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REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA

(Fourth Session)

REPORT

OF

**SELECT COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT TO MAKE
SUITABLE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EXPANSION
OF HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES IN SRI LANKA**

Presented by

Hon. Dr. Wijeyadasa Rajapakse, PC

Chair of the Committee

Ordered by the Parliament of Sri Lanka, to be printed on 21st July 2023

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

Table of Content

	Page No
Chapter 01	
• Terms of Reference.....	01
• Nomination of Members to the Committee.....	02
Chapter 02 - Primary and Secondary Education.....	03
Chapter 03 - Higher Education.....	12
Chapter 04 - Recommendation of the Committee.....	32
• Early Childhood/Nursery Education.....	32
• Primary and Secondary Education.....	33
• Higher Education.....	36
I. State Universities.....	38
II. Non- State Universities/Institutes	40
III. Vocational Educational Universities/Institutes	41
IV. Quality Assurance	41

List of Tables

Tabel 1: Universities Under different Statutes	19
Tabel 2: Students Enrollment in Non-State Higher Education	21
Tabel 3: Statistics related to school and higher education presented by the UGC.....	22
Tabel 4: Subject wise enrollment to State universities in 2021.....	23
Tabel 5: Statistics relating to graduate employability	24
Tabel 6: Estimated Cost per year for an undergraduate in different disciplinarians ...	24
Tabel 7: Percentage allocation from GDP for education in recent years	25
Tabel 8: Number of Academic Vacancies (Permanent Cadre)	28

List of Figures

Figure 1: Asymmetric Nature of Higher Education Institutions of Sri Lanka.....	18
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List of Graphs

Graph 1: Trends in Enrollment for Non-State Higher Education	21
Graph 2: Trends in Estimated Cost per year for an undergraduate in different disciplinarians	25
Graph 3: Trends in Academic Vacancies (Permanent Cadre)	29

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

REPORT

The following motion moved by the Leader of the House, on 13th December 2022 was approved by the Parliament to appoint a Select Committee to study and make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka.

Chapter 01

Terms of Reference

1. *Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka;*
Whereas a large number of students who excel at the G.C.E Advanced Level examination fail to secure higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka;
And whereas higher education opportunities should be expanded;
This Parliament resolves that a Select Committee of Parliament be appointed to make the necessary recommendations to expand the higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka.
2. (a) *that the Chair and Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Speaker; and*
(b) *that in terms of the provisions of Standing Order 101 of Parliament, the Committee shall consists of eleven (11) Members.*
3. *That the Committee shall have the power to*
 - a) *fix its quorum;*
 - b) *summon any person to appear before it, to require any person to procure any document or record, to procure and receive all such evidence, written or oral, as the Committee may think it necessary for the fullest consideration of the matters referred to above;*
 - c) *obtain the services of specialists and experts in the relevant fields to assist the Committee; and*
 - d) *make interim reports from time to time and to sit notwithstanding any adjournment or prorogation of Parliament.*

- 4. The Committee shall present its report to Parliament within a period of two months (02) from the first meeting of the Committee or within such further period as Parliament may grant.*

1. Nomination of Members to the Committee

1.1 In terms of the motion approved by the Parliament, the Hon. Speaker nominated the following Members of Parliament to serve in the Select Committee with the Hon. Dr. Wijeyadasa Rajapakshe, President's Counsel, as the Chairman and such nominations were announced in the Parliament on 20th January 2023.

Hon. Dr. Wijeyadasa Rajapakshe, PC	Chairman of the Committee
Hon. Dr. Ramesh Pathirana	
Hon. Dr. (Ms.) Seetha Arambepola	
Hon. A. Aravindh Kumar	w.e.f : 09.05.2023
Hon. Dr. Suren Raghavan	
Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Attorney at Law	
Hon. Anura Priyadharshana Yapa, Attorney at Law	
Hon. Tissa Attanayake	up to : 19.04.2023
Hon. Eran Wickramaratne	
Hon. (Ms.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna	w.e.f : 09.05.2023
Hon. Prof. Ranjith Bandara	up to : 09.05.2023
Hon. Prof. Charitha Herath	
Hon. Dr. (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya	

1.2 Dr. Suren Raghavan was present on the first day of proceedings and he informed the Committee that he resigns from the Committee.

1.3 While the Committee was in the process of obtaining information from experts in the field of education, the Committee was of the view that the time period allocated namely a period of 2 months was not sufficient to comprehensively study the subject and to make recommendations. Accordingly at the request of the Committee, Parliament extended the time period up to 21st of July 2023.

1.4 The institutions and the persons who came before the Committee and made their representations are given in the list annexed to this report marked as X₁.

Chapter 02

Primary and Secondary Education

- 2.1** The mandate given to our Committee is to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka. It is mandatory that we comprehensively examine the existing legal framework and the practice followed in the system before making feasible and sustainable recommendation for the necessary reforms for the above purpose.
- 2.2** The consideration of the subject of higher education in isolation will not help us to achieve the expected results as it is built up on the capacity, the quality, the quantity and the standards upheld in the primary and the secondary education, which serve as its foundation.
- 2.3** Accordingly, it is important to identify the existing system, shortcomings, lacunas in general education before embarking upon the identification of the necessary reforms to be made in higher education.
- 2.4** In primary and secondary education, the State lacks a clear and precise policy. The national education policy introduced by Dr. C.W.W. Kannangara in 1945, the then Minister of Education, has been distorted due to numerous interventions into the system, which includes constitutional and statutory reforms as well as the practice followed by successive governments from time to time.
- 2.5** Dr.C.W.W. Kannangara, while enacting the national education policy established a cluster school system where there were few schools (may be 3 to 6) as feeder primary schools and a central school (Madya Maha Vidyalaya) as the secondary school.

- 2.6** The education policy enacted by the State Council in 1946 by introducing the “Free education for all” had been strengthened by subsequent laws enacted by the legislature in 1960 absorbing a majority of private schools mainly operated by churches, under government supervision and control.
- 2.7** With the liberalization of the economy in 1977, the doors were gradually opened for private education in all three segments; primary, secondary and tertiary, but not on policy-based methodology, it was mostly on *ad hoc* arrangements.
- 2.8** As a result, education also has become an area of entrepreneurship and expanded significantly with the highest priority being given to earning higher profits.
- 2.9** But it is noted that the State has failed to adopt a State Policy for primary, secondary or higher education, either to ensure a proper regulatory system or to maintain the quality and the standards of the education.
- 2.10** This situation has been exacerbated by the categorization of schools as National Schools and Provincial Schools in the general education system, which emerged with the implementation of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution.
- 2.11** As a result of categorization of schools as national and provincial, there exists a disparity as evident in the statistics provided by the Ministry of Education. According to these statistics, 14% of schools (1439 schools) have student population less than 50, while 15% of schools (1523 schools) have student population ranging from 51 to 100. This difference may be attributed to the varying facilities and resources available in different areas, although this is not the case everywhere.
- 2.12** Because of this disparity, parents are forced to compete to secure admission for their children to national or popular schools, resorting very often to falsifying documents, paying bribes and experiencing feelings of desperation when unable to achieve their desired outcome. This situation has led to numerous

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

economic, social and health crises throughout the country, mainly in metropolitan and suburbs.

- 2.13** It is significant to note that the State policy of opening and naming schools for primary and secondary education based on race, language and religion has also contributed to ethnic, linguistic and religious disharmony in the society or at least remains as an obstacle to national unity.
- 2.14** One devastating practice that has become deeply rooted in primary and secondary education is the growing private tuition culture mainly as a lucrative business. In many schools, the most qualified and trained teachers who are supposed to teach students sitting for Ordinary Level and Advanced Level examinations end up wasting their time idling in classes for six to ten months before the students sit their examinations. This happens because the students are tempted to attend more and more private tuition classes instead of attending schools due to mounting tension in the race of competition.
- 2.15** Parents are also inclined to encourage their children to participate in private tuition, hoping to provide them with the best education. However, it is disheartening that in most of these classes, the students are not even provided with basic facilities, despite the fact that the charges are often unbearable for most parents. State has failed at least to implement a regulatory system for private tuition system.
- 2.16** It is noteworthy that the Grade 5 scholarship examination marks the beginning of the educational competition, as its purpose is to admit children from disadvantaged backgrounds to national or popular schools. Unfortunately, both education authorities and parents have failed to comprehend the seriousness of placing undue pressure on children at such a tender age. This pressure can result in various unforeseen mental conditions later in their lives and it's timely need to carry out a survey to ascertain the repercussions of such tedious engagements.

- 2.17** Countries that have reached to an excellent level of education have abolished such unwarranted and tedious competition and burden on children, as it is deemed intolerable considering their age and cognitive level.
- 2.18** It is also observed that there are numerous international schools that are not regulated by any State agency. These schools are established by registering as companies under the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007. Despite operating as privately owned institutions under the label of "International Schools," there is no mechanism or authority in place to ensure their standards and to regulate them to align with the basic policies adopted by the State.
- 2.19** The widely spread media culture, main stream as well as social media have greatly influenced the students to keep away from the reading habits and there is a little contribution of the media to encourage students to get involved in education. Instead, they have inculcated a gossip watching and reading culture and some parents are ignorant of such aspects. There are instances where the entire life of the children are lost or their future is doomed due to misguided media culture.
- 2.20** The Committee also observed that the authorities have neglected and disregarded nursery and early childhood education. The government is obligated to formulate a proper and effective policy in this regard, ensuring that children are not discouraged from education by implementing incorrect and inappropriate methods.
- 2.21** It also was highlighted that there is insufficient attraction to encourage students to vocational education in secondary education.
- 2.22** When we consider the overall landscape of the existing framework of the primary and the secondary education in our country, during last four to five decades, it has reverted back to feudalistic era due variety of reasons such as;

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

- (i) State has resorted to categorization of schools as national schools, provincial schools, popular schools and furthermore Sinhala schools, Buddhist schools, Tamil schools, Hindu schools, Muslim schools, Catholic schools by which the society is divided creating numerous social differences and unrests at times.
- (ii) National and popular schools are under the grip of old students' societies and they resort in every possible way to keep them under their control to ensure that only their children should be accommodated in such schools, reflecting feudalistic culture.
- (iii) Disproportionate allocation of funds by the State giving preference to national and popular schools have created an abysmal gap between those and that of the others.
- (iv) Disproportionate distribution of resources including human resources whereas there are many schools which are overstaffed while in others there exists a severe scarcity of teachers to maintain even the minimum required numbers.
- (v) Social attitudes towards schools have significantly hindered the establishment of a level playing field in school education.
- (vi) Private school system and private tuition system continues with self- made *ad hoc* models and many of them do not contribute to ensure the quality of education.

2.23 Taking into account all these issues and problems, the committee is of the view that while adopting the recommendations mentioned herein for the expansion of higher education opportunities, the legislature, the government and educational authorities should adopt a State policy considering the following recommendations. This is crucial in upgrading the quality, efficiency and productivity of education in the primary and secondary sectors.

- (i) The State should adopt a suitable policy to introduce early childhood education for all children in the country. It is advisable to incorporate such a policy into the State Policy through legislation or regulations.

- (ii) The State should encourage the private sector to establish and expand institutions for the aforementioned purpose and provide financial support to ensure that all children have equal access to such education.
- (iii) The State should adopt an appropriate curriculum based on the age of children, ensuring that both children in the public and private sectors receive similar education in a non-discriminatory manner.
- (iv) The State should establish an institution (along with centers) for teacher education and training specifically for early childhood education.
- (v) A regulatory framework should be established to ensure proper management system, necessary infrastructure facilities, teacher qualifications and a centralized database.
- (vi) The categorization of schools as National Schools and Provincial Schools has created an abysmal gap between the two types of schools in various aspects, thus violating the equality guaranteed by the Constitution, including Article 27(2) (h). State shall adopt a national policy to ensure the equality and the quality of education
- (vii) The categorization of schools with identities of ethnicity, language and religion has created a distance among communities leading the society toward disharmony and distrust. Since, there had been deeply rooted culture accustomed by many fractions of the society commencing from colonial masters' time, there can be many obstacles and resistance in the event of radical reform in the system, but still, we recommend to resolve this issue gradually by educating the people of every stratum about the importance and the necessity of the education for all in a level playing field.
- (viii) To set up a joint Committee in each province with responsible stake holders of the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Councils in every zone and to establish cluster school system whereas the primary schools to

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

take charge of education from grade 1 to grade 7/8 (feeder schools) and secondary schools (Central Schools) to take charge of the responsibility of teaching students from grade 7/8 up to G.C.E Advanced Level.

- (ix) To establish a centralized teacher service in the State sector schools and to have uniformity in training them.
- (x) To introduce modern education modules and curriculums with the inclusion of democratic and cultural norms and values while enhancing the intelligence and wisdom of the students instead of learn by-heart educational system.
- (xi) There shall be due recognition of modern trends in the field of technology and science and they shall be given priority with the aim of fulfilling job requirements.
- (xii) To ensure that the students are not over burdened with unendurable learning materials and ensure that teaching shall be focused on soft skills depending on the age of the students.
- (xiii) To simplify the curriculums gradually by adopting a mixed marks system of 50% on school based assessments and 50% on examination based assessments. (UK system is based on examination whereas USA system is based on school assessments). We recommend a blended system.
- (xiv) To prepare the students to sit for the G.C.E Ordinary Level examination at grade 10 and G.C.E Advanced Level examination at grade 12 as they are matured enough to face such examinations and to enroll into higher education with re-defined and re-modeled curriculums as one year period of time play a very crucial role in such youths' lives.

- (xv) The State shall enact legislation to monitor all private schools which includes the aspects such as registration, allocation of resources, infrastructure facilities, capacities, quality and standards, social responsibilities etc.
- (xvi) To revamp the existing modules and syllabuses in the primary and secondary education considering the modern trends in the field of technology and science.
- (xvii) There shall be a standardized curriculum for mandatory subjects in both the State and private schools, without any distinction or difference.
- (xviii) To establish a coordination system in between the curriculum setters and the examination paper setters to prevent the inclusion of questions that are not covered by the curriculum and syllabuses.
- (xix) The subjects of language shall be interlinked with the subject of literature in the given language.
- (xx) To adopt a policy to provide equal opportunities to all students to learn both national languages, while insisting the importance of English language.
- (xxi) The State Policy for secondary education shall include curriculums aimed at promoting and encouraging vocational technical education and training in State as well in private schools.
- (xxii) To ensure that the students are encouraged in physical and recreational activities with the purpose of building a healthy nation.
- (xxiii) To eliminate the existing unjustified competition among students and gradually detach the students' reliance on private tuition as it is necessary to

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

create an environment where children can pursue their education with a free and peaceful state of mind because this competition leads to many social implications including the depression of students in the long run. While students are currently compelled to engage in such competition due to limited opportunities for tertiary education, as these opportunities expand, such competition will no longer exist.

- (xxiv) State authorities shall ensure that the G.C.E Advanced Level results are issued within a reasonable time enabling the students to engage in their higher education without wasting their valuable time.

- (xxv) State shall enact legislation to register and regulate all private schools which are known as International Schools including their capacity, quality and standard of education and curriculums and modules.

Chapter 03

Higher Education

- 3.1** At the outset, the Committee decided to examine the existing primary and secondary education system as it is the substratum of the higher educational system, both legally and practically. Accordingly, the Committee examined the same and necessary recommendations for reforms are made in the previous chapter.
- 3.2** Sri Lanka's population has grown up significantly over the years, and substantial reforms have been made in the education system to maintain the highest literacy rate in the region. However, in the case of higher education reform, there has been very little improvement. Higher education continues to be provided largely by the public sector. The Universities Act No. 16 of 1978 empowers the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Sri Lanka to make all policy decisions on student enrollment, budgetary allocations, financial transactions and key personnel appointments. Fiscal constraints among other challenges, have led the State university system to be unable to keep up with developments in the labour market. It is plagued with many issues, including limited accessibility, low quality and weak relevance, poor governance, poor managerial capacity and inadequate resources.
- 3.3** As a result of the inability of the State sector and the Non-state sector higher education institutions to provide higher education to those who are qualified, they seek opportunities in higher education institutions in overseas at a very high cost resulting the foreign exchange of the country been significantly reduced. But the students from low income groups have been deprived of opportunities for higher education either in Sri Lanka or overseas.
- 3.4** Policy options have to strike a balance among costs, sustainability and equitable access. In view of these challenges, there is a need to explore creative ways to improve access to financing and to manage the higher education system with the participation of both public and private providers. Promoting equitable access to higher education for the underserved segments of society would require offering incentives to service providers and giving additional

support to underprivileged students. The high cost of foreign private education remains a burden on many middle-class families. This has a broader impact on consumption and local economic activity. The accumulated currency outflow of foreign private education fees can have an adverse impact on macroeconomic health. According to the Asian Development Bank (2020), much of the research output of public universities is of low quality and of low relevance to national needs. University–industry research collaboration is also very low. Moreover, the average number of doctorate degrees produced per year by public graduate institutions is only around 250, and 92% of them are in the medical science field. Sri Lanka had a relatively high ranking for innovation in 2012–2013 Global Competitiveness Index (58th out of 144 economies), but it lagged behind on a number of other, innovation-related indicators. While Sri Lanka performed better than other South Asian countries on a range of indicators in 2012, Knowledge Economy Index (KEI), the country’s performance was behind that of countries in East Asia and the Pacific.

3.5 Cross-border institutions offer foreign university degree programs in Sri Lanka. At present, there are many dozens of such institutions offering higher education at the professional, diploma, undergraduate and graduate levels. They are registered under the Companies Act, and function as independent entities, without any intervention of the Ministry of Higher Education or the University Grants Commission. Others operate as local affiliates of foreign universities.

3.6 The Committee examined the provisions of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978 whereas the legislature intended to transform the State universities to function and exercise their powers, duties and responsibilities independently while maintaining the autonomy of universities. That Act have very progressive provisions in relation to the independence of institutions with a view to ensure that students in State universities would receive a well-recognized educational qualification, qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

3.7 Universities Act No. 16 of 1978

The Act provides that there shall be a Commission named University Grants Commission, consisting of members appointed by the President in terms of the

Section 04 of the Act. The objects of the Commission are stipulated in Section 03 and read as follows;

Section (3) -

“The objects of the Commission shall be -

- (1) The planning and co-ordination of university education so as to conform to national policy*
- (2) The apportionment to Higher Educational Institutions of the funds voted by Parliament in respect of university education and the control of expenditure by each such Higher Educational Institution*
- (3) The maintenance of academic standards in Higher Educational Institutions*
- (4) The regulation of the administration of Higher Educational Institutions*
- (5) The regulation of the admission of students to each Higher Educational Institution; and*
- (6) The exercise, performance and discharge of such powers, duties and functions as are conferred, or imposed on, or assigned to, the Commission by or under this Act.”*

3.8 Section 15 of the Act empowers the Commission to exercise its powers and functions in respect of higher educational institutions in consultation with governing authority of each higher educational institution which comes within the purview of the Commission.

3.9 As provides in Section 18, the Commission is empowered to make ordinances as it may deemed necessary to enable it to effectively exercise, perform and discharge its powers, duties and functions under the Act. Such powers vested in the Commission are stipulated in Section 18(2) as follows;

3.10 Section 18(2) states that;

- “(A) All matters to be prescribed by Ordinance, in respect of which Ordinances are authorized or required to be made by the Commission by any other provision of this Act;*
- (B) The terms and conditions of service of the staff of the Commission and of the Higher Educational Institutions;*
- (C) The schemes of recruitment and the procedures for appointment, to the staff of the Commission and of the Higher Educational Institutions;*

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

- (D) *The establishment and maintenance of standards of instruction in Higher Educational Institutions for the grant of degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions;*
- (E) *The co-ordination of facilities in and around Higher Educational Institutions;*
- (F) *The nature and scope of extension services which may be provided and organized by Higher Educational Institutions;*
- (G) *The recognition of foreign degrees and diplomas and other academic distinctions; and*
- (H) *Any other matter connected with, or incidental to, any of the matters aforesaid.”*

3.11 It is significant to note that the Minister in-charge of the subject is responsible for issuing general directions to universities.

3.12 Section 20(1) to (5) reads thus;

- (1) (a) *The Minister may from time-to-time issue to the Commission such general written directions as he may deem necessary in pursuance of national policy in matters such as finance, university places and medium of instruction, to enable him to discharge effectively, his responsibility for university education and the administration of this Act. Every such direction shall as soon as possible be tabled in Parliament.*
- (b) *The Commission shall comply with such directions and the governing authority of every Higher Educational Institution shall afford such facilities, and furnish such information, to the Commission or any member or officer thereof as may be necessary to enable the Commission to comply with such directions.*
- (2) (a) *For the purpose of enabling him to discharge effectively his responsibility for university education and the administration of this Act, the Minister may from time to time, order all or any of the activities, or the administration, of any Higher Educational Institution to be investigated and reported upon by the Commission.*
- (b) *The Commission shall comply with such order and the governing authority of any Higher Educational Institution to which that order relates shall*

afford such facilities and furnish such information, to the Commission or any member or officer thereof as may be necessary to enable the Commission to comply with any such order.

- (c) *Upon the receipt of a report by the Commission in compliance with an order made under paragraph (a), the Minister may direct the Commission to take such remedial action as he may consider necessary with reference to any of the activities or the administration of the Higher Educational Institution concerned.*
- (3) *Where the Minister is satisfied that the situation prevailing in a Higher Educational Institution is likely to endanger national security or is detrimental or prejudicial to national policy, or is likely to dislocate the functioning of such Institution, he may direct the Commission to take all such steps as he may deem necessary to bring such situation under control.*
- (4) *Where the Minister is satisfied that, due to any strike or lockout or any other cause, the work or administration of any Higher Educational Institution has been seriously dislocated and that the Authorities of such Higher Educational Institution have failed to restore normal conditions, the Minister may take all such measures as may be necessary to ensure the restoration of normal conditions in such Higher Educational Institution. Pending the restoration of normal conditions, the Minister may, by Order published in the Gazette, make all such provisions as he may deem necessary in respect of all or any of the following matters relating to such Higher Educational Institution;*
- The closure of such Higher Educational Institution;*
- (a) *The appointment of any person by name or by office, to be a competent authority for the purpose of exercising, performing or discharging, in lieu of any officer, Authority or other body of such Higher Educational Institution, any power, duty or function under this Act or any appropriate Instrument, and*
- (b) *Any other matter connected with or relating to any of the matters aforesaid.*

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

(5) Any Order made by the Minister under subsection (4) shall come into force on such date as may be specified therein. Any such Order shall, as soon as possible thereafter, be tabled in Parliament and shall, unless earlier rescinded, remain in force for a period not exceeding three months thereafter.”

3.13 Acts refers to different kinds of educational institutions in the following manner;

- (i) Establishment of University Faculties and Departments (Section 21)
 - (ii) Establishment of Campuses, Faculties and Departments (Section 22)
 - (iii) Establishment of an Open University (Section 23)
 - (iv) Establishment of University Colleges (Section 24)
 - (v) Establishment of Institutions or Centers for Higher Learning (Section 24(A))
 - (vi) Recognition of an Institute or a College as an Institute or a Center for Higher Learning (Section 24(B))
 - (vii) Recognition of existing institutions providing approved courses of study (Section 25)
 - (viii) Recognition of Degree Awarding Institutions (Section 25(A))
- (Above references are made to the Act which include amendments made thereto from time to time)

3.14 The Act provides that a university shall have a Council for the purpose of exercising of executive powers and shall be considered it as the governing authority of the university in terms of Section 44. In addition to that Section 45 provides specific powers, duties and functions of the Council.

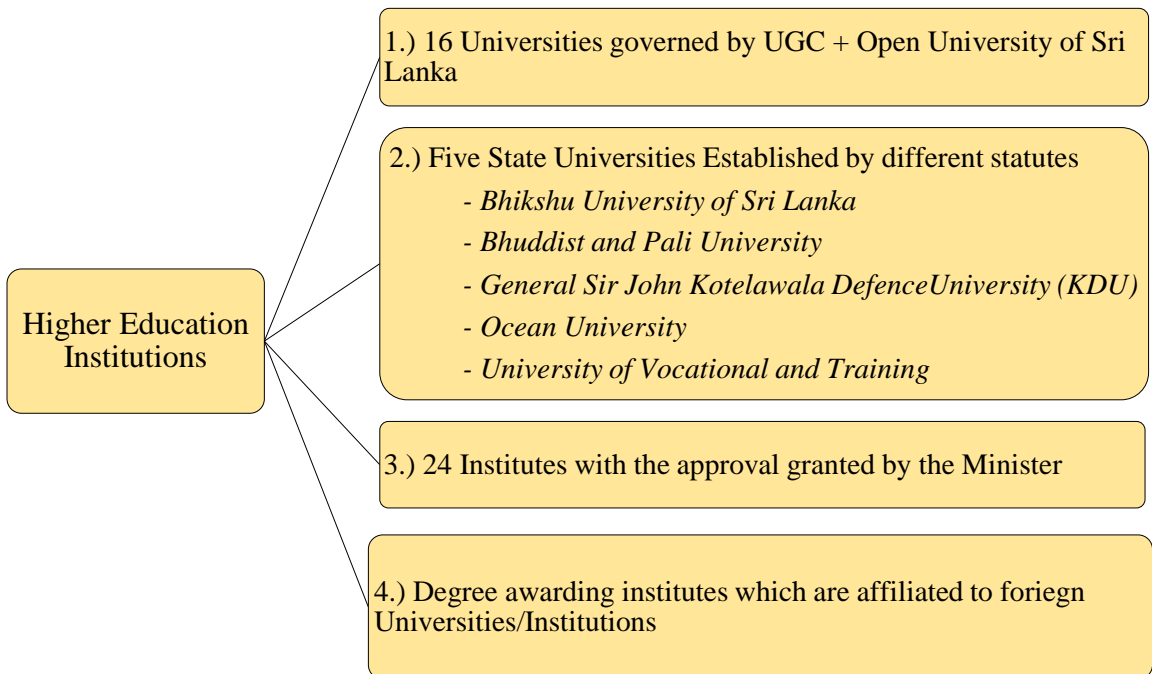
3.15 As provided in Section 46, every university shall have a Senate which is responsible for academic activities of such institution. A campus established under the Act shall have a board comprising of the officials referred in Section 47. There are provisions in relation to the faculties and departments of universities as provided in Section 48 of the Act. The Act also provides to have university colleges to be functioned with the powers vested in it in terms of Section 55 of the Act. This Act has been amended seven times up to 2016.

In addition it was revealed in the course of our deliberation that the UGC is in the process of making further amendments to the Act.

3.16 University Grants Commission also submitted that the Ministry of Higher Education gazetted a bill titled “Higher Education (Quality Assurance and Accreditation)” on 17.06.2019 for the purpose of establishment of a Commission known as the Quality Assurance and Accreditation for higher education in accordance with the national policy on co-ordination and determination of standards of institutions for higher education or research and scientific and technical institutions and to provide a legal framework for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of higher education institutions. But it had not proceeded any further.

3.17 The Committee examined the existing higher educational framework in the country and found the asymmetric nature of the system. The existing system could be summarized as follows;

Figure 1: Asymmetric Nature of Higher Education Institutions of Sri Lanka.



Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

(i) State Universities governed under the UGC.

(a) 16 State Universities

There are 16 universities operating as autonomous higher educational institutions in the State sector as established under the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978.

The organizational structure of State universities consists of faculties and departments. Additionally, the Act allows for the establishment of campuses, university colleges, institutions, or centers for higher learning. The Act was also amended in 1995 to grant the Minister the authority to recognize degree awarding institutions.

(b) Open University of Sri Lanka

The Open University of Sri Lanka was established while addressing the importance of adult education, particularly of the working population. However, over the time, it has aligned with other State universities to a greater extent. It is governed by an ordinance made under the Universities Act.

(ii) Five universities established under the different statutes of Parliament.

The next category of universities, which consists of five institutions, is established under separate legislations and not all of them fall under the Ministry of Education.

Tabel 1: Universities Under different Statutes

	University	Administered by
1	General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU)	<i>Ministry of Defence</i>
2	Ocean University of Sri Lanka	<i>Division of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research & Innovations, Ministry of Education</i>
3	Bhiksu University of Sri Lanka	<i>Ministry of Education</i>
4	Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka	<i>Ministry of Education</i>
5	University of Vocational Technology	<i>Division of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research & Innovations, Ministry of Education</i>

- a) The Committee holds the view that all the said Universities should be treated similarly and brought under one umbrella, despite their specialization in different fields and subjects.
 - b) KDU (General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University) was established with the specific purpose of providing education and training in the field of defense. This was done in consideration of the donor's wish who granted the land for the establishment of a defense academy.
 - c) Bhikku University and Buddhist and Pali University were established with the object of educating and training of Buddhist monks in accordance with Buddhist discipline and dissemination of Buddha's teaching. But it appears that such motivation does not exist and instead they conduct themselves as any other university ignoring the cardinal objects for which they were set up. It is important to have another deliberation to study and make recommendations for Buddhist universities and Pirivena education.
 - d) It is noteworthy to mention that historically, the State's attention to improving and strengthening vocational and technical higher education has been unsatisfactory. This is an area where not only more opportunities for higher education can be expanded, but also more opportunities for professionalism can be developed.
- (iii) Non-State Higher Education Institutions established with the approval of the Minister.**
- a) At present there are 24, Non-State Higher Education Institutions which have been recognized as degree awarding institutions. It is apparent that Section 25(A) and Section 70(C) have been introduced to the Act by amendment Act No. 24 of 1998 for the purpose of empowering the Minister to recognize institutions eligible as degree awarding institutions. (A list of the 24 Non-State Higher Education Institutions is annexed marked as X₂)
 - b) Private higher education institutions are established with the approval granted by the Ministry of Education (MOE)/Higher Education. However, an *ad hoc* administrative arrangement has been implemented for approving courses and awarding degrees or other qualifications. This mechanism is insufficient, as it fails to ensure that these higher education

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

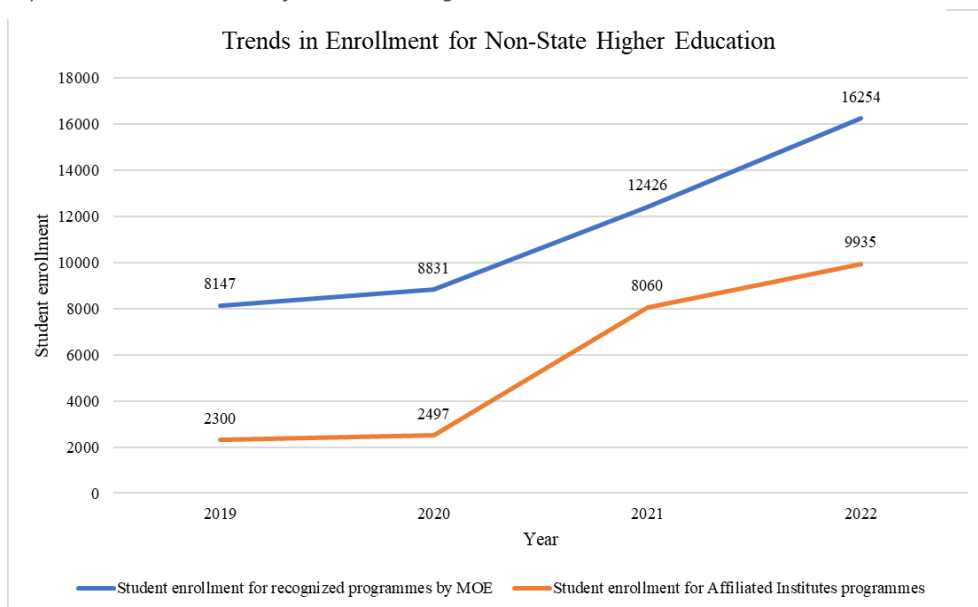
institutes comply with the minimum conditions and requirements for awarding degrees, ensuring quality assurance and accreditation. Parents spend immense amount of money for the higher education of their children in private higher educational institutes, but the State has failed to provide sufficient safeguards to ensure the quality of education.

- c) According to the statistics provided by the Non-State Higher Education Division of the Ministry of Education, the students enrollment for Non-State Education Institutes has been risen with the time. The following table and the graph shows a significant increase of the registered number of student population.

Table 2: Students Enrollment in Non-State Higher Education

Category	2019	2020	2021	2022
Student enrollment for recognized programmes by MOE	8,147	8,831	12,426	16,254
Student enrollment for Affiliated Institutes programmes	2,300	2,497	8,060	9,935

Graph 1: Trends in Enrollment for Non-State Higher Education



above graph indicates that facilitating towards the non-State higher education sector will be widen the opportunities for the higher education to the youth.

(iv) Institutes affiliated to foreign Universities/Institutions

There are many institutions that award degrees and other higher education certificates (including post-graduate), which are affiliated with foreign universities or higher educational institutions. However, the fact remains that there is no mechanism to ascertain the accuracy of what they represent. The exact number of institutions, their locations, the number of students and the types of certificates awarded are not accounted for or regulated by any State agency. Some of these institutions maintain very poor standards and quality and most people are not aware of the validity or acceptability attached to their certificates.

3.18 It is highly appropriate that the State should pay special attention to explore the opportunities for overseas students to engage in higher education in Sri Lanka, as the educational environment and other conditions are conducive for the expansion of higher education for foreign students too. Examples from the region like Singapore and Malaysia can be cited. It is revealed in 2022, there had been 51,000 foreign students in Malaysia. It is evident that a large amount of foreign currency is being drained out of the country due to our children enrolling themselves as students in foreign higher educational institutions, both overseas and within the local domain. Unfortunately, some degrees or higher education certificates awarded by foreign universities or institutions do not meet the recognized standards in their respective fields. Some of those students also face numerous challenges and at times, tragic circumstances.

The Committee decided to examine the system of enrollment of students into State universities and higher educational institutions. We reproduce the statistics related to school and higher education presented to us by the UGC.

Table 3: Statistics related to school and higher education presented by the UGC

	Year					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Grade one Admission	322,135	328,632	333,074	319,405	304,105	312,819
No. sat for O/L	296,812	296,029	305,427	308,134	311,321	472,553
No. sat for A/L	263,184	253,357	267,202	290,313	311,159	283,616
No. Qualified for university admission	160,517	163,160	167,992	181,206	194,366	171,532
No. Applied for university admission	71,110	78,905	76,608	92,695	102,788	91,249
No. Admitted State universities	30,662	34,415	31,881	41,641	43,927	44,000*

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

3.19 As it is reflected in the said table for the year 2017, there had been 160,517 students qualified for university admission, but State universities accommodated only for 30,662. In 2022 when 171,532 students were qualified for university admission, State universities were able only to accommodate tentatively 44,000. Out of the balance 127,000, there may be around 20,000 – 25,000 who can get opportunities to enter into non-State institutions and foreign universities. That shows at least 100,000 students who are eligible to pursue their higher education are deprived of such opportunities (called as drop-outs) due to variety of reasons which includes;

- a) Lack of State policy for higher education.
- b) Insufficiency of funds allocated for higher education as well as primary and secondary education.
- c) Lack of proper legal framework enabling the expansion of higher education opportunities both in the State and private sector.
- d) Lack of motivation to pursue higher education due to lack of job opportunities.
- e) Modules and curriculums are stale and not befitting the requirements and standards of the present days.
- f) Uncertainty and constant disruption of education in State universities.
- g) Reluctance of the private sector to recruit students pass out from State universities due variety reasons.
- h) Inefficiency of university management.
- i) Inefficiency and poor state of affairs in some State universities.
- j) Absence of required discipline is a significant challenge that needs to be addressed.

3.20 The Committee also examined the statistics provided by the UGC in relation to subject wise enrollment to State universities in 2021.

Table 4: Subject wise enrollment to state universities in 2021

Course	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
Arts & Law	11,488	26.2
Mgt. & Commerce	8,009	18.2
Science	7,441	16.9
Technology	3,565	8.1
Engineering & Architecture	3,214	7.3
Vet. & Agriculture	3,022	6.9
Computer Sc. / IT	2,614	6.0
Medicine & Dental	2,168	4.9
Allied Health Sc.	1,645	3.7
Indigenous Medicine	761	1.7

3.21 It is also important to reproduce here the statistics relating to graduate employability (after final results within 3 months)

Tabel 5: Statistics relating to graduate employability

Academic Stream	Average Employability Rate (%)
Medicine	100.0
IT	96.5
Engineering	91.0
Allied Health Sciences	74.8
Agriculture	70
Management	70
Science	70
Technology	54.1
Arts	28.5

3.22 Many academics, educationists, professionals who have excelled in the field of education submitted to the Committee that there is a deviation of institutional centric education and there is a tendency towards individual centric education in the developed and the developing countries in the world.

3.23 UGC also submitted the amount spent for a student in respective subjects as follows;

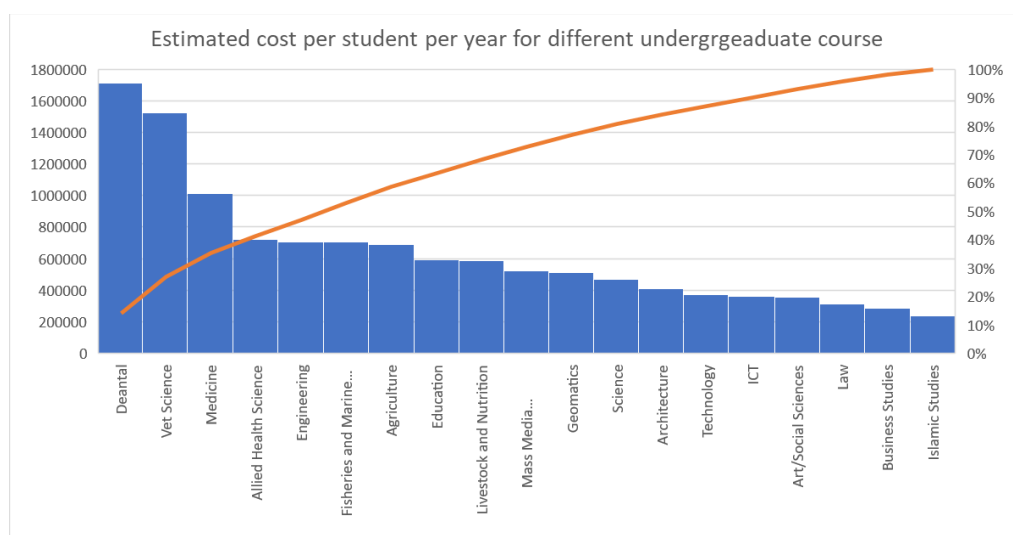
Tabel 6: Estimated Cost per year for an undergraduate in different disciplinarians

Faculty	Duration of the Course/years	Estimated cost per student per year (Rs.)
Agriculture	4	686 607
Architecture	4/5	410 179
Art/Social Science/Humanities	3/4	352 475
Business Studies	4	283 886
Dental	5	1 712 039
Education	4	589 853
Engineering	4	705 231
Law	4	312 460
Medicine	5	1 010 452
Science	3/4	466 344
Vet Medicine	5	1 522 988
Mass Media and performance Arts	4	520 393
Geometrics	4	513 267

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

Faculty	Duration of the Course/years	Estimated cost per student per year (Rs.)
Livestock and Nutrition	4	588 524
Information Technology	4	362 994
Fisheries and Marine Science and Technology	4	704 771
Islamic Studies	3/4	235 328
Allied Health Science	4	720 252
Technology	4	369 879

Graph 2:Trends in Estimated Cost per year for an undergraduate in different disciplinarians



3.24 It also was highlighted that the percentage from the GDP allocated for education is grossly insufficient and the following figures were submitted for the respective years.

Table 7:Percentage allocation from GDP for education in recent years

Year	% of GDP Allocation
2015	2.0
2016	2.0
2017	1.9
2018	1.9
2019	1.9
2020	1.9
2021	1.8
2022	1.5

It was observed that the allocation made for KDU is not reflected here as it comes under the subject of Defence.

3.25 Issues Related to the State Universities

- a) The lack of proper and suitable courses for higher education, which are aligned with the modern-day needs in State universities has significantly contributed to the non-availability of job opportunities for graduates passed out from State universities. This situation also adversely affects advancements, quality, standards and accreditation.
- b) Although we do not intend to elaborate on the existing weaknesses and shortcomings of State universities, there are certain glaring issues that need to be seriously considered.
 - (i) Underutilization of resources, for example, lecture halls are separated for different faculties and are only used for a few hours, unlike in universities in other countries where they maximize the use of facilities by sharing among faculties and departments.
 - (ii) Courses and curricula are not updated for a long period of time, despite numerous efforts made by authorities.
 - (iii) The composition of staff in State universities appears unusual compared to universities in other countries, as there are approximately 16,000 non-academic staff members while there are only around 9,000 academic staff members.
 - (iv) Over Rs. 1,300 million remains outstanding from lecturers who have obtained finance from the universities for their postgraduate studies and have not fulfilled their obligations in terms of the bonds they entered into. All of them enjoy lucrative job opportunities in overseas at the cost of poor Sri Lankans blood and sweat. Almost all the Vice Chancellors have shown a lukewarm interest in recovering the dues by resorting to legal proceedings.
 - (v) It has been revealed that a senior professor in State universities engages in teaching only for 20 hours per month, whereas it is found that a senior

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

professor in the UK works 140 hours per month, according to information available on websites.

- (vi) Constant inordinate delays in releasing the results of Advanced Level examination and enrollment of students by respective State universities.
- (vii) According to the Inter University Students' Federation, university students encounter numerous issues in relation to their academic pursuits such as; the shortage of academic staff. Particularly those located in remote areas is primarily attributed to low recruitment levels and brain drain resulting from the ongoing economic crisis in Sri Lanka.
- (viii) The constant failure on the part of the university administrators to maintain discipline in their universities. Lot of affluent parents are reluctant to enroll their children to State universities due to severe harassments they have to face under the guise of ragging which are inhumane and gruesome.
- (ix) In some universities the new comers are prohibited from entering libraries or talking in English in the first year and sometimes this continues to the next year too. Many students have lost their lives due the vulnerable conduct of such so called seniors.
- (x) Election of Vice-Chancellors have led to many disruptions in the system as some of the losers surreptitiously hinder the smooth functioning of universities due to rival attitudes. At times they motivate students/students' union to disrupt the functions of such institutes.
- (xi) It is also highlighted that some Vice-Chancellors are not competent enough to administer universities due to lack of knowledge and experience in the field of administration.
- (xii) All universities have three main divisions namely; Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Administration. One administrator; Vice Chancellor is burdened with all such responsibilities and at times it has been proved that they have failed due to non-eligibility and inexperience in certain fields.
- (xiii) Since universities recruit lecturers without full qualifications, they migrate as post graduates at the cost of general public. As a result their services are not rendered for a considerable period of time and at times default on the public money spent for their high education. If qualified academics are recruited, there won't be a burden on the State.

3.26 It was observed that a few decades ago our universities were ranked at a high level where they were much above the universities in the region. There are enough facilities to expand the degrees in the fields of medicine, engineering, computing and other technical subjects. The closure of The North Colombo Medical College (Currently, it is being used as the Faculty of Medicine, Ragama.) and South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine (SAITM) due to the pressure of the extremist elements has set a serious draw back in the higher educational sector thereby closing the door for our students as well as the overseas students to enroll into our system. As a result, our students go overseas to pursue their higher education by draining a large sum of foreign exchange while pushing our economy into a chaotic and crisis situation.

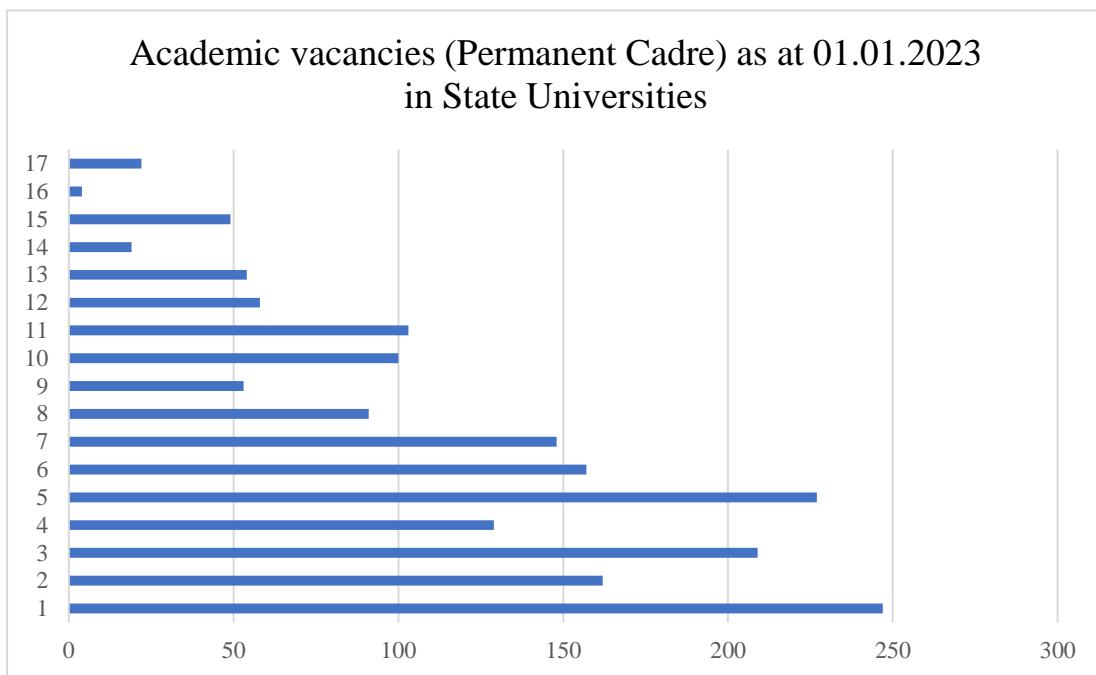
3.27 According to the statistic provided by the UGC, there are several academic permanent cadre vacancies and the information has been provided below.

Tabel 8: Number of Academic Vacancies (Permanent Cadre)

	Name of the University	Academic vacancies (Permanent Cadre) as at 01.01.2023
1	University of Peradeniya	247
2	University of Colombo	162
3	University of Sri Jayewardenepura	209
4	University of Kelaniya	129
5	University of Moratuwa	227
6	University of Jaffna	157
7	University of Ruhuna	148
8	Eastern University of Sri Lanka	91
9	South Eastern University of Sri Lanka	53
10	Rajarata University of Sri Lanka	100
11	Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka	103
12	Wayamba University of Sri Lanka	58
13	Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka	54
14	University of Visual and Performing Arts	19
15	Open University of Sri Lanka	49
16	Gampaha Wickramaarachchi ayurwedha University	4
17	University of Vavniya	22

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

Graph 3: Trends in Academic Vacancies (Permanent Cadre)



However the number of vacancies have increased by the middle of this year (2023) due to the migration of many academics and professionals as per the statistics provided by each university to the Committee.

3.28 According to representation made by students' unions, they are facing the following issues;

- (i) Facility-related issues, including the lack of devices and internet facilities for online education, challenges concerning clinical practices, laboratories, libraries, canteens, hostels, auditoriums, common rooms, sporting facilities, sanitary, lecture halls and medical facilities at university premises.
- (ii) Delays in disbursing monetary scholarships, such as the "Mahapola" scholarship. They have not been adequately addressed and minimized, resulting in a lack of timely financial support for deserving students.
- (iii) Delays in conducting semester examinations, practical examinations, issuing exam and academic calendars and issuing results have been observed.

- (iv) The discontinuation of courses, specifically in fields such as Radiography/Radiotherapy, due to the cancellation and postponement of lectures and examinations, has been noted.

3.29 The Committee also took into consideration the recommendations submitted by the University Grant Commission for the expansion of opportunities for higher education. They are reproduced below;

- (i) Promoting more online degree programmes.
- (ii) Regulating the minimum eligibility criteria for admission to a degree programmes and introducing aptitude tests.
- (iii) Overseeing the quality assurance and accreditation in both the State and Non-State institutes under the supervision of the UGC.
- (iv) Establishing of the 'Sri Lanka University of Computer Sciences' and the 'Virtual University of Sri Lanka' to provide educational opportunities for approximately 70,000 students at a reduced course fee.
- (v) Suggesting the establishment of private medical colleges within the regulatory framework of the UGC, in order to cater to the rising demand for medical education.
- (vi) Establishment of universities in collaboration with private and public stakeholders, harnessing their collective efforts to create innovative and inclusive educational institutions.

3.30 The Committee also took into consideration the recommendations submitted by Non-State Higher Education Division of the Ministry of Education for the expansion of opportunities for higher education. They are reproduced below;

- (i) Establishment of offshore campuses.
- (ii) Establishment of branch campuses of reputable foreign universities.
- (iii) Expansion of the current loan scheme
- (iv) Promoting Public-Private-Partnership for higher educational upliftment.
- (v) Promotion of lateral entry/top-up concept via credit mapping.
- (vi) Promotion of bridging course concept which allows the students who followed any stream other than physical science at G.C.E Advanced Level to enroll in computing discipline degrees.
- (vii) Popularization of blended learning methods in co-operating online learning method.
- (viii) Establishment of an independent Commission for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of all higher education providers.

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

3.31 The Committee also took into consideration the recommendations submitted by National Education Commission for the expansion of opportunities for higher education. They are reproduced below;

- (i) Expansion of the regulatory body of higher education, the UGC to regulate both State and Non-State Higher Education Institutions and provide quality assurance service to both sectors.
- (ii) Establishment of an Independent Accreditation Agency to review both State and Non-State Higher Education Institutions.
- (iii) Facilitation of branch campuses of well-established universities to facilitate undergraduate education.
- (iv) Opening and expansion of regional distance learning centers along with the adoption of modern teaching-learning facilities.
- (v) Establishment of special purpose universities for emerging areas of importance that are experiencing growing demand nationally and internationally.
- (vi) Promotion of vocational and training education as an attractive socially recognized alternative tertiary education pathway.
- (vii) Taking steps to expedite ongoing reforms aimed at streamlining external degree programs.
- (viii) Granting degree awarding status to Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technical Education SLIATE/Advanced Technological Institute ATI and upgrading their courses.
- (ix) Promoting private investments in higher education.
- (x) Strengthening the capacities of established universities to cater foreign students.
- (xi) Taking steps to ensure the smooth functioning of State universities.

Chapter 04

Recommendations of the Committee

The Committee decided to make the following recommendations regarding the reforms on the primary and secondary education. These reforms are essential for enhancing and expanding higher education opportunities, ensuring the quality, efficiency and productivity of education. The Committee also recommends that the legislature, the government and the educational authorities in charge shall adopt a State Policy based on these recommendations and the State Policy on education as envisaged in the Constitution.

The Committee reproduce the above stated recommendations in primary and secondary education for convenience.

4.1 As the Constitution, by its Article 27(2)(h) has guaranteed,

“The complete eradication of illiteracy and the assurance to all the persons of the right to universal and equal access to education at all levels”

The State Policy shall be in compliance of Article 27 (2)(h) of the Constitution.

4.2 Early Childhood/Nursery Education

4.2.1 The State should adopt a suitable policy to introduce early childhood and nursery education for all children in the country. It is advisable to incorporate such a policy into the State Policy through legislation or regulations.

4.2.2 The State should encourage the private sector to establish and expand institutions for the aforementioned purpose and provide financial support to ensure that all children have equal access to such education.

4.2.3 The State should adopt an appropriate curriculum based on the age of children, ensuring that both children in the public and private sectors receive similar education in a non-discriminatory manner.

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

- 4.2.4.** The State should establish an institution (along with centers) for teacher education and training specifically for early childhood education.
- 4.2.5** A regulatory framework should be established to ensure proper management, necessary infrastructure facilities, teacher qualifications and a centralized database.

4.3 Primary and Secondary Education

- 4.3.1** The categorization of schools as National Schools and Provincial Schools has created an abysmal gap between the two types of schools in various aspects, thus violating the equality guaranteed by the Constitution, including Article 27(2) (h).
State shall adopt a national policy to ensure the equality and the quality of education.
- 4.3.2** The categorization of schools with identities of ethnicity, language and religion has created a distance among communities leading the society toward disharmony and distrust. Since, there had been deeply rooted culture accustomed by many fractions of the society commencing from colonial masters' time, there can be many obstacles and resistance in the event of radical reform in the system, but still, we recommend to resolve this issue gradually by educating the people of every stratum about the importance and the necessity of the education for all in a level playing field.
- 4.3.3** To set up a joint Committee in each province with responsible stake holders of the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Councils in every zone and to establish cluster school system whereas the primary schools to take charge of education from grade 1 to grade 7/8 (feeder schools) and secondary schools (Central Schools) to take charge of the responsibility of teaching students from grade 7/8 up to G.C.E. Advanced Level.
- 4.3.4** To establish a centralized teacher service in the State sector schools and to have uniformity in training them.

- 4.3.5** To introduce modern education modules and curriculums with the inclusion of democratic and cultural norms and values while enhancing the intelligence and wisdom of the students instead of learn by-heart educational system.
- 4.3.6** There shall be due recognition of modern trends in the field of technology and science and they shall be given priority with the aim of fulfilling job requirements.
- 4.3.7** To ensure that the students are not over burden with unendurable learning materials and teaching shall be focused with soft skills depending on the age of the students.
- 4.3.8** To simplify the curriculums by adopting a mixed marks system of 50% on school based assessments and 50% on examination based assessment. (UK system is based on examination whereas USA system is based on school assessments.) We recommend a blended system.
- 4.3.9** To prepare the students to sit for the G.C.E Ordinary Level examination at grade 10 and G.C.E Advanced Level examination at grade 12 as they are mature enough to face such examination and to enroll into higher education with re-defined and re-modeled curriculums as one year period of time plays a very crucial role in such youths' lives.
- 4.3.10** The State shall enact legislation to monitor all private schools which includes the aspects such as registration, ascertainment of resources, infrastructure facilities, capacities, quality and standards, social responsibilities etc.
- 4.3.11** To revamp the existing modules and syllabuses in the primary and secondary education considering the modern trends in the field of technology and science.
- 4.3.12** There shall be a standardized curriculum for mandatory subjects in both the State and private schools, without any distinction or difference.
- 4.3.13** To establish a coordination system between the curriculum setters and the examination paper setters to prevent the inclusion of questions that are not covered by the curriculum and syllabuses.

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

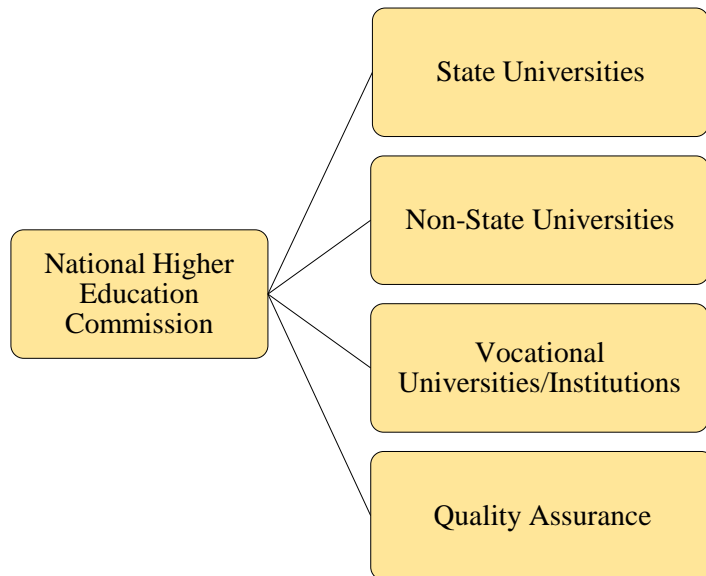
- 4.3.14** The subjects of language shall be interlinked with the subject of literature in the given language.
- 4.3.15** To adopt a policy to provide equal opportunities to all students to learn both national languages, while insisting the importance of English language.
- 4.3.16** The State Policy for secondary education shall include curriculums aimed at promoting and encouraging vocational education and trainings in State as well in private schools.
- 4.3.17** To ensure that the students are encouraged in physical and recreational activities with the purpose of building a healthy nation.
- 4.3.18** To eliminate the existing unjustified competition among students and gradually detach the students' reliance on private tuition as it is necessary to create an environment where children can pursue their education with a free and peaceful state of mind because this competition leads to many social implications including the depression of students in long run. While students are currently compelled to engage in such competition due to limited opportunities for tertiary education, as these opportunities expand, such competition will no longer exist.
- 4.3.19** State authorities shall ensure that the G.C.E. Advanced Level results are issued within a reasonable time enabling the students to engage in higher education without wasting their valuable time.
- 4.3.20** State shall enact a legislation to register and regulate all private schools which are known as International Schools including their capacity, quality and standard of education and curriculums and modules.

4.4 Higher Education

Taking into consideration of all the matters and reasons set out above, our Committee submits the following recommendations for the purpose for which this Committee was mandated.

- 4.4.1** Replacement of the University Grants Commission established by Universities Act No. 16 of 1978 and Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka established by Act. No. 12 of 1995, by an Independent “National Higher Education Commission” by way of a legislative enactment.
- 4.4.2** The Commission shall consist of 11 members (or suitable number) who have achieved significant eminence with integrity in their respective fields such as academia, profession and management.
- 4.4.3** The Commission shall have the authority to exercise its powers, functions and duties independently.
- 4.4.4** The members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President with the prior approval of the Constitutional Council and they shall continue to hold the office for a period of three years. The President shall appoint the Chairman among the members so appointed.
- 4.4.5** The Commission shall be empowered to establish sub-committees, consisting of a specified number of members from and among the main body as decided by the Commission based on a criterion stipulated in their Rules. These sub-committees shall be established for the following categories;
 - (i) State Universities
 - (ii) Non-State Universities/Institutes
 - (iii) Vocational Education Universities/Institutes
 - (iv) Quality Assurance

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka



- 4.4.6** Each such committee shall independently exercise its powers, functions and duties in regulating institutions within its purview. However, all decisions regarding policies and principles shall be made by the full Commission as adopted by its Rules.
- 4.4.7** All existing higher education institutions, both State and non-State universities/institutions which were functioning on the day precedent to date where a new law comes into operation, shall be deemed as registered universities/institutions under such new law.
- 4.4.8** All Regulations, Rules, By Laws, Ordinances made under the Universities Act, Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka Act, the Minister under the Universities Act and other incidental guidelines and circulars shall remain in operation until the necessary Regulations, Rules, By Laws, Ordinances are made under the new laws/enactments.
- 4.4.9** The Minister, with the concurrence of the Commission, shall make regulations regarding the process of submitting applications for the establishment of higher education universities/institutes. Such regulations will specify the qualifications necessary for registration, the courses that will be recognized for higher

education qualifications, the minimum duration required to complete each course, the procedures for internal quality assurance and the other required standards.

- 4.4.10** The Commission shall formulate Rules pertaining to the exercise of its functions, powers, and duties as conferred by the new law, as well as any matters incidental to its functions.
- 4.4.11** Encourage student-centric education instead of institution-centric education and provide financial support to students, subject to the implementation of a suitable repayment program.
- 4.4.12** Both the Regulations and Rules formulated by the Minister and the Commission shall be presented to Parliament for approval. If they are not approved, they shall be considered rescinded, without prejudice to any acts that have already been performed under the new law.
- 4.4.13** The Commission shall introduce innovative measures to encourage and facilitate for overseas students including the facilitation for part time education and training such as clinical studies and training.
- 4.4.14** To establish 'Sri Lanka University of Computer Sciences' and the 'Virtual University of Sri Lanka' to provide educational opportunities to students with a nominal course fee.
- 4.4.15** Opening and expansion of regional distance learning centers along with the adoption of modern teaching-learning facilities

I. State Universities

- 4.4.16** Administrative system of State universities shall be revamped by casting responsibility on finance, good governance, accountability and transparency while preserving their autonomy.
- 4.4.17** Authorities of State universities/institutes shall perform all their powers, functions and duties with due diligence.

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

- 4.4.18** When they do enroll students to their universities/institutes they shall do so without an inordinate delay taking into consideration the value of the time of the youth, specially, the limited period they have to spend for their studies and to avoid numerous hardships.
- 4.4.19** Authorities of the State universities/institutions shall ensure that the resources of their institutions are utilized in a productive manner instead of keeping a large number buildings and facilities idling or not using or using only for few hours as they have been separately allocated for different faculties or departments which is an imprudent practice followed by our universities.
- 4.4.20** Authorities of the State universities/institutions shall ensure that the students do complete their courses of education within the prescribed time period and only one year extension could be granted on medical grounds, if certified by medical experts.
- 4.4.21** Authorities of State universities shall ensure that there exists a peaceful environment conducive for the smooth functioning for academic engagements by maintaining the required discipline in their institutes.
- 4.4.22** Authorities shall permit the students to select the streams that they prefer by following a flexible criterion.
- 4.4.23** Authorities shall adopt new education modules and curriculums keeping line with the modern developments enabling students to have equal and quality education. At the same time English language skills of the students shall be enhanced while encouraging students to engage in aesthetic activities.
- 4.4.24** Authorities shall re-structure the working arrangements of lecturers by devoting a reasonable time period for teaching purpose.
- 4.4.25** Authorities must ensure to enhance allocations for the education and higher education sector in accordance with international best practices.

II. Non- State Universities/Institutes

- 4.4.26** The State shall introduce a legal framework for the private sector higher education recognizing universities and institutes with sufficient incentives and guidelines.
- 4.4.27** The Commission shall encourage private sector higher education institutes and provide incentives, subject to the condition that they fulfill socio-economic obligations. These obligations may include granting free educational opportunities to the poorest sector of the population, such as allocating a certain percentage of student admissions to such institutes.
- 4.4.28** Encourage Public-Private-Partnership universities/institutes.
- 4.4.29** Encourage the establishment of universities following the modality of non-profit organizations, similar to that of trusts or limited by guarantee entities.
- 4.4.30** Initiate a program to establish 25 universities in 25 districts, with a focus on both academic and vocational education, preferably through Public-Private-Partnership models. Greater emphasis should be placed on vocational studies, taking into consideration the available resources in each respective area adhering to the "City Campus" concept.
- 4.4.31** Encourage private sector investors to invest in higher education by providing the necessary infrastructure facilities, such as land, transportation, water, electricity and other required amenities.
- 4.4.32** Encourage foreign investors to invest by offering them suitable incentives and benefits. At the request of the Committee, the Board of Investment (BOI) appeared before the Committee and assured that it has the will and capacity to provide necessary lands with infrastructure facilities to establish higher education institutions both local and foreign.
- 4.4.33** Permit private sector higher education institutes to use the term "University," on the condition that they maintain the required standards as described in the regulations formulated under the Act.

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

III. Vocational Educational Universities/Institutes

- 4.4.34** To Grant degree awarding status to Technical Education institutes upgrading their courses. In addition to that, the authorities may identify other institution where vocational education is maintain to an expected standards could also be upgraded as degree awarding institutes.
- 4.4.35** Establishment of special purpose universities for emerging areas of importance that are experiencing growing demand nationally and internationally.
- 4.4.36** Promotion of vocational and training education as an attractive socially recognized alternative to tertiary education pathway.
- 4.4.37** To introduce foundation courses to enter into graduate programs to those who have not sat or passed G.C.E. Advance Level Examination.
- 4.4.38** Promotion of bridging course concept which allows the students who follow any stream other than physical science at G.C.E. Advanced Level to enroll in Computing discipline degrees.
- 4.4.39** To introduce and promote Industrial Apprentice institutes for the purpose of developing skills required for industries, agriculture and entrepreneurship.

IV. Quality Assurance

- 4.4.40** The Minister shall make regulations to ensure that all higher education institutions comply with the requirements to maintain the internal quality assurance both in the State sector as well as in Non-State sector.
- 4.4.41** There shall be a separate agency to ensure the quality of the education and the degrees to be awarded by adopting an accreditation system, both in the State sector and in the non-State sector.
- 4.4.42** It is prudent to have a separate deliberation on the subject of reforms on Pirivena Education

Minutes of all the Committee meetings held up to 13th July 2023 and the representations made by Hon. Members, officials from different entities have been incorporated in the Volume II of the Select Committee Report.

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

We, the members of the Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations over the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka, do hereby approve the report of the Committee.

Hon. (Dr.) Wijeyadasa Rajapakse, PC

Wijeyadasa Rajapakse

Signed.

Hon. (Dr.) Ramesh Pathirana

Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Seetha Arambepola

[Signature]

Signed.

Hon. A. Aravindh Kumar

Hon. Rauff Hakeem

[Signature]

Hon. Anura Priyadarshana Yapa

Hon. Eran Wickramaratne

Hon. (Ms.) Rohini Kumari Wijerathna

Approval granted.
(Out of the Country.)

Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath

[Signature]

Hon. (Dr.) (Ms.) Harini Amarasuriya

[Signature]

Indira Dissanayake
Secretary to the Committee

Annexure X₁**Officials Presented at Committee Meetings***(From 21st February 2023 to 13th July 2023)*

Institution	Personals
University Grants Commission	(Sn. Prof.) Sampath Amaratunge Chairman
	(Prof.) Chandana P Udawatte Vice Chairman
	(Dr.) Priyantha Premakumara Secretary
	(Prof.) Vasanthy Arasaratnam Member
	(Prof.) Premakumara de Silva Member
	(Prof.) A.K.W. Jayawardane Member
	Mr.Palitha Kumarasinghe Member
	(Prof.) Premakumara de Silva Member
Ministry of Education	Mr. M. N. Ranasinghe Secretary
	(Prof.) Gunapala Nanayakkara Advisor to the Minister of Education
	Mr. H. J. M. C. A. Jayasundara Commissioner-General of Examinations
	Mr. K. A. D. Punyadasa Chief Commissioner (Teacher Education)
	Mrs. P. C. K. Pirisyala Director of Education (Private Schools)
	(Dr.) K. P. Munagama Director of Education (Technical Education)
	Mrs. K. A. J. Prishangika Director of Education (Policy and Planning)
	(Dr.) I.M.K.B. Illangasinghe Additional Secretary
	Mrs. H.D.C. Janaki Director (Student Loan)
	Ms. T.K.W.T.P. Premarathna Assistant Director (Student Loan)

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

Institution	Personals
	Mr. W.T.B. Sarath Director (Science)
Ministry of Education	Mrs. D. N. P. Pullaperuma Assistant Director of Education
	(Prof.) Gunapala Nanayakkara Advisor to the Minister of Education
	Mr. H. J. M. C. A. Jayasundara Commissioner-General of Examinations
	Ms. P.W. Amaradiwakara Director (School Activities)
	Mr.K.R Uduwawala Additional Secretary
<i>Non-State Higher Education</i>	Mrs. J.A.C.H.Jayasinghe Director
	Mrs. W.H.M.M.C.K.Dayarathne Additional Secretary
	Ms. K.T.Sajini Wejesiriwardena Assistant Director
National Education Commission	(Prof.) Harischandra Abeygunawardena Chairman
World Bank (AHEAD Project)	(Dr.) Kumudika Boyagoda
State Universities	
<i>1. University of Colombo</i>	Prof. Chandrika Wijeyaratne Former Vice Chancellor
<i>2. University of Peradeniya</i>	Prof. M.D Lamawansa Vice Chancellor
<i>The Open University of Sri Lanka</i>	Prof. P.M.C. Thilakerathna Vice Chancellor
	Dr. H.G.P.A. Ratnaweera Dean (Faculty of Engineering Technology)
Universities registered under different statutes	
<i>1. Bhiksu University</i>	Senior Prof. Ven. Kanattegoda Saddharatana Anunayaka Thero Vice Chancellor
	Ven. Galwewe Wimalakhanthi Thero Dean
<i>2. Buddhist & Pali University</i>	Prof. Ven. Moragollagama Uparathana Thero Dean (Faculty of Graduate Studies)

Institution	Personals
	Ven. Illukwela Dhammarathana Thero Dean (Faculty of Buddhist Studies)
	Dr. K.G. Swarnananda Gamage Dean (Faculty of Language Studies)
<i>Buddhist & Pali University</i>	Mr.E.A.Gunasena Registrar (Acting)
3. <i>General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU)</i>	Major General MP Peiris Vice Chancellor
	Mr. V.D. Kithsiri Registrar
4. <i>Ocean University</i>	Prof. R.M.Wasantha Rathnayake Vice Chancellor
5. <i>University of Vocational Technology</i>	Prof. Ranjith Premalal De Silva Vice Chancellor
Institutes registered under Ministry of Education	
1. <i>SLTC Research University</i>	Mr. Ranjith G. Rubasinghe Vice Chancellor/Founder
	Mr. Heminda Jayaweera Director (Corporate Affairs and Engagement)
	Mr. Jagath Wijerathne Director (Academic Affairs)
2. <i>CINEC Campus</i>	Admiral Thisara Samarasinghe Senior Consultant
3. <i>NSBM Green University</i>	(Prof.) E.A.Weerasinghe Vice Chancellor
4. <i>Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology(SLIIT)</i>	Prof. Nimal Rajapakse Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor
	Prof. Colin N. Peiris Director (Academic Development & Quality Assurance)
5. <i>The KAATSU International for Undergraduate-studies (KIU)</i>	Ms. Nadeeka Ranadeva Deputy Vice Chancellor
	Ms. Dilhara Rathnayake Head of Marketing Division
6. <i>Institute of Surveying and Mapping</i>	Mr. U.K.S.P. Wijesinghe Senior Deputy Survey General
	Mr. M.T.M. Rafeek Senior Deputy of Surveys

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

Institution	Personals
7. <i>Legal Draftsman's Department</i>	Ms. V.S. Thushari Assistant Legal Draftsman
8. <i>SAB Campus of CA Sri Lanka</i>	Senior Prof. Ariyaratna Jayamaha Director
9. <i>Aquinas College of Higher Studies</i>	Prof. C.A.N. Fernando Rector
<i>Aquinas College of Higher Studies</i>	Mr. Lalindra De Silva Wijeyaratne Registrar
10. <i>Horizon Campus</i>	Mr. Upul Daranagama Chairman
11. <i>National Institute of Social Development (NISD)</i>	Ms. M.T.R. Shamini Attanayake Director General
	Mrs. C.H.D. Hettiarachchi Registrar
12. <i>Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA)</i>	Mr. K.D.N. Ranjith Asoka Director General (Acting)
13. <i>SIBA Campus</i>	Assistant Prof. Ms. Hasanthie Yapa Dahanayake
14. <i>Sri Lanka Institute of Nanotechnology (SLINTEC)</i>	Prof. Viranja Karunarathna Vice Chancellor
15. <i>Saegis Campus</i>	Prof. Nalaka Jayakody Vice Chancellor
16. <i>Institute of Chemistry Ceylon</i>	Prof. Namal Priyantha Senior Lecturer
	Mr. Sanjaya Hettigedara President
17. <i>ESOFT Metro Campus</i>	Dr. Dayan Rajapakse Chairman
	Mr. Nishan Sembacuttyarachchi Chief Executive Officer
18. <i>ICBT Campus</i>	Dr. Sampath Kannangara Chief Executive Officer
	Mr. Anura Gamage Director (Marketing)
	Mr. S. Chandramohan Chief Academic Officer
	Mr. Sampath Perera General Manager

Institution	Personals
<i>19. International Institute of Health Sciences (IIHS)</i>	Mr. H.P.A.L. Pinto Registrar
<i>20. Royal Institute of Colombo</i>	Mr. Lasantha Amarakoon Chief Operating
	Ms. Sudharma Chandrasiri Lecturer and Academic Coordinator
<i>21. Nagananda International Institute of Buddhist Studies (NIIBS)</i>	Mr. W.D.S. Seneviratne Head – Media Department
Board of Investment	Ms. Priyanka Samaraweera Executive Director
	Mr. Prasanjith Wijayathilake Executive Director
	Ms. Ganga Palaketiya Senior Deputy Director
	Mr. G.R.C.Gamlath Senior Deputy Director
	Ms. Thanuja Bandara Deputy Director
	Ms. Priyanka Samaraweera Executive Director
	Mr. Prasanjith Wijayathilake Executive Director
Federation of University Teachers' Association (FUTA)	Prof. B.M.H.S.K. Banneheka
	Prof. Nirmal Devasiri
	Prof. Arjuna Parakrama
	Prof. Rohan Fernando
	Mr. Rohan Laksiri
LIRNEasia Research Institute	Dr.Sujatha Gamage Senior Fellow
	Ms. R.A.A.R. Ranwella Principal
Wayamba Technical College	Mr. R.A.S.R.A. Ranwella Deputy Principal
	Mr. Wasantha Mudalige
Inter University Students Federation (IUSF)	Rev. Galwewa Siridhamma
	Mr. A.M.Rifath
	Mr. A.H. Nawanjana Virashan
	Mr. H.M.N.L Hemantha

Select Committee of Parliament to make suitable recommendations for the expansion of higher education opportunities in Sri Lanka

Institution	Personals
	Mr. S.T.M.Jayasinghe
	Mr. W K I I perera
	Mr. S B H N Bandara
	Mr. Gimhan Rupasinghe
Attorney Generals' Department	Mr. Sehan Soyza State Council
	Ms. Vishni Ganepola State Counsel
Legal Draftsmans' Department	Ms. Thushari Vitharana Assistant Legal Draftsman
	Ms. Shehara Weerakoon Deputy Legal Draftsman
Auditor Generals' Department	Mrs. W.M.P.A. Fonseka Deputy Auditor General
	Mrs. S.M.C. Indika Superintendent of Audit

Annexure X₂**24 Non-state Higher Education Institutions**

1.	Institute of Surveying and Mapping
2.	Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (Guarantee) Ltd (SLIIT)
3.	Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration
4.	National Institute of Social Development
5.	Aquinas College of Higher Studies
6	National School of Business Management Ltd (NSBM)
7	Colombo International Nautical and Engineering College (pvt) Ltd (CINEC)
8	Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy
9	The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka
10	SANASA Campus Ltd
11	Horizon College of Businee & Technology (pvt) Ltd
12	KAATSU - Highly Advanced Medical Technology Training Centre (pvt) Ltd
13	Nagananda International Institute for Buddhist Studies
14	S L T Campus (pvt) Ltd
15	Sri Lanka Institute of Nanotechnology (pvt) Ltd
16	Saegis Campus (pvt) Ltd
17	Esoft Metro Campus (pvt) Ltd
18	Institute of Chemistry Ceylon
19	International College of Business Technology Ltd
20	Benedict XVI Catholic Institute of Higher Education (pvt) Ltd
21	Royal Institute Colombo (pvt) Ltd
22	Business Management School (pvt) Ltd
23	International Institute of Health Science (Pvt)
24	Lanka Nippon BizTech Institute (pvt) Ltd