

Cabinet Decisions taken at the Cabinet Meeting conducted on 21-08-2024

01. Introduction of “Artificial Intelligence related Student Societies” to the Education System

It has been identified that it is appropriate to provide an opportunity to the students to engage in studies relevant to the artificial intelligence in order to achieve the objectives of creating citizens who can face future global trends and to obtain their contribution to the economic development effectively. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the joint proposal presented by the Hon. President in his capacity as a Minister of Technology and Minister of Education, as an initiative step to implement “Artificial Intelligence related Student Societies” as a pilot project in 100 schools with the participation of students from grades 6 to 9 and to expand this program to other schools in the coming years based on the results of that project.

02. Construction of new building to the National Institute of Business Management

The head office of the National Institute of Business Management, which operates as a self-financed institute, is located at Vidya Mawatha, Colombo 07, and as to the insufficient space, two (02) private buildings have been obtained on a lease basis, and courses have been conducted for around 3000 students at present. It has been proposed to construct a building complex with modern technologies in order to provide educational facilities for many students and introduce new courses. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Education to acquire a private or government owned portion of land located adjacent to the head office building of the National Institute of Business Management by utilization of the funds of the institute and to construct a building complex in the said portion of land.

03. Implementation of Tourist Service Counters in the vacant area (Lobby) in front of Entrance Terminal of the Bandaranayaka International Airport

Bidding has been called by the Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) (Private) Ltd. to operate six (06) tourist service counters in the vacant area (lobby) in front of the entrance terminal of the Bandaranayaka International Airport, Katunayake. 12 bids have been received for that purpose. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Aviation to award the following bidders who have substantially responded and submitted the highest bids to grant permission for utilization of respective areas for a period of 03 years under the recommendations of the Technical Appraisal Committee and the Standing Procurement Committee appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers after appraisal of the aforesaid bids.

No of the counter area	Name of the Bidder
01	Airport Tourist Drivers Association
02	Ayubowan Tours and Travels (Pvt) Ltd
03	Avawia Tours (Pvt) Ltd
04	Lanka Travel Agent Association

05
06

Casons Travels (Pvt) Ltd
JNW Lanka Tours

04. Awarding Contracts for Passenger and Mobile Lift Platform Services of the Sri Lankan Airlines

The contract for handling the passenger and mobile lift platform services at the Damam, Jeddah and Riyadh airports in Saudi Arabia is due to be lapsed on 31-12-2024 and the contract for handling the passenger and mobile lift platform services in the Guangzhou Airport in China is also due to be ended on 31-01-2025. Therefore, bids have been called under the limited international bidding procedure in order to select suitable service suppliers for that purpose. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Aviation to award the following service suppliers who have substantially responded to award relevant contracts for a period of 03 years under the recommendations of the Technical Appraisal Committee and the Standing Procurement Committee appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers after appraisal of the received bids.

- To award the contract for Damam, Jeddah and Riyadh airports in Saudi Arabia Swissport Saudi Arabia Limited
- To award the contract for Guangzhou Airport in China to Guangzhoe Baiyun International Airport Co.

05. Contract for Rehabilitation and Upgrading the Access Roads to Kandy Multimodal Transport Terminal

Bids have been invited to award the contract for rehabilitation and upgrading the access roads to the Kandy multimodal transport terminal under the Multimodal Transport Terminal Development project, following the local competitive bidding procedure. 10 bids have been received for that. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Transport and Highways to award the respective contract to the lowest bidder, Maga Engineers (Pvt) Ltd, who have substantially responded, under the recommendations of the Standing Procurement Committee appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

06. Providing fertilizer subsidy to the tea growers to increase the tea production

It has been identified that the reduction in the use of fertilizers in cultivation, due to the increase in the price of fertilizers, and the banning of chemical fertilizers during the past period, have caused a decline in tea production. Therefore, a requirement has arisen at present to grant concessions to the tea growers with the objective of popularizing the use of fertilizers for increasing tea production. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Agriculture and Plantation Industries to provide 50 kg of chemical fertilizer bundle at a concessionary price of Rs. 4000/= to the tea growers through the State Fertilizer Company Ltd.

07. Providing Fertilizer Subsidy to the Farmers Cultivating Paddy Lands for the 2024/25 Maha Season

It has been observed that there is a possibility to ensure food security and increase productivity in the country through providing fertilizer subsidies to the farmers cultivating the paddy and other crops in the paddy lands. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Agriculture and Plantation Industries to sell the fertilizer at a competitive price after importing the fertilizer by the State Fertilizer Company Ltd. and the private sector for the 2024/25 Maha Season and to provide a financial subsidy of Rs. 15,000 per hectare for maximum two hectares for paddy and other cultivations.

08. Submission of the orders issued as per the Port and Airport Development Tax Act No. 18 of 2011 to the Parliament for approval.

Approval has been granted at the cabinet meeting held on 29-05-2023, to remove Port and Airport Development Tax Act relevant to the combined classification codes of the tax relaxation program under the “Sri Lanka – Singapore Free Trade Agreement”. Accordingly, the order prepared as per the provisions of Port and Airport Development Tax Act No. 18 of 2011, has been published in the Extra Ordinary Gazette Notification No.2377/39 dated 28-03-2024. The Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policy to submit the aforesaid order to the Parliament for approval.

09. Specialist Committee Report on Issuance of Tourist Visa without any Charges

Approval was granted at the cabinet meeting held on 25-04-2024 to appoint a specialist committee to study on strategies followed by other countries in respect of the issuance of tourist visas without any charges and submit a report with recommendations. Accordingly, the said appointed committee has studied the 8 countries that are working competitively with Sri Lanka in the field of tourism and submitted a detailed report and Hon. the President has forwarded the said report to the attention of the cabinet of ministers. It has been decided to grant the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers to implement the said recommendations of the specialist committee based on the aforesaid recommendations and to issue visas without any charges for a period of 6 months starting from 01-10-2024 to a maximum of 35 countries that are valid for 30 days.

10. Long Term Contract for Purchasing of 03 Shipment of Murban Type of Crude Oil (2,100,000 Barrels +/- 5%) during the Period of 15-11-2024 to 14-04-2025 under the basis of payment in 30 Days through a Letter of Credit issued by the Bank of Ceylon.

Bids have been called by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation from the registered suppliers to purchase 03 shipments of Murban type of crude oil (2,100,000 barrels +/- 5%) during the period of 15-11-2024 to 14-04-2025 under the basis of payment in 30 days through a Letter of Credit issued by the Bank of Ceylon. 05 bids have been received for that purpose and the bid submitted by the Vitol Asia (Pvt) Ltd in Singapore has only been recommended as the responsive bid by the special standing procurement committee appointed by the cabinet of ministers. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Power and Energy to award the contract for purchasing of 03 shipments of Murban type of crude oil to Vitol Asia (Pvt) Ltd in Singapore.

11. Long Term Contract for Procurement of 03 shipment of Murban type of crude oil (2,100,000 Barrels +/- 5%) during the Period of 15-11-2024 to 14-04-2025

Bids have been called by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation from the registered suppliers for the procurement of 03 shipment of Murban type crude oil (2,100,000 Barrels +/- 5%) under the procedure of issuance from the 100% stored tanks (100% Ex. Storage Modality) during the period of 15-11-2024 to 14-04-2025. Only the Vitol Asia (Pvt) Ltd. in Singapore has submitted the bid for that purpose. The special standing procurement committee appointed by the cabinet of ministers has recommended to award the contract to the said company based on the recommendations of the Technical Evaluation Committee. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Power and Energy to award the relevant contract to Vitol Asia (Pvt) Ltd. in Singapore.

12. Extending of the Project Implementation period of CHEC PORT CITY COLOMBO (PRIVATE) LIMITED

Approval has been granted at the cabinet meeting held on 05-08-2024 to extend the project implementation period from 07-09-2024 to 30-06-2027 with exemptions applicable under the Strategic Development Act for CHEC PORT CITY COLOMBO (PRIVATE) LIMITED. Accordingly, as per the provisions of the Strategic Development Project Act No. 14 of 2008, an order has been published by the Extra Ordinary Gazette No. 2396/60 dated 09-08-2024. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Hon. the President in his capacity as the Minister of Investment Promotion to submit to the Parliament for approval.

13. Programme to normalize fisheries industry by minimizing the impact caused to the fisheries industry due to economic crisis.

The Sri Lankan fisheries industry has experienced a negative impact due to Covid – 19 pandemic situations as well as the economic back drop that followed, and the fuel prices escalation. The fisheries vessel owners have to spend a large amount of finance as working capital for fuel in order to launch fisheries vessels and this has led to limitation of vessels engagement limited. Therefore, it has been recognized the requirement to normalize the industry with immediate effect through granting a certain relief for fuel used in the fisheries industry. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval for the joint proposal furnished by the Hon. President in his office as the Ministry of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies and the Minister of Fisheries to grant an allowance of Rs. 25/- per diesel liter for fisheries vessels for 06 months that belong to owners utilizing diesel as fuel and another Rs. 25/- per liter of kerosene for up to 25 days to the maximum per month for 15 liters per day to fishermen using kerosene as fuel as an “allowance to settle the fisheries industry”.

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