



Decisions Taken by the Cabinet of Ministers on 17.08.2021

01. Handing Embilipitiya Farmers' Grain Conservation Center over to Spices and Allied Products Marketing Board on lease basis.

A grain storage center with a Laboratory with modern equipment and grain drying machines has been established at a cost of Rs. 200 million in the Embilipitiya Divisional Secretariat Division in the Ratnapura District. This grain storage center with a capacity of around 4000 MT has been established as per a 2016 budget proposal. A solar panel generating system with 100 kW capacity has been installed on the roof of the granary. All the properties of the Grain Conservation Center are in the custody of the Ratnapura District Secretary and the management is carried out by an advisory committee chaired by the District Secretary. Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by the Minister of Finance hand this Grain Conservation Center over to Spices and Allied Products Marketing Board with a view to making more efficient use of it.

02. Project to Sustain Air Quality Benefits in Sri Lanka.

It has been observed that the air quality of cities in many countries has improved since March 2020 due to a decrease in the number of vehicles running as a result of lockdowns and travel restrictions imposed to control the spread of the Covid 19 outbreak. The relationship between Covid-19 outbreak and air quality in many cities in the South Asian region has been assessed. But very few studies have been done in Sri Lanka in this regard. The United Nations Environment Program has expressed its willingness to support the launch of a project entitled "Sri Lanka's Air Quality Benefits Sustainability Project: Implementation of 25 Identified Procedures in Covid 19 Period". The total estimated cost of the project is USA \$ 15,000 and it is expected to provide a policy and technical analysis on "Covid 19 and Air Quality in Colombo City" by the project. It is also expected to identify areas where policies need to be formulated to improve air quality, to sustain the air quality and to coordinate high level programs that indicate the results of fresh air quality improvement activities. The findings of the project are also planned to be shared during the discussion on "Sustainable Improvement of Post-Epidemic Quality in the City of Colombo". Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal made by the Minister of Environment to implement the said project.

03. Brand Promotion Arrangement for Exporting “Pure Ceylon Tea”

According to a budget proposal presented in 2015, a promotion program has been implemented to provide a 50% adjustment grant at the promotion cost to promote the Pure Ceylon tea brand with the Lion logo owned by Sri Lankans and registered with the National Intellectual Property Bureau. Under the program, 20 companies have benefited during the period 2015/2016 and 18 companies during the period 2018/2019. It has been identified that a program is needed to promote private brands in parallel with the Ceylon Tea Global Promotion Program to achieve better results. Accordingly, the cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal made by the Minister of Plantations to further expand the Brand Promotion Scheme during the year 2021/2022 encouraging the of “Ceylon Tea Shops and Houses” under the Global Promotion Program currently implemented in 12 countries.

04. Purchase of Clothing Material for School Uniform – 2022

Bids have been invited from local textile manufacturers to purchase clothing materials for school uniforms for the year 2022 and five manufacturers has submitted their bids. Following the price negotiations as recommended by the Cabinet Appointed Standing Procurement Committee, the following institutions have agreed to provide clothing material for School Uniform in accordance with the relevant specifications. Accordingly, cabinet approval was granted to award the contract for the manufacturing, cutting, packaging and distribution of clothing material for School Uniform to the Divisional Education Offices at the agreed prices.

- Vanguard Industries (Pvt) Ltd
- Dankotuwa Weaving Mills (pvt) Ltd
- Prabha Tex Industries
- Creative Textile Mills (Pvt) Ltd
- Star Tex (Pvt) Ltd

05. Amendment of National Medicines Regulatory Authority Act No. 05 of 2015.

Approval of the Cabinet of Ministers was granted at their meeting held on 12th March 2019 to amend National Medicines Regulatory Authority Act No. 05 of 2015 to cater the contemporary requirements. It has been recognized that the said act should have to be further strengthened for performing the activities of National Medicines Regulatory Authority. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval to appoint a committee for further identifying amendments to be applied with the views of the public and to amend the National Medicines Regulatory Authority Act No. 05 of 2015 including those amendments recognized.

06. Policies and guidelines for awarding reparations in terms of the Office for Reparations Act No. 34 of 2018.

The Office for Reparations has been established in terms of the Office for Reparations Act No. 34 of 2018 in order to award reparations individually and collectively to identify and appropriate for individuals who are subject to grievances and qualified for reparation. Accordingly, the office is entrusted with the responsibility of formulating policies for awarding reparation individually and collectively to those experienced grievances. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval to the resolution furnished by the Minister of Justice for the policies and guidelines prepared and for the implementation of those policies and guidelines collectively with the relevant line Ministries.

07. Amendment of Prevention of Frauds Ordinance.

Approval has been granted to amend the Wills Ordinance at the meeting of Cabinet of Ministers on the 19th July 2021. The objective of the amendment is to prevent frauds when writing and signing the last wills before 05 witnesses instead of signing before a Notary Public. However, it has been recognized that the provisions of the Prevention of Frauds Ordinance too have to be amended since it also provided to sign write and sign a last will before 05 witnesses. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval to the resolution furnished by the Minister of Justice for the amendment of the Prevention of Frauds Ordinance including the proposed amendments.

08. Upgrading the general waste water refinery situated within Seethawaka Export Processing Zone.

The Cabinet of Ministers has previously granted approval for upgrading the refinery capacity of the general waste water refinery situated within Seethawaka Export Processing Zone which is implemented under Sri Lanka Board of Investments from 9500 cubic metres to 15000 cubic metres per day. Therefore, bids from contractors registered under Construction Industries Development Authority for selecting an appropriate contractor for implementing the said project under Board of Investment funds have been invited. The Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal furnished by His Excellency the President to award the relevant contract to Sierra Constructions (Pvt.) Ltd in par with the recommendation of the procurement committee appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

09. Import of 360,000 litres of liquid medicinal Oxygen required for treating the Covid – 19 positive patients.

The Cabinet of Ministers has granted approval earlier to monthly import and store 120,000 litres of liquid Oxygen to ensure undisturbed supply of liquid medicinal Oxygen for treating the critical Covid – 19 positive patients. Therefore, the Cabinet of Ministers granted approval for the import of 360,000 litres of liquid medicinal Oxygen in addition to the monthly general import of 120,000 liters of liquid medicinal Oxygen so that sufficient stock of Oxygen can be stored within the country since the number of patients depending on Oxygen has been escalated due to the spread of the new Covid – 19 variant at present.

10. Purchasing of Vaccines

The Covid-19 vaccination program was planned to administrate for a population of 14 million initially with a view of protect the population from the pandemic and as at the 09.08. 2021, the country has been received 19.49 million doses of vaccines. 11.26 million doses were used as the first dose and 3.25 million doses were used as the second dose out of that consignment. It has been decided to vaccinate all persons over 18 years of age by 30th September, 2021 in order to reduce the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved to purchase of 09 million doses of Sinopharm and 14 million doses of Pfizer at the unit price decided by the Negotiating Committee appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers for the vaccine requirements.

11. Establishment of new rice mills under private - cooperative partnership

Annual rice consumption requirement in the country is approximately 2.2 million metric tons. The harvest for the 2020/2021 Maha season and the 2021 Yala season is approximately 4.8 million metric tons of rice and that amount can produce about 3.2 million metric tons of rice. However, the State Ministry of Cooperative Services, Marketing Development and Consumer Protection has planned to implement a program to purchase a significant portion of the paddy harvest in collaboration with cooperatives to produce rice and sell it at a reasonable price, as a solution to the continue market prices hiking of rice. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal tabled by the Minister of Trade to establish 05 rice mills with modern technology in Kurunegala, Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Hambantota and Ampara districts under the private - cooperative partnership to purchase rice from the next Maha season and distribute it through Lanka Sathosa and Co-operative Societies.

12. Obtaining the assistance of Rupavahini Service to continue the education activities amidst the covid-19 pandemic.

It has been become difficult to open schools due to the covid-19 pandemic and various measures have been taken to continue the education of students. Under this, the "E Thaksalawa" Learning Management System, "Gurugedara" Educational Television Program which is conducted by joining "Eye" and "Nethra" channels of the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation and Home Based Learning Programs have been launched at the national level. The provincial education departments also have launched programs on local radio channels, the education management system and YouTube channels. However, the current broadcast time is not sufficient to broadcast all subjects from grade one to grade 13 in Sinhala, Tamil and English. Therefore, SLT has agreed to provide seven dedicated channels for broadcasting educational content free of charge through the "SLT PEO TV" Channel Network. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers granted the approval to broadcast the educational content of Guru Gedara through these 7 channels and to expand the number of such channels to 20 in future.

13. Procurement for supplying construction machineries and equipment and other supply and transport vehicles to the government owned institutions.

The approval was granted at the Cabinet Meeting held at on 15th March, 2021 to invite the bids from the pre-qualified suppliers to supply construction machineries and equipment and other supply and transport vehicles to the government owned institutions. As per bids have been invited from 4 institutions under 6 packages. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers granted the approval for the proposal tabled by the Minister of Highways to award the relevant procurements as recommended by the procurement committee appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

14. Inclusive Connectivity and Development Project

About 95% of the passenger transport in the country and about 98% of the freight transportation is done through roads. Therefore, the existence of an uninterrupted road transport system is a very important factor for the economic activities of the rural areas. It is proposed to implement the "Inclusive Connectivity Development Project" with the financial assistance of the World Bank with a view to strengthening the agricultural supply chain in selected districts to provide a safe, efficient and climate friendly road connectivity and empower the project community. It is expected to implement this project under two components as "Improving transport links that are safe and resilient to climate change" and "Improving the supply chain and access to services for farmers". Accordingly, Approval was granted by the Cabinet of Ministers for the proposal submitted by the Minister of Highways to implement the proposed project joining with the Ministry of Agriculture and to make a suitable mechanism for that.

15. Rice Importation under the Pakistan – Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement

The Cabinet of Ministers approved the Proposal tabled by the Minister of Trade to take steps to import 6,000 metric tons of rice immediately following the provisions under the Pakistan – Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement as a solution for the rice shortage that is being prevailed in the market.