COPE Recommends Postponement of the Aircraft Procurement Process for Three Months

Date : 25-04-2022

The Chairman of the Committee on Public Enterprises Hon. (Prof.) Charitha Herath today (25) recommended to SriLankan Airlines to postpone the procurement process of leasing 21 aircraft for the period 2022-2025, for three months.

Accordingly, in view of the prevailing economic situation, the entire process should be reviewed and it should be ascertained whether the relevant procurement process is in line with the proper methodology, COPE advised the Secretaries to the Ministry of Tourism and the State Ministry of Aviation and Export Zones Development. Furthermore, the COPE Chairman also recommended that a procurement guideline be duly prepared and submitted to the Cabinet through the cabinet minister for the relevant procurement as a Cabinet decision.

The Committee acknowledges that the replacement of aircraft at the end of the service period is essential for the continued operation of the airline. However, in view of the current economic crisis prevailing in the country, it is important to pay more attention to this and meet the relevant requirements.

SriLankan Airlines was summoned before COPE today (25) following a debate in Parliament regarding the recent chartering of aircraft.

Mr. Ashok Pathirage, Chairman of SriLankan Airlines and other senior officials pointed out that several aircrafts out of the 24 existing aircrafts will be reduced in near future and that the process would take some time as the acquisition of aircraft cannot be done immediately. Accordingly, considering the relevant market conditions, this process will take between 6-12 months and these activities will be carried out through the Ministry in a more transparent manner, Mr. Pathirage said.

The COPE members also appreciated the efforts of professionals with high experience in management in the country, working together to upgrade SriLankan Airlines.

The Chairman of Chairman of SriLankan Airlines further pointed out that in the face of the current challenging situation, a large number of staff cuts had to be made and the salaries of the employees had to be reduced while recalling with respect the contribution made by his staff to the betterment of the company.

Minister Hon. Dr Nalaka Godahewa, State Ministers Hon. D. V. Chanaka, Hon. Indika Anuruddha, Members of Parliament Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera, Hon. Patali Champika Ranawaka, Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva, Hon. Eran Wickramaratne, Hon. S. M. Marikkar, Hon. Madhura Withanage, Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Chairman of SriLankan Airlines Mr. Ashok Pathirage and other senior officials were also present at the Committee meeting held.

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