

Cabinet Decisions taken at the Cabinet Meeting conducted on 06-01-2025

01. The Agreement on obtaining Cooperation and mutual support relating to the custom affairs between Sri Lanka and Vietnam

Although approval was granted at the cabinet meeting held on 23-11-2021 to sign an agreement on obtaining cooperation and mutual support relating to the customs affairs between Sri Lanka and Vietnam, the relevant agreement has yet to be signed. It is expected to achieve the objectives such as the minimization of the cost of trade transactions between two countries, correct calculation and collection of borderline-related taxes, prohibition of the transferring of goods subject to the limitations, and imposition of regulations related to the limitations and regulations through this agreement. The clearance of the Attorney General has been received for this agreed agreement by both parties. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by His Excellency, the President, in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, to sign the agreement between Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

02. Granting motivations for the promotion of international airports in the country.

Concessionary motivation schemes have been introduced by the Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) (Private) Limited with the objective of attracting international airline services for the Jaffna International Airport, Colombo International Airport (Rathmalana), and Mattala Rajapaksha International Airport. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Transport, Highways, Port, and Civil Aviation to further extend the relief relevant to the tax deviations for the said airports thereunder.

- Extension of concession of 50% fee waiver from the presently implemented deviation tax for the airlines operating fixed-time flights to Jaffna International Airport till 30-01-2026.
- Extension of concession of 50% fee waiver from the presently implemented deviation tax for the airlines operating fixed-time flights to Colombo International Airport (Rathmalana) for the period of one year from, 27-03-2025.
- Extension of the full concession relevant to the presently implemented deviation tax for the airlines operating fixed-time flights to Mattala Rajapaksha International Airport for a further one-year period from 29-12-2024.

03. Handing over the papers discarded from the government institutions to the Valachchena paper Mill of the National Paper Company Limited.

The functions of the Valachchena Paper Mill have been recommenced in the year 2020, and the raw materials used for the production purpose have been waste paper. It has been essential to supply the stock of waste paper continuously to maintain the production without any obstructions. It has been observed that it could be confirmed sufficient and continuous raw material supply through providing waste papers of the government institutions to the Valachchena Paper Mill. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Industries and Entrepreneurship Development to confirm the continuous paper supply to the Valachchena Paper Mill.

- Handing over the discarded papers including high quality white papers from the Government Press, Government Printing corporation, Election Commission” Ministry of Education and government institutions implemented thereunder, all universities, all government ministries and departments to the National Paper Company Limited on the basis of providing transport facilities by the National Paper Company Limited.
- Handing over the stocks of discarded papers of other public corporations, boards, statutory boards, and all other government-associated institutions to the National Paper Corporation at a concessionary rate agreed upon by both the relevant institutions and the National Paper Corporation without any tender procedure.

04. Payment of compensation for the patients who underwent eye surgeries and lost their eyesight at the Nuwara Eliya District Hospital

Approval was granted at the cabinet meeting held on 12-02-2024 to appoint a technical committee to determine the amount of compensation that should be payable to several patients who had lost their eyesight due to undergoing eye surgery at the Nuwara Eliya District Hospital. Accordingly, a committee was appointed under the chairmanship of an additional secretary of the Ministry of Health, and the recommendations were forwarded regarding the amount of compensation payable to them after studying the relevant matters. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Health and Mass Media to pay the compensation in the following manner to the 17 patients affected due to the relevant matter based on the said recommendations.

- to pay the compensation of Rs. 1,000,000 for each for 12 patients.
- to pay the compensation of Rs. 750,000 for each for 02 patients.
- to pay the compensation of Rs. 700,000 for one patient.
- to pay the compensation of Rs. 250,000 for each for 02 patients.

05. Obtaining 02 tug vessels on a rental for the Sri Lanka Ports Authority for the operation of Colombo Ports

As per the cabinet decision taken on 10-10-2022, international competitive bids have been invited to procure 80 Ton Bollard Pull Tug one vessel for the Sri Lanka Ports Authority for the operation of Colombo Ports. Four (4) bids have been received for that purpose, and the procurement committee appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers has recommended awarding the bid to the lowest responsive bidder. In the meantime, due to the imposition of the Value Added Tax Act of 01-01-2024, the cost of procurement has increased with the addition of tax to the relevant procurement cost. Even though discussions were made with the recommended supplier to obtain the said tug vessel on a loan basis, the said procurement process has been discontinued due to the disagreement with the supplier. Subsequently, international competitive bids have been invited to obtain 02 vessels of the 80 ton bollard pull tug for a rental and 03 bids have been received for that purpose. Although discussions have been made with the lowest responsive bidder to obtain the price deduction in an advantageous manner for the Sri Lanka Ports Authority, the bidder has disagreed to provide the considerable price deduction. In the meantime, since the necessity of the tug vessels should be reassessed on the progress of the completion of the construction of the new terminal at the Colombo port, the management of the Sri Lanka Ports Authority has made a request to cancel the aforesaid procurement process. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Transport, Highways, Port, and Civil Aviation to act in the following manner, taking into consideration that the construction of the new terminal is scheduled to be completed during the period between mid to late 2025.

- to complete the procurement process implemented to obtain 02 vessels of 80 ton bollard pull tug on rental basis for the operation conducted by the Sri Lanka Ports Authority.
- to commence new procurement process to obtain 02 vessels of 70 ton bollard pull twin azimuth stern drive harbor tug which are required for the operations of new terminal scheduled to be started mid term of the year 2025.

06. Renovation and protection of “Richmond Car” under the public-private partnership

The “Richmond Castle” premises and the park located at Palathota in the district of Kaluthara is a trust owned by the Public Trustee's Department. The Archaeological Division of the University of Moratuwa and the National Building Research Organization have shown many essential renovations that should be made to the said mansion. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Buddhism, Religious Affairs, and Cultural Affairs to call for the proposals from private sector investors who are enthusiastic in this respect, enabling the renovation of the “Richmond Castle” and maintaining the activities of the said mansion under a public-private partnership without going against the objectives of the testator.

07. Construction of new Anuradhapura-New Habarana 220 KV transmission Line

International competitive bids have been called for the selection of a suitable contractor for civil works, tower construction, and laying wires for the construction of the new Anuradhapura-New Habarana 220 KV transmission line of 45 km under 4A of the Power System Reliability Empowerment Project. Two (2) bids have been submitted for that purpose. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Power and Energy to award the relevant contract to M/s Ceylex Engineering (Pvt) Ltd, who is the substantially responsive lowest bidder based on the recommendations of the Technical Appraisal Committee and the standing procurement committees appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

08. Amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure Act No15 of 1979

Approval was granted at the cabinet meeting held on 05-12-2023 to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure Act No. 15 of 1979 to remove suspects or accused persons to appear before the court in person under special circumstances and to provide for the remote recording of evidence and to provide the provisions for handing over the summons via e-mail to the specialist witnesses. Accordingly, the clearance of the Attorney General has been received for the relevant bill that has been prepared by the draftsman. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Justice and National Integration to publish the said draft in the Government Gazette and then submit it to the Parliament.

09. Appointment to the post of District Secretary / Government Agent in the Administrative District of Trincomalee.

Since Mr. Chaminda Hettiarachchi, who has served as the District Secretary/Government Agent in the Administrative District of Trincomalee, has been appointed as the Director General of the Department of Pensions from 01-01-2025, the post of District Secretary/Government Agent in the Administrative District of Trincomalee has been vacant. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Public Administration, Provincial Council, and Local Government to appoint Mr. W.G.M. Hemantha Kumara, the special grade officer of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service, who is presently serving as the Additional Director General of the Department of Fisheries and Water Resources, to the vacant post.

10. Appointment of the Commissioner and assistant commissioners to the Sri Lanka New Inventors Commission

As per section 4(1) of the Sri Lankan New Inventors Motivation Act No. 53 of 1979, the Sri Lankan New Inventors Commission should be comprised of a Commissioner appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers and 2 (two) assistant commissioners on the recommendation of the minister. At present, all the members of the Sri Lankan New Inventors commission have resigned, and a commissioner and 2 (two) assistant commissioners should be appointed for the vacant posts. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers

has approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Science and Technology to appoint Prof. Weranja Karunaratne as the Commissioner of the Sri Lanka New Inventors Commission and Senior Prof. R.M.G. Rajapaksha and Dr. N.R.S. Ariyaratne as 2 (two) assistant commissioners.

11. Appointment of Mr. P. B. Terney Pradeep Kumara to the post of Director General of the Department of Costal Conservation and Coastal Resources Management.

A senior officer with theoretical and practical knowledge should be appointed to the post of Director General of the Department of Costal Conservation and Coastal Resources Management and, it has been recognized that Mr. P. B. Terney Pradeep Kumara, the professor on Oceanography of the Oceanography and Marine Geology faculty of the University of Ruhuna is eligible for the post. Therefore, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal furnished by the Minister of Mass Media to appoint him for two years for the post of of Director General of the Department of Costal Conservation and Coastal Resources Management.

12. Continuously following the “One China Policy” by the Sri Lankan Government.

Sri Lankan government has continuously followed the “One China Policy” and, by that it is accepted that legitimate China is only the People’s Republic of China and, Taiwan is only a province of China. The Cabinet of Ministers approved the fact furnished by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism indicating that Sri Lanka further follows the same policy as it is and act adhering to the same.

13. Signing a memorandum of understanding between China Media Group and Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau.

A proposal has been forwarded to sign a memorandum of understanding in between China Media Group and Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau with the objective of creating Sri Lanka a pioneer tourist destination for Chinese tourists utilizing the modern technology and expertise of China Media Group subsequent to the cooperation between the two parties. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval for the resolution forwarded by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism to sign the said memorandum of understading.

14. Signing the relevant protocol related to export of chicken to Chinese market.

A proposal has been forwarded to examine, quarantine, and sign an agreement prepared for health requirements in relation to the relevant procedure between the two countries to carry out the export of chicken to China from Sri Lanka with the mediation of General Administration of Customs of the People’s Republic of China. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval of the resolution furnished by the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Land and Irrigation to sign the said agreement in between the General Administration of Customs of the People’s Republic of China and his Ministry.

15. Signing the Certificate of Handover between Sri Lanka and China in relation to the project on supplying emergency humanitarian aids (rice, fishing nets and pre – casted houses) to Sri Lanka.

The People’s Republic of China has provided the following emergency humanitarian aids of Yuvan 35.7 million for small scale fishermen in Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka.

- 75,000 fisheries nets for small scale and low income generating fishermen.
- 500 pre – casted houses for small scale and low income generating fishermen
- 1,630 tons of rice for small scale and low income generating fishermen

All these goods have been received by the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Marine Resources in the year 2024 and rice and fisheries nets are being distributed by now among selected beneficiaries. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has given their concurrence to the resolution furnished by the Minister of Fisheries, Aquatic and Marine Resources to sign the said Certificate for providing emergency aids between Sri Lanka and the People’s Republic of China.

16. Signing memoranda of understanding / memorandum of cooperation between the Ministry of Health and Mass Media and institutions in the People’s Republic of China.

The Cabinet of Ministers granted approval to the proposals submitted by the Minister of Health and Mass Media to enter into agreements between the Ministry of Health and Mass Media and the following institutions in the People’s Republic of China:

- (i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health and Mass Media and the National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA) of the People’s Republic of China.
- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Associated Newspapers Ceylon Limited and Xinhua News Agency of China.
- (iii) Memorandum of Cooperation between the Department of Government Information and Xinhua News Agency of China
- (iv) Memorandum of Understanding between Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation and China Media Group
- (v) Memorandum of Understanding between Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation and China Media Group

17. Awarding the allowance to children under the programme to award stationary to school children of families not eligible for Aswasuma but with other eligibilities.

Measures have already been taken to remit the allowance of rupees 6,000/- for purchase of stationary for children of the beneficiary families of Aswasuma in bank accounts of those families. The responsibility of awarding that allowance to children without parents that not belong to Aswasuma beneficiary families, children of a disabled mother or a father, all the children at the age of schooling and in children's homes as well as children belong to communities encountered destitution due to special reasons is entrusted with the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education. Considering the lack of an updated database to select children in families belong to that category as well as the requirement to provide the proposed stationary for the year 2025 at beginning of the new school term, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval to the proposal furnished by the Hon. Prime Minister in her capacity as the Minister of Education, Higher Education, and Vocational Education to provide the stationary allowance of rupees 6,000/- to all the children in non – beneficiary families of Aswasuma in 6,576 schools where students are less than 300 from the total 10,096 schools throughout the island, to the children coming from child development centres as well as lay and clergy students in Pirivena and to award the said allowance as a voucher.

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