



Cabinet Decisions taken at the Cabinet Meeting held on 03.03.2026

01. The phased removal of the Cess tax imposed on imported goods.

For purposes such as protecting selected domestic industries and generating revenue, the continuous imposition and expansion of import taxes other than customs duties, including the Cess tax, has taken place over a period. As a consequence, the production cost of export-oriented industries has increased due to high import costs, especially for intermediate and input goods. These conditions have resulted in curtailing the competitiveness of Sri Lankan products in the international market, as well as limiting of export-dominated economic development. Therefore, it has been planned to phase removal the aforementioned Cess tax with the objectives of increasing export competitiveness through the reduction of production costs, promoting industries and assisting in value addition, facilitating trade and providing facilities for trading activities, ensuring equal competitiveness for all stakeholders, and compliance with the internationally recognized practices and policies of the World Trade Organization. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the joint resolution furnished by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development and the Minister of Industries and Entrepreneurship Development to phase removal the Cess tax imposed on imported goods under 2,634 combined classification codes identified over 4 years from 2026 to 2029.

02. Formulation of formal procedure for the import of maize for animal food

Maize is used for animal food, Thripasha production, and human consumption, and the maize has to be imported since the locally produced maize is insufficient for these purposes. However, it has been decided at the cabinet meetings held on 15-12-2025 and 22-12-2025 to formulate a proper mechanism to import maize due to the arising of various issues in the recent past. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Land, and Irrigation to determine the price of the maize by a committee appointed by the Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land, and Irrigation in the future and to import only the amount of maize that could not be supplied locally for animal food production by the animal food manufacturers and animal food importers registered at the Department of Animal Production and Health during the period when the maize harvest is not available in the market, ensuring that local maize farmers are not prejudiced, under the supervision of the Department of Animal Production and Health.

03. Importing and Supplying Procedure for food grade maize to Sri Lanka Thriposha Limited

Sri Lanka Thriposha Limited has to utilize imported maize due to the inability to obtain sufficient stocks of the required standard maize locally for the production of Thriposha. However, since maize imports are subject to multiple regulatory controls, including import control licenses and plant import permits, a procedure should be introduced to import high-quality maize without any obstruction or delay, enabling the continued production of Thriposha. Accordingly, the secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land, and Irrigation, and the secretary to the Ministry of Trade, Commerce, Food Security, and Cooperative Development have formulated a procedure regarding the import of required maize in a stepwise manner to Sri Lanka Thriposha Limited, in concurrence with the relevant procurement guidelines and regulatory requirements for the production of Thriposha and other associated products. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved a joint resolution furnished by the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Land, and Irrigation and the Minister of Trade, Commerce, Food Security, and Co-operative Development to import a maximum of 15,000 metric tons of maize in several phases for the production of Thriposha for the year 2026 following the aforementioned procedure.

04. Implementation of a program for minimization of damages to the crops and human life from the wild animals roaming around human habitats and cultivated lands.

The rural agricultural livelihood and food security have been severely impacted due to the damage caused by wild animals such as elephants, wild boars, monkeys, toque macaque, chipmunks, and peacocks roaming around human habitats and cultivated lands. Further, animal-human conflicts and property destruction have mostly been reported around these areas, and serious social and economic issues have also arisen. Therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land, and Irrigation has prepared a comprehensive program based on the opinions of all stakeholders, including the public, university community, farmers' organizations, environmentalists, non-governmental organizations which work for environmental issues, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Agrarian Development, and other relevant organizations. While taking into consideration the matters submitted by the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Land, and Irrigation in that respect, the Cabinet of Ministers has decided to appoint a ministerial committee with the participation of other relevant ministers, chaired by the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Land, and Irrigation, to submit appropriate recommendations on how the aforementioned program should be implemented by further reviewing the proposals included in the said program and incorporating new proposals further identified.

05. The improvement of the quality of the accident and emergency health care system in Sri Lanka

Since the emergency hospitalizations occurred due to accidents and trauma, road accidents, and severe cardiac and paralytic conditions are increasing, the necessity of establishing the existing limited health services under a combined and standard structure to respond to these situations has been identified. Accordingly, it has been proposed to establish a Directorate of Accident and Emergency Care system under the Ministry of Health and Mass Media to strengthen coordination, regulation, and promotion of accident and emergency treatment services. Through the establishment of this Directorate, it will be able to systematically strengthen emergency treatment guidelines, pathways of referring, and capacity development programs, by combining emergency health services under one structure. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Health and Mass Media to establish Directorate of Accident and Emergency Care System under his Ministry.

06. Transfer of plot of land to construct a new building for Sri Lanka Nursing Council.

The Sri Lanka Nursing Council established as an independent institute for registration of all nursing officers in public and private sector in Sri Lanka, has been temporary maintaining for about 15 years in a small space of the Post Basic College of Nursing. The Sri Lanka Nursing Council has been assigned the task of registration of more than 45,000 public sector nursing officers and nursing and nursing related private sector groups, maintaining their files and computer data system, and conducting sessions for training and making them aware for their professional development. Therefore, the requirement of a premises with adequate space and facilities has arisen for these purposes. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Health and Mass Media to transfer a plot of land measuring 35 feet in length and 30 feet in width, which is owned by the Colombo National Hospital, adjacent to the Post Basic College of Nursing, on a long-term lease basis to construct a new building.

07. Transfer of the Puttalam Base Hospital under the Ministry of Health and Mass Media for development

The Puttalam Base Hospital, which was upgraded to the category "A" base hospital in the year 2019, has been managed by the North Western Provincial Council at present and provides health services for about 4 million people living in around 9 Divisional Secretariat Divisions. The hospital, which was established in an area of 13 acres, comprises 52 buildings and 746 beds. The hospital provides four major specialist services, outpatient care services, diagnostic services, accident and emergency care facilities, inpatient facilities, and other ancillary services. However, the hospital is not yet fully operational as an "A" category base hospital. According to the geographical location of the hospital, the wards of the hospital are at risk of flooding during the rainy season, and it has been further

observed that the existing space for the outpatient division, accident and emergency treatment unit, and other units is insufficient. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Health and Mass Media to transfer the aforementioned hospital under the Ministry of Health and Mass Media with the consensus of the Hon. Governor of the North Western Provincial Council, to develop the Puttalam Base Hospital into a Tertiary Care Level according to the Major Hospital Development Plan prepared in the year 2025 based on the requirements for the implementation of the hospital as an "A" category base hospital.

08. Entering into an agreement between Sri Lanka and Kingdom of Morocco to exempt from obtaining Visa for the holders of diplomatic, duty and service passports.

Although the Cabinet of Ministers approved entering into an agreement on 07-08-2018 with the objective of providing the travel of citizens of the two countries on a mutual basis and to simplify the relevant procedures and to improve the friendly relationship between both countries, the relevant agreement has still not been able to be signed. Therefore, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Public Security, and Parliamentary Affairs to sign an agreement between Sri Lanka and Kingdom of Morocco enabling the holders of diplomatic, duty and service passports to enter, exit and transit through the territory of other party without a VISA leaving, and to move to another country through the relevant international arrival/departure gates not exceeding 30 days through their respective international entry/exit points.

09. Implementation of the project for water supply for safe and climate change resilient for cities in the Western Provincial Council.

The secure drinking water supply is severely impacted in many areas of Sri Lanka due to climate change. There is a dire need to build resistance against climatic conditions, such as floods and droughts, through water-secure plans that are resilient to these conditions as an essential part of water supply management. In response to a call for proposals issued by the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, the Environmental and Social Division established by the National Water Supply and Drainage Board to ensure environmental sustainability, social responsibility, gender responsiveness, and to strengthen resilience against climate and disaster risks, has submitted a project proposal titled: "Safe and Climate-Resilient Water Supply for Cities in the Western Province: Integrating Climate Change Resilience Concepts into the Water Safety Plan of the Ambatale Water Supply Scheme," based on the technical guidance of UN-Habitat. Accordingly, a financial grant of US\$ 469,232 has been received to implement the proposed project within a period of 24 months. The National Water Supply and Drainage Board will provide US\$ 10,000 co-financial support for this project. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Housing, Construction, and Water Supply to implement the proposed project.

10. Restoration of institutions belong to the general education sector which were devastated due to 'Ditwah' Cyclone.

The institutions belong to general education sector devastated due to 'Ditwah' cyclone that struck the island should be restored soon. Under this, it has been estimated a total of rupees million 2,274.23 would be spent as rupees million 1,988.83 for restoration of 150 national schools in the 09 provinces of the island, and rupees million 285.40 for restoration of 07 national colleges of education. In addition to this, required structures has to be constructed based on reports and plans provided by the National Building Research Organization (NBRO) in order to be rid of earth slip risk for education institutions situated in steep slope areas. Accordingly, considering the resolution furnished by the Hon. Prime Minister in her capacity as the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education pointing out the hasty requirement of performing the relevant restoration activities, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval to provide necessary allocations for the said restoration / renovation utilizing the supplementary budget approved by the Parliament in December 2025.

11. Payment of the financial subsidiary for fertilizer to the farmers cultivating paddy lands for the Yala season 2026.

While approval has been granted at the Cabinet meeting held on 18.08.2025 to pay the financial subsidiary for fertilizer to the farmers cultivating paddy lands for the Maha season 2025/26, the programme is planned to be continued for the Yala season 2026 as well. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation to pay a financial subsidiary for paddy cultivation as rupees 25,000/- per hectare and for 02 hectares per farmer to the maximum and to pay rupees 15,000/- per hectare of field crops cultivated in the paddy lands where paddy cultivation is not occurred and decided to be cultivated in a way decided at seasonal crop meetings and recommended by the Director General of Agriculture to be for 02 hectares per farmer.

12. Obtaining used low floorboard buses provided by the Japanese government as a grant.

Attention was focused on the ways in which Japan could assist public bus transport sector in Sri Lanka, during the meeting held in February 2025 between the President of Sri Lanka and the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, who was on a visit to the country. At the discussions held with the Japanese Embassy in Sri Lanka, the Japanese Government has agreed to provide 08 used low floorboard buses to this country. The Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Transport, Highways and Urban Development to obtain the said grant to the country.

13. Construction of phase IV of the portion of highway from Kurunegala to Dambulla of the Central Expressway Project.

It is essential to execute phase IV of the expressway from Kurunegala to Dambulla which is a total of 58.6 kilometres in length to accomplish the total expected benefits of the entire central expressway. Approval has been granted at the Cabinet meeting on 09.06.2025 to perform acquisition of lands recognized for construction of the said phase. The physical progress of the land acquisition process is 73.3% while, compensation should have to be further paid for acquisition of lands. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Transport, Highways and Urban Development to take following measures for accelerated execution of construction work of phase IV portion of the central expressway project from Kurunegala to Dambulla:

- Identification of the appropriate source of financing by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for execution of the said phase and thereby allocate the necessary provisions.
- Getting the National Building Research Organization (NBRO) to perform initial geo technical surveys, slope stability and earth slips risk evaluation prior to initiation of the constructions, since the phase runs across geological sensitive areas.
- Getting the Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation to prepare aquatic designing / landscaping, estimation of flood risk and storm water management plans since the phase is dealing with several major and minor water ways.

14. Upgrading the productivity of the rubber plantation through restoration of mature rubber plantations that have been abandoned without latex harvesting.

The total extent of rubber lands in Sri Lanka is 84,002 hectares. However, a considerable number of the rubber plantation land owners are deprived of harvesting latex from their plantations at present due to shortage of skilled and trained latex extractors, lack of knowledge on the latex extracting techniques as well as tools required for that, excessive crop maintenance cost, decline of number of days that latex can be extracted due to unfavourable weather leading to non – receipt of a fixed income as a result of daily non – extracting latex. There is a possibility of growth in the rubber manufacturing industry which is possessing a higher export value as well as has the capability of obtaining the contribution to the gross domestic product by restoring such lands efficiently. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure Facilities to implement a project from 2026 to 2028 named ‘Upgrading the productivity of the rubber plantation through restoration of mature rubber plantations that have been abandoned without latex harvesting’ so that the rubber lands of 3,300 hectares abundant throughout the island can be restored and to obtain allocations of rupees 1,212.38 million for the purpose.

15. Repealing the Chief of Defence Staff Act No. 35 of 2009

Approval has been granted at the meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers on 24.02.2025 to formulate a draft bill to repeal (or abolish) the Chief of Defence Staff Act No. 35 of 2009. Accordingly, clearance of the Attorney General has been received to the draft bill of Chief of Defence Staff Repealing Act in three languages prepared by the Legal Draftsman. Therefore, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Defence to publish the said draft bill in the government gazette notification and subsequently forward the same to the concurrence of the Parliament.

16. Submission of the Anti-Doping (Prohibited List) Regulations No.11 of 2025 to the Parliament for its concurrence.

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) annually update the Prohibited List for athletes and, parallel to that the agreed nations also enact the same list in their own country. Accordingly, the Anti-Doping (Prohibited List) Regulations No.11 of 2025 has been published in the extraordinary gazette No. 2471 / 51 of 16.01.2026 under the provisions of the Convention Against Doping in Sports Act No. 33 of 2013 for enacting the Prohibited List relevant to the year 2026 in the country. The Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports to submit those regulations to the Parliament for its concurrence.

17. Review of the recruitment process in the public service and implementation of recommendations of the Committee appointed to Cadre Management – (Vote No. 45)

Approval has been granted at the meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers on 30.12.2024 to appoint a committee of officials headed by the Secretary to the Prime Minister in order to present recommendations on the number of recruitments to be taken place essentially by recognizing the requirements, priorities and time frames through review of the recruitment process of the public service. Considering the requests directed by the Ministries to the said committee for filling the vacancies in posts existing in the Departments and other institutions under each Ministry at the committee meeting held on 12.02.2026, the Hon. Prime Minister forwarded the recommendations already submitted and the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval for the following recruitments.

Serial No.	Ministry / Provincial Council	No. of vacant posts recommended by the Committee for recruitment
1.	Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education	300
2.	Ministry of Justice and National Integration	67
3.	Ministry of Defence	9,794
4.	Ministry of Industries and Entrepreneurship Development	112
5.	Ministry of Transport, Highways and Urban Development	121
6.	Ministry of Buddhhasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs	02
7.	Ministry of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs	1,915
8.	Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Governments	66
9.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation	60
10.	Ministry of Health and Mass Media	776
11.	Ministry of Science and Technology	201
12.	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development	214
13.	Ministry of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment	15
14.	Ministry of Environment	213
15.	Ministry of Youth Affairs, and Sports	06
16.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment, and Tourism	03
17.	Ministry of Labour	01
18.	Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure Facilities	09
19.	Ministry of Ports and Civil Aviation Services	339
20.	Ministry of Power	01
21.	Ministry of Trade, Commerce, Food Security and Cooperative Development	50
22.	Ministry of Housing, Construction and Water Supply	10
23.	Central Provincial Council	22
24.	Sabaragamuwa Provincial Council	236
25.	North Western Provincial Council	401
26.	North Central Provincial Council	66
27.	Eastern Provincial Council	282
28.	Uva Provincial Council	146
29.	Northern Provincial Council	411
	Total	15,839

18. Payment of allowances to government officers performing duties at widespread disaster scenarios.

Relevant instructions have been issued by the circular dated 01.09.2019 of the Secretary to the then Ministry of Public Administration, Disaster Management and Livestock development to pay those government officers engaged in duties within widespread disaster scenarios and post disaster period. The requirement to timely revise those allowances has been recognized to cater the current economic conditions. Based on the observations and proposals forwarded by the Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils, and Local Government, the Department of Management Services and the Department of National Budget, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Defence to issue circular instructions so that the relevant allowances now existing can be increased in 100% and, the government officers served at the widespread disaster situation from 21.11.2025 to 15.12.2025 and the government officer who will serve at such widespread disaster scenarios in the time to come can be paid those allowances.

In the event of any inconsistency between the Tamil and English translations of this document, the Sinhala text shall prevail.