COPE focus on the 50 generators purchased at a cost of Rs. 3100 million for the period 2018, 2019 which are not in working condition when purchased

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The Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) focused on the 50 generators purchased at a cost of Rs. 3100 million for the period 2018, 2019 which are not in working condition when purchased.

This was brought to the attention of the Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) chaired by Hon. (Prof) Charitha Herath at Parliament recently (10) to examine the Auditor General's reports for the years 2017 and 2018 and the current performance of the Ceylon Electricity Board.

During the discussion with regards to the 50 generators, the members of the committee expressing their views on the matter, pointed out that the generators were not in working condition at the time of purchase. The Committee questioned whether there was a quality check on these purchases and its cost.

The officials who were present at the committee meeting pointed out that the officials had carried out an inspection on the purchases and that Rs. 3100 million had been spent for those purchases and that all these 50 generators are still in operation as at today. The committee members further stated that these generators were not operational at the beginning and was only operational after the upgrade. Accordingly, a formal inquiry should be conducted into the purchase of generators that were not in working condition at the time of purchase, regardless of the time period in which they were purchased.

The COPE Chairman recommended that a report be submitted to the Auditor General's Department within two weeks.

The COPE Chairman also inquired about the ownership of the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) over LTL and whether the CEB has the ability to deviate from the state audit in deciding who will audit the company. According to the officials present, 63% of the shares of this company are owned by the Ceylon Electricity Board. Accordingly, the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB), which holds the largest number of shares, has been removed from the state audit due to a technical issue, the COPE chairman said. Therefore, he recommended that a report on this be submitted to the COPE within two weeks. The Chairman of the Electricity Board said that action will be taken to resolve this issue within two weeks.

The purchase of electricity from the Ace Embilipitiya Power Station was also discussed. The COPE chairman questioned the signing of new agreements on the purchase of electricity from the plant. Members of Parliament who were present also inquired about the pricing process in drafting a new agreement to purchase electricity.

The officials of the Ceylon Electricity Board did not give a definite answer to this and the COPE Chairman recommended that a report be submitted within a month.

The long-term generation plan was also discussed and it was stated that the Auditor General's Department has not received any information regarding the new generation plan prepared for the

year 2022 - 2041. It was mentioned here that the information contained in the Generation Plan prepared for the year 2018 - 2037 is in the possession of the Auditor General's Department. Accordingly, the Chairman of the COPE recommended that the new generation plan, which has been approved, be submitted to the Auditor General's Department as soon as possible. Officials who were present at the event pointed out that the need to meet 50% of renewable energy as per the policies of the previous government of 2019, but with the coming to power of the new government, the need for renewable energy was pointed out as 70%. They point out that the new generation plan was prepared accordingly.

The COPE Chairman pointed out that it is important to keep the generation plan unchanged even if the policies change due to the change in political authority. In addition, discussions were held on the Memorandum of Understanding with Adani India, the feasibility study for the same, the purchase of emergency energy and the interest on deposits from customers.

Members of Parliament Hon. Patali Champika Ranawaka, Hon. Indika Anuruddha Herath, Hon. Sagara Kariyawasam, Hon. Eran Wickramaratne, Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva, Hon. Rauff Hakeem, Hon. (Dr.) Nalaka Godahewa, Hon. D. V. Chanaka, Hon. Nalin Bandara, Hon. Premnath C. Dolawatte, Hon. Madhura Withanage and Hon. S.M Marikkar were present at this meeting.