



NEW LAWS AND EXECUTIVE DECISIONS UPDATE - MARCH 2026 -

5th April 2026



**LAW
TRACKER**



NEW LAWS AND EXECUTIVE DECISIONS UPDATE – MARCH 2026

5th April 2026

Table of Contents

<u>I. Acts</u>	<u>2</u>
1. MICROFINANCE AND CREDIT REGULATORY AUTHORITY ACT, NO. 09 OF 2026	2
2. POISONS, OPIUM AND DANGEROUS DRUGS (AMENDMENT) ACT, NO. 07 OF 2026.....	2
3. JUDICATURE (AMENDMENT) ACT, NO. 08 OF 2026.....	2
<u>li. Bills Proposed</u>	<u>2</u>
1. PREVENTION OF MONEY LAUNDERING (AMENDMENT) BILL, NO. 20 OF 2026	2
2. FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS REPORTING (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 21 OF 2026	2
3. INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 22 OF 2026	2
4. SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTION LEVY (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 23 OF 2026	3
5. NATIONAL WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 19 OF 2026	3
6. CONVENTION ON THE SUPPRESSION OF TERRORIST FINANCING (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 18 OF 2026	3
<u>lii. Selected Cabinet Decisions.....</u>	<u>3</u>
EDUCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION & VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	3
FINANCE, PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	4
ENERGY & POWER	5
DIGITAL ECONOMY	6
AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, LAND & IRRIGATION.....	6
HEALTH	7
TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS & URBAN DEVELOPMENT	7
WOMEN & CHILD AFFAIRS.....	8
PUBLIC SECURITY, IMMIGRATION & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS	8
JUSTICE, NATIONAL INTEGRATION & PUBLIC SECURITY	9
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, PROVINCIAL COUNCILS & LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	9
BUDDHASASANA, RELIGIOUS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS	10
ENVIRONMENT.....	10
FISHERIES, AQUATIC & OCEAN RESOURCES.....	11
HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION & WATER SUPPLY.....	11
PORTS & CIVIL AVIATION	11
TOURISM.....	11
PLANTATION & COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE.....	11
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	11
DEFENCE	11
INDUSTRIES & ENTREPRENEURSHIP	12
SPORTS	12

I. ACTS

1. MICROFINANCE AND CREDIT REGULATORY AUTHORITY ACT, NO. 09 OF 2026

This Act became law on 20 March 2026. The law establishes a statutory Microfinance and Credit Regulatory Authority with powers to license, supervise, investigate, and sanction microfinance institutions and money lenders. Repeals the Microfinance Act No. 6 of 2016 and broadens regulatory coverage to previously unregulated entities, bringing the entire sector under a single supervisory framework.

2. POISONS, OPIUM AND DANGEROUS DRUGS (AMENDMENT) ACT, NO. 07 OF 2026

This amendment became law on 6th March 2026. The law broadly increases penalties (fines and imprisonment terms) for offences such as possession, trafficking, manufacturing, and distribution of dangerous drugs. Expands and updates schedules of controlled substances. Grants enhanced powers to law enforcement officers for search, seizure, detention, and investigation in relation to drug offences.

3. JUDICATURE (AMENDMENT) ACT, NO. 08 OF 2026

This amendment became law on 6 March 2026. It amends provisions relating to the jurisdiction and allocation of cases among courts, enabling distribution of judicial workload, case management and modernization of court processes.

II. BILLS PROPOSED

1. PREVENTION OF MONEY LAUNDERING (AMENDMENT) BILL, NO. 20 OF 2026

This Bill was gazetted on 17th March 2026. It proposes expanding the definition of 'unlawful activity' and the scope of money laundering. It seeks to impose enhanced due diligence, record-keeping, and reporting obligations on financial institutions and designated businesses. Increases investigative powers, and facilitates cross-border cooperation.

2. FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS REPORTING (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 21 OF 2026

This Bill was gazetted on 17th March 2026. Expands the list of 'reporting institutions' to include casinos, real estate agents, dealers in precious metals/stones, and other non-financial businesses. Introduces mandatory reporting of suspicious transaction reports (STRs) to the Financial Intelligence Unit. Increases powers of the FIU to obtain, analyse, and share financial intelligence with domestic regulators and foreign counterparts.

3. INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 22 OF 2026

This amendment Bill was gazetted on 17 March 2026. Amends specific provisions relating to income tax rates, tax bands, and exemptions applicable to individuals and corporations. Introduces stricter self-assessment, audit, and penalty provisions for non-compliance, including late filing and under-reporting of income. Expands rules on withholding taxes and reporting obligations for employers and financial institutions. Deals with treatment of business income, capital gains, and allowable deductions, reducing interpretative ambiguity in tax liability.

4. SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTION LEVY (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 23 OF 2026

This amendment Bill was gazetted on 17 March 2026. Revises the levy rate and turnover thresholds, directly affecting the calculation of contributions payable by registered businesses.

5. NATIONAL WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 19 OF 2026

This amendment Bill was gazetted on 13 March 2026. It expands statutory powers of the Board to plan, implement, and manage large-scale water supply and sewerage projects. Introduces provisions enabling the Board to raise funds, obtain loans, and enter public-private partnerships (PPPs) for infrastructure development. Deals with regulatory authority over water connections, supply standards, and service charges.

6. CONVENTION ON THE SUPPRESSION OF TERRORIST FINANCING (AMENDMENT) BILL – NO. 18 OF 2026

This amendment Bill was gazetted on 11 March 2026. It expands the definition of terrorist financing to include indirect funding, collection, or provision of assets for terrorist purposes. Introduces provisions relating to freezing and forfeiture of terrorist-linked funds and assets, including those held in financial institutions. Obligations of financial institutions to detect, prevent, and report transactions linked to terrorism financing. Deals with mutual legal assistance and information-sharing mechanisms with foreign jurisdictions and international bodies.

III. SELECTED CABINET DECISIONS

EDUCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION & VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

- **Issuance of New Circular on Student Admissions (Grades 2–11)** (30 March 2026)
Approval to issue a revised circular for student admissions to Grades 2–11 (excluding Grades 5 and 6) to address practical implementation challenges observed under Circular No. 27/2025. Retains maximum classroom capacity limits to prevent overcrowding; eligibility criteria, documentation requirements, and admission sequence for all public schools.
- **Resumption of Project for Establishment of IT Centres for Secondary Education** (23 March 2026)
Approved restarting the project to construct a National E-Learning Centre and two Provincial IT Centres (Southern and Eastern Provinces) to integrate IT education into schools. Original loan secured from the Korean EXIM Bank with government counterpart funding; supports structured e-learning across general, higher, and professional education; implementation guided by expert committee review and recommendations.
- **Appointment of National Steering Committee for Education Reforms** (23 March 2026)
Approved the establishment of a Steering Committee to oversee education reforms for Grades 1–6. Committee includes ministers, experts, officials, professionals, and union representatives; ensures alignment with current government policies; focused on implementation for Grade 1 (2026) and Grade 6 (2027); supports monitoring, evaluation, and timely adjustments of reform measures.
- **Project for Development of Sports Grounds in Government Schools** (23 March 2026)
Approved construction of standard sports grounds with 400m running tracks in 400 schools over 2026–2029. Covers all 25 districts, with one national and three provincial schools per education zone; addresses low sports participation due to lack of infrastructure; estimated cost: Rs.

2,010.50 million; stated objective is to promote physical, social, and psychological well-being and identification of talented athletes.

- **Programme for Provision of Sanitary Napkins to Schoolgirls** (23 March 2026)
Approved annual provision of sanitary napkins to 1.05 million schoolgirls, providing two gift vouchers per student valued at Rs. 720 each. Covers Grade 6 and above students in government and government-assisted schools; each student can purchase 12 packs (8 napkins) or 8 packs (10 napkins) according to preference; ensures continuity of education and menstrual health management.
- **Joining National Savings Bank for Interest-Free Student Loan Scheme** (9 March 2026)
Approved the National Savings Bank as an additional bank to provide interest-free loans under Stage 10 of the government student loan scheme for 7,000 students pursuing government-recognised degree programmes in non-state higher education institutions. Existing lenders are People's Bank and Bank of Ceylon; aims to support students who did not qualify for state university admission.
- **Restoration of General Education Institutions Devastated by Cyclone Ditwa** (3 March 2026)
Approved restoration of 150 national schools and 7 national colleges of education with a total allocation of Rs. 2,274.23 million, including mitigation of earth-slip risks for institutions on steep slopes. Rs. 1,988.83 million allocated for schools and Rs. 285.40 million for colleges; utilises supplementary budget approved in December 2025; follows NBRO structural and geotechnical recommendations; ensures rapid recovery of educational infrastructure post-cyclone.
- **Development of Education Infrastructure and Equipment in Provincial, Zonal, and Divisional Offices** (16 March 2026)
Approved a project to upgrade physical infrastructure and provide modern equipment in provincial, zonal, and divisional education offices to improve administrative efficiency and service quality. Project cost: Rs. 1,264 million for 2026–2028; coordinated with Provincial Councils.

FINANCE, PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Establishment of Sri Lanka Climate and Nature-Positive Investment Fund** (30 March 2026)
Approved drafting legislation to create a statutory authority and National Climate and Nature-Positive Investment Fund to mobilise domestic and international resources for climate adaptation, ecological restoration, and nature-positive investments, with a focus on disaster-affected ecosystems such as the Central Highlands. Fund to be established as a statutory fund under the Public Financial Management Act No. 44 of 2024, ensuring legal compliance and fiscal accountability; provides a mechanism for coordinated stakeholder management; aligns with Sri Lanka's Climate Finance Strategy 2025–2030.
- **Amendment of Telecommunication Levy Act No. 21 of 2011** (30 March 2026)
Approved publication of a draft bill to amend the Telecommunication Levy Act to extend levy provisions, include unrecovered revenue, and update tax applicability. Incorporates retroactive adjustments since 2015; expands scope to include unrecovered revenue (bad debts); ensures current and future telecommunication suppliers comply; aligns with Budget 2026 fiscal objectives.
- **Management of State Expenditure during Energy Crisis** (30 March 2026)
Approved continued payment of fuel-linked allowances to public officers, Ministers, and Members of Parliament under the prevailing fuel price as of 1 March 2026, while controlling non-essential expenditure during the Middle East crisis. Ensures continuity of essential government services; maintains fiscal discipline within approved expenditure limits; reflects temporary adjustment measures due to global energy shocks.
- **Stabilisation of Fuel Prices through Government Subsidy Measures** (30 March 2026)

Approved government subsidies to fuel importers to control increases in 92 Octane petrol and Auto Diesel prices, effective from 22 March 2026. Subsidy of up to Rs. 20 per litre for petrol and Rs. 100 per litre for diesel; aims to mitigate the impact of Middle East tensions on domestic fuel prices.

- **Appointment of Expert Committee on Development of the Energy Economy (23 March 2026)**
Approved the appointment of an expert committee, chaired by Dr. Hans Wijesuriya, to develop a framework for the energy economy aimed at achieving sustainable national economic growth and better integration across key sectors.
- **Policy-Based Lending from Asian Development Bank (ADB) 2026 (16 March 2026)**
Approved USD 620 million in policy-based lending from the ADB under five sub-programmes to support economic reforms and infrastructure development: Trade, Investment and Industries (USD 100M); MSME financial inclusiveness (USD 220M); water and sanitary facilities (USD 100M); resilience and reintegration (USD 100M); and agricultural value chains (USD 100M).
- **Amendment of Colombo Port City Regulation No. 1 of 2024 (16 March 2026)**
Approved amendment allowing duty-free purchases by overseas visitors without revising the USD 2,000 limit when entering twice within 4 days.
- **Phased Removal of Cess Tax on Imported Goods (3 March 2026)**
Approved a 4-year phased removal (2026–2029) of Cess tax on imported goods under 2,634 combined classification codes. Reduces high input costs for intermediate goods critical to manufacturing and exports; with aim of supporting export-led economic growth; encourages investment, industrial expansion, and employment in manufacturing sectors.
- **Establishment of Committee on Economic Surveillance (9 March 2026)**
Appointed a committee headed by the Minister of Labour, the Hon. Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning, and sectoral experts to monitor economic risks and provide policy recommendations amid Middle East geopolitical instability. Monitors import dependency, remittance flows, trade, and investment impacts.
- **Relief for Replanting of Export Crops Devastated by Calamity (9 March 2026)**
Approved financial relief for tea, rubber, and coconut cultivators affected by extreme weather in November 2025 for replanting purposes. Tea: up to Rs. 500,000/ha; rubber: up to Rs. 400,000/ha; coconut: up to Rs. 750,000/ha.

ENERGY & POWER

- **Maha Oya Pumped Storage Hydropower Project (30 March 2026)**
Approved a grid-scale pumped storage hydropower project (LKR 243.09 billion) to store excess renewable energy during off-peak periods and supply it during peak demand, supporting energy security and renewable integration. Implemented in two phases (development and construction); supports grid balancing and renewable energy utilisation, including solar and wind.
- **Construction of 25 Stand-alone Battery Energy Storage Systems (10MW/40MWh each) (30 March 2026)**
Approved construction of 25 battery energy storage systems to store renewable energy and improve system flexibility under a Build, Own, Operate (BOO) model for 15 years. Supports integration of solar and wind energy into the national grid.
- **Construction of 50MW Battery Energy Storage Systems (30 March 2026)**
Approved procurement of remaining 50MW battery storage system capacity connected to existing solar power plants via competitive bidding to address early peak-night demand. Aims to address transparent bidding and dependence on fossil fuel peaking plants.

DIGITAL ECONOMY

- **Implementation of the National Digital Communication and Collaboration Platform** (30 March 2026)
Approved implementation of a secure digital communication and collaboration platform for all public sector employees, incorporating AI tools to modernise operations and improve inter-agency coordination. Total estimated investment: LKR 626 million; in furtherance of the Digital Economy Strategy 2025–2030.
- **Accelerating Programme for National QR Payments** (23 March 2026)
Approved promotion of LankaQR digital payments for transactions under Rs. 5,000 with no fees to sender or receiver. Average monthly QR transactions approximate 90,000 (approximately Rs. 390 million) and supports cashless transactions.
- **Establishment of Apprentice Radio Emergency Communication Network with Japanese Assistance** (23 March 2026)
Approved signing of a grant agreement with the Government of Japan (USD 181,837) to establish a radio emergency network for disaster situations where traditional communication networks fail..

AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, LAND & IRRIGATION

- **Award of Consultancy for Kelani River Basin Watershed Management Plan** (30 March 2026)
Approved a consultancy contract (LKR 206.65 million) to formulate a comprehensive watershed management plan for the Kelani River Basin to reduce pollution and improve water quality. Evaluation based on 7 EOIs and 4 shortlisted proposals; supports flood and pollution mitigation and environmental restoration; establishes baseline for long-term watershed monitoring and management; contract awarded to Resource Development Consultants (Pvt) Ltd following Cabinet Procurement Committee recommendation.
- **Compensation to Farmers Displaced by Uma Oya Multipurpose Development Project** (30 March 2026)
Approved LKR 12 lakhs per household as compensation for 276 families who lost cultivable land due to project implementation constraints. Addresses land encroachment, forest cover, wildlife threats, and remoteness issues; provides financial compensation in lieu of alternative cultivable land; ensures equitable treatment of displaced farmers.
- **Feasibility Study on Construction of Three Dry Dams at Kalu Ganga River Basin** (30 March 2026)
Approved a consultancy contract to the Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau for a feasibility study to construct three dry dams (Malwala, Dala II, and Dala III) to reduce flood risks in the high-risk Kalu Ganga River Basin. Conducted to analyse hydraulic, environmental, and social impacts.
- **Import of Alternative Rice to Address Samba/Kiri Samba Scarcity** (30 March 2026)
Approved import of 1,040 metric tons of GR 11, Ponni Samba, and Kiri/Pal Ponni rice as substitutes to prevent shortages in the domestic market. Covers 1 April 2026 to 30 April 2026, with customs clearance by 31 May 2026; exempts importers from import control licences for these varieties.
- **Implementation of Loan Scheme for Young Entrepreneurs in Agriculture and Industry** (23 March 2026)
Approved continuation of a concessionary loan scheme (Rs. 750 million for 2026) at 4% annual interest to develop 50,000 young entrepreneurs over five years. Loans to be distributed via People's Bank, Bank of Ceylon, and the Rural Development Bank; initial allocation of Rs. 500 million in the 2025 Budget; aims to promote agricultural and industrial sector entrepreneurship.
- **Formulation of Formal Procedure for Maize Import for Animal Feed** (3 March 2026)

Approved a mechanism to determine maize prices via a government-appointed committee and allow import of maize only when local supply is insufficient. Committee appointed by the Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture; imports strictly limited to gaps in local supply; with aim is to protect livelihoods of local maize farmers.

- **Importing and Supply Procedure for Food-Grade Maize to Sri Lanka Thripasha Limited** (3 March 2026)
Approved phased import of up to 15,000 MT of high-quality maize in 2026 to sustain Thripasha production, bypassing regulatory delays while maintaining compliance. Streamlined import licences, plant permits, and procurement processes; aims to ensure continuity of the national nutrition programme (Thripasha).
- **Programme to Minimise Crop and Human Damage from Wild Animals** (3 March 2026)
Appointed a ministerial committee chaired by the Agriculture Minister to develop a comprehensive strategy to mitigate damage caused by wild animals (elephants, wild boars, monkeys, toque macaques, chipmunks, and peacocks) to crops and human settlements.
- **Payment of Fertiliser Subsidy for Yala 2026 Season** (3 March 2026)
Approved fertiliser subsidy for paddy: Rs. 25,000/ha (maximum 2 ha/farmer) and field crops: Rs. 15,000/ha (maximum 2 ha/farmer) to ensure continued agricultural productivity and farmer income security. Continuation of Maha 2025/26 programme; supports efficient input usage and crop yield.

HEALTH

- **Centralisation of Mahiyanganaya Base Hospital under Ministry of Health** (23 March 2026)
Approved transferring Mahiyanganaya Base Hospital (Type A, third largest in Badulla District) from the Uva Provincial Council to the central Ministry to enable infrastructure development and tertiary care provision.
- **Improvement of Accident and Emergency Healthcare System** (3 March 2026)
Approved the establishment of a Directorate of Accident and Emergency Care, unifying emergency services under a single administrative and regulatory framework.
- **Transfer of Land for New Sri Lanka Nursing Council Building** (3 March 2026)
Approved transfer of 35 ft × 30 ft land from Colombo National Hospital on a long-term lease to construct a dedicated Nursing Council building for registration, training, and professional development of nursing personnel. Replaces temporary space at the Post Basic College of Nursing.
- **Transfer of Puttalam Base Hospital under Ministry of Health** (3 March 2026)
Approved transfer from the North Western Provincial Council to the Ministry of Health to develop the hospital into a tertiary care 'A' category base hospital. Serves approximately 4 million people across 9 Divisional Secretariat divisions.
- **Digitisation of Right to Information Commission** (9 March 2026)
Approved project to digitise the operational functions of the Right to Information Commission with a USD 200,000 grant from the Open Society Foundation via World Bank recommendations. Funds allocated for software development, equipment, and HR capacity-building.

TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

- **Submission of Transfer of Passenger Service Permits Regulation to Parliament** (16 March 2026)
Approved submission of Transfer of Passenger Service Permits Regulation No. 1 of 2026 for legal concurrence in Parliament. Published under Gazette Notification No. 2471/68 dated 7

January 2026; resolves legal issues in the transfer of bus permits; ensures smooth operation of the passenger transport system.

- **Submission of Motor Traffic Act Regulations (Section 203 Authority)** (16 March 2026)
Submitted regulations to reserve special vehicle numbers beyond 50,000 and charge Rs. 1,000,000 per number. Published under Gazette Notification No. 2470/14 dated 5 January 2026; applies to all vehicles except motorcycles, motor tricycles, and tricycle vans; strengthens the regulatory framework and revenue generation.
- **Revision of Bus Fare** (23 March 2026)
Approved a 12.19% increase in bus fares across all service categories following the diesel price hike on 22 March 2026. Based on National Transport Commission recommendations; applies to general, semi-luxury, luxury, and super luxury buses; effective from midnight on 23 March 2026.
- **Obtaining Used Low-Floor Buses from the Japanese Government** (3 March 2026)
Approved receipt of 8 used low-floor buses as a grant to support public bus transport infrastructure. Result of bilateral discussions with Japan.
- **Construction of Phase IV of Kurunegala–Dambulla Portion, Central Expressway** (3 March 2026)
Approved accelerated execution of 58.6 km Phase IV, including funding allocation, geotechnical surveys, and flood/stormwater management plans to complete the central expressway. Land acquisition 73.3% complete with compensation pending; NBRO to evaluate slope stability and earth-slip risks; Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation to prepare aquatic and flood risk management.
- **Signing MoU with Ministry of Transport, Russian Federation** (30 March 2026)
Approved signing a bilateral MoU to enhance cooperation in transport sector training, PPP models, and multimodal transport development.

WOMEN & CHILD AFFAIRS

- **Implementation of 'Diviyata Saviyak' Housing Programme** (30 March 2026)
Approved provision of housing financial assistance of up to LKR 2 million per beneficiary to vulnerable groups, including former institutionalised youth and at-risk families, covering land purchase, construction, or renovation. Funded through a LKR 2,000 million allocation in Budget 2026; beneficiaries include individuals under 45 years leaving child care institutions, children at risk, and vulnerable families lacking secure shelter; establishes eligibility criteria, assessment procedures, and disbursement mechanisms.
- **Expansion of 'Artha' Programme** (30 March 2026)
Approved expansion of the monthly LKR 5,000 financial assistance programme to include additional vulnerable children — orphans, disaster-affected children, and those identified as socially at-risk — in line with child protection objectives. Adds children affected by Cyclone Ditwa and associated floods/landslides; includes children living outside institutional care but in socially or economically vulnerable conditions.

PUBLIC SECURITY, IMMIGRATION & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- **Issuance of Free Tourist Visas for Passport Holders of 39 Countries** (30 March 2026)
Approved draft regulations for free tourist visa issuance to passport holders of 39 countries for six months.
- **Extension of VISA Validity for Tourists Affected by Flight Cancellations** (9 March 2026)

Approved extension of visas for tourists unable to depart to the Middle East due to flight cancellations from 28 February 2026, initially by 14 days with the possibility of a further 14-day extension at no cost.

- **Agreement with Nepal on Visa Exemption for Diplomatic, Official, and Service Passport Holders** (9 March 2026)

Approved signing a bilateral agreement allowing holders of diplomatic, official, and service passports from Sri Lanka and Nepal to enter, transit, and stay in the other country without a visa for up to 30 days. Facilitates official travel and strengthens bilateral cooperation; reduces bureaucratic obstacles for government officials.

- **Agreement with Morocco for Visa Exemption for Diplomatic, Duty, and Service Passports** (3 March 2026)

Approved signing an agreement allowing holders of diplomatic, duty, and service passports to enter, exit, or transit without visas for up to 30 days. Updates the 2018-approved agreement; facilitates diplomatic travel and official missions; strengthens bilateral relations and international cooperation.

JUSTICE, NATIONAL INTEGRATION & PUBLIC SECURITY

- **Draft Bill for Chartered Institute of Media Professionals** (30 March 2026)

Approved publication of the draft bill to establish a Chartered Institute of Media Professionals, aimed at professionalising media training and enhancing standards.

- **Draft Bill on Prevention of Organised Crimes** (30 March 2026)

Approved instruction to the Legal Draftsman to prepare new draft legislation to prevent organised crime, based on expert committee recommendations. Addresses gaps in existing criminal law for organised crime; protects citizens and businesses from criminal syndicates; provides a framework for law enforcement, prosecution, and inter-agency coordination.

- **Regulations under Section 156 of Anti-Corruption Act No. 9 of 2023** (30 March 2026)

Approved publication of regulations enabling electronic submission of asset and liability declarations through a centralised system, enhancing compliance under the Anti-Corruption Act. Standardises asset declaration forms and procedures.

- **Amendment of Poisons, Opium and Dangerous Drugs Ordinance** (16 March 2026)

Approved draft bill to allow disposal of narcotics in custody after retaining a specimen for evidence, ensuring legal compliance and safety. Committee chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Justice.

- **Legal Action against Illegal Use of eZCash and mCash for Drug Trafficking** (16 March 2026)

Approved measures to identify, track, and prosecute individuals using eZCash and mCash for drug trafficking and organised crimes through a unified database and legal enforcement framework. Integrated database linking the Central Bank, Sri Lanka Police, and Department of Registration of Persons; implementation guided by committee chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Public Security.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, PROVINCIAL COUNCILS & LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

- **Establishment of Supervisory Committees for Economic Stabilisation** (16 March 2026)

Approved formation of four committees to stabilise the domestic economy amid global geopolitical and economic instability: Energy Committee (Minister of Foreign Affairs – fuel, gas, and coal procurement); Public Service Committee (Prime Minister – maintain government services efficiently); Essential Goods Committee (Minister of Transport – supply chains, fair pricing); and Welfare Committee (Minister of Rural Development – monitor social impacts and coordinate relief).

- **Declaring Wednesday as a Government Holiday** (16 March 2026)
Declared Wednesday a government holiday to conserve fuel and manage supply constraints caused by Middle East geopolitical disruptions..
- **Construction of Elapatha Divisional Secretariat and Infrastructure Development** (9 March 2026)
Approved construction of a new 25,000 sq. ft. office complex and 1,600 sq. ft. quarters for the Divisional Secretary to replace unsafe existing facilities, ensuring safe and efficient public service delivery. Population served: approximately 39,700 across 20 Grama Niladhari divisions; landslide risk mitigation with retaining wall; project duration 2026–2028.
- **Review of Public Service Recruitment and Implementation of Committee Recommendations** (3 March 2026)
Approved recruitment of 15,839 vacancies across ministries and provincial councils based on committee review, prioritisation, and departmental requests. Major recruitments: Defence (9,794), Public Security (1,915), and Northern Province (411).

BUDDHASASANA, RELIGIOUS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS

- **State Vesak Festival 2026** (30 March 2026)
Approved organisation of the State Vesak Festival 2026 at Medillawala Purana Viharaya, Matara, with declaration of Vesak Week (27 May – 2 June) and nationwide religious activities under the theme 'Abhithharetha Kalyane.' Coordinates multiple ministries and Buddhist organisations; ensures nationwide cultural participation in religious observances; incorporates logistics, and community engagement plans.
- **Archaeological Reward Fund Regulations** (16 March 2026)
Approved draft regulations to reward informants and officers who recover artifacts or protect antiquities.
- **Amendment of Central Cultural Fund Act No. 57 of 1980** (16 March 2026)
Approved policy revisions to modernise the administration of the Central Cultural Fund and ensure support for cultural and religious initiatives. Updates fund provisions for heritage development, artisan support, and cultural awards.
- **Declaration of National Namal Uyana as National Heritage** (16 March 2026)
Declared National Namal Uyana (602 hectares, the largest Naa forest) as a national heritage site due to its geological, ecological, and archaeological significance. Features: pink quartz mountain, dry-zone forest ecosystem, and ancient Buddhist shrines.

ENVIRONMENT

- **Establish Large-Scale Data System for Aquatic Environment Monitoring** (16 March 2026)
Approved implementation of a large-scale data system to monitor water quality, industrial wastewater, and the aquatic environment, enabling data-driven policy decisions. Grant from the Japan International Cooperation Agency: Rs. 646 million; partnership with the Central Environmental Authority, University of Moratuwa, and Tohoku University.
- **Implementation of Science-Based Disaster Resilience Framework** (9 March 2026)
Approved a dual-way strategy based on recommendations from the Ditwa cyclone impact assessment to shift from post-disaster response to proactive, science-based resilience measures in infrastructure, agriculture, environment, and ecosystems. Institutional Research Requirement Appraisal National Programme conducted on 14 January 2026; seven strategic research and system development recommendations plus seven implementation recommendations.

FISHERIES, AQUATIC & OCEAN RESOURCES

- **Providing Electric Motorcycles to Field Officers in the Fisheries Sector under Indian Government Grant** (16 March 2026)

Approved the provision of 430 electric motorcycles to field officers of the Department of Fisheries, National Aquaculture Development Authority, and research assistants of the National Aquatic Resource Research and Development Agency. Entire cost of Rs. 264.59 million funded by Indian Government grant; authorised signing of an MoU with India.

HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION & WATER SUPPLY

- **Safe and Climate-Resilient Water Supply Project for Western Province** (3 March 2026)

Approved project integrating climate change resilience into the Ambatale Water Supply Scheme with a USD 469,232 grant from CDRI and USD 10,000 local co-financing over 24 months. Addresses drinking water security against floods and droughts.

PORTS & CIVIL AVIATION

- **Master Plan for Civil Aviation Services in Sri Lanka** (23 March 2026)

Approved the National Civil Aviation Master Plan formulated by the Civil Aviation Authority, aligned with ICAO standards for safety, efficiency, capacity, and environmental protection.

TOURISM

- **Tourism Development Programme 2026–2028** (9 March 2026)

Approved implementation of a nationwide tourism development programme across 9 provinces, including infrastructure enhancement in Jaffna district, with total expenditure of Rs. 2,667.03 million for 2026–2028. Jaffna district projects: Rs. 131.02 million; focus on sustainable tourism and regional development.

PLANTATION & COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Upgrading Productivity of Abandoned Mature Rubber Plantations** (3 March 2026)

Approved restoration of 3,300 ha of rubber lands over 2026–2028 with Rs. 1,212.38 million allocation to increase latex production, export value, and GDP contribution. Addresses shortage of skilled labour and extraction knowledge; aims to reduce maintenance costs and idle land.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- **Tourism Development Programme 2026–2028** (9 March 2026)

Approved a dual-way strategy based on recommendations from the Ditwa cyclone impact assessment to shift from post-disaster response to proactive, science-based resilience measures in infrastructure, agriculture, environment, and ecosystems.

DEFENCE

- **Revision of Family Resettlement Programme House Construction Amount** (9 March 2026)

Increased maximum grant for house construction under the landslide resettlement programme from Rs. 1.6 million to Rs. 2.5 million per beneficiary family. Addresses high-risk landslide areas; supports safe relocation and housing for affected families.

- **Repeal of Chief of Defence Staff Act No. 35 of 2009** (3 March 2026)

Approved publication of draft bill to repeal the CDS Act in the Government Gazette for parliamentary approval.

- **Payment of Allowances to Government Officers in Widespread Disaster Scenarios** (3 March 2026)
Approved a 100% increase in disaster-related allowances for officers serving from 21 November 2025 to 15 December 2025 and in future disaster situations.

INDUSTRIES & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- **Prevention of Scrap Metal Exports Detrimental to Domestic Industries** (30 March 2026)
Approved legal and regulatory measures to prevent illegal export of scrap metal, which threatens domestic manufacturing by creating raw material shortages.

SPORTS

- **Submission of Anti-Doping (Prohibited List) Regulations No. 11 of 2025 to Parliament** (3 March 2026)
Approved submission of the WADA-aligned Anti-Doping Prohibited List 2026 to Parliament for concurrence. Ensures national compliance with international anti-doping standards; supports athlete integrity and fair competition; regulatory alignment with global conventions.

DISCLAIMER – This document was commissioned by the Law and Society Trust as a brief summary to assist those seeking to be alerted to recent legislative and executive developments in Sri Lanka. There is no analysis and any explanation is a summary of the document or decision itself. It is not exhaustive and should not be relied upon as legal advice. For specific legal clarifications, please consult appropriate legal counsel. For questions, clarifications, or to provide feedback, please contact: tegal.lawchambers@gmail.com