



**Cabinet Decisions taken at the Cabinet Meeting held on 09.03.2026**

**01. Joining the National Savings Bank for the Interest-Free Loan Scheme for Students**

The Interest-Free Loan Scheme is implemented to follow government-recognized degree programs in non-governmental higher education institutions for students who have passed the General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level) Examination and have not been eligible to enter a state university. At present, People's Bank and Bank of Ceylon are the banks that are granting loans under the aforementioned loan scheme. It has been planned to provide a loan facility for 7,000 students under stage 10 of the aforementioned loan scheme. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Hon. Prime Minister in her capacity as the Minister of Education, Higher Education, and Vocational Education to join National Savings Bank as a bank that grants loans for students under the aforementioned loan scheme, in addition to the People's Bank and Bank of Ceylon.

**02. Entering into an Agreement between Sri Lanka and the Government of Nepal to Exempt from Obtaining Visa for the Holders Diplomatic, Official and Service Passports**

Through identification of importance of friendship cooperation existing between Sri Lanka and Nepal governments, a consensus has been reached between the relevant parties of the Sri Lankan and Nepalese governments to enter into an agreement with the objective of facilitating transportation between both countries for official matters and removing unnecessary obstacles in obtaining visas. Accordingly, 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 Nepal, enabling holders of diplomatic, official, and service passports of both countries to enter, transit, and stay in the territory of the other contracting party without obtaining a visa for a period not exceeding 30 days.

**03. Implementation of Strategic Frameworks for the Ability for Resilience to the Disasters Based on Science**

Approximately 2.3 million people of the Sri Lankan population have been affected due to the tropical cyclone "Ditwa," which struck at the end of November 2025 and it has been estimated that a US\$4.1 billion overall economic loss has occurred in our country as a result. At this disastrous juncture, decisive, vitally important infrastructure, agricultural and environmental sectors, as well as mountain and coastal ecosystems, were severely damaged, and the relevant incidents could be identified as a climate stress test that revealed critical system weaknesses existing in the national infrastructure. Therefore, the Ministry of Science and Technology has initiated a program to transform the disaster management function from a post-disaster response model based on "Response and Restoration" to a "Science-based Pre-disaster Resilience" framework, and approval has been granted, for the aforementioned program at

the cabinet meeting held on 12-01-2026. Accordingly, the Institutional Research Requirement Appraisal National Program was conducted on 14-01-2026 under the theme "Lessons Learned from the Ditwa Cyclone as a Climatic Stress Examination". The committee appointed to supervise this program has submitted its report with 07 recommendations for strategic research and system development for resilience to disasters based on science and 07 recommendations to implement and activate the aforementioned recommendations. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Science and Technology to implement the aforementioned dual-way Strategy

#### **04. Implementation of the Tourism Development Program for 2026-2028.**

A tourism development program has been formulated to be implemented during the period 2026-2028, covering all nine (9) provinces, focusing on the identification of tourism potential areas in Sri Lanka and the development of their infrastructure facilities to ensure a sustainable tourism industry. The total gross estimate for this program is Rs 2,667.03 million. Further, approval has been granted by the Department of National Planning to implement projects with the estimated expenditure of Rs 131.02 million for the development of tourism infrastructure facilities in Jaffna district. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment, and Tourism to implement the aforementioned program during the period 2026-2028 and to develop tourism infrastructure facilities in Jaffna district in the year 2026.

#### **05. Implementation of the Project to Digitize the Functions of the Right to Information Commission**

The Right to Information Commission, which was established under the provisions of the Right to Information Act No. 12 of 2016, examines and comes to decisions for the appeals submitted to the aforementioned commission under the provisions of the aforementioned Act. The overall process, including examining the appeals, is being documented due to the limited facilities of the technological tools available to the commission at present. Therefore, it has been planned to implement a project for the digitalization of its operational activities with the objective of being efficient in the official duties of the commission and the consensus has been given by the Open Society Foundation to grant US\$ 200,000 on the recommendations of the World Bank for the proposed program. Under this grant, it has been planned to utilize the funds to purchase required equipment, develop software, obtain essential specialized knowledge from human resources, and build the capacity of the current staff. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Health and Mass Media to implement the proposed project.

#### **06. Construction of Elapatha Divisional Secretariat Building and Development of Infrastructure Facilities.**

The Elapatha Divisional Secretariat Division comprises 20 Grama Niladhari divisions and 129 villages, with a total population of approximately 39,700. The Elapatha Divisional Secretariat is currently located in an old building with approximately 10,869 square feet, and the limited space has obstructed the effective functions of official duties, hindering the provision of required services to the general public.

Further, the National Building Research Organization has instructed that the buildings would be damaged due to the risk of a landslide that might occur in the 20-foot-high soil bank located behind the Divisional Secretariat buildings, and a retaining wall should be established to stabilize the bank. Therefore, having demolished the old building existing on the land where the divisional secretariat is currently established, it has been planned to construct a new office building complex with an area of 25,000 square feet and quarters with an area of 1,600 square feet for the divisional secretary. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Public Administration, Provincial Council, and Local Government to take steps to commence the aforementioned project in the year 2026 and complete it in the year 2028.

**07. Appointment to the Post of District Secretary to Badulla Administrative District.**

Taking into consideration the resolution furnished by the Minister of Public Administration, Provincial Council, and Local Government, the Cabinet of Ministers has decided to appoint Mr. Sunil Galagama, a Special Grade Officer of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service, who is currently serving as an Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Mass Media, as the District Secretary to Badulla Administrative District with immediate effect.

**08. Appointment to the Post of District Secretary to Ampara Administrative Division**

Taking into consideration the resolution furnished by the Minister of Public Administration, Provincial Council, and Local Government, the Cabinet of Ministers has decided to appoint Mr. Anupama Mangala Wickramaarachchi, a special grade officer of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service, who is serving as the Additional Commissioner General of Agrarian Development of the Department of the Agrarian Development at present, as the District Secretary to Ampara Administrative district with immediate effect.

**09. Revision of the Amount Paid for the Construction of a House under the Family Resettlement Program due to the Landslides and High Risk of Landslides**

The resettlement program is implemented under the Beneficiary House Construction Scheme by identifying families that should be resettled in another location by shifting them from their current residence due to landslides and the high risk of landslides. Under this program, a maximum amount of Rs. 1.6 million will be provided for an identified beneficiary family to construct a house, and the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the resolution furnished by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Defence to increase the aforementioned amount to Rs. 2.5 million for the construction of one house.

**10. Extending the Valid Period of VISA on the basis of not Charging for the Tourists Affected by Cancellation of Flights Across Middle East.**

Some tourists who scheduled their departure from this country could not leave before the end of their VISA valid period due to cancellation of flights from 28.02.2026 to the middle east region owing to the conflict prevailing at present in that region. Taking the special situation into consideration, such passengers should facilitate to stay legally within Sri Lanka until optional travel facilities are prepared. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Minister of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs to extend VISA of those are unable to leave this country due to cancellation of flights to middle east from 28.02.2026 for another 14 days without any payments and re-extend the extended VISA for another 14 days without payments if the flights are cancelled further.

**11. Providing Relief for Re - planting of Agricultural Export Crops Namely Tea, Coconut and Rubber Devastated Due to Calamity.**

Approval of the Cabinet of Ministers has already been granted to provide relief for cultivators for hastily replant the field crops, vegetable and fruits as well as the minor export crops such as pepper coffee and cardamom devastated due to extreme weather conditions experienced towards the end of November 2025, while measures have been taken by now to provide the cultivators with the relevant relief. Furthermore, the Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure has forwarded recommendations to the General Treasury of the requirement to provide relief for replanting tea, coconut and rubber that are devastated. Based on those recommendations, and depending on the impact of the damage caused, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to grant relief as follows owing to the recommendations and according to the impact of the disaster.

- Up to rupees 500,000/- per hectare to the maximum for tea plantation
- Up to rupees 400,000/- per hectare to the maximum for rubber plantation
- Up to rupees 750,000/- per hectare to the maximum for coconut plantation

**12. Procurement of Supplying and Installation of Oracle Exadata XIIM System and Its Related Software to Sri Lanka Customs.**

Approval has been granted at Cabinet meeting held on 21.08.2024 to execute the procurement of selecting an appropriate agency for supply Oracle Exadata XIIM system and its related software to Sri Lanka Customs. Accordingly, bids have been called following the national competitive bid invitation methodology and three (03) bids have been received in the regard. Subsequent to evaluating the financial bid of the only bidder eligible under technological grounds from the received bids, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Hon. President in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to award the said procurement for a period of eight (08) years for an amount of rupees 2,197.96 million to Millennium I.T.E.S.P. (Private) Limited, based on the recommendations forwarded by the higher level procurement committee.

**13. Establishment of the Committee on Economic Surveillance.**

A precarious situation has been created that would impact the economy with the outburst of the war tone environment currently prevailing in the middle east region. Sri Lanka being a miniature open economy has to be exposed to external economic tremors due to it being depending on the import of power, foreign remittances received from overseas labour that work in the middle east region, and the commercial and investment relationships with that region. Under those circumstances, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the resolution furnished by the Hon. President to appoint the Committee on Economic Surveillance headed by the Minister of Labour, Dr. Anil Jayantha Fernando as the Hon. Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning and comprised of the relevant heads of the Institutions and eminencies in the field to provide recommendations to the Cabinet of Ministers on the essential policy precautions to be taken by constantly supervising the impact that can affect Sri Lankan economy under the above situation, evaluating the risks probable in various sectors and reviewing the circumstances.

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