All Parliamentarians should wear face masks in the Chamber at all times

Date : 31-07-2020

The Operational Guidelines on Preparedness and Response for COVID - 19 Outbreak for the Parliament presented today, state that all Members of Parliament in the chamber should wear masks at all times. Accordingly, all Members of Parliament should not remove or lower the mask when addressing in the Parliament and remain in the Chamber as well.

The guidelines further state that it is mandatory for all Members to sit in the designated seat only and whenever they are not seated in their designated seats should maintain 1m distance with each other at all times in the chamber.

The Director General of Health Services Dr. Anil Jasingha handed over The Operational Guidelines on Preparedness and Response for COVID - 19 Outbreak for the Parliament which contains 21 guidelines to the Secretary General of Parliament Dhammika Dasanayake today (31).

Secretary General of Parliament Dhammika Dasanayake said that the guidelines state that all officers in the chamber and members of Parliament staff as well as all parties in the galleries should wear masks. Sanitizers should be kept at every entrance to the chamber, and Members of Parliament and officials should wash their hands before entering the chamber.

It is mandatory for Members of Parliament to follow these guidelines at Committee meetings as well. The need of wearing masks whenever possible was also emphasized.

In addition, the guidelines include that members of parliament should not exchange their personal items such as mobile devices, head phones, pens etc. with others and should avoid habits of greeting such as hugging and shaking hands.

Addressing the gathering, Director General of Health Services Dr. Anil Jasinghe said that these guidelines would be important in ensuring the safe functioning of Parliament. He also pointed out that the guidelines have been prepared to cover all sections of Parliament. He further said that at the request of the Secretary General of Parliament, the necessary guidelines have been prepared and this is the third set of guidelines that was prepared by the Ministry of Health.

He said that When 09th Parliament convenes all 225 Members of Parliament could be seated safely in the chamber.

These guide lines are prepared to cover a number of locations in Parliament, including the Chamber of Parliament, Members Lounge, Public, Media & Special Guests Gallery, Member’s Restaurants, Library, Kitchens, Staff Cafeteria and guidelines have also been issued for transportation Services and office cleaning staff.

Deputy Secretary General and Chief of Staff Neil Iddawala and high officials of Parliament were present at the occasion.

[Download the Guidelines]