Attention of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Food Security & Agriculture regarding the resolution of issues related to the application of fertilizers to agricultural crops in Sri Lanka

Date : 20-12-2023

- **The Committee looks into strengthening Agricultural Extension Services**
- **The Committee directs attention regarding the progress of the foreign exchange projects being implemented under the Ministry of Agriculture and Plantation Industries**

The Sectoral Oversight Committee on Food Security & Agriculture discussed the resolution of problems related to the application of fertilizers to agricultural crops in Sri Lanka.

This was discussed at the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Food Security & Agriculture held under the Chairmanship of Hon. D. Weerasingha, Member of Parliament in the parliament recently.

Several people including Mr. Gamini Seneviratne, Senior Research Professor of Microbial Biotechnology at National Institute of Basic Education, Kandy, explained about the application of fertilizers to agricultural crops in Sri Lanka. These explanations elaborated on how the microbial cover should be maintained in the soil through the use of biofertilizers and organic fertilizers. The possibility of reducing diseases and the quality of nutrition was also explained.

The Committee also pointed out that there are 32 soil research centers in the country run under the Department of Agriculture and the need to introduce digital technology to quickly test the soil in these.

Furthermore, the Committee pointed out the need to release different fertilizers for agricultural activities in the respective areas by recognizing the differences in the local soil. The officials present mentioned that awareness activities are already being done locally. Furthermore, the introduction of technologically advanced fertilizers in a suitable manner for the respective areas was also discussed at the Committee meeting held.

Furthermore, the Committee focused on the strengthening of agricultural extension services and discussed the progress of the research conducted by the Department of Agriculture through provincial and inter-provincial agriculture officers and the dissemination of modern technology among provincial farmers.

Apart from this, the Committee also paid attention to the progress of the foreign exchange projects being implemented under the Ministry of Agriculture and Plantation Industries.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the irregularities and frauds in the Small-Scale Agri-Business Participation Program (SAPP Project) implemented under the US$ 10 million loan aid provided by the IFAD organization, and the Committee Chair instructed the Secretary to the Ministry to conduct a full investigation submit a report submitted to the Committee.

On the invitation of the Chair of the Committee, Minister Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera, Members of

Parliament Hon. Chamal Rajapaksa, Hon. Kins Nelson, Hon. Samanpriya Herath and Hon. (Major) Sudarshan Denipitiya were present at the Committee meeting held.

Ministry of Agriculture, Provincial Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Auditor General, Department of Agriculture, Department of Agricultural Development, National Fertilizer Secretariat, representatives of Fertilizer Organizations, National Institute of Basic Studies and youth representatives appointed to sectoral oversight committees were also present at this occasion.