outsource cooked food for prison inmates as done by the prison systems of other countries in the region.</p>	
11	Payments to the Medical Board	The Committee ordered the Chief Accounts Officer of the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs, and Constitutional Reforms to examine the records of the arrival and departure of Medical Officer and the payments made based on that, and send a report on the matter to the Committee before July 10, 2023.	The relevant report has been forwarded to the committee by my letter No:MOJ/AC/37/11/2023 and dated 10.07.2023.	

12	Implementation of recommendations included in the special audit report on “Process of Rehabilitation and Socialization of Prisoners by Providing Custody and Care” issued by the Auditor General.	<p>The working committee ordered the Chief Accounting Officer/ Accounting Officer to the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs, and Constitutional Reforms to forward comments and suggestions on the recommendations and conclusions contained in the above special audit report and action plan if recommendations are intended to be implemented, to the working committee before 25 October 2023</p> <p>. The relevant report has been submitted to the Committee through the letter No: MOJ/AC/37/11-1/2023 and dated 25.10.2023 of the Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms.</p>	The current progress and future plans of the recommendations that were implemented in the action plan are presented herewith as Annexure-01.	
13	Development of a system to motivate prison officers.		<p>(i) As per Circular 19/2014, an allowance of Rs.2,750.00 was given to the prison officers and in relation to the Cabinet Memorandum submitted on 30.05.2024 regarding the increase of that allowance, submitted on 20.06.2024, as per the Cabinet Decision No. 24/1080/614/046, increased allowances of Rs.10,250.00 were paid to the prison officers from 01.07.2024 as per letter number: MOJ/prisonAD/05/prHq/ allowances dated 24.06.2024.</p> <p>(ii) Since the increase in allowances for 297 officers working at the Department of Prisons attached from other services including the Combined Service, was not specified regarding payment, a Cabinet Memorandum dated 22.07.2024 on that subject was submitted by the Commissioner General of Prisons and as informed by the Additional Secretary (Control) regarding the relevant need of the discussion and clarification of the facts made about their service, it has been informed that the consent will be given verbally in relation to the relevant request of letter no.S.W.D./02/Niila Demana/2024 dated 22.08.2024 forwarded to me as informed by the Additional Secretary (Control) in the discussion held with the Commissioner of Prisons (Human Resources) and Commissioner of Prisons (Finance) Management Services Department Director (General) and Budget Director (General)</p>	



## **Department of Prisons**

**Progress in Implementing Recommendations  
of the Special Audit Report for  
Rehabilitation and Socio Reintegration of Prisoners by Providing them with Custody and  
Care.- As at 31.08.2024**



No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
9.1	Expediting action to amend the 140-year-old Prisons Ordinance No.16 of 1877 to bring it up to date with national and international standards (Reference 8.1)	<p>Rules to be made by the Minister of Justice under Section 94 of the Sri Lanka Prisons Ordinance (54) (Rules published in the Gazette No: 7093 dated 19th March 1920) were amended by the special gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No: 2288/15 dated 12.07.2022. Similarly, under this, rules 80, 165, 166, 178, 190, 196, 200, 211, 222, 237-238 have been amended last year. This Ministry has prepared a timeline for the further work in relation to the amendment of this Act and forwarded it to the Public Accounts Committee through my letter No.: MOJ/AC/37/11/2023 and dated 10.07.2023.</p> <p>In addition, discussions was held at the Ministry of Justice on the matters proposed by the Prisons Department to be included in the new Act. Also, the new draft bill has been referred to the Legal Division of the Ministry of Attorney General. Further, the legal department of the Ministry has forwarded to the Commissioner General of Prisons through my letter No: MOJ/L(1)/370/2023 and dated 22.08.2024 requesting to provide observations of the Department of Prisons regarding the new bill.</p>	<p>A discussion is to be held between the Prisons Department and this Ministry regarding the observations related to the new bill. .</p> <p>After sending the observation report related to the new draft by the Department of Prisons, it will be forwarded to the law drafter and the final draft containing the relevant recommendations will be obtained.</p>
9.2	In accordance with accepted international standards and in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 179 of the amendments made in the year 1956 in relation to Article 54 of the Prison Ordinance, immediate steps should be taken to construct the prison wards and buildings with minimum space and facilities for a prisone and to protect the human rights of prisoners.(Reference Para. 8.2)	<p>In 2023, existing approved inmate capacity of the Department of Prisons was 10,395. However, according to the morning opening on 30.08.2024, total number of inmates is 29,094. Accordingly, there is 279.8% overcrowding in prison institutions as a whole and this amount varies from prison institution to institution.</p>	<p>I. Accordingly, considering the amount of space available on prison premiseses, in the past few years, necessary measures have been taken to construct 107 cells in Bussa Prison and to construct 07 pre-fabricated prison wards in Wariyapola, Mahara, Kalutara, and New Magazin prisons using the allocations from the budget.</p> <p>II. Further, construction of 04 new two-storied prison buildings (08 wards) in Pallansena Prison has been completed so far and only the construction of sewage systems is under construction.</p> <p>III. The dilapidated wards have also been renovated under the project of turn Weerawila Work Camp into a rehabilitation center for drug addiceds.</p> <p>IV. In addition,as a remedy to vercrowding in the Colombo Prison Complex, planning and design work of the project to relocate the prison complex to Horana Millewa has been carried out</p> <p>As decided in the discussion held with the participation of the National Building Research Institute and other relevant officials on the modernization of dilapidated buildings in Kalutara Prison, the proposal to remove these buildings and rebuild them as parts was presented to make provisions for the 2025 budget estimate.</p> <p>II. The National Building Research Organization has given instructions and plans regarding the renovation of Welikada Chapel Section and D Ward Complex in its Report No.: NBRO/PMD/CR-80 A/2016/2017. Accordingly, the quantity sheets required to carry out related repairs have been prepared and a lot of money has to be allocated on that. As . this land is proposed to be relocated, provision for relacation is to be proposed as well.</p> <p>III. Allocation of funds and starting further work of Wariyapola Prison expansion project through the 2025 budget</p> <p>NOR Committee Appovel was taken for expediting construction of wards and building for special type prisoners and young offenders at Pallekele Prison and further work is to be done for the time frame of 2025-2027 with the necessary Cabinet approval.</p> <p>Furthermore, project of constructing security wall of Wataraka Prison and constructing its residential buildings has also been proposed and submitted for the budget estimat 2025.</p>

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations		Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
			<p>Project has been implemented by the Urban Development Authority and in view of the prevailing economic crisis, the Urban Development Authority has temporarily suspended construction of new projects as per the Ministry of Finance circular. In accordance with the international standards and the provisions of the Prison Ordinance, attention has been paid in planning and design work to provide with minimum space and facilities for a prisoner.</p> <p>In accordance with the international standards and the provisions of the Prison Ordinance, attention has been paid in the planning and design work to provide the minimum space and facilities for a prisoner.</p>	

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations		Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
				IV. Also, attention would be paid on this matter when constructing new prisons (specialy Colombo Prison Complex Relocation Project) and planning and design work of accomodating inmates are done as per relevant standards and regulations. .
9.3	According to the provisions of Chapter 178 of the amendments made in the year 1956 in relation to Section 54 of the Prisons Ordinance in accordance with accepted international standards, measures should be taken to classify and detain each category of prisoners separately according to the facilities of the prison (Reference Para. 8.3)	1. The classification of inmates into male and female, convicted and suspect, youth inmates, death penalty, life sentences, drug addicts and special density inmates is currently being done.		
9.4	Reopening a center like the Correctional Center for the Rehabilitation of Young Offenders in Wathupitipala -Gampaha, which is currently closed, and rehabilitating young offenders by detaining them separately. (Reference Para 8.4)	Youth detainees aged 16-22 who are referred to the Prisons Department by the Youth Detainee Training College Ordinance are detained at the Youth Detainee Training College at Wataraka for a period of 03 years on a detention order granted by the court. It, also runs a government school.		1. No need to implement these recommendations has arisen.
9.5	Taking measures to reduce prison congestion by expediting acquisition of land proposed to be acquired for new facilities to restore and maintain dilapidated prisons, wards and buildings and carry out constructions acquired under the prison relocation project in a standardized manner in accordance with the present, local and international standards. (Reference Para. 8.5.1.8.5.2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Renovation of dilapidated prison cells, wards and buildings are prioritized based on amount of allocation annually by the budget and using prison labor.</li> <li>2 Also, work has been done to renovate dilapidated prison cells, wards and buildings under the sponsorship of organizations like the International Red Cross,.</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Expediting ongoing project to rehabilitate the Colombo Prison Complex in Horana Millawa area.</li> <li>2 Budget allocation -2025 for Wariyapola Prison expansion project</li> <li>3 Allocation from 2025 budget for t construction of remaining prison buildings at Pallekele New Dumbara Prison.</li> <li>4 Accomplishing basic activities required to carry out next steps for relocation of prison institutions such as Matara, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Vavuniya, Galle which are identified to be relocated.</li> </ol>

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
9.6	To reduce the cost of construction of the headquarters office building and to reduce the congestion in the headquarters office premises (Reference Para.8.5.4)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Construction work of the relevant building has already been completed and necessary work has been done to reduce congestion in the office premises of the Prison Headquarters.</li> <li>2 The Planning Division and Engineering Division of the Prisons Department have been established in this new building</li> </ol>	-
9.7	Taking steps to expedite and finalize appeals filed by prisoners in consultation with courts (Reference Para 8.6)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Since the Department of Prison does not have an authority to influence the judicial affairs, arrangements have been made to inform the Ministry about need for this.</li> <li>2 Ministry has already increased the number of appeal court judges from 12 to 20 and number of appellate courts from 06 to 10 in order to speed up the work related to appeals.</li> <li>3 Necessary arrangements have also been made to conduct appeal related proceedings using technology.</li> </ol>	1 Prisons Department is not in a position to implement this recommendation.
9.8	By taking steps to establish a court in the prison and using modern technology such as tele-conference, possibility of taking action on the cases of the prisoners without taking them to the court. (Reference para 6-8)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. At present, all prison institutions have provided with necessary facilities to conduct court proceedings through video technology.</li> <li>II. UNODC is working to build rooms with full video conference facilities in prisons of the Southern Province. Providing laptops and computer screens for prisons in Galle, Matara and Agunacolapalassa. Phase 1 is the development of other necessary infrastructure in Agunacolapalassa prison.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Making legal provisions to promote court proceedings through video technology. A development proposal for this has also been submitted to finance under the KOICA project.</li> <li>2 Proposals have also been submitted for the budget estimate 2025 to obtain the necessary financial facilities to establish the infrastructure of prison institutions and courts in a formal manner.</li> </ol>
9.9	Trying to minimize government expenses by looking into the possibility of handing over elderly prisoners to their guardians due to aging and diseased conditions, prisoners suffering from incurable and chronic diseases, making recommendations and taking action. (Ref. 8.7)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 A committee has been appointed to make recommendations in reducing sentences and the granting of special amnesty to problematic short-term prisoners. Committee also takes chronically ill prisoners into consideration and provide with needed recommendations. The number of cases directed to the ministry for approval is 124, out of which the medical conditions of 32 prisoners have been considered.</li> <li>2 Impossibility to recommend to release of prisoners simply because of old age and chronic diseases.</li> <li>3 The Department of Prisons has submitted the Medical Board appointed by the Ministry of Health under Prison Rule 80 to get recommendations regarding the release of sick prisoners. Five prisoners have already been submitted to the medical board but recommendation have not been made by the medical board.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 As it has been informed by the Minister of Justice from his letter no. MOJ/L8/RGM/2021 dated 02.08.2023 that relevant committee had been dissolved, no further work has been done in this regard.</li> <li>2 A committee has been appointed to study the possibility of releasing elderly and bed ridden inmates through the Circular for Releasing inmates by Licensing Board.</li> </ol>

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
9.10	Focusing on the preparation and implementation of a long-term rehabilitation plan to direct the prisoners to a continuous rehabilitation process and thus taking measures to reduce residivism and prison escapes. (Ref. Para 8.8.1)	<p>1 Having realized the need of work in the five-year plan of the Department of Prisons, the committee appointed for that purpose has prepared a rehabilitation plan and a method of appreciation and implemented.</p> <p>2 When presenting to Committee of Granting Pardon to inmates, this review has been related.</p>	
9.11	Since most of the prisoners who are imprisoned annually are under the age of 40, special attention should be paid to their rehabilitation, and a formal program should be prepared and implemented to obtain their labor to contribute to the development of the country. (Reference Para 8.8.2)	<p>1 According to the Prison Statistics - 2022, 64% of prison inmates are under the age of 40. Also, on the data of the year 2022 indicated that 71.8% of inmates in prison have been imprisoned for drug-related offenses. Therefore, implementation of "Ama Divi Rithma" program has been started in 09 prison institutions to rehabilitate such convicts. Under this program, inmates are provided with counselling, medical treatment, spiritual development, consciousness, all religious programs, agricultural therapy, educational activities (formal and informal), vocational guidance, life skills, coping with adversity, rehabilitation and therapeutic programs such as sports.</p> <p>Inmates under the age of 40 are detained in Taldena, Weerawila, Pallansena prisons.</p> <p>2 Also, all inmates are provided with vocational training to contribute to development of the country's workforce. After socio intergrating, vocational training will give them the opportunity to engage in employment and to contribute to the country's workforce. Provideing vocational assistance to prisoners is also carried out.</p> <p>3 As identified in the Department of Prisons's five-year plan, efforts have been made to effectively contribute prisoners labor to country's labor force in accordance with provisions of the Prison Ordinance and the Department of Prisons's Circulars. In this way, they get a salary for the labor they provided, and they also earn a certain percentage of daily maintenance costs of the government based on the amount of their salary that is credited to the government's income. Also, they are working to give some contribution to their welfare activities through their labor in this method. Several such projects are already underway and proposals for such projects have also been submitted. This professional skill will open the opportunity for them to get a job opportunity in the institution itself during their socialization.</p> <p>4 Also, necessary arrangements have been made to call for proposals for public private partnership projects.</p>	

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
9.12	Since the majority of the inmates have passed only up to grade 08, planning and implementing a systematic education program to improve their literacy (Reference Para 8.8.3)	<p>According to the Prison Statistics 2022, 64% of the prison inmates have learned to grade 08 or below. Therefore, programs are implemented at prison level to improve their educational level. Under this method, formal and non-formal education programs will be implemented while inmates have a chance to sit for G.E.C.(O/L) and G.C.E. A/L) examinations.</p> <p>In addition, opportunities have been opened for English language learning and Dhamma school education. Therefore, inmates have been directed to sit for Dhamma School Final Examination and Dharmacharya Exams.</p> <p>At present, the Department of Prison has made arrangements to sit inmates for higher education as well.</p>	1 Formalization of holding literacy classes to inmates to improve the literacy under resource contribution of the non-formal education unit of the Ministry of Education.
9.13	Making necessary legal provisions to use a part of the profit earned from the sale of industrial and agricultural products produced by the labor of prisoners for the welfare of prisoners (Reference Para 8.8.5)	<p>1 Profit earned under the Agricultural and Industrial Advance Account is credited to the Government Revenue. The opportunity has arisen to improve vocational skills of the inmates through this account, . Also, payments will be made under this account for prisoners participating in related industries.</p> <p>2 Funds for inmate welfare are allocated under the Department of Prisons Welfare Fund Act No. 18 of 1973 of the National Assembly and the Department of Prisons Welfare Fund (Amendment) Act No. 54 of 1979 of the Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.</p> <p>3 The profit earned under the Agricultural and Industrial Advance Account is credited to the government revenue and since the government itself makes provision for the welfare of the prisoners, it is not necessary to allocate a portion of the profit to this fund..</p>	1 Department of Prisons is of the opinion that since the government also allocates provisions for welfare of prisoners, it is not necessary to use a part of profit earned from the sale of industrial and agricultural products which is credited to the government revenue. Accordingly, this recommendation will not be implemented.
9.14	Actions should be taken to transfer prisoners who are not considered as criminals imprisoned for a short period of time to another correctional center so that they can be referred to a rehabilitation process instead of being imprisoned with other prisoners. (Ref. Para.8.9)	<p>1 Those who have been imprisoned for a short period of time (without being able to pay fine, compensation or bail) for this type of crime are referred by the court for community-based correction. Cabinet approval</p> <p>2 Drug addicts are referred to rehabilitation by courts to institutions under the Office of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation</p>	A committee has been appointed by the ministry under the chairmanship of a Hon.Supreme Court Judge to study about proposed home confinement on this regards. Committee has studied about proposal and submitted committee recommendations and drafter of the relevant laws has drafted (basic draft) and submitted it for the observation of the ministry. Similarly, it has been requested to coordinate with ICTA, Sri Lanka Police, Prisons Department and other service providers and experts regarding electronic monitoring methodology and capabilities and give advice on them.

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
9.15	Taking action to prevent the possibility of any illegal activity in the prison for every prisoner by working to introduce a strong internal control system to prevent substances or other equipments prohibited for use within prison premises from being brought into the prisons, implement and use modern equipment and protect the accountability in the institution searches.(Ref. para.8.10)	<p>1 An internal control system has been implemented and developed here by serious criminals involved in drug trafficking within the prisons are restricted from their ability to communicate with each other and are kept in 107 cells in the Bussa High Security Prison to control intrusions through a security camera system and also the Police Special Task Force has deployed to check all officers and parcels entering the prison.</p> <p>2 a) Mobile phone jammers have been installed at Colombo Prison Complex, Agunakolapalassa, Bussa, Kalutara, Negombo, Mahara Prisons.</p> <p>b) The security camera system has already been installed covering the Colombo Prison Complex, Welikada, New Magazine, Colombo remand, women's Ward and the prison hospital at various levels.</p> <p>3 Security camera systems have been installed for prisons in Agunakolapalassa, Bussa, Kalutara, Negombo and Mahara.</p> <p>4 Support of the Police Special Task Force for the strengthening of external security of prisons, surveillance of officers/visitors entering the prison, inspection of parcels and other materials brought into the prison, protection of prison inmates and supervision of CCTV camera systems and telephone signal barriers at Boosa, Angunacolapalassa and Colombo Prison Complexes.</p> <p>5 An unit called the Emergency Response Tactical Force has been established at the Department of Prisons and 194 officers have been recruited and assigned to prison service after training. The Emergency Response Tactical Force officers have been assigned to prisons after training. Therefore, instead of the police special task force, officers of Emergency Response Tactical Force have performed outside duties in the Colombo Prison Premises and Agunakolapalassa Prison Premises.</p> <p>6 Strengthening work of the Prison Pmergency Response Tactical Force officers through purchasing Non linear Junction Detectors and Hand held non linear Junction Detectors to identify electronic devices hidden in prisons and in inmates and outsiders.</p> <p>7 Provision of a Quodcopter with Day &amp; Night camera for Emergency Response Tactical Force to identify inmates participating in various illegal riots or hunger strikes in prisons.</p> <p>8 UNODC has also arranged essential equipment such as security cameras, hand held metal detectors, convex mirrors for searching vehicles and mobile phone detectors.</p>	<p>1 As per instructions given in the Public Accounts Committee held on 09.06.2023, the need for modern technical security equipment has been identified and a cost estimate has been prepared and submitted to the committee .</p> <p>2 A project report with proposals to make provisions for obtaining modern technical equipment through the medium-term budget framework of 2025-2027 has been forwarded to the ministry and has been included in the 2025 budget estimate.</p>

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
9.16	A system must be implemented to subject all external parties, including prison staff officers, who enter the prisons to a mandatory check regardless of their rank and taking measures to investigate the possibility of using other experienced and specially skilled security officers who are not prison officers. (Reference para. 8.10.6)	<p>1 In the past years, the assistance of the Police Special Task Force was used in Bussa, Angunacolapalassa Prisons and Colombo Prison Complex to check all parties including prison officials/visitors entering prisons. Officers of the Police Special Task Force have been deployed to inspect all parties including prison officers/visitors entering the Bussa High Security Prison, and to supervise operation of technical equipment such as CCTV and Jammers.</p> <p>2 Establishing a unit called The Sri Lanka Prisons Emergency Action and Tactical Force (SPEAT FORCE) in the Department of Prisons and recruiting 194 officers for that purpose and assigning them after training for prison service. At present, the officers of the Sri Lanka Prisons Emergency Action and Tactical Force are assigned to inspect all parties including prison officers/visitors entering the prison, supervise the operation of CCTV, Jammer and other technical equipment and they were recruited to the Department of Prisons after 12 years of service in the Sri Lanka Armed Forces. After giving training to officers who left the service regularly. Officers have been directed to supervise at Dumbara, Angunacolapalassa, Magazine, Colombo Remand, Welikada, Women's Ward, and Mahara Prisons.</p>	1. Department of Prisons has implemented this recommendation.
9.17	Taking steps to minimize prison escapes by instilling inmates' confidence in the prison process by building a positive mind among officers, and maximize the number of re-arrests by monitoring the re-arrest process. (Reference para 8.11)	<p>1 Introducing new programs of rehabilitating inmates (Sathi Pasala, Ama Divi Rhythm Program, religious programs, arts and entertainment programs, reading exercises, vocational training programs, prison craft exhibition, art exhibitions, power camps, poetry launches etc.) )</p> <p>2 In addition to the training provided to officers by Department of Prisons , technical training related to prison administration such as minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners (Nelson Mandela rules), dynamic security, contingencies planning, incident management, use of new technology, jointly with organizations such as ICRC and UNODC. Arrangements have been made to provide</p> <p>3 Taking steps to form the Sri Lanka Prisons Emergency Action and Tactical Force, analysis of intelligence information as well as deploy officers for escorting.</p> <p>4 In the monthly discussion with Superintendent of Prisons, informing about the issues that need to be paid attention to, such as risky situations, measures to be taken to strengthen security.</p>	1 The Department of Prisons has implemented this recommendation.
9.18	Working together with the court to detain those who are guilty of drugs, to another correctional center instead of detaining them with other prisoners.	1. According to the Prison Statistical Reports of the year 2021, 74.1% of inmates in prison are incarcerated for drug-related offenses. Therefore, in order to separate and rehabilitate such prisoners from other prisoners, the "Ama Divi Rithma" program has been started in 09 prison institutions ."Ama Divi Rithma". Let's Get Out Together	1 The Department of Prisons has implemented this recommendation.

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
	(Reference Para 8.12.2)	<p>Program is implemented in Ambepussa, Thaldena, Weerawila, Pallansena, Pallekele, Anuradhapura, Kandewatta, Dumbara and Mahara prisons.</p> <p>Under the program, inmates are provided with counselling, medical treatment.</p>	

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
		<p>Sathimathbawa, spiritual development, all religious programs, agricultural therapy, educational activities (formal and informal), vocational guidance, life skills, facing risks, rehabilitation and therapeutic programs.</p> <p>Drug addicts are ordered by courts to send to institutions under of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation for rehabilitation.</p> <p>2.A task force to prevent the use of narcotics and dangerous drugs has been established under the patronage of the Hon'ble Minister of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms, and the Minister of Public Security and with the participation of the Commander of Navy, and with the membership of relevant Ministry of Justice, Ministries of Health, Defense, Education, Attorney General and Police etc. Therefore, it is due to be considered to future steps regarding the prison congestion that has arisen in connection with the imprisonment of drug addicts</p>	
9.19	Taking action for a legal amendment to bring the age limit of children who are incarcerated with women to less than 05 years. (Ref. para. 8.13)	1 According to provisions of the revised section 165 (1)-(7) and 166 of the Prison Ordinance Act, activities are currently being carried out for the admission of children under 05 years of age.	1. Department of Prisons has implemented this recommendation.
9.20	The implementation of the prison information management system, which has been introduced for about 5 years, should be expedited in all prison institutions and the expected results should be achieved. (Ref. para. 8.14)	All prison institutions have already completed networking and prepared the basic infrastructure necessary to implement the prison information management system. At present, only daily prison registration, prison transfer, court presentations and release activities are done through this system in all prison institutions.	The order has been awarded to procure 68 of the 400 computers necessary to implement the Prison Information Management System in prisons within the allocation limit of Rs.50 M. As it is not possible to meet this entire computer requirement quickly based on the amount of allocation provided by the budget, requests have already been made to meet this requirement through other foreign grants (JURE/ UNODC/KOICA). Also, the basic work related to connecting the biometric data system which needs to be connected with this system is being done and it is planned to fulfill the related requirement in 2025.
9.21	Possibility of reducing government expenses on inmates through preventing inmates from possible diseases by means of creating a clean and pleasant environment in prison wards and cells, paying more attention to their hygiene, reducing the suffering caused by animals such as mice and bugs, and preventing diseases that can affect health of prisoners (Reference para. 8.15.1)	Provisions have been made for the years 2022 and 2023 with the purpose of creating a clean and pleasant environment in prison wards and cells and improving inmates' hygiene.  Through this, the construction and repair of toilets, drain systems, showers, toilets, sewage systems in prison institutions are done. In the year 2022, 100. Million RS. of allocation has been used to repair 291 toilets in prison institutions and 46 new toilets have also been constructed. 36 new disabled toilets For disabled residents have also been constructed in prison institutions.	Arrangements have been made to start the repair work of Boussa, Angunacolapalassa sewage system within the allocation limit of Rs.400.0 million allocated for the year 2024. Estimate for repairing sewage system at Bogambara Prison has been received and arrangements have been made to give the money to the National Water Supply and Sewerage Board.

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
		<p>Also, painting and repairing wards were carried out in collaboration with organizations like the ICRC.</p> <p>Also, the Ministry of Health has appointed a medical officer for the post of Deputy Director (Prison Health) of the Department of Prisons. In addition, 07 public health inspectors are employed. They inspect the hygiene and health of the inmates and carry out the necessary further work.</p>	<p>Toilets repairing and other construction works are carried out at prison level and the National Water Supply and Sewerage Board has carried out field inspections and given estimates for planning and designing the construction of sewage systems in Wariyapola, Negombo, Kuruvita and Polennaruwa Prisons. Necessary arrangements have been made to obtain the approval. Implementation of necessary measures for the control of flies, bugs, mosquitoes and rats from time to time at prisons level under the supervision of Public Health Inspectors.</p>
9.22	<p>By taking measures to increase prison wages paid to inmates based on rates of a circular more than 34 years old, in a way that suits the present, to pay a fair wage and to give more opportunities prisoners who go free to live as good citizens in the society. (Refe. para 8.15.2)</p>	<p>As per Circular 64/82 dated 15th November 1982 for Prisoners who are employed in industries, prison wages are paid as following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For Grade 1 - Rs. 1.00</li> <li>• For Grade 2 - Rs.1.50</li> <li>• For Grade 3 - Rs..2.00</li> <li>• For Grade 4 - Rs..2.50</li> </ul> <p>As identified in the five-year plan of the Department of Prisons and since these prison wages have not been increased periodically for more than 40 years, the committee appointed to study the necessary matters and recommendations, has given recommendations to pay prison wages as following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For Grade 1 -Rs.10.00</li> <li>• For Grade 2 - Rs.15.00</li> <li>• For Grade3 - Rs.20.00</li> <li>• For Grade4 - Rs.25.00</li> </ul>	<p>Accordingly, as government spends a lot of money on a prison inmate, this recommendation is not necessary to be implemented at this time because the Secretary to the Ministry has given instructions in a discussion held in the Ministry No.: SMPRPR/PRI/07/ State Account Committee Reports and the letter dated 12.09.2023, this recommendation isnot being implemented.</p>
9.23	<p>Implementation of a system to gather information on prisoners expected to release from prison, such as existance of life, residivism, nature of the crime, and time spent in prison. (Reference para 8.16.1)</p>	<p>As there is no obligation to the Department of Prisons to collect information relating to life existance and information on released prisoners, information will not be collected . Information on residivism, length of imprisonment and the nature of the offense is collected at the prison institution level and analyzed by the Statistics Division of the department and published annually in the Statistical Report.</p>	<p>Progress and future plans of the work carried out in relation to establishment and integration of a biometric data system into the inmate information system are given under Sub No. 09 of the Parliamentary Publication Series No. 95.</p>
9.24	<p>Taking action to continue to implement an existing system to ease the punishment period of long-term sentenced prisoners. (Reference 8.16.2)</p>	<p>1. Committees have been appointed to make recommendations to be considered for grant of special amnesty to long term prisoners. This committee should submit its recommendations to the Ministry.</p> <p><b><u>Long term prisoners -</u></b> No. submitted to the President Secretariat -154</p>	<p>1 Identify the deficiencies in this mechanism and appoint a suitable committee to take further action in this regard.</p>
9.25	<p>To fill the vacancies of officers and create necessary environment to carry out daily duties of prison institutions without interruption and to encourage and train prison officers to provide</p>	<p>1 During the last few years, steps were taken to fill several vacancies existedat the Department of Prisons.</p> <p><b>Prisons Emergency Action and Tactical Force – 194</b></p>	<p>1 Related progress is given under Parliamentary Publication Series 95 Sub no. 03 Filling of Staff Vacancies.</p>

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
	excellent public service and to take action to prepare a new Service Minute for distinguished prison service (Reference Para.8.17.1)	Prison Guard - 788 Jailor - 72 Rehabilitation Officer -14	

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement												
		<p>2 The approval of the Ccommittee Headed by the Secretary to the Prime Minister has been obtained to fill following vacancies.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Prison Guard</td> <td>347</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nurse</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vocational Instructor (Grade 111 )</td> <td>69</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dispnsar</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agri Oversear</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Driver</td> <td>22</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Prison Guard</b> As approval given bythe letter of my no. :MOJ/E008/RECR.CRU/PROCESS and dated 01.04.2023, gazette notice for calling up applications for the competitive examination to recruit 347 Guards has been submitted to the Departmrnt of Examination. The notification for inviting applications prepared for filling up the following vacancies from people engaged in public and semi-public service has been forwarded to the Ministry for the approval of the Public Service Commission.</p> <p>Nurse Dispenser Vocational Instructor Agri Oversear</p> <p>3 A new Service Minute has been drafted naming the prison service as “Correctional Service”. It has been forwarded to this Ministry for approval and then forwarded to the Prisons Department for re-review of certain matters. The committee has also been appointed to carry out related reviews.</p>	Prison Guard	347	Nurse	38	Vocational Instructor (Grade 111 )	69	Dispnsar	27	Agri Oversear	28	Driver	22	
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9.26	In order to encourage prison officers and to reduce the earning of money illigal ways, introducing an incentive sysytem based on efficiency and the nature of duty and value added to the department (value added) insted of existing sysytem of nature of duty and leave. (Reference Para. 8.17.2)	<p>1 Minister of Justice submitted a Cabinet Memorandum dated 22.12.2020 to obtain allowance of 40% from the basic salary of officers of the Department of Prisons and it was decided on 18.01.2021 to submit recommendations of the National Salary Commission and letter was sent to that commission. A discussion was held on 22.02.2021 to get further explanations related to it and the National Pay Commission had requested a month for further study. Further, as remaining allowances (Good Conduct Allowance, Risk Allowance, Health Allowance etc.) given to Jail Officers should be increased from time to time, a committee has been appointed to study and provide a report on demand A discussion was held on 22.02.2021 to get further explanations onnthat matter and the National Salay Commission had requested a month for further study.</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p>	1. Progress of actions taken in relation to this is given under Sub-No-13 of the Parliamentary Publication Series No: 95.												

No.	Recommendations	Progress to the date of 31.08.2024 Implementing Recommendations	Advance Program/ Proposal to Implement
9.27	Taking steps to improve efficiency of officers by means of repairing dilapidated quarters, completing shortcoming in unsafe office premises with less facilities and very old equipment and solving the problems of the officers' barracks infested with less facilities and bedbugs. (Reference para.8.17.3)	Within allocation limit of the year 2023, preliminary work has been started to repair dilapidated quarters of the Colombo Prison Complex.  In the future, it is expected to continue these activities by temporarily evacuating, according to the priority, residents from other quarters as well.	Within the allocated allocation for the year 2023/2024, quarters 63/1-63/8 belonging to the Colombo Prison Complex have been repaired and completed and a new barrack for SPEAT Forec has been completed. Also, proposals have been made to make provision through the 2025 budget estimate for official quarters and barrack facilities in Pallansena, Negombo and Bussa Prisons.
9.28	As compared to the Minimum Standards of the United Nations for the Treatment of Prisoners, the condition of the prisons in Sri Lanka is very low, so protecting those standards by trying to reach those standards as much as possible. (Ref. Para. 8.2, 8.3, 8.8, 8.10, 8.13, 8.15)	Action has been taken together with the ICRC to hold awareness programs and training workshops to educate Superintendent of Prisons and Jailors on this matter.  Together with ICRC, preparation of guidelines for Sri Lanka Prisons called "Prison Brief" that include international rules and local rules is in its final stage. Officers have been briefed on how to meet and maintain UN minimum standards for treatment of prisoners. Also, while planning all new constructions, new buildings have been constructed in accordance with internationally accepted standards.	Providing minimum standards for prisoners is problematic in existing infrastructure because most of prisons do not have enough land to expand. Also, the number of prisoners is increasing daily. Since there are a large number of drug-related offenders among them, a discussion was held with the ministry about the possibility of detaining those offenders separately and given this situation, the prison administration is not in a position to provide the minimum standards to the prisoners. This has been taken into account in planning and design new constructions and an important publication that has been drafted to maintain these standards is drafted to print in collaboration with ICRC.

**Calling for information of the current performance in respect of the progress achieved in the implementation of the directions being given at the Pre-Public Accounts Committee Meeting**  
**Parliamentary Publication Serial Number : 95 - Department of Debt Conciliation**

Key points discussed	Committee's observations/recommendations/directions	Progress in implementation of directions
<p>1. Lack of awareness on the operation of the Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making the people aware of through Grama Niladharis and Samurdhi Development Officers.</li> <li>• Preparing a model debt conciliation application form and providing the general public with instruction leaflets specifying relevant information such as available debt conciliations, phone numbers of branch offices and thereby setting up a proper system to make the general public aware of the same.</li> <li>• Distributing instruction leaflets to those who have taken loans from informal means rather than from state banks/financial institutions in remote areas where branch offices are not currently functioning, along with the application to be submitted seeking reliefs from the Debt Conciliation Board and subsequently conducting mobile services.</li> <li>• Formulating a system to collect debt conciliation applications through District Secretariats/Divisional Secretariats and forward them to the concerned branch office with the recommendation of the relevant Divisional Secretary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the direction given at the meeting of the Committee on Public Accounts held on 09/06/2023, notice letters were sent on 27/06/2023 to all the District Secretaries requesting for opportunity to conduct awareness programs and on such invitation received, awareness programs were conducted at the Divisional Secretariats.</li> <li>• In addition to this, the Ministry of Justice and other government agencies have participated in island-wide programs in ensuring public awareness and have done the necessary activities to educate the public.</li> <li>• Further, necessary activities were carried out to raise public awareness by means of participation in television programs, press conferences and mobile services, and such activities are still being carried out. (Description given below.)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Awareness programs</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Press conference held at the Auditorium of the Ministry of Justice on 23.03.2023.</li> <li>II. Colombo District Secretariat on 08.07.2023.</li> <li>III. Awareness programs at the District Secretariat, Kalutara for Grama Niladharis and Field Officers on 25.07.2023.</li> <li>IV. Awareness programs at the Divisional Secretariat, Colombo for Grama Niladharis in the area on 04.08.2023.</li> <li>V. Awareness programs at the Divisional Secretariat, Tissamaharama for Grama Niladharis and Field Officers on 07.08.2023.</li> <li>VI. Awareness programs at District Secretariat, Polonnaruwa for Grama Niladharis and Field Officers in the area on 14.09.2023.</li> <li>VII. Colombo District Secretariat - District Secretaries' Conference on 16.09.2023.</li> <li>VIII. Awareness programs at District Secretariat, Matale for Divisional Secretaries, Grama Niladharis and Field Officers in the area on 21.09.2023.</li> <li>IX. Participation in the mobile service program conducted by the Ministry of Justice on 22.09.2023 at the Maharagama National Youth Services Council premises to celebrate International Peace Day.</li> <li>X. Educating the Grama Niladharis, Teachers, the general public and non-governmental organizations at the mobile service program conducted at WP/Jaya Weragoda Vidyalaya, Wellampitiya on 05.10.2023.</li> <li>XI. Educating the Grama Niladharis and Field Officers in the area at Divisional Secretariat, Mallawapitiya on 30.10.2023.</li> <li>XII. Educating the Divisional Secretaries, Grama Niladharis and Field Officers at the District Secretariat, Kurunegala on 14.11.2023.</li> <li>XIII. Attending at the Legal Aid Workshop conducted by the University of Colombo on 25.04.2024 at the Municipal Council Hall, Negombo.</li> <li>XIV. Educating the Grama Niladharis and Field Officers at Divisional Secretariat, Kaduwela on 13.09.2024.</li> </ol>

**Television programs**

- i** Aluth Dinaka program over the National Rupavahini on 17.07.2023 at 07.00 a.m.
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**Press conference**

- I. Aruna Newspaper dated 30.04.2023.
- II. Dinamina Newspaper dated 13.06.2023.  
Newspaper
- III. Monara Newspaper dated 15.09.2024

- In coincidence with the establishment of branch offices, posters were distributed to each Divisional Secretariat to be displayed in the offices of the Grama Niladharis of the districts and such posters have now been displayed there.
- UNDP has agreed to provide funding for awareness programs. A communication expert has been appointed to study how to carry out those programs, and studies in respect thereof are now in progress.
- Letters were sent to the District Secretaries on 30.06.2023 seeking their approval for giving opportunity to educate the Grama Niladharis through the Divisional Secretaries, and accordingly awareness programs were conducted.

- I. Divisional Secretariat, Colombo on 04.08.2023.
- II. Divisional Secretariat, Tissamaharama on 07.08.2023
- III. Divisional Secretariat, Mallowapitiya on 30.10.2023

Further, on 16.08.2024, letters have been sent to 23 Divisional Secretariats located in 04 Districts where the branch offices are operating and to the Sri Lanka Police College, Kalutara, requesting for an opportunity to conduct awareness. Pursuant to which, police trainees will be informed of the same in the future.

Awareness programs have been conducted at the Divisional Secretariats on such given dates. Further, according to the said letter, several other Divisional Secretariats have been given the opportunity to conduct awareness programs after the Presidential Election.

- I. Educating the Grama Niladharis and Field Officers at the Divisional Secretariat on 13.09.2024.

- The application form of the Debt Conciliation Board and the instruction sheet for filling them have been uploaded to the Internet and leaflets containing phone numbers and relevant information are distributed at the branch offices during the awareness programs and mobile services that we are to conduct.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This year, there have been no sufficient allocations for conducting awareness programs in remote areas and the allocations have been requested from the budget estimates of 2025 emphasizing those facts.</li> <li>• The Divisional Secretariats have been made aware of the need to refer the disputes referred to them once again to such Divisional Secretariats. Accordingly, such applications are received by the respective branch offices.</li> </ul>																																				
<p>2. Establishment of regional branch offices and approval of cadre requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making arrangements to establish branch boards of the Debt Conciliation Board covering all 25 districts.</li> <li>• Establishment of branch offices covering 9 Provinces as an initial step in the establishment of branch offices. (For the remaining 6 Provinces in addition to the 3 Provinces where branch offices have already been established.)</li> <li>• The Committee directed the Chief Accounting Officer of the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms to submit a report to the Committee before 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 on the establishment of new regional branch offices and the measures taken to approve the required cadre for regional branch offices.</li> </ul> <p>The relevant report has been submitted to the Committee by the letter No. DCB/AC/37/11/2023 dated 10.07.2023 of the Secretary to the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although notice has been given to establish offices covering all 25 districts, the number of applications submitted to each board in the respective districts are shown in the table below and considering the non-receipt of applications equally from all districts, it has been decided to establish 02 branch offices based on Central and Sabaragamuwa Provinces.</li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="1754 688 2680 1331"> <thead> <tr> <th>District</th> <th>Receipt of applications as at 31.07.2024 based on districts.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Colombo</td><td>31</td></tr> <tr><td>Gampaha</td><td>96</td></tr> <tr><td>Kalutara</td><td>42</td></tr> <tr><td>Galle</td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td>Matara</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>Kurunegala</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr><td>Kegalle</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>Ratnapura</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>Kandy</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>Matale</td><td>08</td></tr> <tr><td>Puttalam</td><td>05</td></tr> <tr><td>Hambantota</td><td>04</td></tr> <tr><td>Badulla</td><td>02</td></tr> <tr><td>Ampara</td><td>02</td></tr> <tr><td>Anuradhapura</td><td>02</td></tr> <tr><td>Moneragala</td><td>01</td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td>360</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Despite requests for allocation of funds for the establishment of the above 02 branch offices were included in the budget estimate for the year 2024, no provisions have been received. Requests were made for provision for this in the budget estimate of 2025, and it was said that the necessary provision would be allocated during the budget discussion held.</li> <li>• Once those provisions will be received, the necessary cadre for the new branch offices will be approved.</li> <li>• However, in the departmental audit and management committee meeting held on 26.09.2024, it was discussed that in considering the cost of setting up new branches comparing with the current number of cases (58 in Central and 58 in Sabaragamuwa), it is not effective setting up new branches and thus it is appropriate to decide it after carrying out a feasibility study. (The details including the number of pending cases and how those cases are distributed among branch offices are given in Annexure 01.)</li> </ul>	District	Receipt of applications as at 31.07.2024 based on districts.	Colombo	31	Gampaha	96	Kalutara	42	Galle	45	Matara	24	Kurunegala	40	Kegalle	26	Ratnapura	15	Kandy	17	Matale	08	Puttalam	05	Hambantota	04	Badulla	02	Ampara	02	Anuradhapura	02	Moneragala	01	Total	360
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3. Weaknesses of the Department observed by the Auditor General	In the online evaluation process carried out by the Committee on Public Accounts, the low level of marks of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board was attributed by such facts that include the non- preparation of service charter and the action plan and the non-identification of sustainable development goals.	At present, the files of the Department and branch offices are being maintained systematically by overcoming the weaknesses observed by the Auditor General.  The Citizen Service Charter has been drafted. Action plan has also been prepared. The Sustainable Development Goals have been identified and quarterly reports have been submitted accordingly.
4. Progress conclusion of applications	Although both parties have reached a settlement, such cases are also considered as unresolved applications since such cases are not disposed until the payment is completed that result in showing them as also being pending applications.  (I) In order to avoid that situation, notes need to be entered and maintained to appear as the number of applications received, the number of applications resolved, and the number applications settled upon payments and the number of applications pending.  (11) The Committee emphasized the need to establish branch offices to consider applications received at regionally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to Ordinance No. 39 of 1941, the duty of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board is to settle the dispute of both parties, but even after such settlement, the number of cases still pending seem high because of the fact that the files in respect of which such settlement has been recorded are not disposed for so long as the outstanding sum claimed would be paid off and settled. In the year 2023, the numbers of applications received were 1811, of which 1101 cases were concluded. Accordingly, the performance appraisal is 60%.</li> <li>• Records are been kept and maintained categorically to see the number of applications received, the number of applications resolved, the number in respect of payments have been made and the number of applications pending. Accordingly, reports are sent to the Ministry on monthly basis.</li> <li>• In addition to the main board housed in the Department building, the Colombo branch board is housed in the same building and branch boards are also maintained based in Gampaha, Galle and Kurunegala districts. It is planned to establish 02 branch boards in the future centering in Central and Sabaragamuwa Provinces as well.</li> </ul>
5. Absence of marking attendance and departure of the members of the Department of the Debt Conciliation Board at payment of combined allowance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In this regard, audit queries are raised on the basis of existing legal provisions that a 6-hour service period must be completed to claim the combined allowance.</li> <li>• The Committee instructed the Accounting Officer of the Department of Debt Conciliation to reach a conclusion upon discussing this issue further with the Auditor General.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After discussing this arrangement with the Deputy Auditor General, it was decided that guideline should be sought from the Director General of the Establishments regarding the subject. Actions will be taken accordingly in the future.</li> </ul>
6. Lack of awareness of the Police regarding the role and powers of the Department of the Debt Conciliation Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In considering the way the police officers acts in cases of conflict between both parties regarding an application referred to the Department of Debt Conciliation Board, the police has no understanding of the role of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board.</li> <li>• The Committee advised the Chief Accounting Officer of the Ministry of Justice to inform the Inspector General of Police that the Committee on Public Accounts had given instructions to inform the Officer - in - Charge of Police that the role of the Department of Debt Conciliation is also similar to a course of judicial proceeding.</li> </ul>	A letter dated 16.08.2024 has been sent to the Director of Sri Lanka Police College requesting for an opportunity for training police officers to be educated in this regard as there has been a lack of knowledge acquired by the police officers in this regard.  Added to that, discussions were had with the Director of the College in this regard, where it was concluded the importance of providing the lecturers of the Police Training College with a one-day workshop on the operation of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board and incorporation it in the curriculum in order to ensure making every officer who joins the police service aware of the operation of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board. It will be dealt with accordingly in the future.
7. Renewal and updating lease agreements and implementing sustainable development objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee instructed the Chief Accounting Officer/the Accounting Officer to take steps to update the lease agreements in respect of the buildings where the branch offices of the Department of Debt Conciliation are housed as the terms of such agreements have expired and to further advance the sustainable development objectives of the Board.</li> </ul>	The lease agreements of the rental buildings where the branch boards are housed have been updated.  Steps are in progress to resolve disputes more effectively as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism while advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Names of existing Branch Boards	Pending cases in each Branch Board	Number of cases expected to be referred to Ratnapura Branch Board scheduled to be established.	Number of cases expected to be referred to Kandy Branch Board scheduled to be established.
Main Board Colombo Branch Board	230 208 } 438	Ratnapura District - 22 Kegalle District - 36 Monaragala District - 00	-
Galle Branch Board	106	-	-
Gampaha Branch Board	111	-	-
Kurunegala Branch Board	236	-	Kandy District - 45 Matale District - 11 NuwaraEliya District - 01 Badulla District - 01

**Distribution of cases among Branch Boards scheduled to be established**

Names of existing Branch Boards	Distribution of pending cases among each Branch Board
Main Board & Colombo Branch Board	380
Galle Branch Board	106
Gampaha Branch Board	111
Kurunegala Branch Board	178
Kandy Branch Board (scheduled to established)	58
Ratnapura Branch Board (scheduled to be established)	58

**Calling for information of the current performance in respect of the progress achieved in the implementation of the directions being given at the Pre-Public Accounts Committee Meeting**  
**Parliamentary Publication Serial Number : 95 - Department of Debt Conciliation**

Key points discussed	Committee's observations/recommendations/directions	Progress in implementation of directions
<p>1. Lack of awareness on the operation of the Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making the people aware of through Grama Niladharis and Samurdhi Development Officers.</li> <li>• Preparing a model debt conciliation application form and providing the general public with instruction leaflets specifying relevant information such as available debt conciliations, phone numbers of branch offices and thereby setting up a proper system to make the general public aware of the same.</li> <li>• Distributing instruction leaflets to those who have taken loans from informal means rather than from state banks/financial institutions in remote areas where branch offices are not currently functioning, along with the application to be submitted seeking reliefs from the Debt Conciliation Board and subsequently conducting mobile services.</li> <li>• Formulating a system to collect debt conciliation applications through District Secretariats/Divisional Secretariats and forward them to the concerned branch office with the recommendation of the relevant Divisional Secretary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the direction given at the meeting of the Committee on Public Accounts held on 09/06/2023, notice letters were sent on 27/06/2023 to all the District Secretaries requesting for opportunity to conduct awareness programs and on such invitation received, awareness programs were conducted at the Divisional Secretariats.</li> <li>• In addition to this, the Ministry of Justice and other government agencies have participated in island-wide programs in ensuring public awareness and have done the necessary activities to educate the public.</li> <li>• Further, necessary activities were carried out to raise public awareness by means of participation in television programs, press conferences and mobile services, and such activities are still being carried out. (Description given below.)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Awareness programs</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Press conference held at the Auditorium of the Ministry of Justice on 23.03.2023.</li> <li>II. Colombo District Secretariat on 08.07.2023.</li> <li>III. Awareness programs at the District Secretariat, Kalutara for Grama Niladharis and Field Officers on 25.07.2023.</li> <li>IV. Awareness programs at the Divisional Secretariat, Colombo for Grama Niladharis in the area on 04.08.2023.</li> <li>V. Awareness programs at the Divisional Secretariat, Tissamaharama for Grama Niladharis and Field Officers on 07.08.2023.</li> <li>VI. Awareness programs at District Secretariat, Polonnaruwa for Grama Niladharis and Field Officers in the area on 14.09.2023.</li> <li>VII. Colombo District Secretariat - District Secretaries' Conference on 16.09.2023.</li> <li>VIII. Awareness programs at District Secretariat, Matale for Divisional Secretaries, Grama Niladharis and Field Officers in the area on 21.09.2023.</li> <li>IX. Participation in the mobile service program conducted by the Ministry of Justice on 22.09.2023 at the Maharagama National Youth Services Council premises to celebrate International Peace Day.</li> <li>X. Educating the Grama Niladharis, Teachers, the general public and non-governmental organizations at the mobile service program conducted at WP/Jaya Weragoda Vidyalaya, Wellampitiya on 05.10.2023.</li> <li>XI. Educating the Grama Niladharis and Field Officers in the area at Divisional Secretariat, Mawatha on 30.10.2023.</li> <li>XII. Educating the Divisional Secretaries, Grama Niladharis and Field Officers at the District Secretariat, Kurunegala on 14.11.2023.</li> <li>XIII. Attending at the Legal Aid Workshop conducted by the University of Colombo on 25.04.2024 at the Municipal Council Hall, Negombo.</li> <li>XIV. Educating the Grama Niladharis and Field Officers at Divisional Secretariat, Kaduwela on 13.09.2024.</li> </ol>

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- II. Dinamina Newspaper dated 13.06.2023.  
Newspaper
- III. Monara Newspaper dated 15.09.2024

- In coincidence with the establishment of branch offices, posters were distributed to each Divisional Secretariat to be displayed in the offices of the Grama Niladharis of the districts and such posters have now been displayed there.
- UNDP has agreed to provide funding for awareness programs. A communication expert has been appointed to study how to carry out those programs, and studies in respect thereof are now in progress.
- Letters were sent to the District Secretaries on 30.06.2023 seeking their approval for giving opportunity to educate the Grama Niladharis through the Divisional Secretaries, and accordingly awareness programs were conducted.

- I. Divisional Secretariat, Colombo on 04.08.2023.
- II. Divisional Secretariat, Tissamaharama on 07.08.2023
- III. Divisional Secretariat, Mallowapitiya on 30.10.2023

Further, on 16.08.2024, letters have been sent to 23 Divisional Secretariats located in 04 Districts where the branch offices are operating and to the Sri Lanka Police College, Kalutara, requesting for an opportunity to conduct awareness. Pursuant to which, police trainees will be informed of the same in the future.

Awareness programs have been conducted at the Divisional Secretariats on such given dates. Further, according to the said letter, several other Divisional Secretariats have been given the opportunity to conduct awareness programs after the Presidential Election.

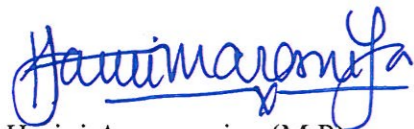
I. Educating the Grama Niladharis and Field Officers at the Divisional Secretariat on 13.09.2024.

- The application form of the Debt Conciliation Board and the instruction sheet for filling them have been uploaded to the Internet and leaflets containing phone numbers and relevant information are distributed at the branch offices during the awareness programs and mobile services that we are to conduct.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This year, there have been no sufficient allocations for conducting awareness programs in remote areas and the allocations have been requested from the budget estimates of 2025 emphasizing those facts.</li> <li>The Divisional Secretariats have been made aware of the need to refer the disputes referred to them once again to such Divisional Secretariats. Accordingly, such applications are received by the respective branch offices.</li> </ul>																																				
<p>2. Establishment of regional branch offices and approval of cadre requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making arrangements to establish branch boards of the Debt Conciliation Board covering all 25 districts.</li> <li>Establishment of branch offices covering 9 Provinces as an initial step in the establishment of branch offices. (For the remaining 6 Provinces in addition to the 3 Provinces where branch offices have already been established.)</li> <li>The Committee directed the Chief Accounting Officer of the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms to submit a report to the Committee before 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 on the establishment of new regional branch offices and the measures taken to approve the required cadre for regional branch offices.</li> </ul> <p>The relevant report has been submitted to the Committee by the letter No. DCB/AC/37/11/2023 dated 10.07.2023 of the Secretary to the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although notice has been given to establish offices covering all 25 districts, the number of applications submitted to each board in the respective districts are shown in the table below and considering the non-receipt of applications equally from all districts, it has been decided to establish 02 branch offices based on Central and Sabaragamuwa Provinces.</li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="1754 688 2680 1333"> <thead> <tr> <th>District</th> <th>Receipt of applications as at 31.07.2024 based on districts.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Colombo</td><td>31</td></tr> <tr><td>Gampaha</td><td>96</td></tr> <tr><td>Kalutara</td><td>42</td></tr> <tr><td>Galle</td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td>Matara</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>Kurunegala</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr><td>Kegalle</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>Ratnapura</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>Kandy</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>Matale</td><td>08</td></tr> <tr><td>Puttalam</td><td>05</td></tr> <tr><td>Hambantota</td><td>04</td></tr> <tr><td>Badulla</td><td>02</td></tr> <tr><td>Ampara</td><td>02</td></tr> <tr><td>Anuradhapura</td><td>02</td></tr> <tr><td>Moneragala</td><td>01</td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td>360</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Despite requests for allocation of funds for the establishment of the above 02 branch offices were included in the budget estimate for the year 2024, no provisions have been received. Requests were made for provision for this in the budget estimate of 2025, and it was said that the necessary provision would be allocated during the budget discussion held.</li> <li>Once those provisions will be received, the necessary cadre for the new branch offices will be approved.</li> <li>However, in the departmental audit and management committee meeting held on 26.09.2024, it was discussed that in considering the cost of setting up new branches comparing with the current number of cases (58 in Central and 58 in Sabaragamuwa), it is not effective setting up new branches and thus it is appropriate to decide it after carrying out a feasibility study. (The details including the number of pending cases and how those cases are distributed among branch offices are given in Annexure 01.)</li> </ul>	District	Receipt of applications as at 31.07.2024 based on districts.	Colombo	31	Gampaha	96	Kalutara	42	Galle	45	Matara	24	Kurunegala	40	Kegalle	26	Ratnapura	15	Kandy	17	Matale	08	Puttalam	05	Hambantota	04	Badulla	02	Ampara	02	Anuradhapura	02	Moneragala	01	Total	360
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3. Weaknesses of the Department observed by the Auditor General	In the online evaluation process carried out by the Committee on Public Accounts, the low level of marks of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board was attributed by such facts that include the non- preparation of service charter and the action plan and the non-identification of sustainable development goals.	At present, the files of the Department and branch offices are being maintained systematically by overcoming the weaknesses observed by the Auditor General.  The Citizen Service Charter has been drafted. Action plan has also been prepared. The Sustainable Development Goals have been identified and quarterly reports have been submitted accordingly.
4. Progress conclusion of applications	Although both parties have reached a settlement, such cases are also considered as unresolved applications since such cases are not disposed until the payment is completed that result in showing them as also being pending applications.  (I) In order to avoid that situation, notes need to be entered and maintained to appear as the number of applications received, the number of applications resolved, and the number applications settled upon payments and the number of applications pending.  (11) The Committee emphasized the need to establish branch offices to consider applications received at regionally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to Ordinance No. 39 of 1941, the duty of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board is to settle the dispute of both parties, but even after such settlement, the number of cases still pending seem high because of the fact that the files in respect of which such settlement has been recorded are not disposed for so long as the outstanding sum claimed would be paid off and settled. In the year 2023, the numbers of applications received were 1811, of which 1101 cases were concluded. Accordingly, the performance appraisal is 60%.</li> <li>• Records are been kept and maintained categorically to see the number of applications received, the number of applications resolved, the number in respect of payments have been made and the number of applications pending. Accordingly, reports are sent to the Ministry on monthly basis.</li> <li>• In addition to the main board housed in the Department building, the Colombo branch board is housed in the same building and branch boards are also maintained based in Gampaha, Galle and Kurunegala districts. It is planned to establish 02 branch boards in the future centering in Central and Sabaragamuwa Provinces as well.</li> </ul>
5. Absence of marking attendance and departure of the members of the Department of the Debt Conciliation Boardalbeit payment of combined allowance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In this regard, audit queries are raised on the basis of existing legal provisions that a 6-hour service period must be completed to claim the combined allowance.</li> <li>• The Committee instructed the Accounting Officer of the Department of Debt Conciliation to reach a conclusion upon discussing this issue further with the Auditor General.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After discussing this arrangement with the Deputy Auditor General, it was decided that guideline should be sought from the Director General of the Establishments regarding the subject. Actions will be taken accordingly in the future.</li> </ul>
6. Lack of awareness of the Police regarding the role and powers of the Department of the Debt Conciliation Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In considering the way the police officers acts in cases of conflict between both parties regarding an application referred to the Department of Debt Conciliation Board, the police has no understanding of the role of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board.</li> <li>• The Committee advised the Chief Accounting Officer of the Ministry of Justice to inform the Inspector General of Police that the Committee on Public Accounts had given instructions to inform the Officer - in - Charge of Police that the role of the Department of Debt Conciliation is also similar to a course of judicial proceeding.</li> </ul>	A letter dated 16.08.2024 has been sent to the Director of Sri Lanka Police College requesting for an opportunity for training police officers to be educated in this regard as there has been a lack of knowledge acquired by the police officers in this regard.  Added to that, discussions were had with the Director of the College in this regard, where it was concluded the importance of providing the lecturers of the Police Training College with a one-day workshop on the operation of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board and incorporation it in the curriculum in order to ensure making every officer who joins the police service aware of the operation of the Department of Debt Conciliation Board. It will be dealt with accordingly in the future.
7. Renewal and updating lease agreements and implementing sustainable development objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee instructed the Chief Accounting Officer/the Accounting Officer to take steps to update the lease agreements in respect of the buildings where the branch offices of the Department of Debt Conciliation are housed as the terms of such agreements have expired and to further advance the sustainable development objectives of the Board.</li> </ul>	The lease agreements of the rental buildings where the branch boards are housed have been updated.  Steps are in progress to resolve disputes more effectively as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism while advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.

		<p>The relevant report has been submitted to the Committee by way of the letter No. MOJ/AC/37/11/2023 dated 10.07.2023 of the Secretary to the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms.</p> <p>Accordingly, in order to carry out the work of this Department more efficient, it has been stated in the sandreport that arrangements are in progress so that an Advisory Board headed by the Ministry Secretary would be established and a Steering Committee headed by the head of the Department would be appointed to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Board.</p>	
06	<p>Absence of proper implementation of the correctional process and the lack of awareness in the society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although the activities of drug prevention programs, training courses on project management, workshops for the development of public relations and communication skills were included in the action plan of the Department; these activities were not carried out.</li> <li>• Magistrates tend to refer minor offenders for correction if the correctional process is done properly.</li> <li>• That it is an important factor in reducing prison overcrowding.</li> </ul>	<p>In the year 2023, 14,066 minor offenders were referred for correction by the Magistrate Courts to the Department of Community Based Corrections. As at 31.07.2024, a total number of 10,138 convicts have been referred. In the year 2023, the Department worked to achieve the goals of the action plan and according to the 2024 action plan, drug prevention programs, training programs and other activities are being carried out.</p> <p>Accordingly, in the year 2023, to educate officials and the public as regards the community correctional process -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness among Public Officials (Divisional Secretariat Level) – 165</li> <li>• Make aware of the Judicial Officers and the Lawyers - 72</li> <li>• Make aware of the Police Officers – 54</li> <li>• Raise awareness among Community (covering GramaNiladhari Divisions) – 1465</li> <li>• Raise community awareness (Special Programs) – 492</li> </ul> <p>As at 31.07.2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness among Public Officials (Divisional Secretariat Level) - 126</li> <li>• Make aware of the Judicial Officers and the Lawyers-59</li> <li>• Make aware of the Police Officers - 29</li> <li>• Raise awareness among Community (covering GramaNiladhari Divisions)- 734</li> <li>• Raise community awareness (Special Programs) – 364</li> </ul>



Dr. Harini Amarasuriya (M.P)

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