Sectoral Oversight Committee direct attention towards the National Policy on Child Day Care Center Facilities

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The Sectoral Oversight Committee on Children, Women and Gender directed its focus in conducting a discussion at length on the National Policy on Day Care Center Facilities for Children prepared by the National Child Protection Authority.

This was discussed at the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Children, Women and Gender which met recently (Jan. 09) under the Chairmanship of Hon. Thalatha Athukorala in Parliament.

Officials representing the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment, National Child Protection Authority, Department of Probation and Child Care Services, representatives of Verité Research Institute and youth representatives assigned to the Sectoral Oversight Committee were present during this discussion.

Officials of the National Child Protection Authority stated that the national policy, which has been prepared to apply to the entire country, has now been submitted to the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment and thereafter steps will be taken to obtain the approval of the Cabinet Ministers.

Furthermore, the Committee observed that there is no proper mechanism for the registration and regulation of day care centers operating in the country and since the registrations are done under the provincial councils, different methods are followed in different provinces. Therefore, as it is essential to ensure the safety of children in any province, the Committee pointed out that there is a need for a common mechanism for the whole country as well as fields such as education and health.

Accordingly, it was decided to call the provincial chief secretaries and the officials of the Attorney General's Department to discuss this matter.

There was also a discussion at length regarding the pilot project implemented in Sabaragamuwa province through the Presidential Secretariat regarding day care centers. Accordingly, the representatives of Verité Research Institute pointed out the need to analyze the observations and results obtained through this pilot project and implement future projects accordingly. The Committee Chair, Member of Parliament Hon. (Mrs.) Thalatha Athukorala instructed to obtain a report from the Chief Secretary of Sabaragamuwa Province regarding this pilot project.

Furthermore, the youth representatives assigned to the said Sectoral Oversight Committees also presented their views.

Members of Parliament Hon. Rohini Kumari Wijerathna, Hon. Manjula Dissanayake, Hon. Muditha Prishanthi, Hon. D. Weerasingha and Hon. Velu Kumar, were present at the Committee meeting held.

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