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2024



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சுற்றுலாத்துறை அமைச்சு

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism



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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

විදේශ කටයුතු Foreign Affairs வெளிநாட்டு அலுவல்கள்	විදේශ රැකියා Foreign Employment வெளிநாட்டு வேலைவாய்ப்பு	සංචාරක Tourism சுற்றுலாத்துறை
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DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

Part 1: Sec (I) –Extraordinary Gazette No: 2412/08 of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka- 25 November 2024

Subjects and Functions	Departments, Statutory Institutions and Public Corporations	Laws, Acts and Ordinances to be Implemented
<p>1. Formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, strategies, programmes and projects, in relation to the subject of foreign affairs, foreign employment and tourism, and those subjects that come under the purview of Departments, Statutory Institutions and Public Corporations listed in Column II based on the national policies implemented by the government</p> <p>2. Provision of public services under the purview of the Ministry in an efficient and people friendly manner</p> <p>3. Reforming all systems and procedures using modern management techniques and technology, thus ensuring that the functions of the Ministry are fulfilled while eliminating corruption and waste.</p> <p>4. Maintenance of diplomatic relations with foreign countries broadening the cooperation of Sri Lanka as an active member internationally thereby stabilizing the good image of Sri Lanka abroad</p> <p>5. Adoption of necessary measures to widen international cooperation in accordance With national policies and; coordination and</p>	<p>1. Diplomatic Missions in abroad</p> <p>2. National Oceanic Affairs Committee Secretariat</p> <p>3. Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies</p> <p>4. Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau</p> <p>5. Foreign Employment Agency of Sri Lanka (Pvt.) Ltd</p> <p>6. Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau</p> <p>7. Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority</p> <p>8. Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management</p> <p>9. Sri Lanka Convention Bureau</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consular Functions Act No. 4 of 1981 • Diplomatic Privileges Act No. 9 of 1996 • Sri Lanka Institute of Strategic Studies Act No. 45 of 2000 • Tourism Act No. 38 of 2005 • Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Act No. 21 of 1985 • Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Act No. 37 of 1956 • All other legislations pertaining to the subjects specified in Column I and II, and not specifically brought under the purview of any other Minister

<p>provision of necessary advice to the government.</p> <p>6. Responding appropriately to counteract adverse propaganda affecting the good image of Sri Lanka and stabilizing the image of Sri Lanka</p> <p>7. Active engagement with international and regional associations of political, economic, environmental, social and cultural cooperation</p> <p>8. Maintaining of diplomatic relations with foreign countries, and conducting negotiations in relation to treaties, agreements and conventions.</p> <p>9. Provision of diplomatic immunities and privileges</p> <p>10. Provision of necessary assistance to relevant Ministries and Institutions for the promotion of external trade, investment, tourism, employment and external financial relations</p> <p>11. Consolidating foreign relations required for the protection of territorial integrity and maritime rights of Sri Lanka</p> <p>12. Adoption of necessary measures related to the welfare of Sri Lankan residents in foreign countries</p> <p>13. Provision of consular services</p> <p>14. Administration of personnel in Sri Lanka</p>		
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<p>Foreign Service and those attached to overseas diplomatic missions and take measures to enhance their professional skills</p> <p>15. Studying geo-political trends and advising the government on strategies to be adopted in the management of such trends in a manner beneficial to the interest of Sri Lanka</p> <p>16. Taking appropriate measures to fulfil the new foreign policy objectives including restructuring the Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>17. Evaluating the economically developing, emerging countries and areas and issuing recommendations for opening missions in order to widen international cooperation for economic development</p> <p>18. Facilitating the efforts on right sizing and quality enhancement of the overseas missions of Sri Lanka to ensure improved trade enhancement, tourism promotion, professional and vocational training and employment opportunities</p> <p>19. Simplifying and streamlining diplomatic processes to make them more efficient and responsive to the needs of the citizen and the State</p> <p>20. Empowerment of foreign Embassies to take necessary initiatives in accordance with the overall foreign policy framework of Sri Lanka</p>		
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<p>while ensuring accountability through regular oversight</p> <p>21. Establishing Sri Lanka Directorate of Cultural Relations under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for promoting Sri Lankan culture abroad to build “soft power” and foster mutual understanding</p> <p>22. Restructuring and strengthening of the Diplomatic Training Institute and the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI)</p> <p>23. Establishment of a robust monitoring and reporting mechanism to review and evaluate the performance of Sri Lankan diplomats, on regular basis</p> <p>24. Establishing a Consultative body with the Sri Lankan diaspora in every country where considerable number of Sri Lankans are present, with a mandate to engage with the respective Sri Lankan foreign mission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>25. Collaborating with relevant institutes to increase and promote foreign employment opportunities and improve the skills required for such employments</p> <p>26. Introducing legal and regulatory measures required to ensure the security of migrant</p>		
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workers		
<p>27. Providing special facilities for expatriate workers and Sri Lankans living abroad to save and invest foreign exchange in Sri Lanka</p> <p>28. Implementing special projects to enable those who return to Sri Lanka after foreign employment to commence enterprises</p> <p>29. Implementing programmes to ensure the protection and welfare of housemaids working in Middle East and other countries.</p> <p>30. Providing remedies for employment issues of migrant workers and maintaining welfare</p> <p>31. Introducing legal reforms to strengthen the process of obtaining compensation entitled to persons who meet with accidents in foreign countries</p> <p>32. Regulation of foreign employment agencies</p> <p>33. Regulation of levy of fees by employment agencies</p> <p>34. Providing career guidance for foreign employment and adopting measures to ensure welfare of those engaged in foreign employment when they are directed to workplaces by foreign employment agencies</p>		

<p>35. Undertaking necessary measures to send skilled and trained workers abroad instead of untrained workers</p> <p>36. Development of the tourism industry and promotion of high standards in line with the national policy while promoting Sri Lanka's image</p> <p>37. Registration and regulation of travel agencies and those involved in the tourism industry</p> <p>38. Popularizing Sri Lanka as a unique tourist Island among domestic and foreign tourists highlighting Sri Lanka's biodiversity, historic heritage, environment, climate diversity, oceanic resources etc</p> <p>39. Promotion of holiday resorts, internationally recognized centres related to conferences, exhibition and entertainment facilities, hotel facilities, air and sea travel for tourists</p> <p>40. Provision of required facilities to encourage those engaged in the tourism trade and related entrepreneurs</p> <p>41. Ensuring safety of tourists</p> <p>42. Preparation of time bound action plans for sustainable usage of natural and cultural resources, developing human resources for the tourist industry, development and standardizing new tourist services, strategic destination</p>		
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<p>promotion etc</p> <p>43. Facilitating to enhance medical tourism by providing a whole range of medical care and treatments including Ayurvedic therapy</p> <p>44. Promotion of sports-tourism industry</p> <p>45. Integration of tourism industry with national and international markets for the visual arts</p> <p>46. Facilitating to make cultural heritage a significant part of the tourism industry</p> <p>47. Supervising all Institutions referred to in Column II and matters relating to all subjects assigned to such Institutions</p> <p>48. Supervision of all Institutions listed in Column II</p>		
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வெளிநாட்டு அலுவல்கள்
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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Vision

To be a responsible nation within the international community and to maintain friendly relations with all countries.

Mission

The promotion, projection, and protection of Sri Lanka's national interests internationally, in accordance with the foreign policy of the Government and to advise the Government on managing foreign relations in keeping with Sri Lanka's national interests.

[illegible]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Annual Progress Report of 2024 aligned with the Public Finance Circular No. 02/2020 dated 28 August 2020, outlines the progress achieved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism during the period from 1 January to 31 December 2024 incorporating the authority granted to the Ministry through the Extraordinary Gazette notification no: 2412/08 dated 25 November 2024. It may be noted that the areas of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism were amalgamated via the aforementioned Gazette Notification and prior to that functioned as three separate ministries. This section of the Annual Progress Report covers the work related to the Foreign Affairs portfolio of the Ministry.

The Foreign Affairs portfolio under the purview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism primarily deals with the promotion and protection of Sri Lanka's interests overseas, with the aim of ensuring the security and prosperity of the country. The conduct of international relations, maintenance of diplomatic ties with foreign nations, projecting and promoting Sri Lanka's image overseas in line with the national interests of the country, advancing Sri Lanka's interests and supporting Sri Lankans overseas are the main areas of responsibility under this portfolio.

This Progress Report highlights the performance of sixty-one (61) Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad and twenty-three (23) Divisions of the Ministry in accordance with the Action Plan-of 2024. The network of Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad is depicted in **Figure-I**, while **Figure-II** sketches the Division Architecture of the Ministry which is categorized into three main pillars i.e. (i) Divisions with Cross-cutting areas, (ii) Territorial Divisions, and (iii) Operational Divisions.

The functions of the National Ocean Affairs Committee Secretariat (NOAC) and the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute (LKI) are also overseen by the respective Divisions of the Ministry, in alignment with the Ministry's authorized scope through the extraordinary gazette no. 2412/08 of 25 November 2024 and the Progress Report also highlights the achievements of these two institutions.

The Ministry engaged with a network of sixty-one (61) Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad, forty-three (43) Foreign Diplomatic Missions based in Sri Lanka and thirty (30) International Organizations, including the United Nations and its affiliated agencies based in Sri Lanka in advancing Sri Lanka's interests.

Sri Lanka has also commenced the process of expanding its diplomatic footprint overseas with the aim of opening up new areas of cooperation and new markets for our exports. In pursuance of this objective in November, 2024 Sri Lanka opened its first resident Diplomatic Mission in Wellington, New Zealand. It is envisaged that Sri Lanka will open a resident Diplomatic Mission in Astana, Kazakhstan in 2025 with a view to expanding cooperation in the Central Asia region. The Mission in Astana will be the first Sri Lanka Diplomatic Mission in the Central Asia region. Additionally, given the large number of Sri Lankans working in Cyprus a decision has been taken to reopen a resident diplomatic presence in Nicosia, Cyprus at the level of a Consulate General. Other Missions to be re-opened in 2025 for which formalities are in progress are Frankfurt/Germany (Consulate General), and Baghdad/Iraq (Embassy).

The work of the Ministry and Missions overseas is executed by a team of dedicated professionals who have endeavored and enabled to deliver on its purpose. Our team demonstrated their professionalism and dedication to service in demanding and sometimes dangerous circumstance. Ministry is led by the officers of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service numbering 173 officers and is supported by officers from allied services. In 2024, a new batch of 19 SLFS officers were recruited after a lapse of close to 6 years. The Ministry over the last decade surpassed gender parity with over 60% of our officers being women. Many of our heads of mission, heads of post and senior executive roles are also held by women.

All sixty-one (61) Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad have efficiently discharged their duties with a minimum availability of human resources, demonstrating their commitment towards the national efforts to reduce public expenditure.

This annual progress report reviews the overall progress made by the Ministry including Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism sectors across various spectrums, including bilateral, regional, and multilateral engagements, economic diplomacy, climate change and environmental protection, connecting with the overseas Sri Lankan community, and promoting people-to-people contacts. Hence, the objective of the progress report is to evaluate the achievement of the overall performance of the mandate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, its priorities and targets outlined in the Ministry's Action Plan for 2024.

1. Navigating a challenging external environment

The Ministry in 2024 had to navigate an increasingly complex global environment characterized by escalating geopolitical tensions, the rise of trade protectionism, resurgence of latent and open conflict, threats to multilateralism and the growing impact of climate change. Challenges in the external environment also meant that the Ministry and Missions/Posts overseas had to support Sri Lankans in distress including those that were caught up in conflict zones and others who became victims of smuggling and trafficking. The countries in which support was augmented included Russia, Ukraine, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Myanmar, Cambodia and Thailand.

Through our engagements, Sri Lanka demonstrated keenness and agility in pursuing neutrality and Non-Alignment whilst actively contributing to the maintenance of regional and global peace and security. Sri Lanka continued to advocate for respect for sovereignty and the rule of law which governs interactions between states. As a small country with a significant geo-strategic location in the Indian Ocean region emphasis was placed on building strong, friendly relations bilaterally, regionally and globally.

Sri Lanka also actively supported the rules- based multilateral system, which provides a level playing field in international relations for small states such as Sri Lanka. We advocated for the voices of the Global South to be acknowledged and for multilateral systems to adapt and be more inclusive in our regional and multilateral engagements. Sri Lanka endeavored to contribute to building a multipolar world which incorporates the political, economic, social and climate change mitigation aspirations of the Global South.

2. Supporting Sri Lanka's Economic Recovery

Foremost among our efforts in 2024 was to revitalize the economy in the face of an economic downturn and ensure stability. The Ministry worked with the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank extensively, in diplomatic outreach related to ensuring the debt sustainability of Sri Lanka. These included supporting engagements with the IMF, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Paris Club and bilateral lenders. As a result of the coordinated efforts undertaken Sri Lanka was able to achieve debt sustainability.

In order to drive trade and investment the Ministry provided strategic support and guidance in promoting and safeguarding Sri Lanka's economic interests overseas. The Economic Diplomacy programme, through which Missions are assigned specific economic targets is being implemented in coordination with a number of public and private sector institutions and industry stakeholders.

Some of the key economic work undertaken by the Ministry included supporting the negotiation of Free Trade and Preferential Trade Agreements and pursuing obtaining the most out of existing arrangements. As a result the Sri Lanka-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (SLSFTA) was put back on track and the Sri Lanka-Thailand Free Trade Agreement (SLTFTA) was signed. The negotiations for a Preferential Trade Agreement with Indonesia was launched and initial discussions were held with Malaysia on entering into a Free Trade Agreement. Discussions were also coordinated on the proposed Bangladesh-Sri Lanka Preferential Trade Agreement (BSPTA) and the 14th round of negotiations of the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) with India was successfully concluded. Sri Lanka continued to lobby extensively to be included into the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) for which a Letter of Intent (LOI) was submitted to the ASEAN Secretariat in July 2023. The Ministry facilitated efforts to obtain inter regional cumulation with Indonesia for rules of origin criteria for more beneficial conditions for the Sri Lankan apparel sector under the UK Developing Countries Trading Scheme (UKDCTS) under which over seven thousand (7000) export products have duty free access to the UK market. Support was also extended to empower selected SMEs in the textile industry through the GTEX-II initiative launched in July 2024 with the support of the Swiss Government. On the EU- GSP + scheme the Ministry continues to interact with the European Commission on Sri Lanka's compliance procedures.

Several important MoUs/Agreements were inked to promote trade, investment, foreign employment, agriculture, labour, ocean affairs and tourism with partner countries such as Saudi Arabia, Romania, Italy, France, China, Japan, Viet Nam, Iran, Oman, Thailand, UK and Russia.

Economic Diplomacy was a key priority for the Ministry and Missions overseas and efforts were taken throughout 2024 to promote exports, discover new markets for exports, participate in exhibitions, and promote business to business contacts. Exploration of new markets included the first ever single country exhibition held in Brazil in the Latin American region and exploratory business engagements in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and the Kyrgyz Republic in Central Asia. The Ministry also worked in close coordination with line ministries, industry, industry associations, chambers of commerce, the EDB and the BOI in promoting key export sectors including apparel, IT, fisheries and agriculture.

On the Tourism front the Ministry and Sri Lanka Missions overseas together with the Sri Lankan Tourism Promotion Bureau undertook promotional campaigns throughout 2024, and supported new and innovative promotional work including through social media. The Ministry also worked together with the Ministry of Public Security and the Department of Immigration & Emigration on initiatives taken to implement unilateral visa free entry for 35 countries to promote tourism, which continues to remain in operation. Reciprocal visa free entry arrangements are also being pursued with several countries and Thailand and Sri Lanka operationalized such an arrangement in 2024.

Securing Foreign Employment opportunities for diverse groups of Sri Lankans was a priority area of focus for the Ministry (Skilled, Semi-Skilled, Unskilled). New areas in which employment opportunities have been secured include nursing and auxiliary police force in Singapore. Opportunities for nursing in the UK and geriatric nursing in Germany are being pursued. Job opportunities are also being pursued for Sri Lankan nationals in Malaysia, Poland, Romania, Italy and the UK in addition to traditional labour markets in the Middle East. The Ministry works with the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment in achieving targets set for Missions overseas in securing employment.

Sri Lanka also remains committed to the framework of rules and agreements that promote and protect the open global trading system through the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Despite being a valuable tool to drive economic growth and development, the multilateral trading system needs reform to address current challenges and deliver on the promises made through the Doha Development Agenda. Sri Lanka called for attaching highest priority to the Dispute Settlement Mechanism at the WTO Ministerial Conference held in Abu Dhabi.

3. Strengthening Relations and Advancing Interests

In the year under review, concerted efforts were taken to strengthen relations with bilateral, regional and multilateral partners. Sri Lanka's relations with India were strengthened throughout 2024 culminating in the first State Visit undertaken by President Anura Kumara Disanayaka to India from 15-17 December. This landmark visit reflected the longstanding, historic ties between the two countries whilst also signaling the upward trajectory of the relationship as outlined in the India –Sri Lanka Joint Statement issued at the conclusion of the Visit. Titled "Fostering Partnerships for a Shared Future", the Joint Statement reaffirmed commitment to progress the bilateral relationship to a mutually beneficial partnership for the wellbeing of the peoples of the two countries. The two countries also entered into two Agreements/MoUs on Avoidance of Double Taxation, and Training and Capacity Building Programmes for Sri Lankan Civil Servants.

Other important visits from the South Asia region included a visit by the Foreign Minister of the Maldives to Sri Lanka which took place from 3-6 June, 2024.

Sri Lanka's longstanding friendly relations with the People's Republic of China were further consolidated with several high level engagements throughout 2024. The former Prime Minister's visit to China in March 2024 for the Boao Forum included a Summit Level meeting with the President and Premier of China at the conclusion of which a Joint Statement was issued. Nine (09) MoUs in areas ranging from market access for Sri Lankan products, industrial cooperation, trade promotion cooperation, media cooperation and education digitalization were signed during the visit.

Engagements with Japan, a country with which Sri Lanka shares a warm and abiding friendship included reciprocal visits by the Foreign Ministers of Japan and Sri Lanka leading to strengthening relations and opening up new areas of cooperation. Other high level visits from Japan included Minister of Finance of Japan (January 2024) and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries of Japan (February 2024).

Sri Lanka's engagement with the United States and the European Union were strengthened in 2024 with the US-Sri Lanka Partnership Dialogue and the EU-Sri Lanka Joint Commission mechanisms being successfully held. These were in addition to a multiplicity of meetings that took place throughout the year with the US and the EU and member countries on a bilateral basis. The US and EU remain the key export destinations for Sri Lankan products and Sri Lanka continues to benefit from preferential access to these markets.

Other important incoming visits to Sri Lanka included the visit of the Prime Minister of Thailand to Sri Lanka (3-4 February, 2024), Prime Minister and Deputy Speaker of the Republic of Korea (April and March 2024 respectively), visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana (August, 2024), the visit of Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal to mark the 75th Anniversary of bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom (January, 2024) and the visit of the President of Iran to Sri Lanka during which the Uma Oya Multipurpose Development Project was jointly declared open and Sri Lanka and Iran concluded five agreements related to culture, technical cooperation, film, mass media, tourism and cooperation between chambers of commerce and national libraries.

During this review period a number of outward visits were undertaken by former President Ranil Wickremesinghe with a view to enhancing Sri Lanka's diplomatic relations, both bilaterally and multilaterally. These included visits to countries such as Switzerland, Singapore, Uganda, Australia, Indonesia and India.

Former President Wickremesinghe also engaged at regional and multilateral fora including the World Economic Forum (WEF), the 19th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and with world leaders on the sidelines of these meetings.

At the "Green Technology Forum", convened on 15th January 2024, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the former President spoke on the theme of "Paving the way to an energy secure Sri Lanka,".

In addition, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, State Minister of Foreign Affairs and Secretary of Foreign Affairs undertook visits of bilateral, regional and multilateral nature in 2024 with a view to enhancing Sri Lanka's interests. These included among others visits to Poland, Germany, Romania, Belgium, Austria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran, India, Singapore, Myanmar and Thailand.

The Ministry initiated and facilitated bilateral political consultations with China, United Kingdom (2nd Strategic Dialogue), Estonia, Latvia, Switzerland, United States, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Turkmenistan in 2024.

Sri Lanka was represented at the Boao Forum, the 3rd EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum, 60th Edition of the Munich Security Conference, BRICS Ministerial Session, Asia Cooperation Dialogue Ministerial session, Antalya Diplomacy Forum, China-Xizang Trans Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial session, BIMSTEC Ministerial session and the Reuters NEXT APAC 2024 Summit, demonstrating robust

engagement at a variety of international fora dealing with critical issues of bilateral and multilateral importance.

Sri Lanka reiterated its call for an immediate ceasefire and unrestricted humanitarian access to Gaza to alleviate the suffering of civilians in 2024. The Sri Lanka Government approved the establishment of the “Children of Gaza Fund,” a compassionate initiative aimed at providing assistance to the victims in Gaza and donated USD one million through UN agencies (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) to provide much-needed support to the victims of Gaza. Sri Lanka also joined the global calls for a sustainable political resolution to the conflict and the establishment of an independent and sovereign State of Palestine, based on the borders of 1967, in line with relevant UN resolutions, as well as ensuring the security of Israel. Sri Lanka donated another 590,000 USD to the Children of Gaza fund in August 2024.

The **tables I and II** below illustrate the inbound and outbound high-level visits that occurred during this period.

4. Expanding Regional and Multilateral cooperation

Sri Lanka’s engagements with regional groupings were strengthened during 2024 with a particular emphasis being placed on increasing engagements within regional constructs of importance including *inter alia* the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), BIMSTEC, Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), SAARC, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Conference on Interactions and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the Colombo Plan,

Sri Lanka as the Chair of IORA celebrated the IORA Day under the theme “Ensuring a Sustainable Indian Ocean for Future Generations” jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education and the Sri Lanka Navy on 10 March 2024. Notably, Sri Lanka also hosted and chaired the 26th IORA Committee of Senior Officials (virtual mode), the IORA Sub-Committee on Finance (virtual mode) and convened the IORA Business Conclave together with the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce in Colombo. Sri Lanka continued to advocate for a rules based maritime order in the Indian Ocean through its engagements. By serving as Chair of IORA, Sri Lanka also demonstrated willingness to give leadership and champion the cause of littoral states.

Underscoring Sri Lanka’s continuous commitment to the BIMSTEC bloc, Sri Lanka hosted the 2nd Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert-Group on Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation and the 1st Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Human Resources Development.

The Secretary General of SAARC visited Sri Lanka to attend the South Asia Trade Fair and Business Forum which was facilitated by the Ministry and Sri Lanka continued to actively and constructively engage with SAARC activities throughout 2024.

On the multilateral front, one of the key challenges Sri Lanka had to deal with was the country specific resolution mooted at the Human Rights Council against Sri Lanka. At the Human Rights Council Sessions held in 2024 (54th & 55th sessions) delivering Sri Lanka’s National Statement the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations reiterated the rejection of HRC Resolution 51/1 and the external evidence gathering mechanism. Twelve (12) countries referred to Sri Lanka during the General Debate under Agenda Item 2 during the 55th Session of the HRC and noted the progress made by Sri Lanka.

The Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee on Human Rights formed by a Cabinet decision chaired by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, held its first meeting on 13 February 2024. This Committee, comprising 21 government agencies, was envisaged as a standing national framework to ensure efficient coordination and reporting on Sri Lanka's voluntary international commitments regarding Human Rights and Reconciliation.

The Ministry facilitated Sri Lanka's participation in several regional fora which enhanced Sri Lanka's visibility and position on issues of regional and global concern such as Disarmament and Non-Proliferation and Disaster Relief. Sri Lanka together with Thailand and the United States co-chaired the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Inter-Sessional Meeting on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and together with Vietnam and Bangladesh co-chaired the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief. Sri Lanka actively engaged within the work of CICA in enhancing its engagement in particular with the Central Asia region.

Sri Lanka championed several important environmental causes within the United Nations, Commonwealth and IORA in the period under review. At the 6th United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) held in Nairobi, Kenya in February 2024 a draft resolution jointly submitted by Sri Lanka and the European Union on "Effective and Inclusive Solutions for Strengthening Water Policies" was adopted. The Ministry also contributed to the drafting of the submission of a new resolution to the 15th Conference of Parties (COP) of the RAMSAR convention to be held in Zimbabwe in July 2025 titled "Rights of Nature in Wetlands" and is planning to lobby Member States to garner support for its adoption.

The Ministry coordinated with relevant line ministries as a champion country at the Commonwealth Mangrove Ecosystem Livelihood Action Group (MELAG) of the Commonwealth where Sri Lanka received an accolade as a United Nations World Restoration Flagship, highlighting it as one of the best examples of large scale, long-term ecosystem restoration globally at the 6th UNEA. Funding was approved under MELAG for two projects in Sri Lanka in 2024 on Blue Carbon and Mapping Technology for Seagrass-Mangroves under the Commonwealth Blue Charter Project Incubator.

The Ministry also supported the establishment of a National Maritime Task Force to deal with issues impacting Sri Lanka in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) related to a proposed new traffic separation scheme in the South of Sri Lanka and worked extensively with line ministries on CITES related initiatives.

Steps are underway together with the Ocean University to set up a SMART-IORA Centre of Excellence on Ocean Science and Environment aiming to launch it virtually in 2025. Action has also been initiated to host the annual IORA Blue Carbon Think Tank Symposium in Sri Lanka in September 2025 for which full sponsorship has been secured.

A five year partnership aimed at enhancing cooperation through the Ocean Country Partnership (OCP) was finalized. In May 2024 a MoU was signed between Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom under the Blue Planet Fund (BPF) in which the key focus areas of cooperation included tackling marine pollution, sustainable seafood, and marine biodiversity with an emphasis on capacity building and technical support.

Cooperation in the area of Hydrography between Sri Lanka and the UK has also been initiated.

The Ministry continues to support Sri Lanka's active engagement in global climate initiatives including the G-20 Global Blended Finance Initiative (GBFA) and the Paris Pact for People and the Planet (4P).

5. Extending Consular Assistance & Supporting Sri Lankans overseas

The Ministry achieved a significant milestone by delivering speedy consular services to the general public through its Regional Consular Offices in Colombo, Jaffna, Matara, Kandy, Trincomalee, and Kurunegala, as well as via Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad. The Consular Division's sustainable digitalization initiatives introduces an online authentication system for GCE Ordinary Level (O/L) and Advanced Level (A/L) certificates which allows applicants to apply for online authentication for their GCE O/L and A/L certificates without physically visiting the Consular Division in Colombo.

As a part of the ongoing effort to digitalize document authentication, the integration of the e-DAS (Electronic Document Attestation System) and e-BDM (Electronic Birth, Death, Marriage registration, Registrar General's Department) databases was implemented on 02nd September 2024. This digital integration allows applicants to apply for authentication of their birth, marriage, and death certificates entirely online, eliminating the need for in-person visits to the Division.

The Ministry has spearheaded efforts to rescue Sri Lankans in dire circumstances overseas. This includes the assistance extended by our Missions in Lebanon and Israel to Sri Lankans impacted by the ongoing tensions in the Middle East.

The Ministry collaborated with the Seychelles' Defence Forces to coordinate the rescue operation of the Sri Lankan multi-day fishing trawler "Lorenzo Putha-4" with its six crew members onboard which had been seized by Somali Pirates. In total 16 cases of stranded fishing vessels were managed by the Ministry and the repatriation of 87 crew members and 9 fishing vessels were facilitated. The Ministry also handled a large number of repatriation requests and coordinated the return of 1520 Sri Lankans stranded abroad for various reasons.

In 2024 the Ministry together with Sri Lankan Missions in Thailand and Myanmar actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to rescue and safely repatriate Sri Lankans trafficked to Myanmar to work in Cybercrime centres located in the Myawaddy region. These efforts successfully facilitated the rescue and repatriation of 8 individuals in April 2024 and 20 more in September 2024. In addition, thirty-two (32) Sri Lankan nationals who were victims of human trafficking were rescued and safely repatriated in December 2024 following a successful, coordinated process. Sri Lanka continues to engage with the Governments of Myanmar and Thailand to rescue the remaining Sri Lankans (reportedly 18 remain in the Myawaddy area).

Sri Lanka remained at 'Tier 2' status in the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report for this year.

The Emergency Response Unit of the Ministry played a crucial role in coordinating and facilitating donations of essential medicines and medical equipment from donor countries. In 2024 the Unit facilitated the donation of Ceylon Tea for the people of Palestine in Gaza, persons impacted by Typhoon Yagi in Myanmar, and the victims of floods in Libya as humanitarian aid from the Government of Sri Lanka.

Conclusion

Overall, this report provides a comprehensive review of the Ministry's progress during the year 2024, focusing on the accomplishments of each Division of the Ministry in collaboration with the respective Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad, line Ministries/agencies, foreign diplomatic Missions, and international organizations based in Colombo.

Figure-I-Spread of Diplomatic Missions/Posts abroad

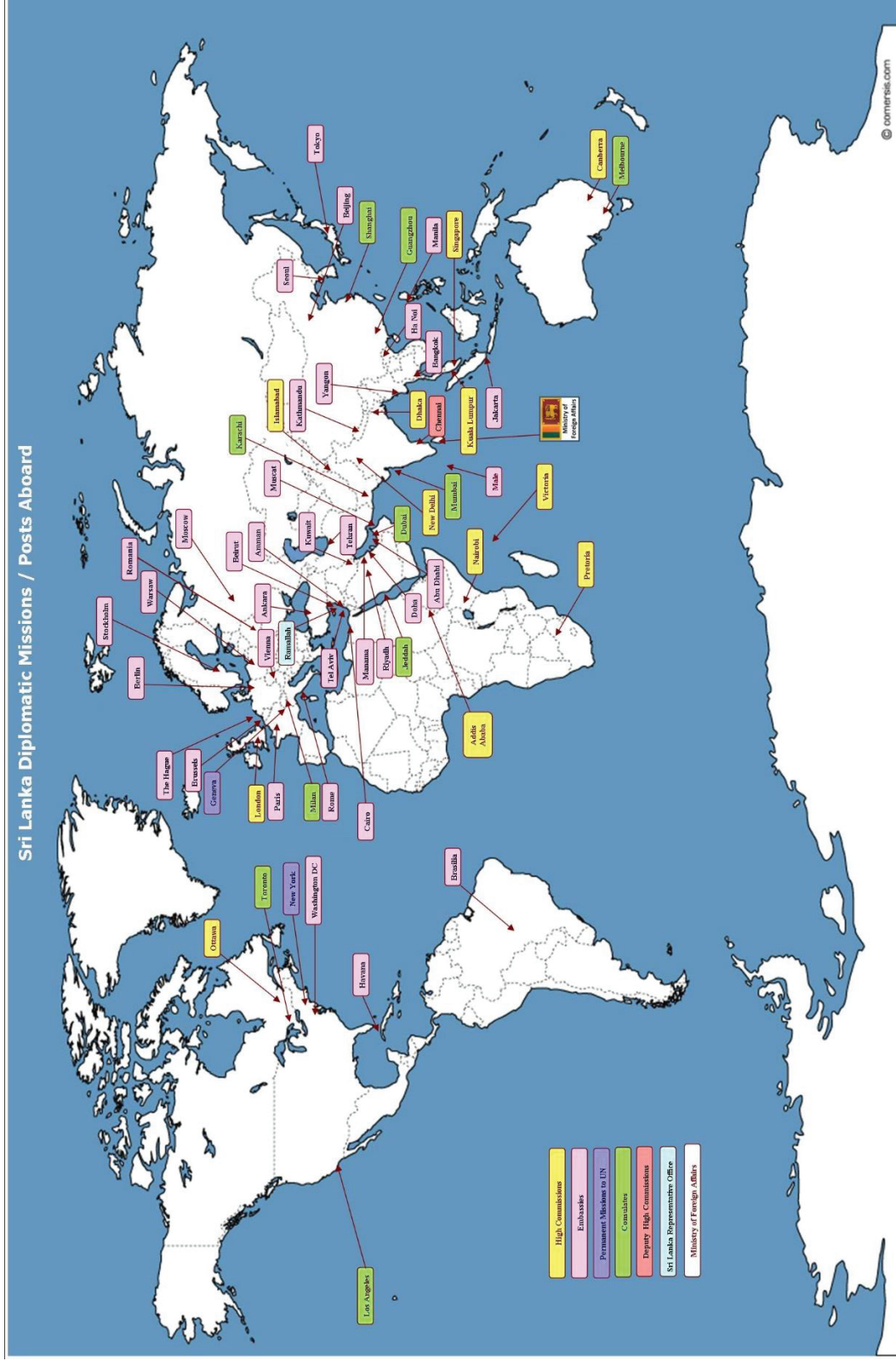


Figure-II-Divisions Architecture

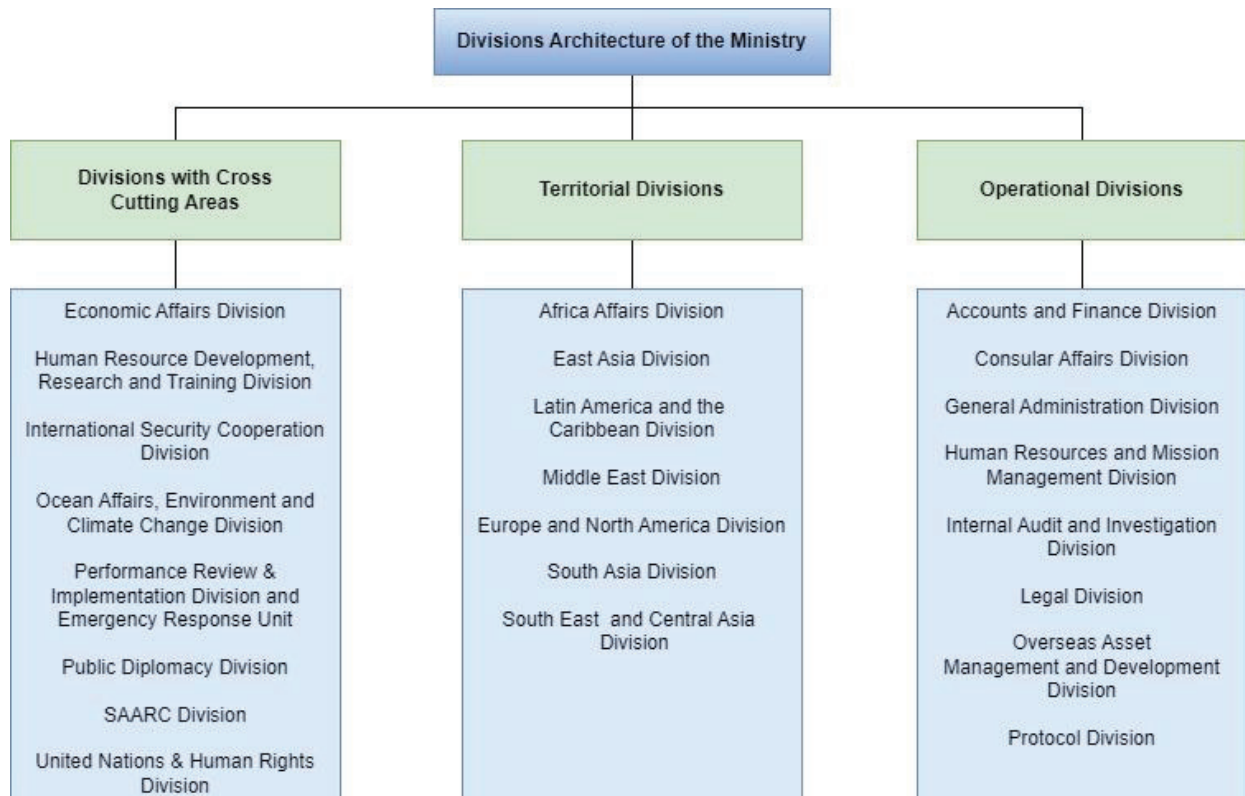


Table – I - High Level Visits: Inward

Visit of Heads of the State and Heads of Government		
1.	His Holiness Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin Saheb, Spiritual Leader of the International Bohra Community	29 January – 27 February 2024
2.	State visit of H.E. SretthaThavisin, Prime Minister of Thailand	04 February 2024
3.	Official visit of H.E. Dr. Ebrahim Raisi, President of Islamic Republic of Iran	23-24 April 2024
4.	His Holiness Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin Saheb, Spiritual Leader of the International Bohra Community as a State Guest	25 June – 03 July 2024
5.	Private visit of H.E. Julius Maada Bio, President of Sierra Leone	20-21 October 2024
6.	His Holiness Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin Saheb, Spiritual Leader of the International Bohra Community	26 October- 08 November 2024
Visit of Foreign Ministers		
1.	Visit of Hon. Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Iran	19-20 February 2024
2.	Visit of Hon. Yoko Komikawa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Japan	04 - 05 May 2024
3.	Visit of Hon. Moosa Zameer, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Maldives	03 - 06 June 2024
4.	Visit of Hon. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar , Minister of External Affairs. India	20 June 2024
5.	Visit of Hon. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana	19-21 August 2024
6.	Visit of Hon. Subramanian Jaishankar , Minister of External Affairs. India	4 th October 2024
7.	Private visit of Hon. Foreign Minister of Poland	23 December 2024

Visits of Speakers of the Parliament and other Ministers		
1.	Visit of Hon. Miri Regev, Minister of Transport and National Infrastructure and Road Safety of Israel	13-18 February 2024
2.	Visit of Hon. Gerry Brownlee , Speaker of New Zealand	07-11 July 2024
3.	Visit of K. Shanmugam, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister of Law of Singapore	11-14 August 2024
4.	Visit of Hon. Qin Boyong , Vice Chairmen of CPPCC, China	16-19 December 2024

Visits of other senior dignitaries		
1.	Visit of Princess Anne, The Royal Princess of the United Kingdom	10 – 12 January 2024
2.	Visit of Mr. Kairat Sarybay, Secretary General of Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)	22-23 February 2024
3.	Visit of Mr. Salman Al Farisi, IORA Secretary General to participate to the celebration of IORA Day	08-10 March 2024
4.	Visit of Professor Danniell Froschauer, Chairman of Vienna Philhamonic Orchestra	02 - 06 April 2024
5.	Visit of Mr. Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General of BIMSTEC	08 - 10 April 2024
6.	Visit of Mr. Eric Sholkaim	27 April - 03 May 2024
7.	Visit of H.E. Golam Sarwar, Secretary General of SAARC	10 - 14 June 2024
8.	Visit of Mr. Ajith Doval , National Security Advisor of India	27 - 29 August 2024
9.	Visit of Secretary General of French Foreign Ministry	10 - 11 December 2024

Table – II - High Level visits: Outward

Visits of the President		
1.	Visit to Davos, Switzerland to attend World Economic Forum (WEF)	13- 18 January 2024
2.	Visit to Uganda to attend 19 th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)	21 – 22 January 2024

3.	Visit to Perth, Australia to attend the Indian Ocean Conference (IOC)	09 - 10 February 2024
4.	Visit to Bali, Indonesia to attend the 10 th World Water Forum High Level Meeting	19-20 May 2024
5.	Visit to New Delhi, India to attend swearing- in ceremony of Hon. Narendra Modi ,Prime Minister of India	09-10 June 2024
6.	State visit to New Delhi, India	15-17 December 2024
Visits of the then Prime Minister		
1.	Visit to China to attend the opening plenary of the Boao Forum	24-30 March 2024
2.	Official Visit to Republic of Korea	02-05 April 2024
Visits of the Foreign Minister		
1.	Visit to Uganda to attend 19 th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)	22-27 January 2024
2.	Visit to London, United Kingdom	27-29 January 2024
3.	Visit to Brussels, Belgium to attend Third EU Indo – Pacific Ministerial Forum	01-04 February 2024
4.	Visit to Perth, Australia to attend the Indian Ocean Conference (IOC)	09-10 February 2024
5.	Visit to Munich, Germany to attend the 60 th Edition of the Munich Security Conference	16- 18 February 2024
6.	Visit to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia	27 February -03 March 2024
7.	Visit to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to attend to the World Economic Forum	28-29 April 2024
8.	Visit to Moscow, Russia to attend BRICS Ministerial Session	10-13 June 2024
9.	Visit to Tehran, Iran to attend the funeral of late president Hon. Ebrahim Raisi	21-23 June 2024
10.	Visit to Tokyo, Japan	01-07 July 2024
11.	Visit to Singapore to attend the Reuters NEXT APAC	09 July 2024

	2024 Summit	
12.	Visit to Romania	15-18 July 2024
13.	Visit to Poland	18-21 July 2024
14.	Visit to Egypt	7-11 August 2024
15.	Visit to New Delhi with H.E. the President	15-17 December 2024
Visits of the then State Minister of Foreign Affairs		
1.	Visit to Antalya, Turkey to attend 3 rd Edition of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum (ADF)	01-03 March 2024
2.	Official visit to Myanmar	9-14 June 2024
3.	Visit to Thailand	9-14 June 2024
4.	Visit to Tehran, Iran to attend 19 th Ministerial Meeting of the Members State of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)	22-24 June 2024
5.	Visit to Moscow, Russia	25-28 June 2024
6.	Visit to China to attend the 4 th China Xizang Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation	01-05 July 2024
7.	Visit to New Delhi to attend the 2 nd BIMSTEC Foreign Minister's Meeting	11-12 July 2024
8.	Visit to Lao PDR to attend 31 st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)	26-29 July 2024

Conferences and Meetings

1.	Colombo Security Conclave	29 th August 2024
2.	Joint Commissions and Political Consultations	January – September 2024
3.	Other Stakeholders meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	

Social Events with the participation of the Diplomatic Corps –2024

1.	Celebration of IORA Day	10 April 2024
2.	Sinhala/Tamil new year celebration 2024	17 April 2024
3.	Vesak celebration 2024	21 May 2024
4.	Kandy Esala Perahera	20 August 2024
5.	Diplomatic Bazaar	07 December 2024
6.	Christmas Celebration 2024	20 December 2024

PROGRESS REVIEW OF THE DIVISIONS: DIVISIONS WITH CROSS CUTTING AREAS

1. Economic Affairs Division

The Economic Affairs Division of the Foreign Affairs is mainly entrusted with activities related to promoting economic diplomacy and plays a catalyst role between the Missions abroad and the line Ministries/agencies in Sri Lanka, while providing strategic support and guidance to the Sri Lanka Missions in promoting and safeguarding Sri Lanka's economic interests overseas. The Economic Diplomacy Program, one of the main tasks of the Division, under which the Missions are assigned with economic targets have been implemented in coordination with a number of public and private sector institutions including; the President's Office, the Prime Minister's Office, then Ministry of Finance and Public Policy and its affiliated agencies (External Resources Department, Department of National Planning, Sri Lanka Customs, etc.), Department of Commerce, Board of Investment, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, Sri Lanka Export Development Board, Sri Lanka Tea Board, Sri Lanka Gem & Jewelry Authority, Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Department of Inland Revenue, Chambers of Commerce, Joint Apparel Association, Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA), Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), etc.

1.1. Economic Affairs (Bilateral): During the period under review, the Division facilitated the bilateral instruments of Thailand-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement, Sri Lanka - Singapore Free Trade Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding between Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka on Cooperation of Promotion of Direct Investment, Memorandum of Understanding between Sri Lanka and Romania on Labour Cooperation, Memorandum of Understanding between Sri Lanka and Italy on Migration and Mobility Partnership, Memorandum of Understanding between Sri Lanka and France on Economic and financial dialogue, Protocol between Sri Lanka and China and facilitating the Market Accesses for wheat Bran Pellets to China, Protocol between Sri Lanka and China on the Inspection, Quarantine and Sanitary Requirements of Poultry products from Sri Lanka and Memorandum of Understanding between Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and Sri Lanka for cooperation on Investment and the signing of the Treaty between Russia and Sri Lanka on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters and finalized the signing of the Treaty between Russia and Sri Lanka on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters.

The Division also facilitated the 14th Round of negotiations of the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) between Sri Lanka and India held in Sri Lanka from 24 - 26 July 2024; facilitated participation of foreign delegations at the Industry Expo 2024 held in Colombo from 19 - 23 June 2024; partnered with the Ministry of Technology in organizing DigiECon Global Investment Summit 2024 held on 25 June 2024; participation of foreign delegations at the Marine Summit Voyage Sri Lanka 2024 held on 26th November 2024 in Colombo and facilitated visas for Sri Lankan officials/companies who participated in trade fairs, Business to Business (B2B) meetings and business engagements overseas.

The Division also played a crucial role on evaluating the travel advisories issued on Sri Lanka which negatively affected the Sri Lanka tourism industry and working with Sri Lanka Missions abroad to update them; finalized the dates for the 3rd Session of

the Sri Lanka – Türkiye Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Cooperation (JCETC); the 3rd Session of Sri Lanka- Russia Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation; 9th Session of Iraq - Sri Lanka Joint Committee Meeting and 12th Session of the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation between Iran and Sri Lanka. Further, Facilitated organization of **FACETS 2024** held from 6 – 8 January 2024 in Colombo.

The Economic Affairs Division also coordinated an inward visit by a Syrian Business delegation (tourism sector) to Sri Lanka organized by the Sri Lanka Embassy in Beirut and the Honorary Consul of Sri Lanka in Syria; called proposals from the line agencies in relation to the Economic Cooperation Chapter. Significantly, the Division facilitated the Foreign Secretary to meet the Canadian Deputy Minister for International Development Christopher MacLennan at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Colombo to discuss significant progress made by Sri Lanka on economic stabilisation and the high priority placed by the Government on economic diplomacy as the country moves towards revenue generation and growth on 28 May 2024.

Facilitated participation of foreign delegations at the Industry Expo 2024 held from 19-23 June 2024 in Colombo. The Ministry partnered with the Ministry of Technology in organizing DigiECon Global Investment Summit 2024 held on 25 June 2024. The Division notably finalized the Joint statement of the 5th U.S – Sri Lanka Partnership Dialogue on 28th June 2024 in Washington D.C. and the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to engage in bilateral talks in Cairo, Egypt to enhance ties between two countries held from 07 – 11 August 2024.

Visas for Sri Lanka Tea Board to participate at the World Food Istanbul 2024 held from 3-6 September 2024 in Istanbul, Türkiye were facilitated to accommodate Ceylon Tea exporters from five well known and well-established Ceylon Tea Companies in Sri Lanka. The Division called for proposals from the line agencies relating to the areas of cooperation identified under the Economic Cooperation Chapter of the Sri Lanka-Singapore Free Trade Agreement.

Negotiations at the Sri Lanka – Indonesia PTA on 14 March 2024 were launched; finalized the MoU between Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and the Ministry of Investment Promotion of Sri Lanka for cooperation on Investment; evaluated the travel advisories issued on Sri Lanka which could negatively affect the Sri Lanka tourism industry and working with Sri Lanka Missions abroad to update them. Coordinated a Smart City Project between Urban Development Authority (UDA) of Sri Lanka with the Moscow Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and assisted Sri Lankan agencies during the visit of the Vice President for Asia of Eutelsat OneWeb with a view to attract investments in the telecommunications sector.

During the year 2024, this Division also liaised with Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad to identify potential investments sectors and working with the Board of Investment to match available investment projects in Sri Lanka. Represented the Ministry at the Sub Export Committee (SEC) on Enhancing Private Sector Investments in the Fisheries sector stakeholders to finalize an Action plan which will contribute in developing the Fisheries sector. Worked with SLASSCOM, Export Development Board (EDB) and Federation of Information Technology Industry Sri Lanka (FITIS) for promoting IT sector of Sri Lanka abroad.

1.1.1. Economic Diplomacy Programme: Allocation of Rs. 7.25 million for Trade and Investment projects and Rs. 2.88 million for Tourism promotional projects were facilitated by Sri Lanka Missions abroad under the Economic Diplomacy Programme. A total of Rs. 10.14 million has been allocated for the Missions from the total allocation of Rs. 15 million for the year 2024.

1.2. Economic Affairs (Multilateral): The Multilateral Affairs Section of the Economic Affairs Division handles matters related to multilateral cooperation with international, inter-governmental and regional organizations in the context of economic affairs. The Section works in consultation with relevant stakeholders to formulate Sri Lanka's positions and to strengthen and to follow up on commitments made by the Government of Sri Lanka internationally.

1.2.1. World Economic Forum – The President participated at the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum, in Davos Klosters, Switzerland from 13 – 18 January 2024. The Minister of Foreign Affairs participated in the World Economic Forum's Special Meeting on Global Cooperation, Growth and Energy for Development from 28-29 April 2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

1.2.2. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) – The Division also acts as the focal point in Sri Lanka for the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) in which Sri Lanka currently chairs. The Division participated in/facilitated thirty five (35) IORA related meetings/Workshops/Training Programmes in coordination with the relevant line Ministries/Agencies and the IORA Secretariat in Mauritius from 01 Jan- 30 September 2024. The Division actively participated in ten (10) IORA related meetings held in person/virtually. Sri Lanka under its Chairmanship of IORA celebrated the IORA Day under the theme "Ensuring a Sustainable Indian Ocean for Future Generations" jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education and the Sri Lanka Navy on 10 March 2024. Fifth Meeting of the IORA Functional Bodies' Chairs and the Coordinating Countries (FBC-CC) was held virtually on 23rd April 2024.

Sri Lanka hosted and chaired the IORA Sub-Committee on Finance (SCF) virtually on 07th May 2024. Sri Lanka chaired the interview (in virtual mode) of candidates for the Post of the next Secretary General of IORA on 21st May 2024. IORA- Business Conclave 2024, under the theme "Sustaining Growth – Bridging Horizons" was hosted jointly by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 28-29 May 2024 in Colombo at Shangri la hotel. Government of Sri Lanka hosted and chaired the 26th IORA Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) Meeting in virtual mode from 30-31 May 2024. The Division performed the key role of making preparations and substantive matters for the above IORA meetings. Hosted and chaired the IORA Sub-Committee on Finance (SCF) (in virtual mode) on 28 October 2024.

1.2.3. Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC): Sri Lanka's representatives participated in BIMSTEC sectoral Meetings hosted by other member countries. In addition, Sri Lanka hosted BIMSTEC Meetings in 2024 and the Economic Affairs Division has performed the key role of making preparations and substantive matters for the meetings of Knowledge-sharing event on emerging infectious disease conditions and countries' best practices in the BIMSTEC region, tabletop exercise, and Asia Pacific Health Financing Forum held from 24 – 27 June 2024, Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert-Group on Science, Technology and

Innovation Cooperation was held from 25 – 26 July 2024 in Colombo, 2nd BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat held from 11th - 12th July 2024 in New Delhi attended by the State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka hosted the First Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Human Resource Development from 21st - 22nd August 2024 in virtual mode, Sri Lanka has agreed to host the Third Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Cultural Cooperation. Sri Lanka was in the process of establishing the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility Centre (TTF) in Sethsiripaya, Battaramulla and the Host Country Agreement had been drafted by Sri Lanka. Pending ratification of Ministry of Agriculture from Nepal, Secretary, and Foreign Affairs led the Sri Lanka delegation for the 24th Session of the BIMSTEC Senior Officials' Meeting held on 19th December 2024 virtually.

1.2.4. BRICS – The Minister of Foreign Affairs addressed the BRICS Ministerial Forum in Russia on 11th – 12th June 2024 in his capacity of IORA Chair held in Russia on 11th June 2024. Coordinated on the directives of the Cabinet of Ministers to obtain membership of BRICS and the New Development Bank.

1.2.5. Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) – The State Minister of Foreign Affairs participated at the 19th Ministerial Meeting held in Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran on 24 June 2024. The Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) was held on 18th September 2024 in virtually and finalized the Doha Declaration. The Third (3rd) Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit and the 2nd Business Forum was held on 2-3 October 2024 in Doha, State of Qatar and Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Qatar attended the above Meetings representing the President. The Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) was held on 23rd December 2024 virtually. Working Group Meetings on Connectivity, Science Technology and Innovation, Education and Human Resource Development and Food Energy Water Security were conducted in virtual mode during this year.

1.2.6. Colombo Plan – Sri Lanka handed over the chairmanship to Thailand at the 308th Session of the Colombo Plan Council held on 9th May 2024. The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Aviation delegation headed by Secretary/Ministry of Ports Aviation and Chairman of Sri Lanka Ports Authority undertook a smart port visit to USA & UAE under the Capacity Development Project of Colombo Plan from 10th - 22nd May 2024. Sri Lanka participated at the 48th Consultative Committee Meeting (CCM) of the Colombo Plan held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 29-31 May 2024 and at the 309th Session of the Colombo Plan Council convened under the Presidency of Thailand on 19th September 2024 in Colombo.

1.2.7. Technical Cooperation: The Economic Affairs Division verified and recommended 209 +3 short term entry visas, 62 +3 long term entry visas and 119 + 10 resident visas to employees of the International Organizations who are employed on specific assignments in Sri Lanka. Visas were facilitated for participants attending workshops and seminars in Sri Lanka organized by the Line Ministries including the Sustainable Development Council under the Ministry of Finance.

The Division facilitated 146+10 Procurement Notices received from Ministries, Departments and Institutions and advised Sri Lanka Missions overseas, to provide adequate publicity for the notices and to update the website/social media of the Missions/Posts. 120 Visas were facilitated for those who needed assistance for Government Institutes, Entrepreneurs, etc. verifications of nine (09) International Companies through the Sri Lanka Missions Overseas were also facilitated.

2. Human Resource Development, Research and Training Division

The Human Resource Development, Research and Training (HRD, R & T) Division coordinates and facilitates matters related to career development of the officers who are working at the Ministry including the Sri Lanka Foreign Service (SLFS) officers. The Division also coordinates matters related to the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute (LKI) and the Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training Institute (BIDTI) as the focal point of the Ministry. The progress made by the Division in line with the scope of the Division, during the period under review is as follows:

- 2.1. Reports and Publications:** Published the Directory of Diplomatic, Consular & other Representation Abroad as of 2022/2023 in January 2024 and compiled the Directory of Diplomatic, Consular & other Representation Abroad- 2024 for publication.
- 2.2. Examinations:** Published gazette for First and Second Efficiency Bar Examinations and Foreign Language Test for the Officers of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service –2020 (2024) which was scheduled to be held in December 2024. Necessary formalities were fulfilled and obtained approval from Department of Examination to publish gazette notification for the Limited Competitive Examination for filling vacancies in the Home Based Management Service Officers Cadre in the Sri Lanka Missions / Posts abroad scheduled to be held in 2025.

Initial steps were taken to publish gazette notification for the Limited Competitive Examination for filling vacancies in the Home Based Personal Assistants' 'Posts in Sri Lanka Missions/Posts Abroad held in 2025. Steps were taken to get the approval from Public service Commission to publish the gazette notification for the Open Competitive examination for recruitment to Grade III of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service in 2025.

- 2.3. Trainings:** During the period under consideration; 48 foreign training programmes and 03 local training programmes for the SLFS officers in the Ministry were facilitated with a view to enhancing their knowledge, skills and capacity. Conducted Diplomatic Training Programme for the newly recruited nineteen (19) Sri Lanka Foreign Service officers from June – July 2024 and two (02) Orientation programmes for Heads of Missions (HOMs) in March and August 2024. Three (05) Orientation programmes were conducted at the Ministry for the qualified Management Service Officers Cadre (MSOs), Personal Assistants (PAs), Labour Officers, Drivers, and Office Employment Service Assistants who were appointed to serve in the Sri Lanka Missions / Posts abroad.

3. International Security Cooperation Division

- 3.1. LTTE-related matters:** The International Security Cooperation Division (ISC) provided the required inputs and coordinated with relevant Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad regarding the continued proscription of LTTE in the European Union. The Division prepared the biannual submissions to the EU which were submitted in 31

March 2024 and 04 October 2024, respectively and the EU announced the retention of the LTTE in February 2024. The Division submitted information to support the retention of the LTTE listing in Canada on 22 March 2024.

The Division coordinated meetings and prepared submissions with a view to countering the recognition of genocide by Canadian authorities and monitored activities related to the LTTE abroad on significant days and events to identify patterns and developments to be addressed.

3.2. Expanding Bilateral Defence Cooperation: The Division expedited the finalization of bilateral agreements/Memorandum of Understandings with the Philippines, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iraq.

- i. The MoU between Sri Lanka and the Philippines has already received Cabinet approval and is ready to be signed and the date and venue is yet to be confirmed.
- ii. The revision of the MoU between Sri Lanka and Indonesia negotiated and the Division has requested observations from the Indonesian side for amendments made by the Ministry of Defence, Sri Lanka.
- iii. MoU between Sri Lanka and Pakistan on combating International Terrorism to the High Commission of Pakistan in Colombo in order to obtain the concurrence of Pakistani authorities.
- iv. A draft MoU between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh on “Combatting International Terrorism and Transnational Crimes and Intelligence Sharing” was sent for observations to the Bangladeshi side and a response was awaited for finalization.
- v. The Division obtained the observations of the Ministry of Defence for the proposed MoU for Joint Cooperation in the Field of Combatting Terrorism between Sri Lanka and Iraq and was waiting for the observations of the legal Division of the Ministry.

3.3. Capacity Development of Local Defence, Security, and Legal Agencies: The Division coordinated participation in capacity-building programs, offered by other governments and international organizations (e.g.: UNODC), for officials of the Armed Forces, Ministry of Defence etc.

In addition, the Division coordinated the organization of the first Thematic Working Group on Rehabilitation and Reintegration under the South Asian Network for Prevention of Violent Extremism (SAN-PVE) with UNODC intending to share good practices and knowledge to enhance comprehensive Rehabilitation and Reintegration strategies through multidisciplinary collaboration.

3.4. Support Preventing / Countering Violent Extremism Efforts: The Division continued with support strengthening cooperation between the relevant agencies in countering and preventing violent extremism.

The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF- a global fund dedicated to preventing violent extremism) under its Accelerated Funding Mechanism for Sri Lanka identifies projects and consolidates funding under the UNODC SAN-PVE

network. This Division coordinated the work between the GCERF and other Sri Lankan stakeholders.

As a member of the South Asian Network for Prevention of Violent Extremism (SAN-PVE), the Division submitted two Notes to the Cabinet on SAN-PVE to formalize Sri Lanka's engagement with the SAN-PVE.

The Division is working closely with the Ministry of Defence and the Malaysian authorities to initiate engagement with the Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counter Terrorism (SEARCCT). These efforts aim to foster collaboration and exchange best practices in combatting terrorism and violent extremism, laying the groundwork for deeper cooperation in the future.

3.5. Countering Terror Financing: The Division represented the Foreign Ministry in the Officials' Committee convened by the Chief of National Intelligence to review the Designated List of Persons and Entities under UN Regulation No.1 of 2012 to promulgate UNSCR 1373.

3.6. Support other aspects of addressing threats to national security/image: The Division coordinated with the relevant political Divisions and Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad to combat the false propaganda on Sri Lanka through monitoring statements, events, social media, and political activity by pro-LTTE elements and providing recommendations and input for countermeasures.

3.7. Participation in Meetings/Conferences: This Division coordinated, the official visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Munich Security Conference in Germany, from 16-18 February 2024. The Division participated in the "Seminar on the EU Counterterrorism and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Ecosystem and Priorities of Practice" from 23-25 January 2024 in Brussels organized by the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) /International Center for Counter Terrorism (ICCT) along with two officials from the Ministry of Defence. The visit of "UNOCT-UNCCT Regional Workshop on CBRN Exercise Programme" held from 9 - 12 July 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand, for which three officials of Ministry of Defence participated.

4. Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change Division

The Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change Division is responsible for promoting, coordinating, and ensuring coherence in Sri Lanka's international engagements related to ocean affairs, environment, and climate change, while providing foreign policy insights to relevant government ministries and agencies.

Additionally, the Division works to strengthen Sri Lanka's role in international, regional, and sub-regional organizations in these areas, positioning the country as a bridge builder to advance both organizational objectives and Sri Lanka's national interests.

4.1. Political Diplomacy: This Division facilitated the finalization of a five-year partnership aimed at enhancing cooperation through the Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCP). On 17th May 2024, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Sri Lanka and United Kingdom under the Blue Planet Fund (BPF) focusing on

marine pollution, sustainable seafood, and marine biodiversity and also emphasizing on capacity building, and technical support. This Division continued to advance the activities under the partnership of Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP).

This Division expedited actions to finalize the MoU on Bilateral Arrangements between the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office and the Sri Lanka National Hydrographic Office and the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers for signature was obtained by Ministry of Defence.

Further, the Division continued to reach out to other countries to obtain assistance to enhance the operations and institutionalize connectivity between the SLNHO and other foreign counterpart agencies.

- 4.2. Multilateral Diplomacy:** At the 6th United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in Nairobi, Kenya (February 19–23, 2024), a draft resolution jointly submitted by Sri Lanka and the European Union on "Effective and Inclusive Solutions for Strengthening Water Policies" was adopted and also contributed to the drafting of the submission of a new resolution to the 15th Conference of Parties (COP) of RAMSAR convention to be held in Zimbabwe, in July 2025 titled 'Rights of Nature in Wetlands' and planned to lobby Member States to garner support for adoption.

Coordination with the relevant line ministries as a Champion country at the Commonwealth Mangrove Ecosystem Livelihood Action Group (MELAG) of the Commonwealth and Sri Lanka was received an accolade as a United Nations World Restoration Flagship, highlighting it as one of the best examples of large-scale, long-term ecosystem restoration globally at the 6th United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), held from February 26 to March 1, 2024. Further under MELAG, funding was approved for Sri Lanka in 2024 for two projects on Blue carbon and Mapping technology for seagrass – mangroves under the Commonwealth Blue Charter Project Incubator.

Ocean Affairs Division of the Foreign Affairs and the Ocean University finalized the validation of the SMART IORA Center of Excellence on Ocean Science and Environment, aiming to launch it virtually before the IORA Council of Ministers meeting scheduled for February 2025. The Division also initiated discussions to host the annual IORA Blue Carbon Think Tank Symposium in Sri Lanka in September 2025, with full sponsorship provided.

The establishment of a National Maritime Task Force to thwart the issues impacting Sri Lanka in the International Maritime Organization (IMO), such as the proposal for a new traffic separation scheme south of Sri Lanka was facilitated. This effort was strengthened coordination between local agencies, the Sri Lanka Mission in London, and the IMO. Additionally, the Division is advancing a proposal to establish a South Asia Regional Office for the IMO in Sri Lanka, to enhance cooperation with the IMO. Establishment of a Regional Office of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) Sri Lanka was coordinated by the Division and the Host Country Agreement in this regard is now in final stages at the Ministry of Environment.

Progress was achieved on two key Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) related initiatives: finalized Sri Lanka's submission to the CITES Secretariat regarding the Malagasy Rosewood stockpile

seized in 2014 and coordinating national efforts to shape Sri Lanka's position on proposals at COP20 of CITES concerning the conservation status of sharks, Mobula rays, and related species. Stakeholders were sensitized and aligned to prepare Sri Lanka's overall stance on these critical issues, which also align with other related Conventions such as Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

The Division actively involved in global climate initiatives, including the GBFA for blended climate finance and the Paris Pact for People and the Planet (4P), with coordinating negotiations and collaboration among national stakeholders to ensure effective participation.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, organized the 2nd World Seagrass Day event on March 1, 2024, in Negombo, with participation from academia, experts, and diplomats was organized. Additionally, in partnership with the Australian High Commission in Colombo, the Division organized a symposium with the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources & Security (ANCORS) at the University of Wollongong from 1-14 March 2024, focusing on maritime regulation, enforcement, and governance issues.

High-level visits and actively facilitated and involved in formulating Sri Lanka's positions on environmental treaties from a Foreign Policy perspective; such as : the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka to the Seventh Indian Ocean Conference, Perth, Australia (9-10 February 2024), The President to the World Water Forum, Bali, Indonesia (18-25 May 2024), Coordinated the State Minister of Urban Development and Chairman of Marine Environment Protection Authority's attendance at the Commonwealth Ocean Ministers Meeting (COMM) in Cyprus (17-19 April 2024), contributing to the draft Ocean Declaration for the Commonwealth Heads of State Meeting in Apia, Samoa (21-25 October 2024), Participated COP 16 of the Convention on Biodiversity in Cali, Colombia (October 2024), COP 29 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Baku, Azerbaijan (November 2024), COP 16 of the UN Convention for Combating Desertification in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (December 2024), and participated in the 5th Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee meeting on Plastic Pollution in Busan, Republic of Korea.

This Division organized a meeting to identify stakeholders for implementing the BBNJ agreement and the Cabinet approval was received for Sri Lanka to become a signatory with the ratification process to follow after signing. The Division also sought technical assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat for the implementation of BBNJ. Additionally The Division was formulating Sri Lanka's position and inputs for the Zero draft of the 2025 3rd UN Ocean Conference declaration, which will be adopted at the conference in June 2025 in Nice, France.

- 4.3. Science and Technological Diplomacy:** Memorandum of Understandings finalized; The Division initiated efforts to partner with the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA), with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development seeking Cabinet approval for the Membership Agreement. The Agreement for Cooperation on Climate Change between Sri Lanka and the Republic of Korea was finalized and a signing date from the Korean side was awaited after completing their domestic procedures.

5. Performance Review and Implementation Division and Emergency Response Unit

5.1. Performance Review and Implementation Division: The Performance Review and Implementation Division which was established in January 2023, has been mandated with functions of (i) Preparation of Ministry Action Plan, evaluating the implementation of the Ministry Action Plans and Reforms , (ii) Preparation of all annual & quarterly reports of the Ministry and obtaining reports from all Divisions and thereafter assisting the Secretary of Foreign Affairs in monitoring and evaluating the achievement of the targets identified (iii) Monitoring the status and the implementation of Memorandum of Understandings/Agreements signed with the foreign countries. (iv) Coordinating the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Consultative Committee meeting, COPA and other related audit and finance meetings (v) Handling the functions of the Emergency Response Unit. In addition, the Division is also mandated to prepare special quarterly progress reports on the Foreign Secretaries' Performance Plan under the Key Results Areas (KRAs) as well as quarterly progress reports related to the follow up on the throne speech by the President and submitted them to the Presidential Secretariat.

Accordingly, the progress made by the Division during the period under review is as follows:

5.1.1. Annual Action Plan of the Ministry: Prepared the Annual Action Plan-2024 of the Ministry and shared with the respective entities.

5.1.2. Annual Performance Report of the Ministry: Prepared the Annual Performance Report-2023 of the Ministry and submitted to the Parliament of Sri Lanka and other respective government entities.

5.1.3. Secretaries' Performance Agreement: Prepared the annual performance plan of the Key Results Areas (KRAs) for the Foreign Secretary's performance agreement with the Presidential Secretariat in coordination with the Divisions of the Ministry and the Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad and reported half yearly progress up to the to the Presidential Secretariat.

5.1.4. Implementation of the Agreements, MoUs and other instruments signed with the foreign countries: Formulated a digital platform to follow-up on the implementation of the agreements, MoUs and other instruments signed with the foreign countries, in coordination with the line Ministries/agencies, Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad and the Divisions of the Ministry.

5.2. Emergency Response Unit

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs established an Emergency Response Unit since January 2023 to handle all types of Emergency Responses Activities. Accordingly, this Unit cooperated with several government institutions like Presidential Secretariat, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Health, National Medicines Regulatory Authority (NMRA), Disaster Management Centre (Ministry of Defence) and other institutions like Sri Lanka Tea Board, Board of Investments and Sri Lankan Airlines,

Ceylon Shipping Corporation as well as Sri Lanka Missions abroad and Foreign Missions in Sri Lanka in such emergency operation activities.

This Unit coordinated a donation with the High Commission of Sri Lanka in London with The Library of Haverstock School, London, and a collection of academic and non-academic books to the Ministry of Education in Sri Lanka. Also, the Unit organizes and coordinates donations by the Government of Sri Lanka to other Foreign Countries during their major emergency situations / calamities.

Thousands (1000) kilo grams of Ceylon Tea to the people of Palestine in Gaza Strip at an event organized by the Emergency Response Unit of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Unit is also working on sending another 227 Kgs of Ceylon Tea as Humanitarian Aid in Support of affected people by Typhoon Yagi in Myanmar.to the victims of floods in Libya and to the victims of earthquake in Morocco.

6. Public Diplomacy Division

The Public Diplomacy (PD) Division carried out all media and public communication related activities of the Foreign Affairs section which includes those of the Minister, Deputy Ministers, Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism and Sri Lanka Missions and Posts abroad. These activities comprised of important meetings, events, briefings, policy decisions and positions of the Government of Sri Lanka with a foreign policy perspective.

The Public Diplomacy Division monitored important news items related to the Ministry/Sri Lanka on the local/foreign media and web news and keeps the Hon. Minister, Secretary and officials of the Ministry and all Missions/Posts informed. Daily updates of the news items that are detrimental to the image of the Ministry and Sri Lanka are brought to the attention of the Secretary and rebuttals were issued when deemed necessary. The Division responded to the all written and verbal media queries including on weekends and holidays.

- 6.1.** During the period under review, the Division organized the media briefings by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the outcome of the official visit of the Prime Minister of Thailand on 06 February 2024, Joint Press Briefing by Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and Iran on 20 February 2024, Joint media briefing by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and Japan on 04 April 2024, Media briefing by the State Minister of Foreign Affairs to brief on the positive outcomes of the "Temple to Temple" diplomatic initiative on 22 May 2024, Joint media briefing by the State Minister of Foreign Affairs and the H.E. the Ambassador of Russia to brief on the Sri Lankans being deployed in the Russian Ukraine conflict on 30 May 2024, Joint Media Briefing by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and Maldives on 05 June 2024, briefing by the then State Minister of Foreign Affairs to brief on the rescue of 20 Sri Lankans who were victims of human trafficking and stranded in Myanmar held on 16 August 2024, mMedia Briefing on the progress of the Ministry during last two years on 28 August 2024 at the PMD.
- 6.2.** The Division also coordinated the media aspects of the visits/events which were undertaken during the period under review,i.e. - Visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, The Princess Royal of the United Kingdom to Sri Lanka from 10 -13 January 2024, Official visit of the Prime Minister of Thailand from 03-04 February 2024, IORA Day 2024 on 10 March 2024 at the Galle Face Green, Official visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran from 19-21 February 2024, Official Visit of Minister of Foreign

Affairs of Japan on 04 April 2024, State visit of the President of Iran on 24 April 2024, Visit of Vietnamese journalists to Sri Lanka on 17 May 2024 to cover the National Vesak Day Festival, Official visit of the Hon. Minister of External Affairs of India on 20 June 2024, State visit of H.E. the President to India from 15-17 December 2024, The Division coordinated the media aspect of the commemorative event to mark the 75th anniversary of Geneva Conventions which was held on 14 August 2024 and Diplomatic Charity Bazaar held on 07 December 2024.

- 6.3.** An interactive session for 10 journalists from the Middle-Eastern region with Ministry officials on 29 August 2024 on Sri Lanka's foreign policy at the request of the Sri Lanka Press Institute was organized. Further, since Sri Lanka Missions abroad did not have access to issue visas through the agent module system, the Public Diplomacy Division coordinated the issuance of visas for several journalists of the following media organizations with the coordination of Department of Immigration and Emigration:

ARD German Radio, Ananda Vikatan Publishers, BBC, China Global Television Network, SBS Australia, Le Monde, The Economist, Associated Press, Les Echos, Swedish Broadcasting Corporation, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Duestsche Welle, New Generation Media, The Publishing PVT LTD, Aljazeera Media Network, Financial Times, New York Times, Agence-France Presse, Bloomberg, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Chinese Media Group, Collective News Room, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Globo Reporters, ITV London, Jiji Press, Kyoudo News, Mediacorp, New Generation Media Corporation, Japan Broadcasting Corporation, Nikkei Inc, Reuters, Radio Radicale, Sky News, Stringer News Agency, Taz.die.tageszeitung, The Week, TRT World, Wall Street Journal, Youmiuri Shinbun, NDTV India, Strait Times, The Print, National Public Radio (NPR)

- 6.4.** In addition to the above, 225 Ministry Media Releases, 675 Mission releases and 207 Notices were disseminated to local print, online and electronic media and Foreign Correspondents based in Colombo, engaged daily on social media platforms to further strengthen public relations through X -231 posts, Facebook - 197 posts, and Youtube - (03 videos), facilitated 104 media accreditations for foreign journalists visiting Sri Lanka and facilitated the work of 51 foreign film crews making documentaries in coordination with the National Film Corporation, The Division provided Sri Lanka Missions/Posts information on policy statements and daily updates on key development pertaining to Government of Sri Lanka institutions relating to trade, investment promotions, tourism promotion, and the evolving economic situation.

The Division also played an active role during the Independence Day commemorated in 2024 and also provided coverage for important meetings, cultural and religious events held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the period under review.

7. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Division

SAARC Division coordinates the activities conducted by the Secretariat of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), its Regional Centers (05), Specialized Bodies (04), Apex Bodies (06) and Recognized Bodies (18).

- 7.1. Enhancement of Cooperation between Sri Lanka and the Member States of SAARC through the Secretariat of SAARC:** The 59th Session of the Programming Committee of SAARC was held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 6-7 March 2024, after a lapse of 04 years. The Division participated in the meeting representing Sri Lanka. Introductory visit of the Secretary General of SAARC to Sri Lanka was arranged by the Division in collaboration with the Protocol Division of the Ministry from 10-14 June 2024. During the visit, H.E the SG/SAARC, Mr. Md. Golam Sarwar paid courtesy calls on the President, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Actg. Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Secretary General of SAARC also participated in a roundtable discussion at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute (LKI) and apprised the audience of the current developments and the future direction of the SAARC process. During the visit, the Secretary General, SAARC also participated in the Inaugural session of the 45th SAARCFINANCE Governor's meeting and undertook visits to the SAARC Culture Centre (SCC) and a SAARC Development Fund, a co-funded project in Kandy. Actg. Additional Secretary, SAARC participated the SAARC Charter Day held on 08 December 2024 in Colombo as the Chief Guest and delivered a statement on behalf of Sri Lanka.
- 7.2. SAARC Visas - Number of SAARC Visas issued under SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES):** As of 31 December 2024, on requests made by Members of Parliament/ government officials participating in SAARC related meetings, 52 letters were issued by the Division to the Department of Immigration and Emigration for the issuance of SAARC Visas (Ministers/Members of Parliament and dependents - 41 Other officials – 48). As per the guidance received from the SAARC Secretariat, action was promptly taken by this Division for the resumption of issuance of SAARC Business Visas w.e.f 01 April 2024 for local businessmen and industrialists, which was halted since 30 April 2020 and 04 letters were issued by the Division to the Department of Immigration & Emigration for the issuance of SAARC Visas.
- 7.3. Enhancement of Cooperation between Sri Lanka and the SAARC Regional Centers:** The Division was actively coordinating with the Ministry of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs and the SCC and participated in meetings to discuss with the relevant stakeholders regarding “The action on the construction of the SCC in Nawimana, Matara”. Discussions were in progress with the aim of finding an appropriate permanent venue for the SCC in Colombo. The Courtesy call on the Secretary, Foreign Affairs by the Director of SCC on 05 February 2024 was coordinated with the relevant line Ministries/agencies in obtaining concurrence/participation for meetings/trainings/workshops organized by the SAARC Regional Centers and participated in the events organized by the SCC in Colombo, facilitated the recruitment process of General Service Staff of the SCC and coordinated GoSL's participation at Governing Board (GB) Meetings of SAARC Regional Centers. Actg. DG/SA & SAARC participated in the 14th Meeting of the GB of the SCC which was held on 22-23 October 2024 in Colombo.
- 7.4. Enhancement of Cooperation between Sri Lanka and the SAARC Specialized Bodies:** This Division conveyed the concurrence of the Government of Sri Lanka for the appointment of Director General to the SARCO in coordination with the Legal Division of the Ministry. Mr. Choining Dorji from Bhutan assumed duties as the Director General of SARCO on 25 June 2024. The Division coordinated the payment of the annual share contribution of the GoSL for the SAARC Arbitration Council (SARCO) for the year 2024 with relevant line Ministries/agencies in obtaining

concurrence/participation for the meetings/trainings/workshops organized by the SAARC Specialized Bodies.

7.5. Enhancement of Cooperation between Sri Lanka and SAARC Apex and Recognized Bodies: Facilitated the visit of Secretary General of SAARC to Sri Lanka from 01-04 August 2024 to attend the South Asia Trade Fair and Business Forum, which was organized by the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka. During the visit, H.E the Secretary General of SAARC paid a courtesy call on the Secretary, Foreign Affairs on 02 August 2024.

7.6. Enhancement of Sri Lanka's engagement with SAARC through the studies/workshops etc. conducted by International Organizations: SAARC-ADB Final workshop on Regional Multimodal Transport Study (SRMTS) was held from 28-29 February 2024 in Kathmandu, Nepal. Director General, SAARC participated in the above workshop along with three other officials representing the Ministry of Transport and Highways and Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Aviation. The Foreign Affairs Section represented at the SAARC –ADB Consultation workshop on Climate Change held from 10-11 July 2024 in Thimphu, Bhutan. The meeting discussed best practices for regional and national actions for the effective implementation of the Thimphu Statement on Climate Change (TSCC) and the way forward including issues to be deliberated at the Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Expert Group on Climate Change (IGEGCC). The Division with the Ministry of Environment coordinated the Fifth Meeting of IGEG.CC held from 3-4 December 2024 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Ministry of Health was facilitated for its participation at the “Regional Dialogue on Adolescent Pregnancy” held from 11-12 July 2024 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The event was organized by the SAARC Secretariat in collaboration with the UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The 10th Meeting of the SAARC Sub-Group on Customs Cooperation, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, held on 1-2 October 2024, SAARC-ADB Consultative Workshop on the Contextualization of SDGs and Revisiting the SAARC Plan of Action on Poverty Alleviation" held in Kathmandu on 21-22 October 2024 and the 6th SAARC-ADB Special Meeting on Regional Economic Integration Study (Phase II)", held in Kathmandu on 24-25 October 2024.

7.7. Enhancement of Sri Lanka's engagement with SAARC Observers: The Division coordinated the participation of the Ministry of Power and Energy in the ROK-SAARC Partnership Seminar in July, 2024. The division in consultation with the Ministry of Education, conveyed the concurrence of the Government of Sri Lanka in implementing the programme named “Japan –East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youth (JENESYS)-2024”, to the SAARC Secretariat.

8. United Nations and Human Rights Division

Sri Lanka's Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York, Geneva, and the Embassies/Permanent Delegations accredited to the affiliated agencies of the UN in Vienna, Paris, Rome, Nairobi, Bangkok and in The Hague come under the purview of this Division in the context of Sri Lanka's multilateral relations :

8.1. 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), New York: The United Nations and Human Rights Division provided substantive inputs/guidance for Sri Lanka's participation at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Voting instructions were also provided following analysis of information available and in keeping with line of Government of Sri Lanka foreign policy priorities. During the High-Level Week of the UNGA from 22 – 30 September 2024, the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations addressed the 79th UNGA on 30 September 2024, and further engaged and delivered statements at High-Level forums, enhancing Sri Lanka's visibility and position in the multilateral fora. The High-Level forums in which Sri Lanka participated and delivered statements at Summit of the Future held in September 2024, High-Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing the Existential Threats Posed by Sea Level Rise in September 2024, High-level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance in September 2024 and the High-Level Meeting to Commemorate and Promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons in September 2024

8.1.1. Meetings held on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA in which Sri Lanka participated : 24th Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting (CFAMM) , NAM Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Third Annual Gathering of the Global Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) Compact, 11th Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of the CTBT, Second Group of Twenty (G20) Foreign Ministers Meeting, 36th Annual Meeting of Senior Officials of the Group of 77 & China, Global Development Initiative (GDI), Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), Side Event: 'Decoupling agri-food systems from routine antimicrobial use: the importance of animal health and welfare', 19th Ministerial Meeting of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), NAM Ministerial Committee on Palestine, Ministerial Meeting on "The Situation in Gaza and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution as the Path to Just and Comprehensive Peace", 48th Annual Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Group of 77 & China , UNAOC Group of Friends High Level Meeting and BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Meeting

8.1.2. Sri Lanka participated in the 79th Sessions of the UNGA, covering all six Committees of the UNGA including the First Committee, Seventy-ninth session, New York, 3 Oct to 08 November 2024, Second Committee, Seventy-ninth session, New York, 03 October to 27 November 2024, Third Committee, Seventy-ninth session, New York, 03 October to 22 November 2024, Fourth Committee, Seventy-ninth session, New York, 03 Oct to 20 November 2024, Fifth Committee, Seventy-ninth session, New York, 07 October to 10 December 2024, Sixth Committee, Seventy-ninth session, New York, 02 Oct to 22 November 2024.

8.2. Reconciliation and Human Rights: Sri Lanka participated at the 55th, 56th and 57th Sessions of the Human Rights Council (HRC) held in March, June and September 2024 respectively. Sri Lanka Missions overseas were continuously apprised of steps taken locally with regard to reconciliation and human rights in order for them to apprise their interlocutors on the progress being made in the country and seek support for local mechanisms to address consensus. At every Council session, the national statement of Sri Lanka rejected the HRC Resolution 51/1 on Sri Lanka. The Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee on Human Rights held its first meeting on 13 February 2024, following Cabinet approval. This Committee, comprising 21 government agencies, is envisaged as a standing national framework to ensure

efficient coordination and reporting on Sri Lanka's voluntary international commitments regarding human rights and reconciliation.

The UN and HR Division continued preparations for Sri Lanka's 9th Periodic Review under the CEDAW which is scheduled to take place on 13 February 2025. Meetings were held at the Ministry with the participation of relevant officials from the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs which is Sri Lanka's member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee.

8.3. Sustainable Development: The Division organized a one-day national event to showcase Sri Lanka's priorities towards the objectives of the Summit of the Future on 22 August 2024 at the Presidential Secretariat. The event featured four panel discussions corresponding to the proposed chapters of the Pact of the Future. The topics covered during the event included Sustainable Development and Climate Financing, Digital Divide and Global Digital Compact, Women, Youth and Future Generations and Promotion of Humanitarian Methods in Warfare.

8.4. Disarmament: The Division facilitated Sri Lanka's participation at major meetings, which enhanced Sri Lanka's visibility and position in the disarmament fora. Sri Lanka, together with Thailand, co-chaired the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) – Inter-sessional Meeting on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament for 2022-2024 in Hawaii from 29 April 2024 to 01 May 2024.

The Cabinet of Ministers, by the decision No. 23/0985/619/024 dated 05.06.2023, approved Sri Lanka hosting the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), On-Site Inspection (OSI) and Integrated Field Exercise (IFE) 2025, following Sri Lanka's selection to host the above by the CTBTO. Accordingly, the following visits/exercises were facilitated by this Division in cooperation with the CTBTO in 2024, in the lead up to/preparation for the IFE 2025. CTBTO delegation visited Sri Lanka for Technical-Operational Visit (TOV) from 14 to 23 February 2024. A delegation from Sri Lanka participated at the OSI Build-up Exercise (BUE24) from 29 June to 03 July 2024 in Hungary.

Sri Lanka further participated at significant meetings related to disarmament including the Fourth Review Conference (RevCon4) on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and on its International Tracing Instrument (ITI) for Asia was held from 23 -25 January 2024 in Kathmandu, Nepal with the participation of Sri Lanka. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka delivered an online video Statement at the High-Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament on 26 February 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland. The 2nd Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was held from 22 July 2024 to 02 August 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland. Sri Lanka was represented at the meeting by the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations where Sri Lanka delivered a statement reiterating its commitment to the NPT objectives and the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons and that Sri Lanka remain hopeful towards meaningful deliberations in the coming days. The 12th Meeting of States Parties (MSP) to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) was held from 10 – 13 September 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland. The Permanent Representative for the United Nations in Geneva represented Sri Lanka and made a

statement. Sri Lanka played the role of Vice Chair at the 12th Meeting of State Parties on the CCM, which was held from 10 to 13 September 2024. The 68th Regular Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was held from 16 - 20 September 2024, Vienna, Austria. Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the IAEA participated and made a statement at this Session.

Sri Lanka participated in the 29th Session of the Conference of State Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, held from 25 to 29 November 2024, in The Hague, The Netherlands. Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) made a statements at the Sessions including the 66th Session of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, Working Group A and informal/expert meetings held in Vienna, from 16 to 18 Oct 2024, Fifth Review Conference of the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, from 2 to 6 December 2024, and made three interventions. Sri Lanka was appointed as a member to the Victim Assistance Committee under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, 7th, 8th and 9th Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025, held in New York, respectively from 4-8 March 2024, 8-12 July 2024 and 2-6 December 2024 and Sri Lanka's representatives made interventions at the said Sessions.

- 8.5. Multilateral engagement in Science and Technology:** The Division coordinated Sri Lanka's engagement in the multilateral fora that promotes international cooperation in the Science - Technology and socio – economic spheres.
- 8.6. Multilateral engagement in Socio-Economic spheres:** Sri Lanka delegation participated at meetings of Eightieth Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) from 22 to 26 April 2024, at the United Nations Conference Center in Bangkok, Thailand, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) from 08-17 July 2024, New York and Policy Roundtable held on improving the response to people going missing along dangerous routes in Asia co-organized by IOM, UNHCR, RSO/ Bali Process and ICRC from 26-27 November 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Audrey Azoulay undertook a visit to Sri Lanka from 16 – 19 July 2024 at the invitation of the Government of Sri Lanka, in commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of Sri Lanka's membership in UNESCO. The Director-General Azoulay held meetings with high-level political dignitaries and the event included the launch of a Commemorative Publication. As a result of the visit, support from the UNESCO was sought in developing the World Heritage Site of the ancient city of Anuradhapura, organizing an expert conference to mobilize conservation, scientific support, training of experts and funding support for Anuradhapura, digital documentation (3D geo-mapping) of World Heritage Sites such as Anuradhapura and Sigiriya, and conservation of Sigiriya frescoes. The Ministry co-hosted the South Asia Sub-Regional Consultation on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) from 5-6 November 2024 in Colombo as a precursor to the 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the GCM to be held in February 2025 in Bangkok. The consultation served as a

platform for dialogue and deliberation among Governments and civil society from South Asian countries (including Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Pakistan) as well as multiple local stakeholders and UN agencies, which will be reported in an outcome document for the upcoming regional review in Bangkok. The Division coordinated the event in collaboration with IOM.

8.7. Candidatures: The Division continued to coordinate Sri Lanka's efforts towards forging meaningful partnerships within multilateral fora by supporting candidatures proposed by other States to various bodies in the UN and other International Organizations.

8.7.1. The election campaigns relating to the following three elections held in 2024, by guiding Sri Lanka's Missions abroad to lobby with their respective counterparts and engaging with Colombo-based foreign diplomatic Missions.

8.7.2. Through intense lobbying, Sri Lanka succeeded in getting elected to the UN bodies and International Organizations of UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (for the term 2025-2027): 07 June 2024, Sri Lanka obtained 182 votes, of the 189 member states present and voting, securing the 2nd highest vote count from the region, and the 7th highest number overall from the UNGA, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) (for the term 2025-2031): 20 November 2024.

8.7.3. Sri Lanka obtained 177 votes at the said election, securing the 2nd highest number of votes within the Asia Pacific Group, and 2nd highest overall among the thirty one members elected. Evaluation Body – 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) (for the term 2025-2028) - 07 December 2024.

8.7.4. Sri Lanka's candidate, Dr. B. D. Nandadeva was elected as an expert to the prestigious Evaluation Body of UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) at the 19th Session of the ICH Committee Meeting held in Asunción, Paraguay. Sri Lanka's candidate secured 16 votes out of the 23 member states present and voting. The Division has provided inputs on candidature details for 159 requests received from Territorial Divisions of the Ministry, relating to 262 countries in 2024, to be used for bilateral discussions, negotiations and meetings.

8.8. Credentials: No. of credentials issued during 1 January to 31 December 2024: 53

8.9. Visas: No. of visas facilitated during 1 January to 31 December 2024: 406

PROGRESS REVIEW OF THE DIVISIONS: TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS

9. Africa Affairs Division

- 9.1. Political Diplomacy:** In alignment with the Government of Sri Lanka's "Look Africa" policy, the Africa Affairs Division furnished comprehensive briefings to the President for his discussions with the leaders of South Africa, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Benin, and Uganda on the sidelines of the G77 and NAM summits. Additionally, detailed preparatory materials were supplied for his engagements with Ghanaian counterpart during the World Economic Forum Interactions and meetings with his counterparts in Algeria, Seychelles, Ghana, and Kenya on the sidelines of the G77 and NAM. Furthermore, to enhance the political relations, Division facilitated the MFA's meetings with Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana, High commissioners of Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Mauritius and Ambassador of Algeria.

The State Minister attended meetings with relevant Head of Missions based in Colombo and Hon. Justice Minister's participation in the Commonwealth Law Ministers' meeting in Tanzania. Mr. Ruwan Wijewardane's (Senior Advisor to the President on Climate Change) attendance at the UN's Sixth Session of the Environment Assembly in Nairobi, and the participation of Hon. State Ministers Pramitha Bandara and Seetha Arambepola in the Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking and Substance Abuse in the West Indian Ocean, which was held in Mauritius.

Director General of Africa Affairs met with High Commissioner of Seychelles, Ambassador of Libya, Ambassador of Egypt, Charge d' Affaires. ai of Madagascar, and Honorary Consul of Morocco to strengthen the political ties with those countries. The Division engaged with relevant stakeholders to expedite the appointments of Honorary Consuls in Gabon, South Africa, and Nigeria, as well as to secure an extension of the tenure of the Honorary Consul in Zambia, Mozambique and the Republic of Guinea. Additional Secretary, Africa Affairs, Middle East and East Asia and Director General, Africa Affairs chaired the meeting with Honorary Consuls of African region countries in Sri Lanka to strengthen Sri Lanka's relations with Africa region and to look into the collaboration opportunities in trade, investment, tourism and employment.

- 9.2. Economic Diplomacy:** Facilitated the visit of Foreign Minister to Egypt where the Minister had meetings with Egyptian Foreign Minister, Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade the Cairo Chamber of Commerce.
- 9.3. Defence and Security cooperation:** collaborated with the Seychelles' Defence Forces to coordinate the rescue operation of the Sri Lankan multi-day fishing trawler "Lorenzo Putha - 4," with its six crew members onboard, which had been seized by Somali pirates. The Division facilitated the enhancement of Defence and security cooperation through the Chief of Defense Staff's visit to Kenya and Rwanda, as well as the participation of the Sri Lankan Navy in the meeting of the Heads of Drugs and Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies within the Southern Route partnership. Also, Division assisted the visit of Chief of Defence forces of Seychelles to Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka Navy offers training courses to Sudan and Nigeria on payment basis to enhance the professional skills of naval personnel. The Division collaborated with

relevant authorities of the countries to disseminate the information. The Division also shared the information regarding the scholarship offered by the Kothalawala Defence University for two officials from the each country of Egypt, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia for the year 2025.

9.4. Cultural Diplomacy and People to People Relations: During the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Egypt, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Bandaranaike International Training and Diplomatic Institute (BIDTI) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Institute for Diplomatic Studies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt. As a part of strengthening bilateral relations, MoU on visa exemption for holders of Diplomatic, Official and Service Passports of Benin and Sri Lanka was signed. The Division facilitated the participation of Sri Lankan Boxing team in the Seychelles, Constitutional Day Boxing tournament.

9.5. Science and Technical Diplomacy: Division facilitated the meeting of the High Commissioner of Seychelles with pharmaceutical manufactures of Sri Lanka during her visit to Sri Lanka in February 2024, strengthening bilateral cooperation in the pharmaceutical manufacturing sector.

10. East Asia Division

10.1. Political Diplomacy: The Division coordinated the official visit of the Prime Minister to China to attend the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference in March 2024. During the visit, the Prime Minister held a Summit meeting with H.E. Xi Jinping, President of China and Premier Li Qiang. The Division also negotiated with the Chinese side the text of the China-Sri Lanka Joint Statement issued following the visit of the Prime Minister in March 2024. During this visit the Division coordinated signing of 09 MoUs in areas ranging from market access for Sri Lankan products, industrial cooperation, on Trade Promotion Cooperation, media cooperation and education digitalization.

Coordinated and facilitated the visits of Ms. Sun Haiyan, Vice Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee of China in November, the visit of H.E Qin Boyong, elected vice chairperson of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and the visit of Ms Zhang Dongmei, Vice President of All China Women's Federation in December. Key meetings were organized with H.E. the President, Hon Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism and Women's and Child Affairs Minister for the visiting delegations.

Several high-level visits from Japan in 2024, including the visits of Hon. Suzuki Shunichi, Minister of Finance, in January; and Hon. Norikazu Suzuki, State Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries in the month of February were facilitated. Further, the Division coordinated the visit of Hon. Kamikawa Yoko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan to Sri Lanka in May 2024. During the visit, meetings were held with the President, Prime Minister and with the Foreign Minister. A joint press briefing was also held by the two Foreign Ministers during the visit.

The Division facilitated the official visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Japan in July 2024. During the visit, bilateral meetings were held with Hon. Kamikawa Yoko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, covering a wide range of topics to enhance Sri

Lanka's engagement with Japan. Key meetings were also organized with the Justice Minister, Digital Transformation Minister, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Japan International Trainee and Skilled Worker Cooperation Organization (JITCO).

13th round of Diplomatic Consultations with the People's Republic of China was held on 17th June 2024 in Beijing under the co-chair by the then Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka and Hon. Sun Weidong, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of China. Coordinated the visit of the Hon. Gerry Brownlee, Speaker of New Zealand Parliament in July 2024. The delegation held meetings with the Prime Minister, Speaker and the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka.

Facilitated, in coordination with Sri Lanka Embassy in Seoul, the official visit of the Prime Minister and the Speaker to the Republic of Korea in April and March 2024 respectively. During the two visits, high-level bilateral meetings were held with the ROK Prime Minister, Speaker, Minister of Labour and Foreign Employment.

10.2.Economic Diplomacy: Promoted Sri Lankan products and tourism through business-to-business interactions, exhibitions, and virtual platforms by Sri Lankan Missions and Posts in accredited destinations Republic of Korea. Participated at the Seoul Friendship festival and Korea International Tourism Show with a view to promoting Sri Lanka's tourist attractions, rich cultural heritage, cuisine and handicrafts in the Republic of Korea. Organized 14 online B2B meetings to introduce Sri Lankan exports to the potential buyers in the Republic of Korea.

Sri Lanka Embassy in Beijing initiated several promotional activities for Ceylon Tea, including pairing Ceylon Tea with Chinese Biscuits. The Division coordinated with the Ministry of Agriculture to initiate the export of pineapples and will also proceed with the export of mangoes to New Zealand.

10.3.Defence and Security Cooperation: Coordinated the signature of Agreement between Sri Lanka and China for Provision of Military Assistance Gratis to Sri Lanka which provided for a grant of RMB 52 million to obtain military assistance from China. The Division also coordinated a subsequent Protocol to utilize a part of the said grant to repair a patrol vessel of the Sri Lanka Navy.

Facilitated and coordinated the participation of military personnel for training programmes and defence cooperation programmes in China. The Division coordinated with the Sri Lanka Navy to liaise their participation for the "Indo-Pacific Naval College Seminar" happening in Tokyo in 2025, the visit of the delegation and the gifting ceremony of the Beechcraft KA350 maritime surveillance aircraft to the Sri Lanka Air Force from the Australian government.

10.4.Consular Assistance and Migrant Employment Welfare: Consular assistance was successfully rendered by Sri Lanka Missions/Posts to repatriate Sri Lankans, illegal migrants, deportees and facilitated extension of visa and resolved various grievances faced by Sri Lankans, especially medical students who were expecting to resume their studies in China, handled death cases, resolved cases related to labour and welfare of Sri Lankans residing in Australia, China, Japan, RoK and other accredited destinations, looked after the welfare and other needs of Sri Lankans who are currently in jails and the detention camps.

The Division continuously engaged with relevant South Korean authorities to increase the current re-entry limit of EPS migrant workers as well as to upgrade the existing EPS quota for Sri Lanka. Furthermore, following the implementation of martial law in the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka Embassy in Seoul was closely monitoring the welfare of the Sri Lankan diaspora in the Republic of Korea.

10.5.Cultural Diplomacy and People-to-People Relations: Coordinated the exchange of letters regarding the Project of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance (Rice, Fishing Nets and Housing Facilities) from China to Sri Lanka during the Prime Minister's visit to Beijing in March 2024. Coordinated the exchange of letters for the Japanese Grant Aid for Human Resource Development Scholarship Program 2024 during the Foreign Minister's visit to Japan in July. Additionally, the division facilitated the exchange of notes to promote economic and social development between Sri Lanka and Japan during the same visit.

Coordinated a donation of RMB 580,000 to purchase an ambulance for the Colombo North Center for Liver Diseases (CNCLD) from Guangdong Buddhist Community of China and a donation of LKR 6 million from Korean Mahavihara to the CNCLD. Coordinated with the Mission and relevant local authorities to facilitate the participation of the Sri Lankan delegation at EXPO 2025 in Osaka and humanitarian assistance from Japan to provide emergency relief to those affected by the floods. Coordinated a grant of USD 100,000 in cash and Emergency Humanitarian Materials worth 10 mill Yuan in October from China to assist in addressing the challenges caused by the floods in Sri Lanka.

10.6.Other activities: Coordinated a number of graduate, post graduate scholarships and training opportunities received from Australia, China, Japan and the Republic of Korea for the students and government officials of Sri Lanka. The Division assisted the Sri Lankan Embassy in Japan in making representations to Japanese authorities, leading to the addition of three new job categories for Sri Lankans under the Special Skilled Worker Program. In 2024, this number expanded to seven categories with the inclusion of the accommodation industry, building cleaning sector, and aviation industry.

11. Latin America and the Caribbean Division

There are 33 countries in the Latin America and Caribbean Region. Sri Lanka enjoys formal Diplomatic relations with 31 Countries and Sri Lanka's interests in those countries are looked after by four Sri Lanka Embassies established in Brasilia, Brazil (with concurrent accreditation to Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname and Uruguay), Havana, Cuba (with concurrent accreditation to Common Wealth of Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Venezuela), Washington DC (with concurrent accreditation to Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago), and Permanent Representation in New York (concurrently accredited to Bahamas). In order to look after their interests in Sri Lanka, Brazil and Cuba have established their Embassies in Colombo. Many other countries of the Latin America and Caribbean region look after their interests in Sri Lanka through their Missions based in New Delhi.

As of now, Diplomatic relations have been established with 11 countries out of 13 countries approved by the Cabinet Paper in 2012 for the establishment of DPL relations. There are 10 Honorary Consuls from the Latin America and Caribbean Region in Colombo. (Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay) and Sri Lanka has appointed 14 Honorary Consuls to the Region. (Bahamas, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Suriname).

During the period under review, the visit of expert from the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), the Division held meetings with the National Science Foundation, the Ministry of Agriculture and Plantation Industries, the Ministry of Investment Promotion and the Sugarcane Research Institute on 18 July, 2024 for the dairy sector development and sugarcane projects.

11.1.Economic Diplomacy:

11.1.1. Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brazil organized the first ever single country exhibition in Brazil/Latin America under the theme “Explore Sri Lanka” on 12 and 13 January 2024 with the Secretariat of International Relations of the Federal District of Brazil, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau and Sri Lanka Tea Board. Facilitated to finalize the MoU between Bogota Chamber of Commerce in Colombia and Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. Organized an awareness session with the Industry Development Board in Brazil in March 2024. Facilitated meetings/virtual meetings with Ms. Clara Savelli, International Affairs Coordinator of the Association of Brazilian Software Companies and SLASSCOM officials in June 2024, Mr. Christian Tadeu, President of the Association of Brazilian Information Technology Companies, and Mr. Marco Aurélio Kühner, First Vice President of the Federation of Foreign Trade Chambers (FCCE) of Rio de Janeiro on 12 June, 2024, Mr. Marcelo Abreu, Sales Manager of Rio de Janeiro for Emirates and Mr. Patrick Corrêa, President of Riotur on 13 June 2024. Participated at the International Food and Culture Exhibition on 01 June 2024, the ABAV Expo 2024 exhibition held from 26 to 28 September, 2024 and the Espacio Food and Service Exhibition in Santiago, Chile from 01 to 03 October 2024. The National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka and the Brazil-Asia Chamber of Commerce of Brazil signed a MoU digitally in August 2024 and facilitated having the first official meeting (online) on 03 September 2024. During the visit to Paraguay in March 2024 the Ambassador met Ms. Monica Costa, Chairman of Paraguayan Association of Travel and Tourism Companies (ASATUR) and other officials to seek the possibility of cooperation between two countries to promote tourism.

11.1.2. Embassy of Sri Lanka in Cuba introduced new Sri Lankan exporters to Cuba and accredited countries through the Cuban Chamber of Commerce in Havana. Mission held meetings with the Cuban Government authorities, Ministry of Tourism, Cuban Chamber of Commerce, Cuban travel agents and the Platinum Group of Companies. A Sri Lankan company that is interested in investing in the tourism sector in Cuba has submitted proposals and the Mission is pursuing the five business proposals submitted by the company to the Cuban authorities. The Mission conducted a tea promotional event, “Ceylon Tea Time,” in Havana on 23 July 2024 and facilitated a link between the Hidden Hills Tea Company and counterparts in El Salvador. The Ambassador called on the Minister of Foreign Trade and discussed potential trade opportunities between the two countries. The Mission established a link between the Sri Lanka Coconut Research Institute and the Honorary Consul in Jamaica. The Mission

participated at the Havana International Trade Fair held from 04 to 09 November 2024. Embassy of Sri Lanka in Washington DC continues to liaise with the Mexican side on early finalization of the pending bilateral Agreements on Exemption of Visa Requirements for holders of Diplomatic, Official and Service Passports and Mutual Administrative Assistance and Exchange of Information on Customs Matters.

11.2. Political Diplomacy: The Division coordinated the scholarships for medical studies in Cuba with the Ministry of Higher Education and the Cuban Embassy. A Sri Lankan student was selected for the scholarship in the year 2024. Prepared speaking notes and facilitated Courtesy calls by the Ambassador of Guatemala Omar Castaneda Solares, Ambassador of Colombia Victor Hugo Echeverri Jaramillo, Ambassador of Paraguay Fleming Duarte and Ambassador of Cuba Andres Marcelo Gonzalez Garrido on the Minister of Foreign Affairs on 04 February, 06 June, and 01 July 2024 respectively at the Foreign Ministry.

64 pending Bilateral Agreements/MoUs of the countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region were followed up. The Division facilitated and prepared speaking notes for the first courtesy call by the Ambassador of Cuba to Sri Lanka Andrés Marcelo González Garrido on 02 October 2024 on the newly elected President, His Excellency Anura Kumara Disanayaka and a courtesy call on the Hon. Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs of Sunil Kumara Gamage for H.E. the Ambassador of Cuba to Sri Lanka on 26 December 2024. Ambassador of Cuba Andres Marcelo Gonzalez Garrido paid a courtesy call on the Director General, Latin America and the Caribbean Division Mrs. Chaminda I. Colonne on 2 November, 2024.

The Division arranged a virtual courtesy call meeting between H.E. David Puig, Ambassador of Dominican Republic in New Delhi and Mrs. Chaminda I Colonne Director General of Latin America and the Caribbean Division on 06 November, 2024. The Division prepared speaking notes, county briefs and speeches for bilateral meetings, with high dignitaries, felicitation messages for national day celebrations and felicitation messages for newly elected leaders of the region. First courtesy call by the Ambassador of Cuba to Sri Lanka Andrés Marcelo González Garrido on 15 October 2024 on the newly appointed Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Hon Dr. Harini Amarasuriya.

Expanding diplomatic presence : appointment of four (04) Honorary Consuls (Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, and Trinidad & Tobago) and consideration of the extension of the period of seven (07) Honorary Consuls (Bahamas, Chile, Brazil (Saopaulo), Colombia, Dominican Republic, Panama, and Suriname)

The Ambassador of Sri Lanka in Brazil met with Mr. Eliseu Kessler, Vice Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Municipal Council of Rio de Janeiro and Mr. Lucas Padiha, Secretary of the Civil House of the Municipal Secretariat of the Civil House, on 13 June 2024 in Rio de Janeiro and discussed the establishment of sister city project between Colombo and Rio de Janeiro Municipal Councils. Initiated action to hold political consultations and Economic cooperation with Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Suriname and the draft Agreements/Memorandum and Understandings are being reviewed by the respective governments. The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Cuba hosted a Diplomatic Reception to mark the 76th anniversary of Independence of Sri Lanka at Hotel National on 05 February 2024. The Ambassador made a courtesy call on the President of Cuba, Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermudez on 24 July 2024 and extended greetings for the 65th anniversary of Sri Lanka-Cuba bilateral relations. Mission

conducted an event to commemorate the 65th anniversary of Sri Lanka-Cuba bilateral relations on 07 August 2024 with high-level participation.

The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Washington DC shared positive developments in Sri Lanka, particularly in reconciliation and economic recovery, governance, etc., with the governments of Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago through their resident Missions in Washington DC and the respective Foreign Ministries. Cooperated closely with the Organization of American States Secretariat in Washington DC (where Sri Lanka is as an Observer State) and member states through their resident Missions. Information on useful events, statistics, good practices etc., received were regularly shared with the respective Government of Sri Lanka institutions.

11.3. Multilateral Diplomacy

- 11.3.1.** The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brazil requested support and constructive intervention of the governments of Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Paraguay for the Oral Update on Sri Lanka presented by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights at the 55th session of the UNHRC held on 04 March 2024 and the Interactive Dialogue at the 57th session held on 09 September 2024. The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Cuba and other accredited countries have ensured their support for Sri Lanka in the international forum during meetings with the Ambassador. Meetings were held with the Missions of accredited countries to seek assistance for Sri Lanka at the UNHRC sessions in May and September 2024.
- 11.3.2.** The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Washington DC: The Mission lobbied for the support of Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago following Sri Lanka's international initiatives and candidatures : Sri Lanka's resolution on Effective, Inclusive, and Sustainable Multilateral Action towards Climate Justice 6th Session of the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) in Nairobi, Kenya, took place from 26 February to 01 March, 2024, Sri Lanka's candidature to the ECOSOC for the term 2025-2027 at the elections held on 07 June 2024 in New York. Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations in New York: Ambassador/PRUN, continued to Chair the High-Level Meeting on South-South & Triangular Cooperation and participated in several meetings hosted by the UN Office for South- South Cooperation.
- 11.3.3.** Permanent Representative for the United Nations in New York participated at the Group of Twenty (G20) Foreign Minister's Meeting held on 25 September 2024 in New York. A group of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, namely, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ecuador, Haiti, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago Suriname, and Uruguay have supported Sri Lanka's candidature for UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the term 2025-2027 at the elections held on 07 June in New York. Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama and Peru have supported Sri Lanka's candidature for UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) for the term 2025-2031 at the elections held on 20 November, 2024. Dominican Republic extended support for the candidature of Sri Lanka on the Evaluation Body of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) for the term 2025-2028 at the election held on 07 December 2024.

11.4.Public Diplomacy: Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brazil facilitated the visit of a four-member TV crew from “Globo Reporter,” a Brazilian TV show, to Sri Lanka from 3 to 30 September 2024 to film a documentary on Sri Lanka tourism and the first episode of the documentary was telecasted in December 2024. The Mission published an article on Sri Lanka in Portuguese in the monthly publication of International Relations of the Federal District of Brazil. Also participated in the media campaign of the Government of District Federal (GDF) called “Minuto Do Embaixador” to promote Sri Lanka tourism. Participated in the “Connect Sri Lanka” TV Program to create awareness on the Brazil Market opportunities among the Sri Lankan business community in Sri Lanka on 01 July 2024. Embassy of Sri Lanka in Cuba looked after the welfare of Sri Lankan medical students and the monthly allowance paid to the Sri Lankan students has been increased from USD 15.00 to USD 40 with effect from 01 July 2024 by the Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka.

11.5.Consular Assistance and Migrant Employment Welfare: The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brazil: The Mission updated data on Overseas Sri Lankans living (less than 200) in Brazil and other concurrently accredited countries. Embassy of Sri Lanka in Cuba extended Consular assistance to Sri Lankans living in Cuba and other accredited countries. The Mission liaised with Turkish Airlines in Havana and obtained approval for Sri Lankan employees travelling to the Cayman Islands and other Caribbean countries to board at the Istanbul Airport (mandatory requirement of Turkish Airlines for transit). Embassy of Sri Lanka in Washington DC continued to receive reports and information on illegal or suspicious transit of Sri Lankan nationals through Mexico. Mexico is a popular transit hub for illegal immigrants. Both sides are working closely to exchange timely information and reduce or halt such unlawful incidents.

11.6.Cultural Diplomacy and People to People Relations: An exhibition to showcase Sri Lanka was organized in Cuba as a renowned tourist destination to coincide with the 77th Independence Day, 2025, at the Cuban National Library.

11.7.Science and Technological Diplomacy: Embassy of Sri Lanka in Cuba met the Minister of Science, Technology and Environment and discussed strengthening bilateral relations, and the renewal of the MoU on Science and Technology which had expired in 2023. The Ambassador met the Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Industries Group of Cuba, BioCubaFarma, to establish a joint venture with Farma to produce medicines at low cost to Sri Lanka. Introduced the Colombo International Nautical and Engineering College, also known as the CINEC campus, to the Honduras and Panama Embassies in Havana to link up with relevant Merchant Marine Institutions.

11.8.Human Resources, Mission Management, and Overseas Assets Management Development: Considering the financial constraints of the country, the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brazil saved approximately USD 15000 per month, following the Ambassador’s decision to keep the posts of a DPL Officer (SLFS) and a Personal Assistant to the Ambassador vacant. Home based staff of the Mission has voluntarily registered with SECE in Brasilia, which provides 50% discount to certain laboratory tests. Embassy of Sri Lanka in Cuba installed a new generator at the Official Residence. Approval has been granted to purchase a generator for the Chancery building which would help increase the output of the staff given the prevailing frequent power cuts in Havana. The Official Residence was painted on the request of the Ambassador by the

landlord, PALCO, a government entity. PALCO has also agreed to refurbish and paint the Chancery building.

12. Middle East Division

12.1. Bilateral Relations: The Division facilitated high-level visits including the following, with the assistance of respective Sri Lankan Missions abroad, in order to further enhance the bilateral relations. Dr. Hossein Amir Abdollahian, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran undertook an official visit to Sri Lanka from 19-21 February 2024 on the invitation extended by former Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Sabry. During the visit the Minister paid courtesy calls on former President Ranil Wickremesinghe and former Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena and had official discussions with former Foreign Minister Ali Sabry at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the invitation of H.E. Ranil Wickremesinghe, former President of Sri Lanka, H.E. Ibrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran visited Sri Lanka to jointly declare open the Uma Oya Multipurpose Development Project on 24 April 2024.

Sri Lanka and Iran signed five (05) Agreements during the visit which are Agreement on Programme of Cultural, Scientific and Technical Cooperation Mass Media, Youth & Sports between Sri Lanka and Iran, MoU on Cooperation in the Film Industry between the National Film Cooperation of Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Cultural and Islamic Guidance of Iran, MoU between the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka and Iran Chamber of Cooperation, MoU on Cooperation between the National Library of Sri Lanka and the National Library & Archives of Iran, MoU on Cooperation in the field of Media and Tourism between Sri Lanka and Iran.

The former Minister of Agricultural and Plantation industries led a delegation to Iran to participate in the 6th Iran Expo Exhibition from 26 April to 01 May 2024. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs M.U.M. Ali Sabry led a high level delegation to Tehran to participate at the state funeral of late President Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Dr. Hossein Amirabdollahian and other senior Iranian officials, held in Tehran on 22 May 2024. Former Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs, Hon. Vidura Wickramanayaka, visited Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and signed the Haj agreement with Dr. Thowfiq Al-Rabiah, Minister of Haj and Umrah of Saudi Arabia, on 07 January 2024.

The former State Minister of Foreign Affairs led a delegation to Tehran to participate in the 19th meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the member states of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) preceded by the Senior Officials of the ACD member states. The former Speaker of Sri Lanka's parliament undertook a visit to Iran to participate in the inauguration ceremony of President, H.E. Masoud Pezeshkian, on 30 July 2024. The former Foreign Minister visited Saudi Arabia from 28 to 29 April to participate in the world Economic Forum's Special Meeting on Global Cooperation, Growth and Energy for Development, and held meeting with HH. Prince Faisal Bin Farhan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E Faisal Al Ibrahim, Minister of Planning and Economy, and H.E. Deemah Al Yahya, Secretary General of the Digital Cooperation Organization.

Hon. Nalin Fernando, former Minister of Trade, Commerce and Food Security of Sri Lanka visited Abu Dhabi to attend the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference which was held from 26-29 February 2024 in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The MoU on the Establishment of a Political Consultation Mechanism between Sri Lanka and Jordan was signed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Jordan on 10 July 2024 and it is proposed to have 01st round of Political consultations at the beginning of 2025. MoU in the field of Tourism Cooperation between Sri Lanka and Oman and MoU in the field of Agriculture between Sri Lanka and Oman were signed in Colombo, on 02 April and 10 June 2024, respectively.

Finalized MoUs on Bilateral Consultations between the two Foreign Ministries of Sri Lanka and Kuwait, Extradition Treaty with the United Arab Emirates, MoU on Mutual Legal Assistance between Sri Lanka and Saudi Arabia, and MoU on Transfer of Sentenced Persons between Sri Lanka and Saudi Arabia.

12.2.Migrant Labour Welfare, Overseas Sri Lankans: In collaboration with NAITA and TVEC, Sri Lanka Embassy in Tel Aviv organized NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) Level 3 and 4 written and practical exams in Israel from 23 July to 02 August 2024. Sri Lankan Missions in the Middle East Eastern Region have worked towards providing labour related services in a timely manner. Sri Lanka Missions in Beirut and Tel Aviv in particular, are working towards assisting Sri Lankans effected by the ongoing tensions in Middle East. Sri Lanka Embassy in Kuwait in collaboration with the Kuwaiti and Sri Lankan authorities facilitated the transfer of the first batch of 32 Sri Lankan sentenced prisoners from Kuwait on 25 November 2024, in line with the provisions of the agreement on transfer of sentenced persons, signed in 2007 between the two countries.

12.3.Cultural/Public Diplomacy: Sri Lanka Missions/Posts based in Middle East region organized New Year Celebration, Iftar, Vesak, Poson, Deepawali, and Christmas programmes, in association with Sri Lanka community organizations. Sri Lanka Embassy in Abu Dhabi finalized and presented the concept note and the design of a proposed Buddhist temple to the UAE side (H.H. Sheikh Mubarak Al Nahyan-Minister of Tolerance, and H.E. Noura Al Kaabi- State Minister of Foreign Affairs) and was in the process of establishing the working committee with the participation of Embassy representatives of other Buddhist countries and all other with Buddhist communities based in the UAE.

12.4.Defence and Security Cooperation : H.E. the Ambassador in Beirut visited Syria on 24 September 2024 to hold meetings with the Officials of the Foreign and Defence Ministries, upon the request of the Sri Lankan side. Combined Maritime Forces: Sri Lanka Embassy in Manama facilitated the appointment of Commander, Mr. Jayamuni Sanjaya Dinesh Silva, of Sri Lanka Navy to Combined Maritime Force, Bahrain, and also assisted the participation of Rear Admiral MHN Peiris of the Sri Lanka Navy, in the Combined Maritime Forces Maritime Security Conference (MSC 24) from 15 - 19 April 2024. Sri Lanka Embassy in Abu Dhabi with the Ministry of Defence of United Arab Emirates facilitated the Study Tour of Defence Service Command and Staff College of Sri Lanka to the UAE from 02-11 September 2024. Two delegations from the Sri Lanka Navy visited Israel for the bilateral Defence Consultations. The first delegation consisting of five senior officers of the Sri Lanka Navy participated in the Factory Acceptance Tests (FAT) and Factory Visit for the installation and commissioning of ten

stabilized electro-optical devices held in Israel from 11 - 15 November 2024. The second delegation consisting of three senior Sri Lanka Navy officials visited Israel for Factory Acceptance Tests [FAT] from 02 - 10 December 2024.

12.5.Human Resources, Mission Management, Overseas Assets Management Development: The appointment letter of an Honorary Consul for Sri Lanka in Haifa and Northern Israel was issued on 01 March 2024, to promote trade, investment, and tourism in Haifa and Northern Israel.

13.Europe and North America Division

13.1.Economic Diplomacy: Coordinated the Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS), the new UK GSP scheme. Following, the DCTS Regional Symposium held in Colombo from July 22-23, 2024, organized by the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office of the United Kingdom, Sri Lanka raised concerns about the Rules of Origin Criterion in DCTS. In response to these challenges, the Ministry has initiated a request for DCTS inter-regional cumulation with the Republic of Indonesia specifically for the apparel sector. This process is now in its final stages, with the proposal been forwarded to the Indonesian side for signature.

The GSP Plus Monitoring Mission to Sri Lanka, possibly in the second quarter of 2025. Raised awareness of the requirements and importance of the newly implemented EU Regulation on Deforestation (EUDR) for a sustainable future of the e country's rubber exports. In this respect, the Ministry organised a virtual information session with the EU on 18th March 2024.

The Division also Monitored the GTEX –II initiative, launched in July 2024, focusing on empowering selected Small Medium Enterprises in the textile industry to facilitate Sri Lanka exporters to upgrade their productions, suiting the growing market of sustainability and ethical production/Coordinated the Handover Ceremony of the Safe Labor Migration Program, funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation for 14 years in Sri Lanka ensuring protection and empowerment of Sri Lankan migrant workers in November 2024.

Further Initial discussion was held to convene a stakeholder meeting to discuss a potential pilot project on recruiting Sri Lankans for identified job vacancies in Germany. Initially, an internal stakeholder meeting will be held to develop a project proposal to be submitted to the German stakeholders.

13.2.Agreements: Successfully Coordinated meetings to operationalize the Healthcare MoUs with the United Kingdom for the employment of Sri Lankan nurses. Initiated discussions to operationalize the Joint Declaration signed in 2017 on Fair Recruitment of Personnel for Training as Geriatric Nurses from Sri Lanka to Germany. Discussions to conclude G2G Agreement with Poland in the construction sector for employment, Memorandum of Understanding with Romania for cooperation in the field of labour, Two MoUs with Italy on Migration and Mobility Partnership and for the Mutual Recognition of Driving Licenses/MoU with the United Kingdom for the Mutual Recognition of Driving License, Intergovernmental Agreement to relocate the Agence

Française de Développement (French Development Agency) regional headquarters in South Asia from India to Sri Lanka were coordinated.

13.3. Technical Assistance: Coordinated technical assistance for the Inland Revenue Department in collaboration with His Majesty's Revenue and Customs Unit of the United Kingdom. The Foreign Affairs Section coordinated the opening of the German - Sri Lanka Friendship Hospital for Women in Galle on 27 March 2024, funded by the Federal Republic of Germany, Helmut Kohl Maternity Hospital Galle Foundation and the Government of Sri Lanka. Coordinated initial discussions for capacity building/technical assistance between the Ministry of Justice and National Integration and the Swiss International Center for Asset Recovery (ICAR) to recover illicit assets misappropriated through corruption and other financial crimes. Coordinated initial discussions between the present government and representatives of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to obtain broader assistance in spheres such as agriculture, digital transformation, women's empowerment and Sri Lankan diaspora engagement. Coordinated technical-level visits/ participation in training and capacity-building programmes by Sri Lankan authorities to France as a part of maritime cooperation.

Facilitated a technical-level visit funded by France by then Senior Additional Secretary and the CEO/ Climate Change Office, Dr Anil Jasinghe and then Advisor to the President on Environment, Climate and Green Finance Dr Ananda Mallawatantri to France in April 2024 to have discussions with key interlocutors on the French side on climate and green financing. The meetings resulted in French authorities' commitment to supporting Sri Lanka's climate and environmental initiatives. Sri Lanka was invited to partner with France in participating in the UN Ocean Conference 2025 and the One-Water Summit.

13.4. Political Diplomacy: Sri Lanka proactively engaged with countries in Europe and North America, creating a conducive environment for result-oriented interactions and further outreach. These engagements, including Foreign Ministry Consultations, high-level visits and the signing of MoUs, have facilitated mutual understanding and collaboration. This approach has facilitated in-depth discussions, strengthened partnerships, and delivered tangible benefits and educational and technical assistance to Sri Lanka.

13.5. Bilateral Consultations: During this period, the Division convened bilateral consultations with United Kingdom (2nd Strategic Dialogue), Estonia (Inaugural), Latvia (Inaugural), Switzerland (4th Round) and the United States (5th Round).

13.6. High-level visits: The participation of H.E. the President in the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) held in Davos, Switzerland 13-18 January 2024, during which he met with his counterpart from Switzerland, the Visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, the Princess Royal and Sir Tim Laurence on 10-13 January 2024 to mark the 75th Anniversary of bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom.

Visits of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Poland (from 18 to 21 July 2024 which marked a Foreign Ministerial visit to Poland after 30 years), Germany (from 16-18 February 2024 to attend the 60th edition of the Munich Security Conference (MSC), Romania (in the context of the opening of the Sri Lanka Embassy in Bucharest,

Romania on 16 July 2024), Belgium (in February 2024 to attend 'Third EU-Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum')

The visit of the Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Austria aligned with the 70th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations in April 2024. During the visit, bilateral discussions were held with the Austrian counterparts to further enhance cooperation between the two countries. The visit of the State Minister of Foreign Affairs to Türkiye to participate in the Third Edition of Antalya Diplomacy Forum (ADF) in March 2024.

The visits of various senior bureaucrats and dignitaries, notably U.S. Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, Ambassador Richard Verma; Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Department of State, Elizabeth Allen; Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Alexis Taylor; Assistant Secretary Bureau Of South And Central Asian Affairs, Donald Lu and CEO of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, Scott Nathen.

As a follow-up to the President's meetings with the French President, a technical-level visit was undertaken by the Chief of Staff of the President and National Security Advisor to France in January 2024 and had discussions with the French Presidential Advisor on Asia & Oceania and Global Affairs, and the Advisor on Climate / COP 28 at the Elysee Palace. Secretary General of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France Anne-Marie DESCÔTES (the equivalent of Foreign Secretary) undertook an official visit to Sri Lanka from 10-11 December 2024 to attend the inauguration of the Regional Centre for Maritime Studies at the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) on 11 December 2024. Coordinated visit by a delegation of the German Parliamentary Friendship Group for South Asia visited Sri Lanka in March 2024 and held meetings with the Hon. Speaker, the newly formed Sri Lanka-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Association, Businesses and civil society organizations. During this period, this Division facilitated 1287 short-duration visit visas of delegates from the region on official duties, of which 1032 were U.S. passport holders.

13.7.Agreements: Amongst the numerous Agreements that this Division facilitated the signing, the most important of are Agreement between Sri Lanka and France to establish a Regional Centre for Maritime Studies in Sri Lanka, which would be a hub for training and academic collaborations in the Indian Ocean region, in order to set the trajectory to elevate the relations with France as it is a member of IORA. MoU signed on the Ocean Country Partnership Programme under the Blue Planet Fund of the United Kingdom on 17 May 2024. MoU signed on to respond to the global threat of antimicrobial resistance through the UK Government's Fleming Fund programme in October 2024. SL-UK will work together to enhance the surveillance of antimicrobial resistance. MoU between the Sri Lanka Navy and the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration to detect and interdict illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material through technical cooperation. MOU between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance In Customs Matters.

13.8.Other - The Sri Lanka Embassy in Moscow has initiated action to establish Honorary Consulates in the Chuvash region, Buryatia region and Nizhny Novgorod in Russia. Facilitated the opening of a new Honorary Consulate of Malta in Colombo. Participated in the National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force meetings to finalize the GoSL

submission to the US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report 2024 and responses to the follow-up questions. Following extensive consultations with U.S. and Sri Lankan authorities (both the Ministry and the Mission in Washington D.C.) regarding the U.S. 2023 TIP Report, Sri Lanka's status remained unchanged at the 'Tier 2' level.

Coordinated with the Swiss Embassy in Colombo in implementing the TROIKA proposal (a joint initiative by Switzerland, Japan, South Africa), which is aimed at promoting reconciliation and unity in Sri Lanka, with a focus on truth-telling, accountability, power devolution and socio-economic development.

13.9. Multilateral Diplomacy

13.9.1. European Union: Coordinated and facilitated the convening of the EU – Sri Lanka Working Group on Trade and Economic Relations, Working Group on Development Cooperation and Working Group on Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights during the period. Facilitated Sri Lanka's active participation at the 26th Joint Commission, which was held with the EU in February 2024 in Brussels. Coordinated the arrival of several Election observers for the recently concluded Presidential Election and General Election, including the EU Election Observation Mission, EU Election Expert Mission, Commonwealth Election Observer Group (COG), and their reports have viewed the Sri Lankan electoral process in an extremely positive light.

13.9.2. Commonwealth: A delegation led by the Secretary/Foreign Affairs attended the Commonwealth Senior Officials Meeting and the Meeting of the Committee of the Whole held in London from 03-06 September 2024. An official-level delegation attended the Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting held in New York on 23 September 2024. The Ministry was involved in developing the CHOGM Communique and the Commonwealth Ocean Declaration which was presented at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Apia, Samoa in October 2024. An official-level delegation from Sri Lanka attended CHOGM. The Commonwealth appointed a Commonwealth National Climate Finance Adviser for Sri Lanka through the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) to help the country unlock climate financing.

13.10. Defense and Security Cooperation: In view of enhancing the capabilities of tri forces, the Mission in Washington D.C engaged closely with the US Department of Defence (DoD). Due to these engagements, U.S. Army has offered two training slots to the Sri Lanka Army at the U.S. Army Infantry School, Fort Moore, Georgia, in Maneuver Captain's Career Course (MCCC), annually. Sri Lanka will also be offered one additional slot at the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, California. The U.S. has granted the fourth U.S. Coast Guard Cutter to Sri Lanka and will be received next year. The U.S. has granted Sri Lanka Air Force a Beechcraft King Air 360 ER and the U.S. Coast Guard has commenced offering MK 75 weapon operation and maintenance training for the Sri Lanka Navy's officers and men.

The Mission in Moscow secured twelve training courses offered to the Sri Lankan Military by the Russian Ministry of Defence (MOD) at Military institutes for the training year 2023/2024. Coordinating the ongoing collaboration between Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom on Hydrography / visit of the UK Hydrographic Office in January 2025, to conduct a training programme for the Sri Lankan National

Hydrographic Office/Scheduling in signing the MoU on Hydrography between SL-UK in February 2025.

- 13.11. Public Diplomacy:** Various social media platforms have been used by Missions to communicate Government of Sri Lanka policy, investment, and tourism initiatives and updates to the relevant stakeholders in respective countries and accredited destinations. The constructive engagements by this Division and the relevant Missions have resulted in the continuance of the proscribed status of LTTE in the U.S., Canada and Europe.

Further, the Ministry and the Missions of Ottawa and Toronto liaised actively with the Canadian High Commission in Colombo and Global Affairs Canada to indicate our grave objection to the perpetuation of an outrageously false narrative based on malicious disinformation and fabrications for vote bank politics by the use of the term "genocide" by the Canadian Prime Minister in his statements on 18 May 2024 on Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day and on 23 July 2024 on the 41st Anniversary of Black July. The Ministry and Missions also indicated our grave objection to the action taken by the Brampton City Council, Ontario on 28 February 2024 to construct a monument purportedly commemorating a so-called "Tamil Genocide", also to perpetuate the outrageously false narrative based on malicious disinformation and fabrications for vote bank politics. The Ministry also closely coordinated with the Ministry of Defence regarding the Petition presented to the Canadian House of Commons by Shawn Chen MP calling on the Canadian Government to, amongst other things, take Sri Lanka to the International Court of Justice based on the so-called "genocide" allegation.

In response to GOSL's appeal, **the Mission in Washington D.C.** facilitated and successfully procured urgent in-kind medicinal donations from U.S. NGOs—from January to April 2024, USD 258,808.32 (LKR 77. Million) and delivered to the Ministry of Health.

- 13.12. Consular Assistance and Migrant Employment Welfare:** The respective Missions have given due prominence to extending effective consular services to the overseas Sri Lankan community. The Foreign Affairs Section and the Mission in Moscow met with the Russian Ambassador in Colombo and the concerned officials of the MOD of the Russian Federation several times to discuss issues encountered by Sri Lankan nationals who have joined the Russian Armed Forces on a contractual basis. A high-level delegation led by Hon. State MFA visited Russia from 26 to 27 June 2024 and had discussions with the Deputy Minister of Defence and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia regarding the plight of these Sri Lankans and to find remedies to issues, including, the payment of compensation for the deceased/injured and early release. Accordingly, the Mission in Moscow has facilitated the return of 94 Sri Lankans who were deployed in the Russian Armed Forces to Sri Lanka. Presently, the Ministry and the Mission in Moscow are expediting the process of coordinating the performance of the final rites of 23 Sri Lankans who had been killed in action while serving in the Russian army and the payment of their death compensation.

Similarly, the Ministry was coordinating matters relevant to POWs in Ukraine and the repatriation of Sri Lanka-origin detainees in Ukraine. Coordinated matters pertaining issues of working visas to Romania and Italy, including arranging a briefing session for

foreign employment agents together with the Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau and the Romanian Embassy in Colombo. The Sri Lanka Embassy in Ankara met with the Deputy Minister of Interior of Türkiye, Münir Karaloglu, in September and discussed matters of mutual collaborations as well as high rate of visa rejections and issues faced by Sri Lankans living in Türkiye (studying or working), when renewal of residence permits.

13.13. Cultural Diplomacy and People To People Relations: Coordinated the second phase of restitution of artefacts from the Netherlands. Under this phase, 06 artefacts are expected to be restituted. Upon request made by the Foreign Ministry, the French Embassy with the Alliance Française, Colombo, offered 08 scholarships for SLFS officers to study the French language. Classes will be begun in January 2025. The Mission in Moscow initiated the establishment of 02 Russian language centres opened by the Chuvash State Pedagogical University in the Helena Wijayawardhana Balika Vidyalaya and by the Ural State University of Economics in the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, respectively. The Mission in Washington D.C. played a key role in celebrating the Vesak at the White House with expanded participation. The Mission also facilitated the issuance of Proclamations designating 23 May 2024 as Vesak Festival Day and 04 February 2024 as Sri Lanka National Day by the US regional governments in Washington DC and Hawaii.

The Mission in Paris played a pivotal role in the historic adoption of Decision 219 EX/27, to commemorate the International Day of Vesak at UNESCO. The Mission also organized a cultural evening, titled "Harmony in Motion: Celebrating Vesak through Dance, Music, and Cultural Expression," on Vesak day at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

13.14. Science And Technological Diplomacy : Several initiatives through relevant Missions to enhance greater opportunities for relevant line ministries, universities and institutes in the fields of science and technology were taken. Accordingly, the SL Embassy in Washington D.C. facilitated a discussion between H.E. the President and Prof. Ricardo Hausmann, Harvard University in Davos, Switzerland, on 16 January 2024 and a discussion between the Sri Lanka Presidential Secretariat/Climate Team and the University of Georgia regarding the International Climate Change University. The Mission also facilitated potential STEM and other educational/research partnerships between U.S. universities and state/non-state Higher Education Institutions in Sri Lanka (Ministry of Agriculture, NSBM Green University, National Institute of Business Management and Nāgānanda International Institute for Buddhist).

Coordinated a virtual meeting between the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka and the Head of the Department of International Cooperation in Higher Education (OeAD) of Austria to explore opportunities in Austrian Universities for Sri Lankan students/academics and enhance cooperation between Sri Lanka and Austria in the field of higher education. This Division continued engagement with the EU during the period under review to deepen cooperation in the field of higher education, research and technical cooperation under the ERASMUS+ & Horizon Europe Framework and opportunities for Sri Lankan participation in the Jean Monnet Programme.

With the coordination of this Division, the Embassy in Moscow initiated the establishment of cooperation between 12 Sri Lankan and Russian Universities and

facilitated the signing of 03 MoUs between the Universities. The High Commission in Ottawa has continued to hold virtual and in-person meetings with Associate Vice-President and senior Sri Lankan professors of Universities in Canada to explore avenues for research collaboration in the areas of Agriculture, Public Health and Community Health. The Mission also launched the Canadian Network of Sri Lankan Academics (CANSLA) together with the Ministry of Higher Education to foster academic collaboration between Canada and Sri Lanka. A MoU on Cooperation in Education, Science, Culture, Media, Youth and Sports was signed with Romania in July 2024, to streamline greater opportunities for Sri Lankans.

14. South Asia Division

The South Asia Division and the Sri Lanka Missions in South Asian countries during the given period have promoted economic initiatives, fostered friendly relations, enhanced bilateral ties, and showcased Sri Lankan culture and interests. Some of the key highlights in this regard are as follows:

14.1. Economic Diplomacy: facilitated digitization of the Certificates of origin for goods exported under the Free Trade Agreement between Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Sri Lanka High Commission in Dhaka met with Mr. Noor Mahabubul Haq, Addl. Secretary and Head of the Foreign Trade Agreement Division of the Ministry of Commerce of Bangladesh on 03 January 2024 and facilitated a business promotion visit to Bangladesh by OREL IT Company, Sri Lanka by arranging meetings with several counterparts in Bangladesh. Discussion with Mr. Afsarul Arifeen, Secretary General, and other high-level officials of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) on 24 November 2024 regarding organizing a business promotional visit to Sri Lanka in 2025. Coordinated matters related to the proposed Bangladesh-Sri Lanka Preferential Trade Agreement (BSPTA) with the relevant authorities of the two countries. Held a meeting with the newly appointed Executive Chairman of the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) Ashik Chowdhury on 14 November 2024 at the BIDA office in Dhaka. Promising opportunities available for Bangladeshi companies to invest in Sri Lanka's pharmaceutical and logistics services sectors were presented BIDA and the possibility of organizing two-way investment promotional programmes were discussed.

Sri Lanka Embassy in Nepal: Organized a meeting with a tour operator from Sri Lanka Luxury Holidays Asia (PVT) LTD and 10 most reputed Nepal tour operators to promote tourism in Sri Lanka. Facilitated a meeting with SLIIT and members of Educational Association in Nepal to promote Sri Lanka as a destination for Higher Education. The Embassy Organized Awareness Session for International Gem and jewellery Show 2025 along with key business leaders, professionals from Nepal's Gem and Jewellery sector and members from the Nepal Chamber of Commerce. Sri Lanka High Commission in Islamabad had two meetings with the President and Board of members of the Federation Chamber of Commerce & Industry and discussed the area of trade opportunity between the two countries. Held a meeting with the Director General of the Pakistan Tourism Development Authority and the CEO of Pakistan Travel Mart to facilitate the visit of a delegation from Sri Lanka's tourism sector. The delegation will participate in the Tourism Exhibition and Roadshow organized by Pakistan Travel Mart, scheduled to take place from 31st January 2025 to 5th February 2024 in Karachi and Islamabad. The Acting High Commissioner had a meeting with the

Secretary, Ministry of Commerce of Pakistan to discuss the trade dispute between Pakistan and Sri Lanka and to strengthen the trade volume between both countries.

Sri Lanka High Commission in Malé met with the Minister of Tourism of Maldives, H.E. Ibrahim Faisal on 31 January 2024 and discussed matters on tourism promotion. The Mission also arranged the visit of Sri Lanka-Maldives Business Council delegation to Maldives from 12 – 16 May 2024. The Mission has researched on the possibility of the mechanism to facilitate transfer of Maldivian Rufia (MVR) to Sri Lanka and conversion into Sri Lankan Rupees (LKR) for the Sri Lankan workers in the Maldives. On 12 November 2024, Sri Lanka Business Council of the Maldives was launched. Sri Lanka High Commission in New Delhi engaged in 15 trade fairs, organized 50 business-to-business meetings, addressed 141 trade inquiries, and supported eight trade delegations. Additionally, the High Commission held 140 meetings with various business entities, trade chambers, and government officials and took part in two travel fairs and roadshows with SLTPB and responded to 51 travel queries. Collaborated with the High Commission, Sri Lankan Airlines launched of the Ramayana Travel Package at the High Commission on 23 November 2024.

Sri Lanka Deputy High Commission in Chennai facilitated a 6-days tour of Sri Lanka from 28th April to 4th May 2024 for 38 members of the Travel Agents Federation of India. Products of meat, sausages, ham burgers of M/s. John Keels Food Pvt. Ltd. were introduced to three food product importers and distributors. The Post facilitated SS Salem Buriyani, M/s. Subashi Reddy Vilas and M/s. Adayar Ananda Bavan investments in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka Consulate General in Mumbai organized Sri Lanka Tourism Roadshows and Networking Evening in Indore, Baroda, Surat and Mumbai together with Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, an Indo-Sri Lanka Convention, two Sri Lanka Food Festivals and a Sri Lankan wildlife photographic exhibition. Organized Sri Lanka's participation together with Industrial Development Board (IDB) at the World Trade Expo from 17th to 18th October at the World Trade Centre, Mumbai obtaining free stalls for Sri Lanka Pavilion and a 10-member trade delegation to Maritime Summit: Voyage Sri Lanka from the Southern Gujarat Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Surat (SGCCI). 06 meetings were held with potential event management companies, wedding planners, MICE promoters, film/commercial producers, companies in the wellness tourism sector to promote Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka Consulate General in Karachi in facilitation of FDI, organized a business delegation to Sri Lanka in collaboration with the Pakistan-Sri Lanka Business Forum (PSLBF) from 28th to 31st October 2024, comprised of 15 companies / 18 members. Karachi recently hosted an insightful online networking session, bringing together the Colombo Port City Economic Commission and the business community of Karachi.

14.2. Political Diplomacy:

14.2.1. High-level visits : The State visit of H.E. the President to India from 15 to 17 December 2024 during which India – Sri Lanka Joint Statement was issued as well as two Agreements/MoUs on Avoidance of Double Taxation, and Training and Capacity Building Programmes for Sri Lankan Civil Servant were exchanged. The visit of H.E. the former President to India from 09 to 10 June 2024 to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister of India. The visit of the Hon. Moosa Zameer, Foreign Minister of Maldives to Sri Lanka from 03-06 June 2024. The visits of the Hon. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India to Sri Lanka on 20 June 2024 and 04

October 2024. The visit of the Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, then State Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Hon. Shehan Semasinghe, then State Minister of Finance for the 9th edition of the Raisina Dialogue held in New Delhi from 20th – 23rd February 2024. The visit of the delegation led by then Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor on National Security to the President Mr. Sagala Ratnayake to New Delhi from 27-28 March 2024 to hold discussions on the proposed Connectivity Corridor between Sri Lanka and India.

14.2.2. Courtesy calls : H.E. the High Commissioner/Dhaka paid a courtesy call on H.E. Sheikh Hasina the then Prime Minister of Bangladesh on 8 January 2024 and the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh on 11 March 2024 and discussed the existing areas of bilateral cooperation and other matters of mutual interest. The High Commissioner paid a courtesy call on Mr. Md. Jashim Uddin, newly appointed Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh on 29 October 2024 and discussed the current level of Sri Lanka-Bangladesh multifaceted bilateral engagement.

H.E. the Ambassador in Kathmandu paid a courtesy call on newly appointed Foreign Minister, Hon. Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba and conveyed best wishes on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka. SLEMB/Nepal Ambassador had a courtesy call with the Foreign Secretary of Nepal.

SLHC/Islamabad had meetings with the Secretary of the National Heritage Cultural Ministry, senior level officials of the Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Ministry and the Senior officials of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, prior to the visit of the Hon. Vidura Wickramanayake, Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs, Sri Lanka who participated as a Chief Guest of the International Symposium on “From Gandara to the World: The Legacy of Gandara Buddhism” organized by the MoFA, Pakistan. SLDHC/Chennai conducted a number of initiatives in terms of resettled Sri Lankans in Tamilnadu, such as included issuance of all country passports and raising awareness, and collaborating with NGOS working in integration of refugees.

14.2.3. Other : Coordinated and facilitated a meeting between the Secretary/Foreign Affairs with her Indian counterpart, Foreign Secretary of India, Vikram Misri, on the sidelines of the Outreach/BRICS Plus Summit in Kazan, Russia during 22 – 23 October 2024 with regard to Sri Lanka’s decision to join the BRICS. SLHC/ND Coordinated the work related to the appointment of Honorary Consul in Bengaluru in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs.

Facilitated visits of 15 military aircraft 10 naval ships and 02 submarines from other South Asian countries and the training of 10 newly recruited Foreign Service officers and 13 other Government officers from parallel services in the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, New Delhi in August 2024.

Training for 2 newly recruited Foreign Service Officers for the 30th Junior Diplomatic Course, Foreign Service Academy, Islamabad, Pakistan were facilitated. H.E. the President’s virtual participation at the Voice of Global South Summit conducted by the Government of India in August 2024 and the release of Sri Lankan fishermen and vessels in India.

14.2.4. MoUs and Agreements: During the State visit of H.E. the President to India from 15 to 17 December 2024; two Agreements/MoUs on Avoidance of Double Taxation, and

Training and Capacity Building Programmes for Sri Lankan Civil Servants were exchanged.

14.2.5. Consultations: The South Asia Division in cooperation with Sri Lanka High Commission in Islamabad facilitated the Seventh round of Bilateral Political Consultations at Foreign Secretary level between Sri Lanka and Pakistan on 30 July 2024 in Islamabad.

14.2.6. Joint Working Group: Fisheries: In order to address the ongoing Fisheries issue, the Ministry facilitated 6th JWG which was held in Colombo on 29 October 2024. The Meeting was co-chaired by the Secretary, Department of Fisheries of India and Secretary, Ministry of Aquaculture, Lands, Livestock, Irrigation, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of Sri Lanka.

14.3. Cultural Diplomacy and People to People Relations: facilitated visa for cultural troupes from South Asian countries visiting Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka High Commission in Dhaka, in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Association in Bangladesh (SLAB) and Sri Lanka -Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SLBCCI) regularly facilitated organizing cultural and community related events promoting Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka Association in Bangladesh (SLAB) in collaboration with the SLHC/Dhaka organized a Sri Lankan Gala Night at the Sheraton Dhaka Hotel on 22 November 2024. Over 400 Sri Lankans, Bangladeshi business people, and well-wishers participated in the event.

Sri Lanka Embassy in Kathmandu celebrated the “Vesak” festival with the SL community and diplomats from Buddhist countries. Further, the Katina pinkam at the Sri Lanka Maha Vihara in Lumbini, Deepavali and Dshain festivals at chancery were celebrated. Chargé d' affaires participated the Bhakatapur Cultural festival 2024.

Sri Lanka High Commission in Islamabad, H.E. the High Commissioner, had a meeting with the Secretary, Ministry of National Heritage and Culture for a discussion to establish friendship Cultural Centers from Buddhist Countries under the initiation of the Hon. Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Sri Lanka High Commission in New Delhi participated in the International Bazaar organized by the Delhi Commonwealth Women's Association (DCWA) to promote Sri Lankan products and food. The High Commission coordinated with the National School of Drama (NSD) to explore the possibility of establishing contacts in the field of performing arts (theater) and facilitating an exchange of expertise program between the two countries. The National School of Drama invited Sri Lankan participants to take part in Bharat Rang Mahotsav 2025, one of the leading international theatre festivals in India, scheduled for February 2025.

The High Commission participated in the 8th edition of the India International Folk Festival, organized by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Ministry of External Affairs of India, on 27th November 2024. International cultural troupes from Sri Lanka, Colombia, Slovakia, and Iraq participated in the festival.

14.4.Science and Technological Diplomacy : H.E. the High Commissioner paid a courtesy call on Dr. Md. Abdus Shahid, the then Minister of Agriculture of Bangladesh at the Ministry of Agriculture in Dhaka on 10 March 2024. The discussions focused on sharing Bangladeshi best practices, technical expertise and new scientific initiatives to develop the agriculture sector in Sri Lanka particularly the rice production using high-yielding seed varieties.

H.E. the High Commissioner had a meeting with the Chairman of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan to strengthen the academic exchange programme between the two countries. The Mission had 06 meetings with the Project Director of HEC regarding various matters under the Allama Iqbal Scholarship Programme for 1000 Sri Lankan students. The High Commission in New Delhi facilitated the timely dissemination of various NAM S&T Centre courses to the focal point in Sri Lanka. Deputy High Commissioner in Chennai had a meeting with Dr. Nithya Venkatesan, Director, and International Relations at Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) on 5 July 2024 and discussed on a student exchange programme and scholarship opportunities that can be availed by Sri Lankan students.

Chargé d affaires of the SLEMB/Kathmandu participated in the PHEWA Dialogue in Pokra. The Phewa Dialogue series commenced recently, marking collaboration between Nepal and China and aims to encourage policies that promote regional prosperity and peace. Participants will discuss critical issues affecting South Asia, including industrial changes and emerging needs. The initiative reflects a commitment to enhance economic integration within the region.

14.5.Defence and Security Cooperation: Facilitated the signing of the founding documents of the Colombo Security Conclave on 30 August 2024, trainings of Sri Lankan military personnel in other South Asian countries, the visit of a delegation from the National Defence College of Pakistan in May 2024 and a delegation from the National Defence College in New Delhi in September 2024 to Sri Lanka.

SLHC/Dhaka in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence, Sri Lanka facilitated the participation of Bangladeshi Military officers in various military training courses conducted in Sri Lanka and the participation by Sri Lankan Military Officers in various military training courses held at the National Defence College and Defence Services Command and Staff College in Bangladesh. H.E. the Ambassador, in Kathmandu paid courtesy call on the Chief of Army Staff, Nepali Army to develop defence cooperation. SLHC/Islamabad facilitated a visit by four members delegation from Sri Lanka Air Force from 25- 29 Sep 2024 to finalise, conduct physical inspection on acquisition of FT7 (a pilot trainer fighter craft) which is planned to be gifted to Sri Lanka and facilitated a visit by Air Marshal RAUP Rajapaksa the Commander of the Sri Lanka Air Force for a five-day visit to Pakistan from 22 October 2024 to 26 October 2024.

SLHC/New Delhi facilitated high level visits of senior military personnel, military training and study tours. As part of high-level defence cooperation, the Director General of the Indian Coast Guard visited Sri Lanka in November, and the Commander of the Navy visited India during the second quarter. Both countries' National Security Advisers engaged in reciprocal visits to further bilateral defence dialogues. Additionally, Army-to-Army staff talks and the annual IMBL meeting were held in Sri Lanka. Four member SL Navy delegation headed by RAdm MDK Wijewardane attended Navy-to-Navy Staff Talks from 18 to 20 December 2024 in New Delhi.

Facilitated joint military exercises between Sri Lanka military and the military of other South Asian countries to enhance bilateral and multilateral military cooperation, the Sri Lanka Navy and Air Force participated in Exercises MILAN and Taranga Shakti in India. Simultaneously, a 106-member contingent from the Indian Army took part in Exercise Mitra Shakti in Sri Lanka. Additionally, Sri Lanka Navy ship SLNS Sayura visited port of Visakapatnam on 16 December 2024 for Sri Lankan India Naval Exercise) SLINEX 2024. Facilitated Defence Dialogues, Army to Army Talks, IMBL Meeting between Sri Lanka and South Asian countries. Coordinated with the Chennai Port authority and assisted SL Navy in transporting an ammunition shipment to Sri Lanka from Philippines.

15. South East Asia and Central Asia Division

One of the foremost foreign policy tenets of the Government of Sri Lanka is to expand cooperation with the Southeast and Central Asia regions. Consequently, concerted efforts were taken to deepen engagement with these two regions during the period under review i.e. 01 January 2024- 30 September 2024. Sri Lanka increased its engagement with ASEAN in order to forge closer political, economic and social ties with the ASEAN region. ASEAN has risen as a pivotal regional middle power shaping the geopolitical landscape of Southeast Asia. With a combined GDP of US \$ 3.8 trillion in 2023 ASEAN is positioned as the 5th largest economy in the world and has also become a hub of growth and development with increasing influence on the global stage.

The relationship between Sri Lanka and ASEAN member states both from a historical and a modern context is of critical importance. Sri Lanka's enduring connections with Southeast Asia stand as evidence of its strong regional ties, perhaps second only to its affiliations with India and the Maldives. Efforts have also been made during this period to forge closer ties with countries in the Central Asian region, given its growing importance in the world. Sri Lanka has enjoyed long standing relations with Central Asia dating back to the 3rd century BC, when it served as an important stop on the maritime Silk Route. Central Asia is one of the world's leading storehouses of energy, including oil, gas, and rare earth minerals.

15.1. Economic Diplomacy : During the period under review, as a result of the extensive work undertaken on deepening economic integration with Southeast Asia Sri Lanka – Thailand Free Trade Agreement was signed on 03 February 2024. On 14 March 2024, negotiations for the Sri Lanka-Indonesia Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) were formally launched during a virtual meeting held between the State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and the Vice Minister of Trade of Indonesia whilst discussions are ongoing between Malaysia and Sri Lanka on entering into a Free Trade Agreement. The first meeting of the Trade Negotiating Committee of Indonesia was held in April 2024, while the second round of discussions was held in Colombo in July 2024. A cabinet decision was taken to implement a free visa regime for 35 countries including Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia which has been extended until further notice. Thailand has also implemented a 60-day visa free regime for Sri Lankan passport holders from July 2024. The two countries are negotiating a visa free agreement for Ordinary passport holders for a 60 day stay period.

Furthermore, business to business linkages were facilitated with several visits by business delegations, chambers of commerce, and exporters taking place to the

Southeast Asia region. Continuous efforts were also made to introduce the investment potential of the country. Participation by Sri Lankan exporters in trade fairs in the region were facilitated. The Division is prioritising engagement with Central Asia due to its geopolitical importance regarding strategic geo-economic corridors, energy, investments, and tourism. In April 2024, the Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs led Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to enhance economic cooperation in exports, investment, tourism, and renewable energy. A virtual consultation with Turkmenistan was held at the Director General level in May 2024 and virtual meetings between the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan and the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB) and port authorities of both countries were held to advance aforementioned initiatives. Additionally, Honorary Consuls in the region are actively promoting Sri Lankan tea and other export products in Central Asia region.

15.1.1. Visits: Sri Lankan Embassy in Bangkok, facilitated the visit of former Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin to Sri Lanka from February 3-4, 2024, where he was the Guest of Honour at the 76th Independence Day celebrations. The visit resulted in the, signing of the landmark Thailand Free Trade Agreement (SLTFTA), the renewal of the Air Services Agreement and signing of MoU on cooperation in the Gems and Jewellery sector. Key sectors identified for cooperation included fisheries, renewable energy, and food processing. Following this, three Thai delegations visited Sri Lanka in April/May and August 2024 to explore opportunities in the fisheries and renewable energy sectors, while a Thai food processing company also conducted a visit. Additionally, a delegation from the Thai Neighbouring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency (NEDA) visited in April 2024 to discuss the possibility of establishing a Debt Management Office in Sri Lanka.

15.1.2. Introduction of Sri Lankan Products: SLEMB/Jakarta facilitated the introduction of Atire (Pvt) Ltd, a premium tyre producer, to the Indonesian market and coordinated with the EDB to promote Sri Lankan products and highlight investment opportunities in Indonesia's construction and energy sectors. In Manila, the Mission facilitated the visit of the Haycarb delegation to the Philippines in September 2024, during which an Agreement on Leasing of the Land was reached, with a follow-up visit planned for mid-October to finalise the agreement. Additionally, the SLEMB/Hanoi supported the participation of Astron Ltd., Morison Ltd., and Gamme Interpharm (Pvt) at the MediPharm Expo 2024 from August 1-3, 2024.

15.1.3. Port and Marine Investments and Developments: SLHC/Singapore has actively promoted port development and related investments by coordinating several key initiatives. From February 27-29, 2024, the High Commission facilitated the visit of the Director of Investment Promotion for Port City Colombo, arranging meetings with officials from Singapore Chambers of Commerce and potential investors. In March 2024, SLHC/Singapore supported Colombo Dockyard's participation in the Asia Pacific Maritime Exhibition, organising meetings with Singapore-based buyers to enhance investment opportunities. Additionally, on April 22, 2024, with a view to work together to promote the boating and yachting industries a MoU was signed with the Singapore Boating Industry Association (SBIA) and the Chamber of Marine Industries of Sri Lanka (CMISL).

15.1.4. Gems and Jewellery: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Sri Lanka's Gems and Jewellery Research and Training Institute and Thailand's Gems and Jewellery Institute in February 2024, to enhance collaboration between the two sectors. SLHC/Islamabad coordinated the visit of a delegation from the Kyrgyz Republic to participate at the Ratnapura International Gem Exhibition in June/July 2024. Additionally, SLEMB/Hanoi supported the participation of five Sri Lankan companies at the International Jewellery Vietnam 2024, while a delegation of eight from the Viet Nam Association of Gemstones (VAG) attended the Ratnapura International Gem & Jewellery Show 2024.

15.1.5. Air Service Agreements and Visa Facilitation: To attract more tourists to Sri Lanka, the Division and the Missions in Southeast and Central Asia have been focused on facilitating visa processes and establishing air service agreements. In February 2024, the Air Services Agreement between Thailand and Sri Lanka was renewed, allowing Thai Airways to resume daily flights to Sri Lanka starting March 31, 2024. Additionally, Air Astana, Kazakhstan's national carrier, resumed direct charter operations in December 2023, leading to an increase in tourist arrivals from Kazakhstan, which reached 8,450 by the end of April 2024. Furthermore, negotiations are currently underway for a reciprocal visa-free arrangement to facilitate tourist arrivals for normal passport holders from Kazakhstan and Thailand.

15.1.6. Agriculture and Food Security: The Division collaborates with Missions in the respective regions to strengthen bilateral economic ties in agriculture and food security. In April 2024, a delegation led by Dr. Abdul Jalil Abdul Karder, Assistant Chief Executive Officer of the Singapore Food Agency, visited Sri Lanka to evaluate local companies as approved sources of poultry products for Singapore. The delegation toured a rice processing mill, a fruit and vegetable processing centre, and a seafood export company, submitting samples from various rice processing mills for evaluation by potential clients. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam, Hon. Minh Hoan Le, and the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security in Malaysia, Hon. Mohamed bin Sabu visited Sri Lanka on 21 February 2024 to participate in the 37th Session of the FAO's Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific. On the sidelines of the Conference, a Work Plan for Agricultural Development Cooperation for 2024-2026 was signed between Vietnam and Sri Lanka.

15.1.7. Digital Economy: SLHC/Singapore facilitated the visit of a delegation led by the Chief Fintech Officer of the Monetary Authority of Singapore and Chairman of the Board of Elevandi to Sri Lanka to participate at the Digi Econ Global Investment Summit 2024 held on June 25, 2024. The visit aimed to explore potential collaboration on skill development, particularly in areas aligned with the digital economy. Additionally, SLEMB/Bangkok organised a seven-member delegation headed by Sanan Angubolkul, Chairman of the Thai Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade of Thailand, to visit Sri Lanka from June 23-25, 2024, to participate in the International Industry Expo 2024, which took place from June 19-23, and the DigiEcon Global Investment Summit.

15.1.8. Employment Opportunities: The Division and its Missions prioritised pursuing employment opportunities for Sri Lankans. As a result, SLHC/Singapore in collaboration with the Singapore Ministry of Health, initiated recruitment for approximately 420 Sri Lankan nurses into the Singaporean public healthcare system,

with 100 nurses arriving in March 15, 2024. Additionally, Singapore expressed interest in recruiting 250 Auxiliary Police Officers from Sri Lanka as a pilot project, with 25 officers already deployed and recruitment efforts ongoing. Furthermore, SLHC/Kuala Lumpur, in partnership with the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), is actively seeking job opportunities for Sri Lankan nationals in Malaysia's construction, manufacturing, plantations, and security sectors, addressing a labour shortage of around 500,000 to 750,000 workers in these fields. Both countries are also working to finalise a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding the recruitment, employment, and repatriation of workers.

15.2. Political Diplomacy: In line with the decision taken to augment ties with the Southeast Asia and Central Asia regions on a political front, several significant steps were taken during the period under review. The Division facilitated the opening of reciprocal diplomatic Missions in Astana, Kazakhstan, and Colombo in 2025 to strengthen ties with the region and with Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA). To further enhance political relations with Central Asia, the visit of Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, Secretary General of CICA, was arranged in February 2024, marking the first visit of a CICA Secretary General to Sri Lanka. Bilateral political consultations were also held with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in April 2024 and with Turkmenistan in May 2024.

15.2.1. High level Visits In collaboration with its Missions, organized several high-level visits in 2024 to enhance diplomatic relations. Notably, former President Wickremesinghe participated in the 10th World Water Forum in Indonesia in May, where he held discussions with President Joko Widodo and Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment of Indonesia on the sidelines of the World Water Forum. The discussions were centered on finalizing a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between Sri Lanka and Indonesia in the first quarter of 2025. The talks also covered empowering Hydro Diplomacy and establishing bilateral task force to coordinate and implement the Tropical Belt, Blue Economy, and Seaweed Industry, research collaboration on Mangrove Cultivation. Further Sri Lanka joined the Global Blended Finance Alliance (GBFA) by signing the Letter of Intent (LoI) with 09 other countries, marking a commitment to climate action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The two sides also discussed the establishment of a Maritime Dialogue between Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

In parallel, substantial progress was made in bilateral cooperation with Singapore. The visit of Singapore's Non-Resident High Commissioner to Sri Lanka in early 2024 and the first official visit of Hon. Ali Sabry, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, took place on July 7, 2024. During the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Singapore, discussions were held with Singaporean high-level officials, including H.E. Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, H E K Shanmugam, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law and Senior Minister H E Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore.

Additionally, through coordinated efforts with the SLEMB/Manila, Sri Lanka enhanced cooperation with the Philippines across various sectors in 2024. Significant activities included participation in the Asia and Pacific Food Security Forum and engagements that fostered women's leadership and disaster management. The first negotiations for a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) and the Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced

Persons (TTSP) marked a milestone in legal cooperation. These initiatives, alongside engagements on democratic governance, deepened the economic, political, and cultural partnership between Sri Lanka and the Philippines. Furthermore, a visit by the Director General of the Department of South Asia, Middle East, and African Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand to Sri Lanka in August 2024 highlighted ongoing diplomatic activities in the region.

- 15.2.2. Signing of MoUs/ Agreements:** Together with the Missions in Southeast and Central Asia took steps to initiate, finalise, and renew bilateral agreements across various sectors. Following MoUs/ Agreements were signed during the period of January to December 2024. Sri Lanka - Thailand Free Trade Agreement (SLTFTA) - Signed on 03 February 2024, Renewed the Air Services Agreement with Thailand- Signed on 03 February 2024, MoU on cooperation in the Gems and Jewellery sector between Sri Lanka and Thailand – Signed on 03 February 2024

Work Plan for Agricultural development Cooperation between two countries for the year 2024-2026 signed between the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam and the Ministry of Agriculture and Plantation in Sri Lanka. - Signed on 21 February 2024. The MoU between the Viet Nam Buddhist Sangha and the All-Island Buddhist Council was signed. Sri Lanka Embassy in Viet Nam facilitated this visit of Most Venerable Mugunuweala Anuruddha Thero to Viet Nam to sign the MOU from the Sri Lankan side. - Signed on 15 April 2024. A Letter of Intent as a founding member of the Global Blended Finance Alliance (GBFA), along with Indonesia, the UAE, Congo, Fiji, Luxembourg, Canada, and Kenya was signed by the former Minister of Water Supply and Estate Infrastructure Development, who also attended the 10th World Water Forum. – Signed on 20 May 2024. The renewal of the MoU between the Board of Trade of Thailand and the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka which was signed in 1988. MOU with the Singapore Boating Industry Association (SBIA) and the Chamber of Marine Industries of Sri Lanka (CMISL) – Signed on 22 April 2024.

MoU on Bilateral Consultations signed on 15 April 2024 between Sri Lanka and Kyrgyzstan.

15.3. Multilateral Relations

- 15.3.1. ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF):** Sri Lanka significantly strengthened its engagement with the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) by taking a leading role in key areas such as disarmament, non-proliferation, disaster relief, and defence university cooperation. The Division facilitated Sri Lanka's co-chairing of the 22nd ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief, held virtually in collaboration with Vietnam and Bangladesh in April 2024. Additionally, Sri Lanka co-chaired the 15th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in Honolulu, USA, alongside Thailand and the United States. The State Minister of Foreign Affairs represented Sri Lanka at the 31st ARF in Vientiane, Laos, in July 2024, following the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) held in June 2024 in Laos. Sri Lanka will host the 26th ARF Heads of Defence Universities, Colleges and Institutes Meeting (HDUCIM) together with Cambodia in January 2025, coordinated by KDU.

15.3.2. Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA):

This Division played a key role in strengthening Sri Lanka's engagement with the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), a forum for promoting peace and stability in Asia. Since gaining full membership in 2018, Sri Lanka has actively participated in CICA discussions, with the Division facilitating involvement in the ongoing Special Working Group (SWG) and Senior Officials Committee (SOC) meetings. The Division also organised the visit of CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay in February 2024 and supported virtual participation in the CICA Ministerial Conference on Environment in August. Additionally, Sri Lanka nominated a member to the CICA Youth Council, with three youth volunteers participating in the Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders in October 2024. Sri Lanka was also represented by an expert on mine safety at the 2nd CICA International Conference on Mine Safety Risk Prevention and Control held in Beijing. Additionally, Sri Lanka proposed two activities i.e. a webinar on ensuring women's and gender rights, including sharing of legislative measures and the development of a common e-commerce marketing platform to promote and showcase the goods and services of CICA member countries to be included in the CICA catalogue of Confidence-Building Measures for 2025. This initiative will be carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Women, Child, and Youth Affairs and Sports of Sri Lanka.

15.3.3. Central Asia Forum: This Division, in collaboration with the think tank Geopolitical Cartographer, organised a Central Asia Forum on August 21, 2024, in Colombo to enhance Sri Lanka's engagement with Central Asia and emphasised its strategic and economic significance. The forum highlighted the region's critical role as a hub for global connectivity, showcasing Central Asia's rich natural resources and geopolitical dynamics as significant opportunities for Sri Lanka.

15.4.7th CICA Ministerial Council Meeting : The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, Vijitha Herath, addressed the 7th Ministerial Council Meeting of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) held virtually on 17th December 2024 highlighting Sri Lanka's growing engagement with CICA and commitment to strengthening its partnership as CICA transitions into a fully-fledged international organization. Minister Herath emphasised the important role that can be played by CICA in ensuring stability, prosperity, and economic development across Asia through collective efforts. The Minister also welcomed the development of a funding pipeline under CICA Project Review Committee, established to address key challenges in the region including in the areas of food security, climate financing, women's empowerment, and urbanization.

15.5. Consular Diplomacy and Migrant Labour Welfare: SLEMB/Manila coordinated with the Bureau of Immigration (BI) to facilitate the release of three Sri Lankans from a detention centre in the Philippines. Meanwhile, the SLEMB/Moscow extended consular assistance and arranged the repatriation of two Sri Lankans who had been detained and imprisoned in Uzbekistan. Additionally, SLHC/Singapore successfully secured employment opportunities for 406 Sri Lankan migrant workers in Singapore.

15.5.1. Rescue and Repatriation of Trafficked Sri Lankans in Myanmar: This Division in collaboration with the Missions in Thailand and Myanmar, and actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to rescue Sri Lankans trafficked to Myanmar to work in cybercrime

centres, particularly in the Myawaddy district. These initiatives included consultations with the Governments of Myanmar and Thailand, and initiating discussions between the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Ministers of both countries in January and April 2024. The President of Sri Lanka also reached out to Myanmar's Prime Minister for intervention. In June 2024, the State Minister of Foreign Affairs visited both countries to advocate for the release of the trapped Sri Lankans. The Ministry also facilitated a visit to Thailand and Myanmar by the Members of Parliament to pursue the release of the trafficked Sri Lankans. These efforts successfully facilitated the rescue and repatriation of 8 individuals in April 2024 and 20 more in September 2024. The Division continues to engage with Myanmar and Thailand to rescue the remaining 40 Sri Lankans. The issue was also addressed during the Fourth Meeting of the BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs in July 2024, attended by the Secretary of the Ministry of Defence of Sri Lanka. In addition, thirty-two (32) Sri Lankan nationals who were victims of human trafficking (out of the 45 reported to be in Myawaddy area in Myanmar) were rescued on 25 November 2024 following a successful, coordinated process. Out of the said 32 Sri Lankan nationals, 05 were returned to Sri Lanka on 06 December 2024 and 27 Sri Lankan nationals returned to Sri Lanka on 16 December 2024.

15.5.2. Assisting matters related to boat arrivals from Myanmar: A boat carrying 102 persons was detected by the Sri Lanka Navy in the North-Eastern coast of Sri Lanka on 19th December 2024 and were provided with humanitarian assistance by the Government of Sri Lanka. As per information provided by the group they have arrived from Myanmar and include 47 males, 30 females including a pregnant lady and 25 children. The division facilitated matters related to the boat arrivals with local authorities. At present following a court order by the Trinco Magistrate dated 23/12/2024, the 103 boat arrivals were detained at the Air Force Camp in Mulaitivu and currently immigration investigations and health screenings are being carried out. The division is also in touch with the Myanmar authorities on this matter.

15.6. Cultural Diplomacy: The Southeast and Central Asia Division, in collaboration with Southeast Asian Missions, facilitated the "Temple to Temple" program to strengthen connections between temples and religious communities in Sri Lanka and ASEAN countries, promoting mutual understanding and cultural and economic exchanges. In collaboration with SLHC/Singapore, this Division arranged the ceremony to launch the research publication *"Singapore and Sri Lanka at 50: Perspectives from Sri Lanka"* at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute on August 27, 2024, marking 50 years of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Singapore. Additionally, SLEMB/Hanoi, together with the Central Cultural Fund, also supported the construction of an outer wall around the Bodhi Tree in Bai Dinh Pagoda, featuring Sri Lankan and Vietnamese architectural styles, symbolising the close Buddhist cultural cooperation between Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

15.7. Defence and Security Cooperation: The Division coordinated and facilitated the participation of Chief of Defence Staff General Shavendra Silva and the Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy at the 21st IISS Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia's premier security summit, in Singapore in June 2024. The Sri Lanka Mission in Bangkok facilitated a study visit by a defence delegation, led by the Air Commodore, Chief Instructor – Air Wing of the Defence Service Command and Staff, to Thailand from 2-11 September 2024. Additionally, the Mission in Manila provided assistance to the Sri Lanka Navy

regarding the shipment of an ammunition consignment from the Philippines to Sri Lanka. Negotiations are currently underway to finalise the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence Cooperation between Sri Lanka and Thailand, while the Letter of Intent (LOI) on Defence Cooperation between Sri Lanka and Indonesia has been finalised and is ready for signature.

A delegation from Singapore's Immigration and Checkpoints Authority exploring technological upgrades for Sri Lanka's immigration system visited Sri Lanka to explore opportunities for collaboration in enhancing Sri Lanka's Immigration system through the integration of advance technology, with the goal of achieving standard similar to those of Singapore. In addition, the visit of H.E. K Shanmugam, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law of Singapore took place in August 2024, enhanced legal and security cooperation between the two countries.

15.8.Science and Technology: The Southeast and Central Asia Division, in collaboration with Sri Lanka's Missions in the regions, undertook work related to science and technology sectors. In this context, an Agreement on Educational Cooperation between Sri Lanka and Vietnam for the period 2024–2026 was formally signed on 20th August 2024.

PROGRESS REVIEW OF THE DIVISIONS: OPERATIONAL DIVISIONS

16. Consular Affairs Division

The Consular Affairs Division, along with its Regional Consular Offices (RCO) located in Jaffna, Matara, Kandy, Trincomalee and Kurunegala, operates in compliance with the Consular Functions Act No. 04 of 1981 and the subsequent amendment Act No. 18 of 2006. The Division provides services to Sri Lankan citizens residing both within the country and overseas, operating through Sri Lankan Diplomatic Missions and Posts abroad. Consular services for the public are organized into five key sections: Document Authentication, Repatriation, Compensation, Death (related to deaths occurring abroad), and Miscellaneous matters which addresses various consular matters.

16.1. Authentication of documents and digitization process

- 16.1.1.** The Consular Division and its Regional Consular Offices (RCO) generated a combined revenue of LKR 546,974,000.00 during the corresponding period by authenticating 459,246 documents for 221,803 applicants. Among these Regional Consular Offices, RCO Jaffna generated LKR. 31,882,800.00, through the authentication of 25,856 documents for 13,246 applicants. The RCO Matara collected LKR 28,339,200.00 through the authentication of 23,688 documents for 14,899 applicants. The RCO Kandy contributed LKR 32,432,400.00 through authenticating 27,203 documents for 17,097 applicants. The RCO Trincomalee has generated LKR 14,128,800.00 by authenticating 11,856 documents for 7,477 applicants. Furthermore, RCO 18,216 applicants.
- 16.1.2.** In partnership with the Department of Examinations, the Consular Affairs Division launched an online authentication system for GCE O/L and A/L certificates in August 2023. This system enables applicants to apply for certificate authentication online, eliminating the need to visit the Consular Division in Colombo in person. Between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024, a total of 46,520 GCE O/L and A/L certificates were authenticated online. This initiative represents a major step toward the digitization of document authentication services within the Consular Division. GCE O/L and A/L certificates constitute the bulk of daily authentications, accounting for around 30-40% of the total documents processed.
- 16.1.3.** As part of the ongoing effort to digitalize document authentication, the integration of the e-DAS and e-BDM (Registrar General's Department) databases was implemented on September 2, 2024. This digital integration allows applicants to apply for authentication of their birth, marriage, and death certificates entirely online, eliminating the need for in-person visits to the Division.
- 16.1.4.** Development in the e-DAS system was progressed with the introduction of Branch Modules, aimed at integrating key government document-issuing authorities into the e-DAS platform to digitalize the document authentication process. Under this integration projects databases and document issuing procedures of entities such as local universities, the Medical Council, Sri Lanka Police, the Department of Motor Traffic, the Department for Registration of Persons, the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, the British Council, the Sri Lanka Atomic Energy Board etc,

will be integrated with the e-DAS. Once integration with these key entities is completed, it is anticipated that over 80% of the documents authenticated by the Division daily will be processed online.

- 16.1.5.** The automation of the Division's document authentication process aimed to deliver an efficient and productive online service to the public. Since documents submitted for authentication are received directly from issuing authorities with minimal human involvement, the authenticity of online authenticated documents is ensured. Additionally, the online authentication system was expected to significantly reduce the current daily flow of over 1000 applicants visiting the Consular Division in Battaramulla and its five Regional Consular Offices.

16.2.Coordination of Deaths aboard: During the period under review, 690 deaths of Sri Lankan nationals abroad were reported. The Division facilitated the repatriation of the remains of 440 individuals, while 203 were buried, and 47 were cremated overseas with the consent of their Next of Kings. The Death Section processed 295 requests for Consular Death registrations from the Next of Kings of Sri Lankans who passed away abroad. Additionally, the personal belongings of 28 deceased Sri Lankans were handed over to their NOK in Sri Lanka during this period.

16.3.Coordination of Compensations aboard: During the period under review, the Compensation Section coordinated the receipt of approximately LKR. 382 million in compensation (Disbursed through Public Trustee LKR 382,035,944.31) blood money and various other entitlements for Sri Lankan citizens, in view of their demise, accident, injuries, retirement benefits, while they were overseas. This compensation was subsequently distributed among 121 families and victims in accordance with the established procedure.

Further, the Division received 363 (Death compensation 245 + Non death Compensation 118) fresh compensation requests during the corresponding period, and all of these requests have been directed to the respective Sri Lankan Missions abroad for processing

16.4.Repatriation Section: The Repatriation Section processed 1324 repatriation requests (286 involving jailed individuals, 911 regular cases and 127 involving individuals in cybercrime compounds in Myanmar) made by NOK, government authorities, and law enforcement entities. Repatriated 1788 Sri Lankans stranded abroad for various reasons. Regionally, 179 Sri Lankans were repatriated from the Middle East, 1,304 from Asian countries including 98 from Myanmar cybercrime compounds, 251 from Europe and Western countries, and 38 from Africa. Additionally, 3 individuals were repatriated from BIOT and 13 from Réunion Island during the same period. The Repatriation Section also managed 28 cases involving stranded fishing vessels and facilitated the repatriation of 91 crew members and 9 fishing vessels.

The Division contributed as a resource entity to awareness sessions aimed at strengthening the knowledge on awareness and response of human trafficking and safe migration organized by the SAFE foundation. The Division coordinated inputs from Sri Lankan Missions in abroad for the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) 2025 report.

16.5. Miscellaneous Section: The Miscellaneous Section of the Consular Affairs Division involved in processing and distribution of 760 original birth certificates to individuals born outside Sri Lanka. Additionally, it facilitated the issuance of 47 citizenship certificates and addressed 217 passport-related matters. This section also coordinated the acquisition of 75 foreign police clearance certificates for Sri Lankans residing abroad. Furthermore, 282 foreign degree certificates issued to government officials were verified through Sri Lankan Missions and Posts abroad, while 415 are currently being processed. The observations and recommendations were conveyed to conduct 22 Consular Mobile Services by Sri Lankan Missions and Posts abroad during the corresponding period.

The section coordinated with foreign missions based in Sri Lanka on various inquiries and investigations as required by Sri Lankan law enforcement authorities. Additionally, it worked with Sri Lankan Missions and Posts to locate nationals who had lost contact with their families in Sri Lanka. In collaboration with the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), the Division also addressed labor-related issues.

The Ministry has presented a proposal to the Department of Immigration and Emigration through the Ministry of Public Security to digitalize the passport application process at Sri Lankan Missions/Posts abroad. Initially, 29 Missions/Posts across 21 countries have been selected for implementation. The Japanese government, through the International Organization for Migration (IOM), is to fund this project by providing technical equipment such as PCs, scanners, and fingerprint machines, while the Department of Immigration and Emigration will design and supply the operating system.

The Consular Affairs Division participated in GLOCAL Fair 2024 held in Monaragala on February 17-18, 2024, organized by the Ministry of Labour & Foreign Employment. During the event, the Division provided visitors with information about its consular services, which include document authentication, addressing human trafficking issues, repatriation, and handling compensation-related matters.

The Division has coordinated to launch the issuing certified copies of birth, marriage and death certificates through the e-BMD data system of the Registrar General's Department at the selected Sri Lankan Missions/Posts abroad.

17. General Administration Division

The General Administration Division (GAD) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for administrative policy planning and implementation, operational and maintenance duties, and human resource management for officers of All-Island Services, Combined Services and Departmental Services, excluding the Sri Lanka Foreign Service. Additionally, GAD manages Cabinet Memoranda, responses to parliamentary questions and attends to Parliamentary Committees and Consultative Committees. Below is a summary of the key tasks performed by the division from January to December 2024:

17.1.Human Resource Management

- i. Secured approval from the Department of Management Services (DMS) to create a temporary cadre position for the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for an Additional Director General (Policy Planning).
- ii. Submitted amendments to the Scheme of Recruitment for the positions of Legal Advisor, Executive Assistant (Protocol) and Protocol Assistant to the Public Service Commission (PSC).
- iii. Approved the creation of a cadre for the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKIIRSS) and submitted the Scheme of Recruitment for 18 posts to the DMS.
- iv. Obtained approval for the Scheme of Recruitment of Legal Officer.
- v. Successfully completed capacity-building programs for Ministry officers to improve English and IT skills, including a 100-hour spoken English course for OES and Drivers in collaboration with SLIDA, costing Rs. 840,000.

17.2.Parliamentary Affairs

- i. Coordinated the submission of 29 Cabinet Memoranda, 18 Cabinet Notes, and 84 observations for Cabinet Memoranda with the Cabinet Office.
- ii. Managed the submission of answers to Parliamentary questions and reports to the Consultative Committee.
- iii. Submitted reports to the Committee on Public Accounts (COPA) through the Performance Review and Implementation Division.

17.3.Procurement and Maintenance

- i. Managed procurement activities worth LKR 9.3 million for Sri Lankan Missions and LKR 86.90 million for local requirements between January and December 2024.
- ii. Maintained the Republic Building while preserving its archaeological value, incurring a cost of LKR 7.8 million during the period.
- iii. Relocated the Consular Affairs Division to the 16th Floor of the Secretariat Building, Suhurupaya, at a cost of LKR 17.37 million.
- iv. Managed the maintenance of 27 official quarters, with repairs costing LKR 1.8 million, and spent LKR 8 million on maintaining the Ministry's plant and machinery.

17.4.Logistics Services : Developed a component under the Asset Management System (AMS) to maintain vehicle records and related maintenance. The Ministry's fleet of 85 vehicles (72 ministry vehicles and 13 leased vehicles) was efficiently utilized, with a focus on maintaining the existing fleet without incurring additional costs for new vehicle purchases.

17.5. Common Website Platform for Missions/Posts Abroad: After a competitive procurement process, Elysian Crest (Pvt) Ltd has been selected as the developer for

the common website platform for Missions/ Posts abroad. After obtaining the approval from the Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment, and Tourism to proceed with the contract agreement, the development of the common website platform is to commence. Additionally, the Technical Evaluation Committee for hosting services related to the common website platform has been appointed to ensure the effective implementation of hosting arrangements.

17.6. IT Capacity Building and Cyber Security: Enhanced IT infrastructure and ensured cyber security measures for Ministry operations; conducted firewall training for officers responsible for managing the Ministry's firewall; implemented a comprehensive email usage policy to ensure security and compliance with best practices.

17.7. Hall Booking System: Currently, the hall booking process is managed manually, often resulting in scheduling conflicts. To resolve this issue, a cost-effective hall booking system is being developed. The system, now in its final stages of completion, is designed to streamline the reservation process and provide real-time status updates to ensure efficient management of hall bookings.

17.8. The process of organizing and uploading monthly scanned vouchers into the shared drive: The Ministry currently facilitates the transfer of vouchers and bills from Missions/ Posts to the Ministry through Diplomatic (DPL) bags, a process that entails significant costs. To address this, a streamlined process has been introduced to organize and upload monthly scanned vouchers to a shared drive, ensuring accuracy, accessibility, and proper documentation. This system has been specifically tailored for the Accounts Division, and a comprehensive manual has been finalized, providing a step-by-step guide for collecting and uploading scanned vouchers (Receipts and Payments) from the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Kuwait to the shared drive as a pilot system.

18. Human Resources and Mission Management (HR & MM) Division

The main responsibility of the HR & MM Division is to ensure the provision of adequate human resource facilities required by the Sri Lanka Diplomatic Missions abroad are provided in a timely manner. Further, the division is empowered to provide necessary policy directives to all Sri Lanka diplomatic Missions abroad with the view to managing human resources and related administrative requirements of each Sri Lanka Mission abroad.

The composition of the **sixty-two (62)** Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad is as follows;

- Embassies - 35
- High Commissions - 13
- Permanent Missions to the United Nations - 02
- Deputy High Commissions - 01
- Consulate General Offices - 10
- Representative Offices - 01

18.1. Significant Achievements

- 18.1.1. Establishment/re-opening of Diplomatic Missions:** Approval has been received from the Cabinet of Ministers to establish resident Sri Lankan Missions in Astana/Kazakhstan and to re-open the Missions/Posts in Baghdad/ Iraq, Nicosia/Cyprus and Frankfurt/Germany. The formalities are in progress on the establishment/re-opening of the same. Sri Lankan Missions in Wellington/New Zealand has been established on 25.11.2024
- 18.1.2. Appointment of New Heads of Mission/ Heads of Post:** With the directives of the Foreign Secretary processed and facilitated appointments of sixteen (16) Heads of Mission/Heads of Post for the Sri Lanka Missions abroad.
- 18.1.3. Termination of Non-Career Head Mission/ Heads of Post including DPL Secretaries :** As per the directive of the Head of State, the Division took action to terminate the tenures of thirty two (32) non-career Heads of Mission/Heads of Post appointed.
- 18.1.4. Transfers of Sri Lanka Foreign Service (SLFS) Officers:** A total of thirty (30) SLFS officers have been transferred out to the selected Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad on diplomatic appointments under two (02) SLFS Transfer Boards in 2024 and are assumed duties at the respective Mission/Posts. The HR & MM Division facilitated in seeking medical and security clearance in particular while attending matters of their domestic assistants, substantive and local ranks, payments of salary and allowances at the post etc. on the same. The third Transfer Board for the last quarter of 2024 was appointed for the transfers of Foreign Service Officers.
- 18.1.5. Promotion and Retirement of Foreign Service Officers:** The HR & MM Division processed necessary procedural elements related to the promotion of fifteen (15) officers from SLFS Grade III to II and seven (07) officers from II to I in the SLFS. Further, necessary formalities related to the retirement processes of two (02) SLFS officers have been completed.
- 18.1.6. Promotion of SLFS Grade I Officers to Special Grade:** The Division is in the process of appointing SLFS officers who are eligible for Special Grade. Twenty Seven (27) officers of the SLFS Grade (I) faced the interview and the recommendation of 15 officers are now being processed by the PSC. Facilitated HRD, R& T Division for the recruitment of new SLFS batch (2024 intake) to the Ministry while maintaining their personal files by this Division.

Further, forty nine (49) non-SLFS officers in the public service representing the Ministry of Defence (06), Department of Labour (07), Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS) (05), Sri Lanka Accountancy Service (SLAcctS) (01) and Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) (30) were posted to the selected SL Missions/Posts abroad.

During the period under review, timely initiatives were taken by the HR & MM Division to appoint three (03) Additional Secretaries in acting capacity to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Seventy two (72) Home-based Management Service Officers who consented out of the seventy five (75) qualified from the last competitive examination, have been appointed to the Missions/Posts abroad. Thirteen (13) Home- based Personal

Assistants who consented out of the seventeen (17) selected through the last competitive examination, have also been recruited appointed to the Missions /Posts. Further, one (01) Home-based Protocol Officer, three (03) Home- based IT Officers and four (04) Home- based Typists selected through Transfer Boards appointed by S/FA, have assumed duties in the Missions/Posts during 2024.

18.2. Appointment of Home Recruited Contractual (HRC) Staff: The appointment of two (02) home-based Drivers was processed during the period under review. Similarly, a selection process of filling vacancies of Drivers and KKSs in the vacant posts of Home Recruited Contractual (HRC) employee category was completed. Accordingly, seventeen (17) KKS and nineteen (19) Driver posts in SL Missions abroad have progressed. Further, six (06) Clerk positions have been filled during the period under reference.

18.3.Facilitating official visits: The HR & MM Division facilitated 149 official visits during the period.

18.4.Controlling Public Expenditure : The HR & MM Division also took part in various proactive initiatives of the Ministry to introduce to manage the affairs of SL Missions/Posts abroad by way of curtailing the expenditure.

Accordingly, the most viable and practical measures were taken in consultation with respective Heads of Mission/Post to recruit only the essential staff for SL Missions abroad on local basis or casual recruitments.

18.5.Reporting and Monitoring Obligations : The HR & MM Division took every effort to attend in a timely manner, all requirements related to the preparation of accurate reports on the matters related to staffing in SL Missions abroad, and payment of allowances together with any clarifications related to expenditure procedures etc. of the SL Missions abroad.

The Division also responded to queries from the Presidential Secretariat, Auditor General, Bribery Commission, Secretary General/Parliament, the Hon. Attorney General, and the Presidential Commissions, etc.

Responses for RTI queries, parliamentary questions, and complaints against diplomatic and Non-diplomatic officers attached to SL Missions abroad were coordinated with relevant authorities and Heads of Mission/Heads of Post in a timely and confidential manner.

All relevant matters and ongoing activities that come under the purview of the HR & MM Division were carried out as per the directives of the Secretary/Foreign Affairs in line with the established regulations/procedures and with the consents/observations/recommendations from relevant authorities/divisions in order to ensure expected productivity of the Division.

19. Internal Audit and Investigation Division

The key responsibility of this Division includes: monitoring and evaluating the internal control mechanism of the Ministry, Sri Lanka Missions / Posts abroad and other institutions coming under the purview of the ministry and provide the strategic apex with guidance on overall performance and compliance.

Progress of Annual Audit Plan – 2024 (as of 31st December)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Progress (%)
Audit and Management Committee meetings	√	√	√	75
	Annual Target	Completed		
Audit Queries	26	22		85
Cumulative progress				80

20. Legal Division

The main functions of the Legal Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to furnish legal advice on matters of International Law to the Minister through the Ministry's Secretary, to other Divisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to the Sri Lanka Missions abroad, to the Foreign Missions in Sri Lanka as well as to other Ministries/Departments. The Legal Division is also the Treaty depository of the Government of Sri Lanka. The Legal Division provides advice on legal aspects of all policy decisions and particularly international issues arising from time to time, such as territorial claims and boundaries, terrorism-related issues, recognition of treaty relations, diplomatic immunities and privileges, sanctions regime of UN and also on unilateral sanctions, migration including organized crime (human trafficking and smuggling) etc. Officers of the Legal Division also represent the Ministry in different expert Committees. During the time frame of 01.01.2024-31.12.2024, the Legal Division has provided legal observations/ Legal Clearance for approximately 350 MoUs/Agreements in terms of Circular No: PS/SP/SB/ Circular/06/2023 issued by the Presidential Secretariat. In addition to the above, the Legal Division has made the following significant key performances.

20.1. Law of the Sea: The work of the National Oceanic Affairs Committee (NOAC) is coordinated by the Legal Division. The Sub-Commission appointed by the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf of Sri Lanka (UNCLCS) accepted that Sri Lanka has fulfilled the four criteria required to establish Sri Lanka's Continental Margin. Consideration of the submission has been put on hold by the subcommittee, based on the objection lodged by India. Dates for bilateral discussions have been requested from India.

20.2. Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the proposed Internationally Legally Binding Instrument on Marine Bio-Diversity beyond Areas of National Jurisdiction (BBNJ): Legal Division represented the GoSL at those discussions and secured the interest of Sri Lanka in this connection. Approval of the Cabinet to sign the treaty has already been obtained. Action is also been taken in consultation with the Ocean Affairs Division to draft legislation with view to ratify same early.

20.3. Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for Granting Diplomatic Clearance to Foreign Seaborne Vessels arriving in Sri Lanka, Foreign Military or State Aircrafts operating into Sri Lanka and Overflying Sri Lankan Territory, Clearance for Weapons, Ammunition & Communication Equipment during a VVIP/VIP Visit: SOP was finalized with the office of the Chief of National Intelligence, and approval of the Cabinet has been taken to the text.

20.4. Negotiation of Free Trade Agreements (FTA): Legal Division was involved in negotiating the FTAs and also serves in the Working Groups negotiating the Investment, Legal and Trade Remedies Chapters of FTAs. All fourteen (14) chapters of the FTA was legally vetted by the Legal Division prior to signing the FTA with Thailand. ETCA negotiations with India is on-going and the Legal Division is involved in negotiating the Investment Chapter. Further the Legal Division also engaged in with the National Trade Negotiating Committee with regard to setting the way forward for discussions on the FTA with China and Review of the Singapore FTA

20.5. Investment : Certain Articles of the IPPA with the UAE is being re-negotiated. New Investment Model of Sri Lanka is being reviewed taking into account the on-going negotiations on FTA investment chapters.

20.6. Drafting the Energy Bill of Sri Lanka: Legal Division represents the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism in the expert committee chaired by Justice Sobhitha Rajakaruna, President of the Court of Appeal in drafting the above mentioned Bill which is nearing completion.

20.7. Immunities and Privileges: Action has been taken to gazette immunities and privileges granted to following organizations and to table same in Parliament in terms

of the Diplomatic Privileges Act no. 9 of 1996, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), International Centre for Research in Argo Forestry (ICRAF).

20.8.The Trafficking in Persons (TIP): The Legal Division is the Ministry focal point for the National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force (NAHTTF). Report of the US Department of State placed Sri Lanka in the Tier 2, this Year.

20.9.Asia Pacific Group (APG) on Anti Money Laundering and combatting the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT): The 2025 Mutual Evaluation of Sri Lanka by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) was scheduled to be held in March 2025 where an Institutional wise time bound Action Plan is given to the Foreign Ministry. Legal Division is working with the FIU to get ready for the APG Evaluation. However an extension has been given by the APG for Sri Lanka Mutual Evaluation which is yet to be confirmed by FIU.

The Legal Division is presently involved in fulfilling the main Action Points, i.e. amending the existing regulations on UN Security Council Resolutions 1373, 1267, 1540 and the related UNSC resolutions regulated on Iran and DPRK and the promulgation of UNSCRs on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) and on Violent extremism. Cabinet approval to be obtained on enacting legislation on FTFs.

The Legal Division actively participates on the TFS committee chaired by the Secretary Defence and liaise with the Ministry of Defence and the financial intelligence unit in combatting money laundering and the financing of terrorism and proliferation. The Legal Division represents the Legal Committee in the implementation of UNSCR 1540 by way of drafting a new Strategic Trade Management Act.

20.10. Readmission: Negotiations on the EU Readmission Protocols were finalized with, Italy, France and the Netherlands on behalf of the Benelux and the Protocols could be finalized for signature. Presently liaising with the Netherlands and France to finalize the Protocols for signature. Negotiations on a new Readmission Agreement was finalized with Georgia in 2018 and yet to be agreed upon on certain reformulated provisions to be signed. Readmission Agreement with Russia to be finalized soon for Signature.

20.11. Agreements on Avoidance of Double Taxation: Cabinet approval was sought to sign the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with Austria in August 2024. Dates were proposed by Sri Lanka to commence the third round of negotiations with Maldives, and to revise the existing DTAA with Bangladesh, in the latter half of 2024.

20.12. International Humanitarian Law Matters: An IHL Committee meeting chaired by the Legal Division was convened with the participation of National IHL Committee members. Preparatory meeting to sensitize IHL Committee members relating to the

34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent under the theme of “Navigate Uncertainty –Strengthen Humanity was held on 27th June 2024.

The Legal Division with financial assistance from ICRC, conducted a drafting workshop to formulate domestic legislation and to give effect to the provisions of Biological Weapons Convention with the participation of all relevant stakeholders. In collaboration with the ICRC, 75 years of the Geneva Conventions under the theme of “Global and Sri Lankan perspectives” was celebrated at BMICH on 14th August 2024 followed by a panel discussion and photo exhibition.

Legal Division initiated the process of obtaining the official endorsement for Sinhala and Tamil translations of the Geneva Conventions liaising with the Department of Legal Draftsman and Department of Official Languages. Taking in to consideration Sri Lanka’s continuous commitment towards upholding International Humanitarian Law, the Legal Division drafted the Government of Sri Lanka’s specific pledge on the theme “Towards a universal Culture of Compliance with International Humanitarian Law” during the 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

20.13. Air Services Agreements: Legal Division is a member of the Government Bilateral Negotiation Team for Air Services, New Air Services Agreement with Thailand was signed and action has been taken to bring the Air Services Agreement into force along with the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Aviation, Protocol to the Air Services Agreement with Israel is finalized and ready for signature. Legal Division has initiated action for the Renewal of MoU between the National Search and Rescue Agency of Indonesia and Civil Aviation Authority of the Sri Lanka on Search and Rescue Cooperation. Air Services Agreement with Myanmar was negotiated by the Government Bilateral Negotiation Team for Air Services and GoSL observations have been finalized for onward transmission to the Myanmar side for their concurrence. Discussions have been started to initiate a new Air Services Agreement with Hungary and a draft model has been shared with Hungarian authorities

20.14. BIMSTEC: The Legal Division provided observations and cleared the BIMSTEC Agreements / MoUs including Agreement on BIMSTEC Maritime Cooperation, MoU between the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi- Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Host Country Agreement of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC), MoU on Cooperation between BIMSTEC and the World Bank on Strengthening Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response and Health Systems Resilience among BIMSTEC member States. MoU between the Indian Ocean Rim Organization (IORA) and the BIMSTEC. MoU between the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the BIMSTEC. MoU between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the BIMSTEC. MoU between the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and BIMSTEC

20.15. IAEA Matters : Represented the Ministry at the IAEA Regional Workshop to Promote Universalization of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) held from 19-21 August 2024 in Luang Prabang, Lao

P.D.R. The Legal Division also represents the Committee formed to develop national legal frameworks of nuclear legislation and has provided its services to the said Committee during the year 2024

- 20.16. Cybersecurity and Prevention of Cyber Crimes:** Actively participated in the negotiations of the UNODC Ad Hoc Committee to collaborate a Comprehensive International Convention for countering the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) for Criminal Purposes. Eventually, the UN Convention against Cybercrime; Strengthening International Cooperation for Combatting Certain Crimes Committed by means of ICT's and for the sharing of Evidence in Electronic form of Serious Crimes, was adopted in August 2024.
- 20.17. Cabinet observations:** 90 Cabinet observations of the Minister of Foreign Affairs were prepared by the Legal Division during the period under review.
- 20.18. Full Powers:** 45 Full Power instruments have been prepared by the Legal Division and submitted for Hon. M/FA's signature during the period.
- 20.19. Foreign summons :** Legal Division facilitated the Service of 235 Summons in foreign countries in coordination with the Ministry of Justice, relevant Courts and the Missions abroad. Facilitated 52 Court cases to obtain testimony from the relevant Parties of the said cases who are living abroad, through Audio Visual linkage in terms of assistance to a Protection of Victims of Crime and Witness Act no. 10 of 2023. The Legal Division facilitated 263 No. of requests from the Foreign Countries to deliver their Summons in Sri Lanka.
- 20.20. Credentials:** The Legal Division clear all credentials drafted by the UN Division to be signed by the Minister.
- 20.21. Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA), Extradition and Transfer of Offenders (PTA) requests :** 43 Mutual Legal Assistance requests, 23 Extradition requests and 09 Transfer of Offenders requests have been facilitated during the period from 1st January – 31st December 2024. Virtual Negotiations on PTA with Latvia and Saudi Arabia were finalized. Negotiations with Philippines, Saudi Arabia, on MLA, PTA and Extradition were concluded.
- 20.22. SAARC Arbitration Council (SRCCO) :** Legal Division represents the Ministry in the above Regional Corporation Organization provided the position of Sri Lanka during discussions held in Colombo in December 2024.
- 20.23. Signed Agreements and MoUs :** 43 Agreements/MoUs were signed and deposited in the Treaty Depository of the Legal Division during the period.
- 20.24. Providing Legal Opinions:** More than 225 Legal opinions have been furnished to the Foreign Secretary, to other Divisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to the Sri Lanka Missions abroad, to the Foreign Missions in Sri Lanka as well as to other Ministries/Departments.

20.25. The Officers of the Legal Division are appointed as Members of certain Cabinet appointed Committees and other Committees

- i. Committee on developing Comprehensive Counter Terrorism Legislation.
- ii. The National Ocean Affairs Committee.
- iii. Legal Committee on the implementation of UNSCR 1540 on Strategic Trade Control (STC) and on the process of finalizing the draft laws on STC.
- iv. The Financial Intelligence Unit, National Coordinating Committee and carry out all Ministry work related to Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- v. The National Risk Assessment Committee conducted by the Financial Intelligence Unit which is a requirement for the APG mutual evaluation.
- vi. Targeted Financial Sanctions (TFS) Committee chaired by the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence.
- vii. 1373 (Regulation NO:1 of 2012) Listing Committee
- viii. National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force
- ix. Committee on repealing the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act No.02 of 1996
- x. Committee appointed by the Minister of Justice to develop national legislation on nuclear laws.
- xi. Technical Advisory Committee on the Standard Operating Procedure chaired by the CDS.
- xii. Committee on National Hydrographic Council
- xiii. New Nuclear Act Reviewing Committee
- xiv. Sri Lanka Atomic Energy Act Reviewing Committee
- xv. Inter-Ministerial Committee to expedite the process of clearing Higher Education MoUs/ Agreements with Foreign entities
- xvi. Global Action on Cybercrime Enhanced (GLACY-e) Legal Project Team
- xvii. Technical Steering Committee of National Policy and Action Plan on Migration Employment – Sri Lanka 2023-2027
- xviii. Inter-Agency Committee on Tracking the Progress on Sri Lankas's Migration Related Targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and assessing the contribution of Migration towards the SDGS.

20.26. Right to Information Requests and Agreements/MoUs: 90 RTI requests were received under the RTI Act No. 12 of 2016 during the period and out of the said 90 requests, 34 requests have been facilitated, 27 requests have been denied and 29 requests were pending. Five appeals made to the RTI Commission, and all the appeals have been solved by the Commission.

20.27. Agreements/MoUs: Cleared approximately 790 Agreements/MoUs and has provided around 195 advices on diverse fields. The Legal Division has provided observations for 59 Agreements/MoUs in the field of "Higher Education and Research".

As per the available records in the Treaty Depository of the Legal Division, 43 Agreements/MoUs/ Protocols have been deposited in the areas of Free Trade, Development Cooperation, Air Services, Custom Matters, Defence Cooperation, Development Cooperation, Investment Cooperation, Trade Promotion, Double Taxation, Visa Exemptions, Diplomatic Relations, Cultural Cooperation, Education

and Tourism Sector, Film Cooperation, Buddhist Ties & Sports sector in the Legal Division.

21. Overseas Asset Management and Development Division

The main responsibility of the OAM & D Division is to manage and develop overseas assets related to Sri Lanka Diplomatic Missions / Posts abroad. OAM & D is also oversee Travel Unit, Cypher and Security Mail Division of the Ministry.

21.1. Establishment and reopening of Sri Lanka Missions abroad during 2024:

SLHC/Wellington has been established and all required formalities were completed to commence functions of the High Commission. Heads of Mission and staff were appointed. All required formalities and preliminary arrangements were completed to commence functions of the Sri Lanka Consulate General in Cyprus.

21.2. Facilitation of Heavy Baggage and Air Passage : 166 staff officials together with 224 family members of the officers were posted to Sri Lanka Missions abroad during the prescribed period were facilitated with obtaining passports, visas, air tickets, heavy baggage 77 -lump sum allowances 93 – travelling claims were facilitated. Handled required formalities and administrative matters regarding the movement of 205 Officers were transferred from SL Missions to Sri Lanka. (Heavy baggage / lump sum allowances, purchase of air tickets, travelling claims etc.)

21.3. Procurement and Maintenance of Movable Capital Items: 12 Nos. of Vehicles have been procured, on Outright Purchase basis (09 vehicles) and Operational leasing basis (03 vehicles). A total of 341 requests / orders received from Missions/Posts abroad for various purchases of capital items were processed by the Division (i.e. furniture, office equipment and others). Total expenditure on purchasing capital items in prescribed year was of LKR. 80,788,356.93, approximately US\$ 269,294.52 (at an average parity rate US\$ as 300).

21.4. Renting / Leasing of Chanceries / Residences: the Division handled renting 87 Nos. of new Official Quarters and 148 Nos. of renewal of agreements.

21.5. Maintenance, Renovation of Government of Sri Lanka owned Properties Abroad : Upon the directives of the Foreign Secretary, the Division guided and facilitated the renovation work at Government owned properties in New Delhi, Canberra, Bangkok, Chennai, Jakarta, Beijing,

21.6. Allocation of Staff Quarters in Colombo which belongs to the Ministry : To address the housing / accommodation needs of returning SLFS Officers, the Division handled the allocation of 14 housing units.

21.7. Responding to Audit Quarries: Ensured the timely response to the audit quarries raised by the Internal Audit and Govt. Audit Division. Accordingly 18 audit quarries were responded.

21.8. Annual Board of Survey of Missions Abroad: To prevent loss and damage to Government properties, the Division mandated that all Missions abroad submit Board of Survey reports (2023) in a timely manner. All 61 Missions/Posts have complied with this directive for the year 2024.

21.9. Reporting and Monitoring Obligations: Ensured the accurate and timely preparation of all reports related to traveling claims, lump sum allowances, and capital item procurement. The Division has proactively responded to inquiries from the Presidential Secretariat, Auditor General, RTI requests, and parliamentary questions regarding SL Missions abroad. Additionally, we have maintained effective coordination with relevant authorities and Missions/Posts abroad in a timely and confidential manner. All matters within the purview of the OAM & D Division have been executed in strict adherence to the directives of the Secretary/Foreign Affairs and established regulations/procedures and standard practices.

To ensure effective overseas Assets Management Development, the Additional Secretary/OAM & D and staff officers have conducted regular progress evaluations and assessments of matters under the Division's purview. To promote the efficient and economical use of the Ministry's funds, the Division has issued timely circulars and SoPs to Missions abroad as needed.

21.10. Travel Unit: Managed all official travel arrangements for Ministry VIPs and officials, including visa processing, travel bookings, and foreign allowance payments. Additionally, the Travel Desk issues Third Party Notes (TPNs) to facilitate visa applications for diplomats, officials, and the public. During the specified period, the Travel Desk facilitated visas and air passages for 215 Ministry Officials, supporting 100 official visits. Furthermore, 1713 Third Party Notes were issued to assist GoSL Officials from various Ministries and Departments in obtaining visas.

21.11. IT Division / Cypher is the main communication hub of the Ministry, connecting and communicating the Ministry with its all - Sri Lanka Missions abroad, outside Ministries and other government institutions and entities, etc. Approximately 34,780 inward communications and 21408 Outward communications had been processed from/to Sri Lanka Missions / Posts abroad.

21.12. Security Mail Division: Handling DPL pouches from and to 61 SL Missions/Posts. In addition, handling special DPL consignments containing medicine, promotional items are being done and the Division also distributes received documents to relevant Divisions :

I. Outgoing DPL Bag movements during the time concerned

Via Sri Lankan Airlines	683
Via DHL	787

II. Incoming DPL Bag movements during the time concerned

Via Sri Lankan Airlines	224
Via DHL	103

22. Protocol Division

The work of the Protocol Division is categorized as coordinating ceremonial functions, facilitating and monitoring diplomatic immunities and privileges extended to foreign Diplomatic Representations, UN and its specialized agencies and international organizations accredited to Sri Lanka, facilitating arrangements for Heads of Mission accredited to Sri Lanka (Based in Colombo and concurrent accreditations from other Missions.) and facilitating logistical and protocol arrangements for international conferences held in Sri Lanka.

During the review period, this Division has facilitated inward Visits: Twenty five (25) inward visits which included six (06) visits of Heads of State/Government, seven (07) visits of Foreign Ministers, four (04) visits of Speakers/ other Ministers and eight (08) visits of other foreign dignitaries. Outward Visits: Six (06) visits of H.E. the President, two (02) visits of Hon. Prime Minister, fifteen (15) visits of Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and eight (08) visits of Hon. State Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Conferences and meetings: Colombo Security Conclave was facilitated by this Division during the review period. Additionally, Joint Commissions, Political Consultations, Diplomatic Briefings and other stakeholder meetings on various subjects were facilitated.

Social Events organized by the Protocol Division: During the review period this Division organized four (04) events to enhance people to people contacts.

Appointments

The following Diplomatic appointments were made:-

- I. Holding Credential Ceremonies - 06
- II. Appointment of Foreign Heads of Mission to Sri Lanka - 32
- III. Appointment of Sri Lankan Heads of Mission - 12
- IV. Appointment of Honorary Consuls of Sri Lanka - 07
- V. Extensions of the tenure of service of Honorary Consuls of Sri Lanka - 35
- VI. Facilitation of the appointments of Honorary Consuls of foreign countries in Sri Lanka -01

Immunities and privileges: Further, this Division has coordinated aspects related to immunities and privileges of the Diplomatic corps. 1610 no's of visas were issued.

Diplomatic clearance: 167 flights and 33 ships were given diplomatic clearance

HUMAN RESOURCE PROFILE OF THE MINISTRY

Cadre Management

Staff of the Ministry (Colombo) as at 31 December 2024*

Category	Approved Cadre	Existing	Vacancies/ Excess
Senior ¹	105	90	15/*
Tertiary ²	09	05	04/*
Secondary ³	448	401	47/*
Primary ⁴	128	127	*/01

This Ministry is in the process of filling vacancies in the secondary level cadre in coordination with the Ministry Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government.

Staff of the Missions as at 31 December 2024

Category	Approved Cadre	Existing	Vacancies/ Excess
Home Based			
Senior/ Tertiary ⁵	239	152	87
Secondary ⁶	247	190	57
Primary ⁷	07	06	01
Locally Recruited			
Secondary ⁸	240	182	58
Primary ⁹	309	242	67

¹ Senior – Executive Level officers including Sri Lanka Foreign Service, Sri Lanka Administrative Service, Accountants Service, Legal Officers, Auditor's Service, ICT service.

² Officers in Super Grade of Management Service Officer's Service, Translator Service, ICT Service

³ Officers in Development Officers Service, Management Service Officer's Service, Librarian, Receptionist, and other Departmental Service Officers

⁴ Officers including Drivers, KKS, Sanitary Labours, Electricians, etc.

⁵ Head of the Mission, Minister Counsellor, Counsellor, First Secretary, Second Secretary, Third Secretary

⁶ Officers in Management Service Officer's Service including Development Assistant, Information Technology Officers

⁷ Officers including Drivers, KKS, Sanitary Labours

⁸ Officers including Clerks, Receptionists, Stenographers, Translators, Information Technology Officers

⁹ Officers including KKS, Drivers and Sanitary Labours

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Performance of the Utilization of Allocation (as at 31 Dec. 2024)

LKR '000

Type of Allocation	Allocation 2024		Actual Expenditure (As at 31 Dec.2024)	Allocation Utilization as a % of Final Allocation (as at 31 Dec.2024)
	Original	Final		
Recurrent	18,874,025	18,736,075	16,528,076	88%
Capital	738,000	875,950	443,205	51%
Total	19,612,025	19,612,025	16,971,281	87%

Progress of implementing National Budget Proposals – 2024

Budget Proposal No.	Proposal (in brief)	Allocated Funds	Expected output (if relevant)	Progress	
				Physical %	Financial %
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Performance of the Reporting of Non – Financial Assets

LKR '000

Asset Code	Code Description	Balance as per Board of survey report as at 31 Dec. 2024	Balance as per Financial Position Report as at 31 Dec.2024	To be accounted	Reporting progress as a %
9151	Building and Structure		10,555,257		100%
9152	Machinery and Equipment		1,987,678		100%
9153	Land		1,010,362		100%
9154	Intangible Assets		55,803		100%

9155	Biological Assets		-		-
9160	Work in Progress		-		-
9180	Lease Assets		-		-

Performance of the Revenue Collection - 2024 (As at 31 Dec. 2024)

LKR '000

Revenue Code	Description of the Revenue Code	Revenue Estimate 2024		Collected Revenue (As at 31 Dec. 2024)	
		Original	Final	Amount	as a % of Final Revenue Estimate
1003-07-02	Department of Registrar General's	10,000	12,800	34,684	271%
2002-01-01	Rent on Government Building & Housing	3,000	3,000	3,772	126%
2002-02-99	Other Interest	5,000	9,100	12,050	132%
2003-02-07	Fees of Passports, Visas & Dual Citizenship	3,600,000	3,800,000	3,643,095	96%
2003-02-13	Examinations & Other fees	25	25	1	4%
2003-02-14	Dept. of Motor Traffic	30,000	36,000	35,203	98%
2003-02-99	Consular Fees	2,000,000	2,200,000	2,119,938	96%
2003-99-00	Other Receipts	325,000	350,000	258,271	74%
2004-01-00	Social Security Contributions - (Central Government)	35,000	40,000	39,299	98%
2004-02-00	Social Security Contributions - (Provincial Councils)	600	675	697	103%
2006-02-01	Sale of Capital Assets (Vehicles)	6,000	6,000	1,479	25%
2006-02-02	Sale of Capital Assets (Other)	200	200	118	59%
Total		6,014,825	6,457,800	6,148,607	95%

LAKSHMAN KADIRGAMAR INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC STUDIES (LKIIRSS)

Mandate of the LKI

The Mission of LKIIRSS is to engage in independent research of Sri Lanka's international relations and strategic interests that reflects Minister Kadirgamar's vision to internationally promote the country's intellectual profile. To this end, the LKI has sought to produce research that is current and relevant, informed by contemporary global dynamics, and drawing on the best practices and internationally accepted policy standards. The LKI plays an influential role in producing policy relevant research that would assist the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and more broadly the Government of Sri Lanka, to make decisions based on facts and research. The LKI also acts as a channel through which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could reach out to the wider Foreign Policy relevant community in Sri Lanka and abroad.

The LKI is governed by a Board of Management (BOM) chaired by the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and includes 8 members. In the year under review, the BOM met on 11 January 2024.

LKI Research Programme and Publications: A revised 'LKI Research Programme' is structured under three pillars: *Global Relations, Global Governance and Global Economy* was approved by the Board of Management in July 2023. The 'Global Relations' pillar is a new addition to enable the LKI to contribute more actively in evolving of an authentic 'Sri Lankan foreign policy perspective' in its work, informed by the global dynamics. Under each pillar specific priority areas of research have been identified, and Research Assistants and Research Interns have been assigned specific issue areas to focus on.

In addition to the regular news releases which are disseminated on the website, social media posts and bi-annual LKI update, its key scholarly contribution from its research is the series of '*LKI Policy Briefs*', which provides a comprehensive analysis on policy issues affecting Sri Lanka and the contemporary world. Summaries of the same are available in Sinhala and Tamil.

Among the recently published Policy Briefs are:

1. Straddling the major power rivalry in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR): Sri Lanka's quest to navigate in an Increasingly 'Zero-Sum' Environment, by Ambassador Ravinatha Aryasinha, Executive Director.
2. Sri Lanka's Role in UN Peacekeeping: Possibilities and Challenges for a Mutually Beneficial Process, by Mr. Dulanaka Jayasinghe, Research Assistant
3. Countering Maritime Crime in the Indian Ocean: Evaluating the Effectiveness of IORA, Research Assistant, by Ms. Theshani Weligamage, Research Intern
4. Borrowing Wisely: Gaining Insights from Debt Restructuring in Ghana, Sri Lanka and Zambia, by Ms. Dilmini Abeyrathne, Research Assistant
5. 'Debt-for-Renewables' Swaps: How to Address Climate, Debt and Energy Sector Vulnerabilities in Sri Lanka, by Mr. Michael Iveson, Research Fellow
6. Sri Lanka's Path to Economic Integration: An Assessment of Past Efforts and Prospects through the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), by Mr. Mihin Perera, Research Assistant

Research projects were also commenced in 2024 on: Sri Lanka's Voting Behaviour in the UNGA, the Office for Reparations, the Office on Missing Persons, Deciphering Hedging, Navigating

Strategic Shifts in the Belt and Road Initiative, New GSP Reforms and Implications for Sri Lanka, Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation in the Indo-Pacific Region, Emerging Trends in Autonomous Weapons Systems (AWS), Intellectual Property protection and innovation in Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka's Bid for Membership in BRICS, Colombo Security Conclave, Current Dynamics of SAARC in Regional Cooperation.

LKI Flagship Programmes: LKI Foreign Policy Forum, panel discussions open to the public, evaluates a contemporary issue related to Foreign Policy, was held; on 21 February 2024 (The Relevance of Non-Alignment in a Polarised World) and 11 July 2024 (Debt Restructuring Outcome and Economic Diplomacy).

LKI Expert Roundtable, small group consultations on specific issues based on Chatham House Rules, was held; on 01 February 2024- on "Strengthening Engagement in Sri Lanka – Australia Relations" and on 13 June 2024 with the Secretary-General of SAARC.

LKI Collaborative Events, organized in collaboration with foreign embassies, international organizations, academic/research institutions, were held; 09 April 2024 - Interactive Session in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs featuring the Secretary General/BIMSTEC, on 'Regional Cooperation through BIMSTEC', 06 June 2024 - Workshop in collaboration with the Australian National University and the Australian High Commission on 'Building Maritime Domain Awareness in Sri Lanka', 21 August 2024 - Joint Seminar with the Republic of Korea on 'Economic Security in the Indian Ocean Region; Prospects for Collaboration between Sri Lanka and the Republic of Korea', 19 December 2024 – Seminar with the ICRC on 'Artificial Intelligence (AI), Autonomous Weapons Systems (AWS) and Contemporary Challenges'. Publications have also been done based on the proceedings of these sessions.

LKI Cultural Events, provides an inclusive platform to celebrate the rich culture of Sri Lanka and from around the world, and were held; Scholarly Panel Discussions on 'Sri Lanka as a Destination: From Antiquity to Modernity' (January 2024) and 'Martin Wickramasinghe's Impact on the Cultural Legacy of Sri Lanka' (January 2024).

Annual memorial event to honour the legacy of Hon. Lakshman Kadirgamar (August 2024).

LKI's Contribution to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other Government entities: Fulfilling its responsibility to provide policy recommendations to the government, the LKI's research outputs are made available to the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, the Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, and to key policymakers within the Presidential Secretariat, the Prime Minister's Office and other relevant Ministries and institutions in Sri Lanka and Embassies abroad.

LKI's Contributions to Sri Lankan and External Educational Networks: Relations with the Departments of IR/relevant Departments in Sri Lankan state and private universities and other Research Institutions has been strengthened, and LKI's services including its library facilities has been made available to students and other researchers. The Executive Director regularly participates as a speaker in external events, and the LKI has also commenced the practice of conducting seminars/ briefings for students from universities/ other institutions who are interested in delving deeper into the field of foreign policy and related studies. Regular sessions have been held in 2024 with visiting groups, including delegations from the National

Defence University - Pakistan, Gateway House – India, the International Department of the Communist Party of China, the U.S Congressional Research Service, the US- Sri Lanka Fullbright Commission, the European Union, University of Agder-Norway, the Polish Institute of International Affairs, and the Australian National University.

LKI Meetings and Visits: These serve as a platform for LKI to host diplomats, policymakers, academics, professionals and activists - resident and visiting Sri Lanka. Outreach meetings reflect the LKI's proactive approach to building partnerships and sharing its research and insights with local and global audiences.

Administration: There had been no revision of the cadre of the LKI since that originally provided for in 2001 at the founding of the Research Institute affiliated to the Foreign Ministry, which consisted of an Executive Director and 15 other officers. Following a negotiation process initiated in September 2023, this anomaly was rectified through consultations with the Department of Management Services (DMS), which on 17 April 2024 approved the revised cadre requested by the LKI, numbering 26 positions - including an Executive Director, a Director/Research, a Deputy Director/Administration and Finance, a Deputy Director/Communications and Strategic Outreach, and 9 further positions earmarked for research activities at different levels.

Long outstanding repairs were carried out in 2024 to the roof of the historical main building of the LKI, sections of which was dilapidated. Additionally, repairs were also done to the roof of the adjacent administration unit, along with the completion of the exterior work of the Research Division which was repaired and re-furnished in 2023. Urgent repairs were also carried out to the drainage system of LKI. The sound system in the auditorium, which is the one of the main income resources of LKI, was also upgraded.

Following improvements made to the 'Lighthouse Auditorium' of the LKI in recent times, and the greater visibility the institute has received in the public domain, venue hire doubled from Rs. 2.7 million in 2023, to Rs. 5.2 million in 2024.

Finance / Assets Management

Income

For the year 2024, the LKI has been allocated an Imprest (Recurrent) of Rs.13,787,501.72 (4M received as reimbursement for the Year 2023 is included) from the National Budget through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Details are below.

Imprest (Received Date)	Imprest
04.01.2024 (reimbursement for 2023)	4,000,000.00
09.19.2024	2,035,815.58
24.10.2024	2,532,278.93
26.12.2024	5,219,407.21
Total	13,787,501.72

Further the Institute received grants amounting to the sums of Rs. 1,760,116.78.

Received from	Amount Rs.
Australian National University	411,350.00
Republic of Korea	866,830.78

ICRC	531,936.00
Total	1,760,116.78

In 2024, the Institute has also received interest for its Fixed Deposits held at the Bank of Ceylon amounting to Rs. 15,485,709.19. For venue hire during this period, the Institute has earned a total of Rs. 5,276,000.00

Expenditure

The Total Expenditure for the year 2024 was Rs. 32,779,628.76. Approximately Rs. 1.2 million of this was incurred as capital expenditure, for improvements to the main building and administration building (Rs 726,930.00), and for repairing the drainage system (Rs. 461,000.00).

Human Resource Profile of the LKI (as at 01.12.2024)

Category	Approved Cadre	Existing	Vacancies
Senior Level (*ED)	1	1	0
Tertiary Level	4	0	4
Secondary Level	17	5	12
Primary Level	4	1	3
Total	26	7	19

***ED Position - Enactment of the ED position governed by the Act No. 32, 2006**

Financial Reports

Performance of the Utilization of Allocation (as at 31 December 2024), LKR' 000

Type of Allocation	Allocation 2024		Actual Expenditure (As at 31 Dec. 2024)	Allocation Utilization as a % of Final Allocation (as at 31 Dec.2024)
	Original	Final		
Recurrent	24,000*	13,787 **	32,779***	237%
Capital	-	-	-	-
Total	24,000	13,787	32,779	237%

*The original estimate was prepared in anticipation that new cadre positions will be filled from early 2024. However, only 7 positions of the 26 member-cadre approved was functioning, as the SORs for the new cadre positions were to be finalized.

Most of the year was managed with Rs. 4.5 M disbursed in September and October 2024, and the LKI self-generated Rs. 16.5 M FD interest, Rs. 5.2 M Venure Hire and Rs. 1.8 M grants received through collaborative ventures.

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வெளிநாட்டு வேலைவாய்ப்பு
Foreign Employment

17 වන මහල "මෙහෙවර පියස", නාරාහේන්පිට, කොළඹ 05
17 ம் மாடி "மெஹேவர பியேச", நாரஹேன்பிட்ட, கொழும்பு 05
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1. VISION AND MISSION

Vision

Make Sri Lanka the best choice for competent human resources in the overseas market

Mission

To Formulate, direct and evaluate appropriate policies, programmes and projects to fulfil the expectation of all stakeholders by promoting competent human resource for foreign employment opportunities and quality of life of families of migrant workers

2. ORGANOGRAM

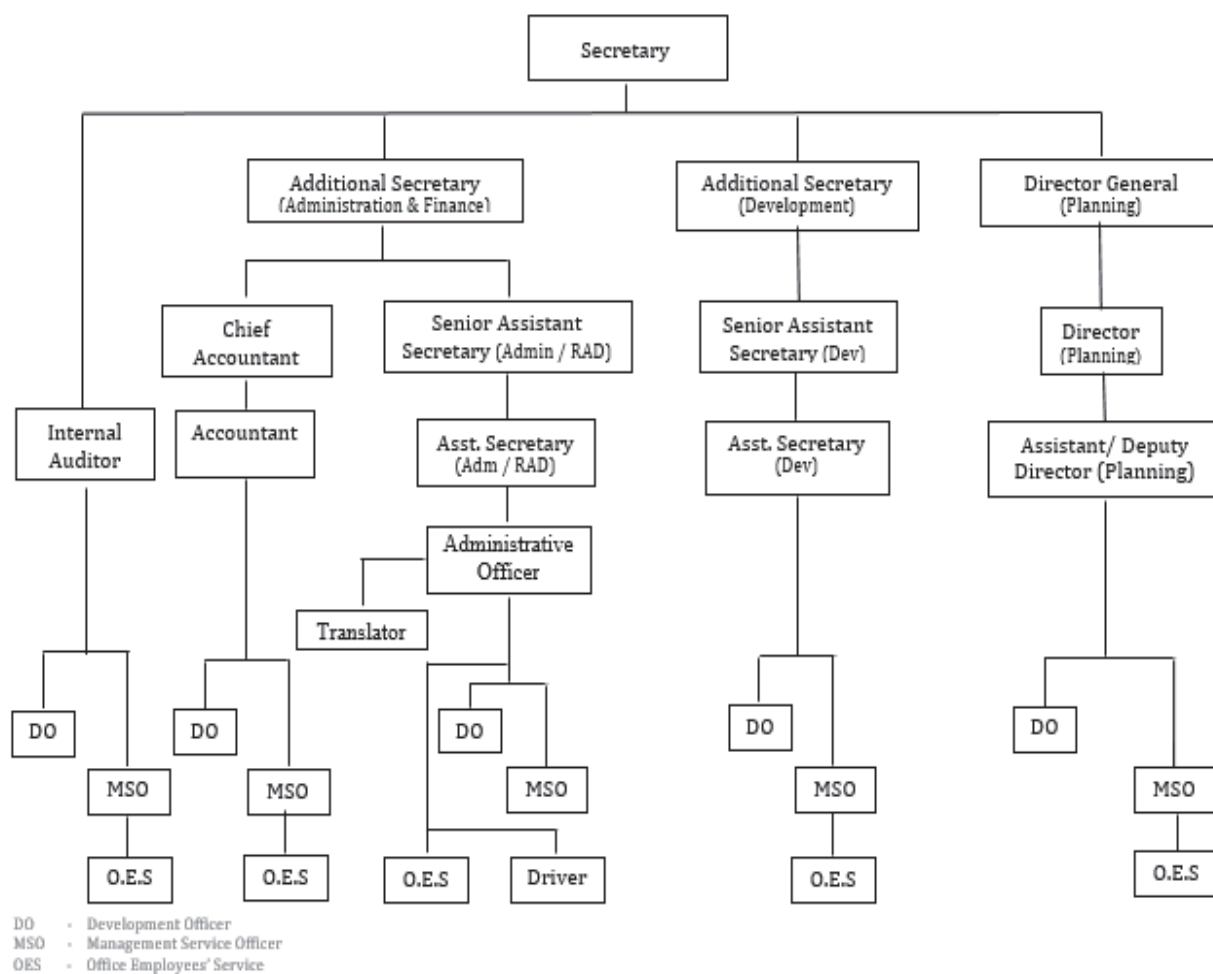


Diagram 1 - Organizational structure of the foreign employment Division

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Progress Report of the Foreign Employment Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment, and Tourism for the year 2024 is submitted for the committee stage debate of the budget in the Parliament of Sri Lanka. This submission fulfills the statutory requirement of the Parliament, as informed by the Office of the Leader of the House on 28 November 2024.

Migration for employment plays a crucial role in bringing much-needed foreign exchange to the Sri Lankan economy. Number of migrant workers has increased since the inception of migration for employment in the 1970s. In the year 2023, receipt of foreign remittances was reported to be LKR 1,950.8 billion, accounting for nearly 9% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Migration for employment reduces the rate of unemployment by providing foreign employment, it is noted that 313,642 persons, out of which 185,692 males and 127,950 females departed for foreign employment in 2024. Thus, the migration for employment sector is placed firmly within the country's vision and development agenda, expanding global spaces for Sri Lankan labour.

Prime mission of the Foreign Employment Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism is to fulfill the expectations of all stakeholders by formulating, implementing and evaluating appropriate policies, programmes and projects to expand employment opportunities in various employment sectors, ensure safe migration, direct skilled human resources, and promote the quality of life of migrant workers' families. In realizing this mission, the programmes of the Ministry have been lined up based on the sustainable development goals, the international conventions ratified by Sri Lanka and in terms of Extraordinary Gazette No. 2412/08 dated 25.11.2024.

The National Policy and Action Plan on Migration for Employment Sri Lanka (NP&APME) 2023–2027 has been developed in alignment with national and international legal and policy frameworks, and covers four key policy areas.

Foreign Employment Division along with two affiliated institutions ie; Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), established under the Act No. 21 of 1985 (amended) and Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt.) Ltd (SLFEA), incorporated in 1996, are being implemented projects and programmes in accordance with the National Policy and Action Plan on Migration for Employment Sri Lanka focusing on individual migrant worker as well as members of the migrant worker families. The programmes are designed as a comprehensive package of services to ensure safe migration, prevent human trafficking, and support the wellbeing of migrant workers and their families. In addition, 941 no. of Development Officers (Foreign Employment) attached to the District and Divisional Secretariats facilitate and coordinate developmental and welfare activities at the field level for migrant workers and their families.

The government of Sri Lanka has entered into 25 agreements/ MOUs/MOCs with 19 destination countries to achieve varied objectives including, foreign employment promotion, human capacity development, training programmes and mutual relationships and of which 21 are active at present. In addition, actions have been taken to amend the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Act No. 21 of 1985 collaboration with all stakeholders and reviewing the final draft.

Development Officers (Foreign Employment) serving Island-wide, have been recommended 66,073 Reports on the Care Plan of Minors of Women who wish to migrate for employment, taken follow-up actions and coordinated and facilitated for welfare, livelihood development, educational and re-integration programmes.

The SLBFE has implemented a range of activities to regulate the labour migration process, ensuring conditions of dignity, security, and equity for Sri Lankan nationals seeking employment overseas. The SLBFE has issued 73 no. of new licenses, registered/ renewed 1,268 no. of employment agencies and companies in foreign countries that recruit Sri Lankans during the period under review.

A total of 3,037 training programmes were conducted by the SLBFE to enhance the skills of 84,344 aspirants for foreign employment.

The SLBFE has initiated legal proceedings against licensed agencies and other unlicensed entities involved in the recruitment for foreign employment. In this regard, the SLBFE conducted 4,658 investigations for complaints received on licensed foreign employment agencies and resolved 1,635 complaints. Under the resolving of complaints received from or on behalf of migrant workers and actions against human trafficking, a total of 13,236 complaints were received. These complaints pertained to issues related to migrant workers, their businesses or human trafficking, and 8,974 of them were resolved.

The SLBFE has implemented a range of services for the protection and empowerment of migrant workers and their families for the welfare of migrant workers, such as payment of insurance premia, providing food, transportation, accommodation, and medical treatment, bearing repatriation costs, providing necessary equipment/ materials to start or improve self-employment, providing school equipment, etc. A number of 33,187 of migrant workers and family members were benefitted from various types of welfare programmes and a sum of LKR 380.49 Mn was spent in this regard. During the period under review, the SLBFE provided relief for migrant workers who passed away abroad. Meanwhile, the SLBFE conducted numerous programmes for the promotion of foreign employment, including job fairs at district and divisional level.

Further, Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt) Ltd., subsidiary under the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment has facilitated 558 Sri Lankan individuals in foreign employment.

Additionally, measures have been taken to implement various grassroots-level programmes in collaboration with international agencies to ensure safe migration.

This progress report outlines the achievements of the Foreign Employment Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, along with its affiliated institutions, from January 2024 to December 2024. The report comprises seven sections.

4. INTRODUCTION

Migration for employment is a global phenomenon which contributes to economic growth, builds human capital, reduces socio-economic inequalities, and facilitates interaction among different societies and cultures. Migration for employment supports individuals and families to realise their dreams, it strengthens societies to accept and respect diverse perspectives and experiences of the migrant workers while benefitting from their skills and competencies and most importantly, it powers the development of countries, regions and the entire world.

Sri Lanka has become a recipient of myriad gains from migration for employment for the last five decades. Number of migrant workers have increased since the inception of migration for employment in the 1970s. Migration for employment brings much needed foreign remittances to the country which amounted to LKR 1,950.8 bn in the year 2023, nearly 9 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Further, migration for employment benefits to reduce the rate of unemployment and 312,836 persons, out of which 185,162 males and 127,674 females departed for foreign employment in 2024. Thus, the migration for employment sector is placed firmly within the country's vision and development agenda, expanding global spaces for Sri Lankan labour.

Accordingly, Prime mission of the Foreign Employment Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism is to fulfil the expectations of all stakeholders by formulating, implementing and evaluating appropriate policies, programmes and projects to expand employment opportunities in various employment sectors, ensure safe migration, direct skilled human resources, and promote the quality of life of migrant workers' families. National Policy and Action Plan on Migration for Employment Sri Lanka, (NP&APME) 2023 – 2027 has been formulated in accordance with national and international legal and policy framework, covering all stages of migrant cycle.

Foreign Employment Division along with two affiliated institutions ie; Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment and Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt) Ltd are being implemented projects and programmes in accordance with the National Policy and Action Plan on Migration for Employment Sri Lanka focusing on individual migrant worker as well as members of the migrant worker families. In addition, Development Officers (Foreign Employment), attached to the District and Divisional Secretariats facilitate and coordinate for smooth functioning of developmental and welfare activities at the field level for migrant workers and their family members.

Accordingly, the programmes of the Foreign Employment Division of the Ministry have been lined up based on the sustainable development goals and the international conventions ratified by Sri Lanka and in terms of Extraordinary Gazette No. 2412/08 dated 25.11.2024 in order to make migration for employment sector effective and productive for the development of the country.

I. Main functions of the Foreign Employment Division

- a. Formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies, programmes and projects related to foreign employment
- b. Collaborating with relevant institutes to increase and promote foreign employment opportunities and improve the skills required for such employments

- c. Undertaking necessary measures to send skilled and trained workers abroad instead of untrained workers
- d. Introducing legal and regulatory measures required to ensure the security of migrant workers
- e. Providing special facilities for expatriate workers and Sri Lankans living abroad to save and invest foreign exchange in Sri Lanka
- f. Implementing programmes to ensure the protection and welfare of housemaids working in Middle East and other countries
- g. Providing remedies for employment issues of migrant workers and maintaining welfare
- h. Introducing legal reforms to strengthen the process of obtaining compensation entitled to persons who meet with accidents in foreign countries
- i. Implementing special projects to enable those who return to Sri Lanka after foreign employment to commence enterprises
- j. Regulation of foreign employment agencies
- k. Providing career guidance for foreign employment and adopting measures to ensure welfare of those engaged in foreign employment when they are directed to workplaces by foreign employment agencies

II. Sections under the Foreign Employment Division

a. Administrative Section

The responsibility of this section is to execute all establishment and administrative activities of the Foreign Employment Division with the aim of providing facilities required for the discharge of key functions relevant to the Foreign Employment Division of the Ministry.

Maintaining personal files of all public officers attached to the Foreign Employment Division and establishments activities related to them and updating information on the staff.

Preparation of cabinet memoranda and taking action in respect of cabinet decisions, providing answers to referrals made by the Consultative Committees and Public Petitions Committee, parliamentary questions and refers public complaints forwarded by the Presidential Secretariat and the Prime Minister's Office as well as public grievances received directly from the public to the relevant institutions are carried out by this section.

Administration of vehicles of the Division, provision of necessary infrastructure facilities, training activities, management of capital goods and equipment, activities relating to overtime, holiday payments, Agrahara insurance, approval of distress loans and conducting investigations.

Holding the responsibility of carrying out establishments and administrative activities of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment and Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt) Limited.

b. Development Section

The Development Sections discharges its duties under two units as Foreign Relations Unit and Development Unit.

The major functions of the Foreign Relations Unit are activities pertaining to international conventions in relation to the field of migration, submission of reports and proposals as per requests made from time to time by the United Nations and other international organizations through the Foreign Affairs Division on issues relation to the field of migration, entering into memoranda of understanding/ agreements, updating agreements, following up on the implementation of agreements, conducting activities relating to joint meetings and all activities relating to regional/ global dialogues.

The other key functions of the Development Section include the formulation, enforcement and follow up of the enactments, regulations, guidelines and policies relating to the migration sector, preparation of cabinet memoranda and notes to the cabinet pertaining to the subjects of the Foreign Employment Division, training of Development Officers deployed for field work of the Division and maintaining the pool of trainers for Training of Trainers, implementing programmes at the District and Divisional Secretariat Divisions level through Development Officers and holding appeals committee regarding family background reports of female migrant workers, conveying committee decisions and following up on them.

c. Planning Section

The primary responsibility of the Planning Section is the overall planning, making plans implemented, monitoring & evaluation and reporting within the scope of the Foreign Employment Division.

The Section is also responsible for the formulation, implementation, monitoring, reviewing progress and following up of development plans and annual action plans in collaboration with institutions involved in the foreign employment Division.

Another important function of the Section is the planning, monitoring and reporting of programmes relevant to the foreign employment sector implemented at the District and Divisional Secretariat Division levels with the support and guidance of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment through the Development Officers attached to the District Secretariats and Divisional Secretariats.

Among other responsibilities assigned to the Planning Section include the preparation of projects relevant to the subject of Foreign Employment and the preparation of Annual Performance Report and the Progress Report, submitted to the committee stage debate of the budget.

d. Finance Section

The main responsibility of the Accounts Section is to ensure that the financial allocations allocated to the Foreign Employment Division by the annual budget are used efficiently and effectively to achieve the relevant objectives in accordance with the Government's policies.

Further, the section maintains updated audit inquiry register and submits answers for the relevant audit queries to the Auditor General, supervises the financial matters related to the statutory institutions and foreign aid programmes operating under the Foreign Employment

Division, represents the Ministry to each of the relevant committees and submits the reports related to the financial and asset management activities to the General Treasury.

e. Internal Audit Section

The internal audit activities are carried out as per the appointment made in terms of Section 40 of the National Audit Act ensuring the responsibilities of the Chief Accounting Officer are duly discharged as set out in Sections 38(b) and (f) of the said Act and the powers vested in the Internal Audit Division in terms of FR 133 and FR 134 and requirements of Circular No. 01/2019 dated 12.01.2019 of the Department of Management Audit.

The Internal Audit Section is responsible for conducting Audit Management Committee meetings (quarterly), preparation of annual audit plan, preparation and submission of reports and the conduct of field investigations on internal audit inquiries, implementation of audit programmes and preparation of answers for audit queries.

III. Institutions under purview of Foreign Employment Division

a. Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) is the main statutory institution established by Parliament Act No.21 of 1985 as amended by Act No. 4 of 1994 and Act No. 56. focusing on Sri Lankans migrating for employment. The key responsibilities of the Bureau are the governance and regulation of the foreign employment sector, protection and empowerment of migrant workers and their family members and promotion and development of employment opportunities outside Sri Lanka for Sri Lankans.

In addition to the 33 operational divisions at the head office of the SLBFE, services are provided through 09 Provincial Migrant Resource Centres, 10 District Offices, 02 Training Centres and 03 Airport Units, with the staff of 1,121.

Key functions

- Issuing licenses to run foreign employment agencies
- Conducting training programmes for those expecting foreign employment
- Registering Sri Lankan migrant workers in the Bureau/ recruiting Sri Lankans for foreign employment
- Resolving complaints lodged by migrant workers or their family members
- Providing welfare facilities for migrant workers and their family members
- Enforcement of laws applicable to foreign employment sector
- Promoting foreign employment opportunities for Sri Lankans

b. Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt) Limited

The Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt) Ltd (SLFEA), the only state-owned recruitment agency incorporated in 1996, as a subsidiary of the “Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment”, the national regulator of the foreign employment sector of Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency, an institution, incorporated under the Companies Act No. 17 of 1982, operates with a Board of Directors of between 4-7 members.

Key functions

- Conducting business activities in accordance with the rules and regulations in force from time to time by the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment and any other statutory law or legal framework
- To offer employment to qualified workers in all job classifications, whether professional, administrative, technical and industrial hygiene, skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled domestic and related, within Sri Lanka or abroad
- Entering into MoUs with institutions and organizations active in the provision of manpower services, such as individuals in trade, insurance, commerce or industry, as well as institutions active in providing such services
- Developing the necessary facilities to enhance the capabilities of the workforce to meet the needs of foreign employment, and managing competency building and awareness programmes

5. PROGRESS ACHIEVED BY THE FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT DIVISION

I. Strengthening the necessary legal policy framework for the promotion of foreign employment

a. Implementation of National Policy and Action Plan on Migration for Employment of Sri Lanka

National Policy and Action Plan on Migration for Employment of Sri Lanka (2023–2027) was launched on 25 October 2023 and to support its implementation and monitoring, the National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration was established on 24 March 2024.

A total of 14 awareness programmes were conducted across the island for officers of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), the primary partner in implementing this policy and other stakeholders, including representatives from relevant ministries, government institutions, foreign employment agencies, trade unions, and civil society organizations.

Additionally, as the first step towards establishing Provincial and District Coordination Committees on Migration for Employment, awareness programmes covering all provinces were successfully completed. The process of setting up these committees across the country is underway.

b. Amending the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Act No. 21 of 1985

Actions are being taken to amend the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Act with inputs from all stakeholders involved in the sector in order to further enhance the regulation of the foreign employment sector. The draft Act, drafted by the Legal Draftsman has been submitted to the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment for observations.

II. Empowering migrant workers through international cooperation

a. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) / Agreements

The Government of Sri Lanka has entered into multiple agreements with various countries on promoting foreign employment sector, human resource development, international social security programmes, training programmes, legal frameworks, and mutual relations. Currently, 21 MOUs/Agreements are actively in effect.

- **Exchanging drafts related to signing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)/ agreements through the Foreign Affairs Division**

Drafts for MoUs/Agreements were exchanged with the following countries;

Romania	-	Employment and Manpower Sector
Italy	-	Migration and Mobility Partnership
Turkey	-	Proposed Agreement on Labour Migration

- **Reviewing the existing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) / bilateral agreements with destination countries regarding foreign employment**

Information regarding the review of the following agreements/ Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) is being forwarded to the respective states through the Foreign Affairs Division, facilitating a bilateral exchange of views.

Republic of Korea	-	Sending Workers under the Employment Permit System
Malaysia	-	Recruitment, Employment, and Repatriation of Workers

b. Global and Regional Forums

• **Abu Dhabi Dialogue**

The 7th Ministerial Consultation of Abu Dhabi Dialogue was held in the United Arab Emirates on 10 and 11 February 2024.

The following guidelines for a collaborative thematic agenda for the upcoming two-year cycle were discussed at the session.

- The Link Between Climate Change in Asia and Labour Mobility – Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Corridor
- Labour Mobility and Skills for a transformation to a Green Economy
- Managing short-term independent workers (Gig workers) abroad in member countries of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue
- Unlocking Opportunities for Skills and Diversity towards Labour Productivity in Abu Dhabi Dialogue Countries

• **Global Policy Network (GPN)**

A high-level meeting of the Global Policy Network (GPN) was held in Geneva on 10 –11 June 2024. It operates under four technical working groups:

- Committee on Licensing and Oversight, headed by Uganda
- Committee on Inspections & Enforcement, headed by Norway
- Committee on Bilateral Cooperation, headed by Sri Lanka
- Committee on Skills Dimensions of Labour Mobility, headed by Tunisia

• **Colombo Process**

Joint meeting of the Thematic Area Working Group (TAWG) was conducted in Bangkok, Thailand, from 26 to 28 November 2024, under the chairmanship of India, with participation from Colombo Process member countries.

The following Thematic Area Working Group (TAWG) meetings were convened with the facilitation and coordination of the Colombo Process Technical Support Unit (CPTSU).

- Pre-departure Orientation and Empowerment (PDOE): The eighth TAWG meeting, chaired by the Philippines, was held on 26 November 2024
- Fair & Ethical Recruitment Practices (FERP): The eleventh TAWG meeting, chaired by Bangladesh, was held on 26 November 2024
- Skills and Qualification Recognition (S&Q): The ninth TAWG meeting, chaired by Sri Lanka, was held on 27 November 2024
- Cheaper, Faster & Safer Transfer of Remittances (CFSTR): The eighth TAWG meeting, chaired by Pakistan, was held on November 27, 2024.

- **The Safe and Substantive Labour Migration Programme Phase IV – Funded by Swiss Development Cooperation**

The project titled “Safe and Substantive Labour Migration for Sri Lankans” was implemented under the fourth phase with guidance from the Foreign Employment Division, in collaboration with the Swiss Embassy in Sri Lanka and with financial support of the Swiss Development Cooperation. The primary objective of this project is to enhance the well-being of Sri Lankan migrant workers and their families. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Executive Service Corps (IESC) served as national partners for this project. The programme was completed in August 2024 at a total cost of LKR 498 million.

- **Migrant Resource Centre (MRC)**

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sri Lanka on 11 December 2023. Following this, the Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) was established in Batticaloa on 26 April 2024. The MRC offers comprehensive migration-related services to the persons who wish to migrate for employment. The International Centre for Migration Policy Development under the New Zealand government has provided funding for its management processes. To date, LKR 14.53 million has been allocated to this project.

III. Guidance and referral system for foreign employment

- **Establishing an Integrated Guidance and Referral System (IGRS) for Enhancing Foreign and Domestic Employment Opportunities in Sri Lanka**

The Foreign Employment Division, with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), established an Integrated Guidance and Referral System (IGRS) targeting young job seekers aiming for foreign employment. The IGRS provides career guidance for foreign employment, develops a pool of skilled and experienced job seekers, and facilitates their referral for foreign employment.

This system was officially launched on 15 July 2023, and has received 678 applications from job seekers, of which 95 have been identified as eligible for foreign employment. Additionally, 65 Development Officers (Foreign Employment) have been trained through four specialized training programmes regarding the functioning of the system.

IV. Protection, welfare and empowerment of migrant workers and their family members

- **Issuance of Family Background Reports**

The Circular No. 02/2023 dated 31.03.2023 as amended by the Circular No. 02/2023(1) dated 18.14.2023 titled “Obtaining a report on the protection programme of the minor children of women expecting to migrate for employment” was issued with the objective of providing protection to minor children of female migrant workers. As per the said circular, 66,073 family background reports have been recommended at the Divisional Secretariat level in the year 2024. Recommendations were given to 19,413 reports in the first quarter, 15,028 reports in the second quarter, 14,849 reports in the third quarter and 16,783 in the fourth quarter and 345 family background reports were not recommended.

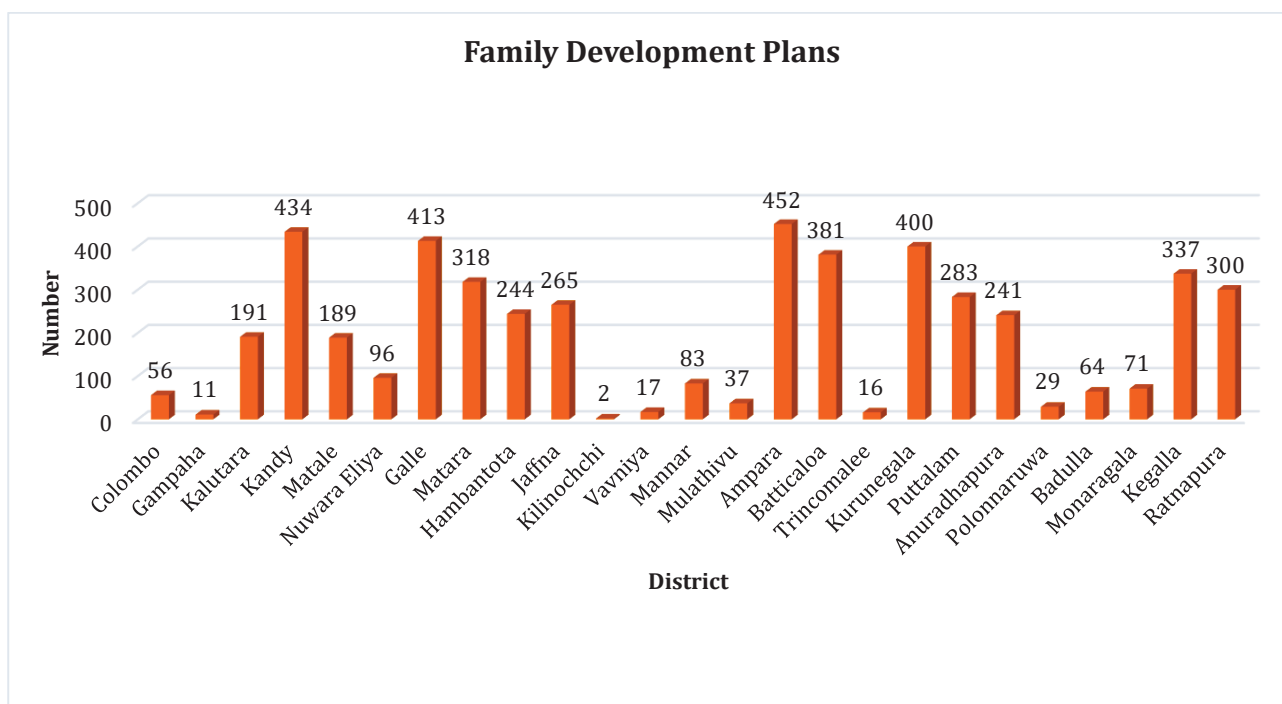
- **Appeals Committee to Review Reports on protection programme of the minor children of women expecting to migrate for employment**

If applicants are dissatisfied with the reports on the protection programme of the minor children of women expecting to migrate for employment, which are not recommended at the Divisional Secretariat level, they can submit their appeals to the Appeals Committee under the Foreign Employment Division. The Committee has convened 12 times to review the appeals, resulting in 62 recommendations and 23 appeals that were not recommended. Further action is ongoing for the remaining appeals.

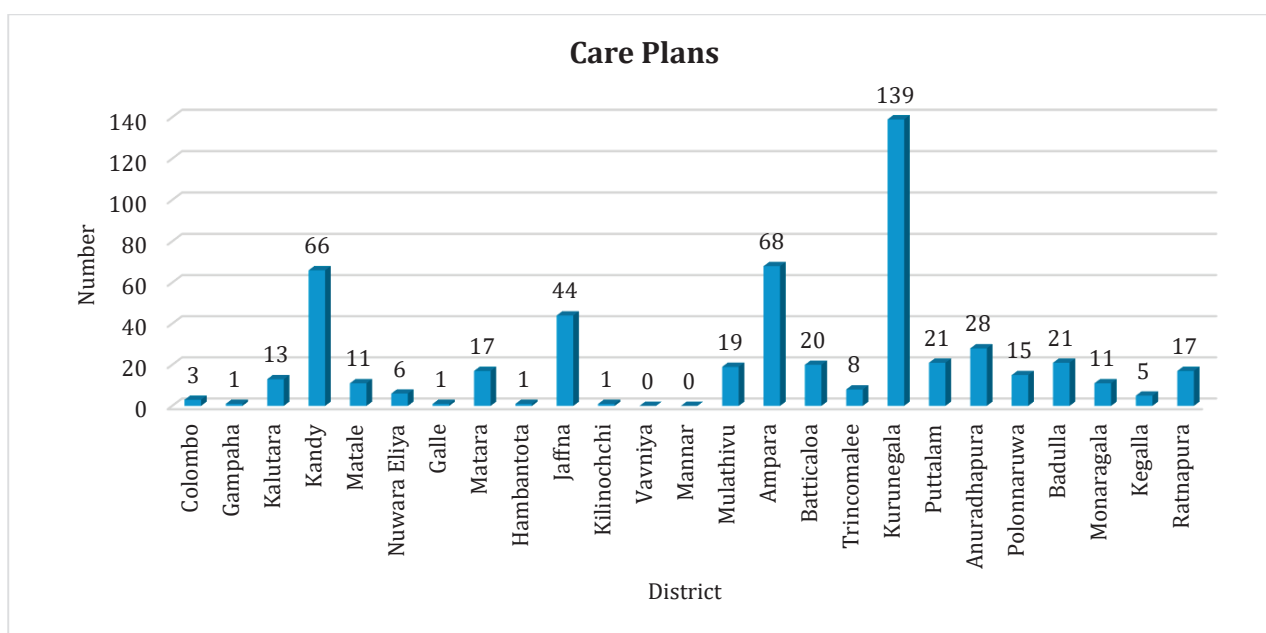
- **Preparation of Family Development Plans and Care Plans for Migrant Worker Families**

The Development Officers (Foreign Employment) attached to Divisional Secretariats by the Foreign Employment Division of the Ministry, prepare and implement “Family Development Plans” aimed at uplifting the economic status of migrant worker families registered with the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, as well as “Care Plans” targeting socially vulnerable children of migrant families, focusing on the safety and welfare of migrant workers. Accordingly, 4,930 Family Development Plans and 536 Care Plans have been prepared in 2024.

In addition, referrals to programmes conducted by the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, such as providing educational scholarships for the children of migrant families, supplying school equipment, offering self-employment assistance for returning workers, providing self-employment and housing assistance for differently-abled individuals, referring to vocational training programmes, and conducting medical clinics, are carried out by Development Officers (Foreign Employment).



Graph 1 - Family Development Plans Prepared by Development Officers



Graph 2 - Care plans prepared by development officers

- **Conducting Awareness Programmes**

Development Officers attached to Divisional Secretariats by the Foreign Employment Division have been implementing awareness programmes targeting the migrant community at the divisional level. In 2024 a total of 9,003 awareness programmes were conducted island-wide, focusing on the following areas.

Table 1 - Progress in Conducting Awareness Programmes for the Migrant Community

No	Programme	Number
1	Safe migration	3,052
2	The social reintegration programme	780
3	Self-Employed Skill Development and Career Guidance	672
4	Child protection	866
5	Drug prevention	363
6	Creating awareness on prevention of gender-based violence	322
7	Raising awareness to prevent human trafficking and protect potential victims	1,188
8	other	1,760
	Total	9,003

- **Establishment of Migrant Workers' Societies**

The formation of Migrant Workers' Societies was initiated with the intervention of Development Officers (Foreign Employment) with the aim of bringing together migrant workers, their family members, returned migrant workers and those who are expected to seek foreign employment, empowering them in society and socializing them as active members through improving their knowledge, skills and attitudes. Accordingly, as of now, 4,638 Migrant Workers' Societies have been established at the Grama Niladhari division level, 315 at the divisional level, and 24 at the district level across the island. At the Grama Niladhari division level, the total membership stands at 63,956.

- **Progress Review Meetings to Monitor Duties of Development Officers (Foreign Employment)**

The Foreign Employment Division has conducted two online meetings to monitor the progress of Development Officers assigned to Divisional Secretariats and District Secretariats. At the district level, the District Development Officers have conducted a total of 88 progress review meetings, including 20 held virtually and 68 with in-person participation, provisions of LKR 1,083,250.00 have been allocated for this purpose.

- **Training of Trainers Unit**

- **Conducting Capacity Development Programmes**

With the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and facilitated by Helvetas Sri Lanka, training programmes on entrepreneurship development, financial management, psychosocial support during reintegration, and gender issues were conducted for Development Officers (Foreign Employment) and other related field officers at the district level, delivered in Sinhala and Tamil media using resource persons of the Training of Trainers Unit. A

total of 6 programmes have been conducted, covering the Southern, Sabaragamuwa, Central, and Eastern provinces.

In addition, with the financial support of the Voice of Migrants, 09 capacity development training programmes on organizing the migrant community were conducted for Development Officers (Foreign Employment) in the districts of Polonnaruwa, Galle, Puttalam, Badulla, Kurunegala, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, and Kegalle, utilizing the resource persons of the Training of Trainers Unit.

To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Training of Trainers Unit's activities, coordination efforts were made to provide laptops to 15 officers of the Training of Trainers Unit with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Additionally, 17 training programmes on psychosocial support for the capacity development of Development Officers (Foreign Employment) were conducted at the district level under the provisions of Foreign Employment Division. Furthermore, 19 psychosocial support training programmes for the migrant community and 29 entrepreneurship development training programmes were held at the district level under the provisions of Foreign Employment Division. With the support of the IOM, 11 training programmes on entrepreneurship development and financial literacy for the migrant community were also conducted at the district level.

- **Conducting awareness programmes**

A total of 640 awareness programmes have been conducted with the support of resource persons of the Training of Trainers Unit to empower the migrant community across the island on the topics of safe migration, child protection and care, human trafficking, reintegration of migrant workers, psychosocial support, and entrepreneurship development in the year 2024.

- **Capacity Development of Officers in the Foreign Employment Division**

Seven local training programmes for the capacity development of officers in the Foreign Employment Division were conducted in 2024. Accordingly, officers were referred to the following training programmes; the Basic Project Management Workshop - Phase II, office systems training, capacity development of Administrative Officers, and the Higher National Diploma in Public Procurement and Contract Administration.

V. Governance and regulation in the foreign employment sector

The **Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment** is the foremost regulatory authority for labour migration in Sri Lanka. It is an entity with broad scope established under a legal framework for the regulation of labour migration process ensuring that Sri Lankans seeking employment abroad migrate under conditions of dignity, security and equality

Table 2 - Issuance of Licenses to Foreign Employment Agencies, Approval of Foreign Employment Orders, and Registrations for Foreign Employment - SLBFE

	Description		Number
01	Issuing licenses for foreign employment agencies	Number of new licenses issued	99
		Number of licenses renewed (annual renewals)	1,095
02	Registration / renewal of employment agencies and companies in foreign countries that recruit Sri Lankans	No. of employment agencies / companies registered/ license renewed (in host countries)	1,833
03	Granting approval for foreign job orders and notices submitted by the Foreign Employment Agencies	Number of approved job orders	4,102
		Number of notices approved	2,888
04	Registration for foreign employment	No. of approvals granted to licensed foreign employment agencies to recruit Sri Lankans for foreign job vacancies and sending them abroad	122,104
		No of migrant workers who were registered to leave for foreign employment through private channels	81,924
		No of migrant workers who renewed registration to leave for foreign employment through private channels	29,026
		No. of migrant workers who registered through diplomatic missions in foreign countries	2,971
		No. of migrant workers who renewed registration through diplomatic missions in foreign countries	5,624
		Number of migrant workers registered to leave for foreign employment through the Airport Unit	29,782
		Number of migrant workers who renewed registration to leave for foreign employment by the Airport Unit	58,055

Table 3 - Instituting legal actions against licensed employment agencies/ other parties which are not licensees in connection with recruitment for foreign employment - SLBFE

	Description	Number
01	No. of complaints lodged	4,658
02	No. of complaints resolved	1,635
03	No of successful raids in respect of illegal recruitments	24
04	Number of People Arrested During raids in respect of illegal recruitments	27

05	No. of cases filed in courts against licensed/ non-licensed parties for violation of laws	910
06	No. of times appeared in courts/ labour tribunal for cases filed against licensed/ non-licensed parties for violation of laws	3,155

Table 4 - Resolving Complaints Received from or on Behalf of Migrant Workers and Actions Taken Against Human Trafficking - SLBFE

	Description		Number
01	Resolving complaints received from or on behalf of migrant workers	Number of complaints received	7,478
		Number of complaints resolved	7,733
02	Resolving complaints received related to resolving business issues	Number of complaints received	5,695
		Number of complaints resolved	1,180
03	Resolving complaints related to combating human trafficking	Number of complaints received	63
		Number of complaints referred to the Criminal Investigation Department from the complaints received	61

Table 5 - Welfare programmes implemented for migrant workers and their family members - SLBFE

	Description	Progress	
		Number	Amount (LKR, Mn)
01	Payment of insurance premia for migrant workers	213,735	368.95
02	Payment of insurance compensation for migrant workers (including expenditure for bringing back, medical expenses and compensation for deaths)	949	184.34
03	Implementation of an employer-paid foreign insurance scheme for female domestic workers in the Middle East		
	i. Number of employees covered by foreign insurance	70,444	
	ii. Number of employees who applied for insurance compensations	309	
	iii. Number of insurance compensations paid	103	4.89
04	Providing food, transportation, accommodation and medical treatment to migrant workers in need	11,369	9.63
05	Repatriation of Migrant Workers Facing Various Difficulties Through the Mediation of Foreign Mission		
	i. Through the Employees' Welfare Fund	16	8.43
	ii. Through insurance	19	

	iii. Through other sources (NGOs)	1,067	
06	Provision of Relief Through the Employees' Welfare Fund	95	19.86
07	Providing necessary equipment/ materials to workers for starting/ expanding self-employment	529	25.32
08	Providing financial support for medical treatment to migrant workers and their family members	53	5.53
09	Distribution of school equipment for children of migrant workers	13,969	132.91
10	Providing necessary assistance to the children of migrant workers in need	28	2.29
11	No of scholarships granted to Students who passed Grade 5 scholarship, GCE O/L and GCE A/L	2,688	81.12
12	Providing Sathosa vouchers worth LKR 10,000.00 to female workers who are migrating for the first time as domestic assistants	2,523	25.23
13	Implementation of a pension scheme for migrant workers		
	i. Number of migrant workers who have applied for pension scheme	5,567	
	ii. Number of migrant workers who have qualified for pensions	99	
14	The number of patients brought to the country through foreign missions and the Bureau's intervention for hospital fees		
	i. Payment of hospital fees	06	5.89
	ii. Payment for airfare	02	0.29
15	The Bureau's intervention for the female migrant workers who were provided services through the safe houses available at foreign missions	1,041	63.99
16	Providing relief for migrant workers who died abroad		
	i. Assistance from the Employees' Welfare Fund for Repatriating Remains to Sri Lanka	16	7.65
	ii. Bearing expenses for Funeral Activities	289	11.56

Table 6 - Progress in conducting training programmes - SLBFE

	Programme	Progress	
		Number of programmes	Number participated
01	Housekeeping Assistant of domestic sector - Middle East (National Vocational Qualification Level III)	659	14,516
02	Housekeeping Assistant training of domestic sector for East Asian and European countries (National Vocational Qualification Level III)	51	1,091
03	Attendant training (National Vocational Qualification Level III)	162	5,078

04	Training Programme Implemented for Experienced Domestic Housekeeping Assistants	90	1,395
05	Training for workers leaving for non-domestic employment	1,883	55,239
06	Pre-migration training - South Korea	80	3,598
07	Pre-migration training - Japan Technical Internship Training Course (TITP)	10	125
08	Special language training (Japanese)	25	529
09	Special language training (English)	77	2,773

VI. Promotion of the foreign employment sector

a. Online Job Bank

Facilities have been made available for foreign employment aspirants to register in the online job bank maintained by the SLBFE.

Foreign employment aspirants can register personally through the website of the Bureau or through the Head Office or Provincial Offices. Such registration is valid for a maximum period of two years from the date on which the application was submitted to the job bank. The Job Bank facilitates foreign employers and licensed foreign employment agencies to find suitable candidates for foreign employment opportunities.

The number of job candidates registered through the Job Bank in the year 2024 is 11,033

In addition, 152 awareness and mobile service programmes have been conducted to promote foreign employment among aspirants and the general public, with a total of 7,848 participants.

31 job fair programmes have been conducted at the district and provincial levels, with the participation from 934 employment agencies and 54,174 foreign employment aspirants.

VII. Enhancing service quality of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

a. Adopting the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System

The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) Head Office was awarded the ISO 9001:2008 Quality Certification on 6 November 2012.

To reconsider the ISO 9001:2015 quality certification for future years, an audit certified by the Sri Lanka Standards Institution (SLSI) was conducted at the head office and branch offices in March 2024.

Accordingly, SLSI has extended the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Certification for the SLBFE Head Office and Branch Offices, from 26 April 2024 to 25 April 2027.

VIII. Human Resource Development at the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE)

a. Staff training and development

Table 7 – Staff training and development - SLBFE

	Description	Number of participants	Cost (LKR, Mn)
01	Workshops	43	0.44
02	Courses	30	3.54
03	Training Programmes	1,442	38.5
	Total	1,515	42.48

IX. Sending workers for foreign employment

Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt) Ltd. plans and implements activities related to the recruitment of individuals for foreign employment. Accordingly, the following activities are carried out and a total of 558 workers have been sent for foreign employment in the year 2024.

- Finding job orders
- Obtaining preliminary approval for job orders
- Obtaining approval for advertisements related to job orders
- Finding suitable candidates
- Submitting applications for selection by employers and calling them for interviews
- Conducting interviews and quality tests to select suitable candidates
- Carrying out activities related to recruitment such as medical examinations, signing contracts, obtaining air tickets
- Preparing relevant documents for obtaining visas and forwarding them to the appropriate departments
- Obtaining final approval from the Foreign Employment Bureau and sending individuals abroad for employment

Table 8 – Referring persons for foreign employment - SLFEA

Employment Field	Cyprus	Romania	Dubai	Singapore	Japan	Russia	America	Maldives	Qatar
Domestic Worker	194								
Labourer	17								
Chef	1					2			

Agricultural Labourer						56			
Juki Machine Operator						77			
Kitchen assistant						4			
Cutter						4			
Specialist						2			
Helper		23	4			31			
Tour Operator								2	
Caregiver					2				
Food supplies					12				
Engineer - Production					1				
Nursing Assistant					6		1		
Police Assistant				63					
Packers						17			
Waiter									12
Waitress									3
Horseman		7							
Mason		4							
Blacksmith		9							
Electrician		1							
Chef - Helper		1							
Machine Operator			1						
Sales Officer					1				
Total	212	45	5	63	22	193	1	2	15
Grand Total	558								

6. HUMAN RESOURCES PROFILE (CADRE)

Table 9 -The staff composition of the Foreign Employment Division

	Institution	Senior level		Tertiary level		Secondary level		Primary level		Total		
		Approved No.	No. employed	Approved No.	No. employed	Approved No.	No. employed	Approved No.	No. employed	Approved No.	No. employed	Number of vacancies
1	Ministry office - Foreign Employment Division	11	10	2	2	1,024	995	21	15	1,058	1,022	36
2	Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment	137	91	197	173	692	639	251	218	1,277	1,121	156
3	Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt) Ltd	7	4	6	6	10	9	7	9	30	28	2
	Total	155	105	205	181	1,726	1,643	279	242	2,365	2,171	194

7. FINANCIAL REPORTS

I. Foreign Employment Division

Table 10 - Progress in the utilization of treasury allocations

Institution / Division	Foreign Employment Division	
Expenditure Head	193	
	Recurrent	Capital
Net Provision (LKR, 000')	782,725	218,000
Expenditure (LKR, 000')	751,822	120,551
Balance Provision (LKR, 000')	30,903	97,449
Expenditure Percentage (%)	96	55

This report has been prepared according to the CIGAS Expenditure Report as Treasury Expenditure Report (31.12.2024) has not been received.

II. Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

Table 11 – Income and expenditure report, from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024 – SLBFE (Draft)

Details	Unaudited accounts (LKR)	Budget allocations (LKR)	Budget Achievements (%)	2023 (Actual) (LKR)
Income				
Recruitment Fees - Agencies	653,529,600	717,600,000	91	711,438,184
Recruitment Fees - Privately/Bureau	2,101,389,464	2,955,600,000	71	1,774,483,577
Recruitment Promotion Fees	195,281,277	372,664,000	52	279,138,716
Facility Fees	62,633,800	83,000,000	75	59,549,881
License Fees	125,726,284	132,800,000	95	114,383,047
Cess Income	664,222,105	908,922,000	73	986,018,458
Fees related to the Korean re-employment programme	128,540,589	184,269,000	70	171,211,541
Training fees	233,610,694	165,000,000	142	248,113,646

Receipts from the Employee Welfare Fund	3,035,239,024	3,600,000,000	84	3,622,967,476
Operating income	7,200,172,837	9,119,855,000	79	7,967,304,526
Added - other income				
Foreign exchange gains/ losses	(400,000,000)	125,000,000	-320	(680,814,066)
Miscellaneous income	1,602,188,810	967,000,000	166	2,120,601,630
Total other income	1,202,188,810	1,092,000,000	110	1,439,787,564
Interest income on investments	1,657,350,903	1,698,430,827	98	2,815,501,918
Total Revenue	10,059,712,550	11,910,285,827	84	12,222,594,008
Less				
Staff Costs	2,295,244,578	3,161,005,000	73	1,875,674,039
Corporate Expenses	948,043,948	1,261,257,574	75	782,066,919
Operating Expenses	607,283,645	1,086,251,000	56	528,896,940
Financial Expenses	25,160,099	10,465,780	240	18,167,656
Advertising and Promotion Expenses	162,455,063	498,213,000	33	115,428,265
Business Promotion Expenses	567,208,178	910,755,000	62	82,177,391
Employee Welfare Fund Expenses Less	1,198,944,695	4,397,174,000	27	1,036,249,283
Total Expenses	5,804,340,206	11,325,121,354	51	4,438,660,493
Surplus/Deficit	4,255,372,344	585,164,473	727	7,783,933,515

III. Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt.) Ltd.

Table 12 - Income and expenditure report – SLFEA (Draft)

	Description	From 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024 - LKR
01	Income	277,171,923.00
02	Expenditure	74,185,052.00
03	Profit	202,986,871.00

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சுற்றுலாத்துறை
Tourism

696/4, මරදාන පාර, කොළඹ 10.
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01

TOURISM SECTION

INTRODUCTION

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism was established on 25th November 2024 under the Extraordinary Gazette No. 2412/08. Strengthening the tourism industry as a high foreign exchange income, employment and livelihood generating sector thereby making Sri Lanka is an attractive tourist destination highlighting Sri Lankan culture, biodiversity, environmental friendliness and the friendly identity of the people. Among the main objectives of the establishment of a dedicated Ministry in charge of the tourism sector are among the main objectives of the establishment of a dedicated Ministry in charge of the subject of tourism.

VISION

To be recognized as the world's finest island for memorable, authentic and diverse experiences.

MISSION

To be a high- value destination offering extraordinary experiences that reflect Sri Lanka's natural and cultural heritage are socially inclusive and environmentally responsible and provide economic benefits to communities and the country, while sustaining the flora & fauna.

SUBJECTS AND FUNCTIONS

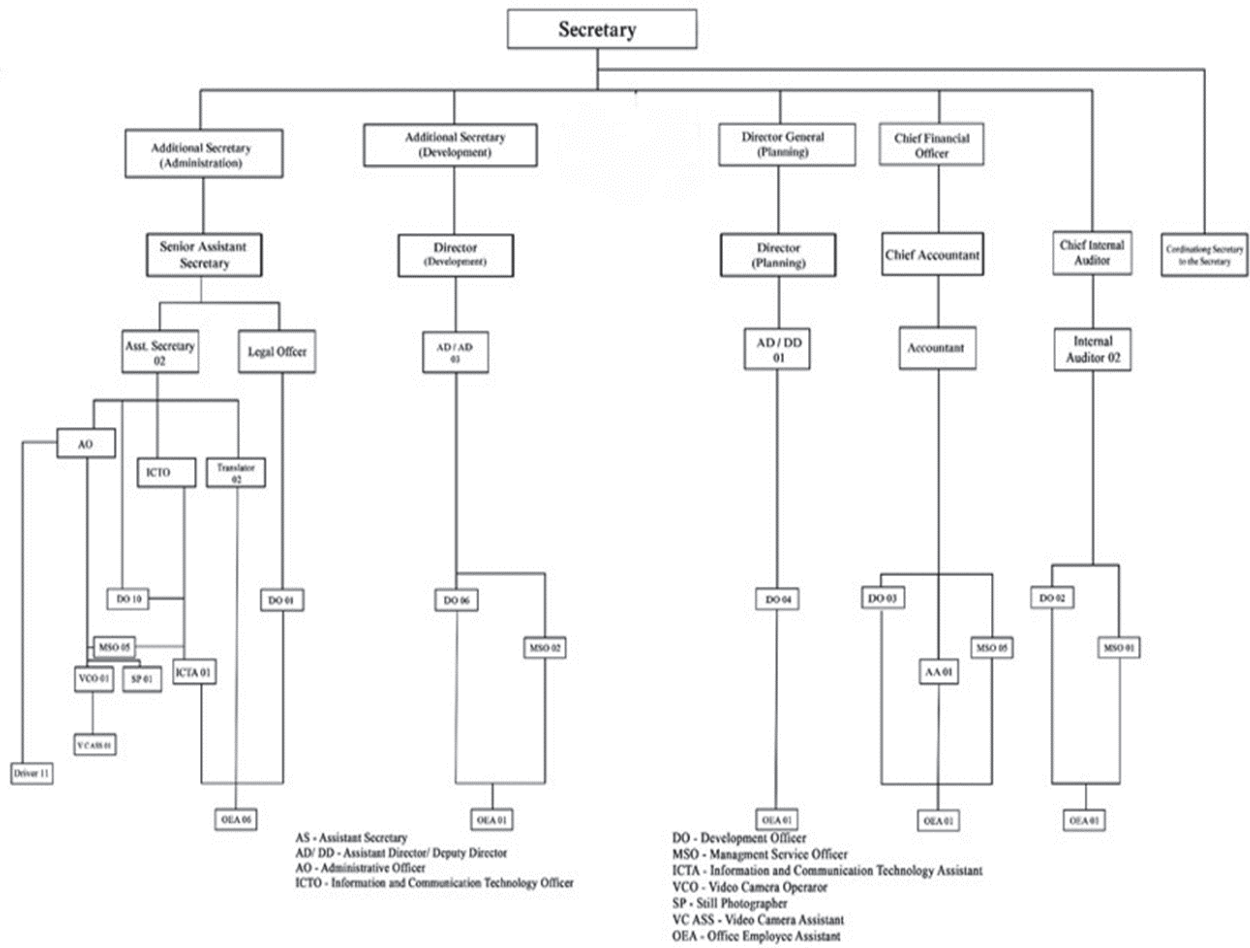
1. Formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, strategies, programmes and projects, in relation to the subject of foreign affairs, foreign employment and tourism, and those subjects that come under the purview of Departments, Statutory Institutions and Public Corporations listed in the Gazette.
2. Provision of public services under the purview of the Ministry in an efficient and people friendly manner.
3. Reforming all systems and procedures using modern management techniques and technology, thus ensuring that the functions of the Ministry are fulfilled while eliminating corruption and waste.

4. Provision of necessary assistance to relevant Ministries and Institutions for the promotion of external trade, investment, tourism, employment and external financial relations.
5. Development of the tourism industry and promotion of high standards in line with the national policy while promoting Sri Lanka's image.
6. Registration and regulation of travel agencies and those involved in the tourism industry.
7. Popularize Sri Lanka as a unique tourist island among domestic and foreign tourists highlighting Sri Lanka's biodiversity, historic heritage, environment, climate diversity, oceanic resources, etc.
8. Promotion of holiday resorts, internationally recognized centers related to conferences, exhibition and entertainment facilities, hotel facilities, air and sea travel for tourists.
9. Provision of required facilities to encourage those engaged in the tourism trade and related entrepreneurs.
10. Ensuring the safety of tourists
11. Preparation of time bound action plans for sustainable usage of natural and cultural resources, developing human resources for the tourism industry, development and standardizing new tourist services, strategic destination promotion etc.
12. Facilitating to enhance medical tourism by providing a whole range of medical care and treatments including Ayurvedic therapy.
13. Promotion of sports tourism industry.
14. Integration of tourism industry with national and international markets for the visual arts.
15. Facilitating to make cultural heritage a significant part of the tourism industry.

INSTITUTIONS COMING UNDER THE TOURISM SECTION

1. Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority
2. Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau
3. Sri Lanka Convention Bureau
4. Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management

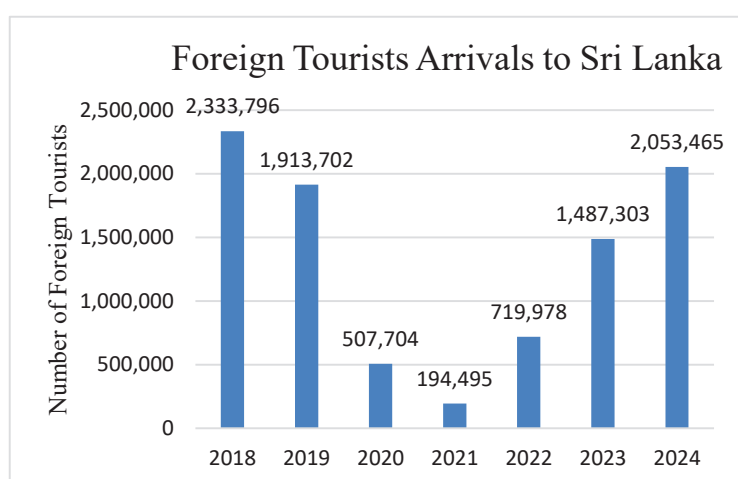
ORGANIZATION CHART



1.1. Progress and Future Outlook of the Tourism Section

Sri Lanka is a country blessed with richness and diversity of cultural and natural heritage (eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites), enviable biodiversity (one of 36 global hotspots for biodiversity) and 1,340 km of coastline. Sri Lankans are known for their warm hospitality and friendly demeanor, which enhances the overall tourism experience for visitors. The welcoming nature of the locals often leaves a lasting impression on tourists, encouraging repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. The attractiveness of Sri Lanka as a destination comes not only from this unique heritage but also from its strategic location in the Indian Ocean in the center of major air and sea routes.

Tourism is one of the major sources of income for Sri Lanka, significantly contributing to its economic growth. In 2024, the industry showed steady growth, bringing renewed hope to those in the sector. Large numbers of foreign tourists visited during January, February, March, and December of 2024. The total number of tourists is expected to reach 3 million and facilitating USD 5 billion in measurable annual tourism income within the tourism sector in year 2025.



Graph 1: Foreign Tourists Arrivals to Sri Lanka 2018 – 2024
Source: SLTDA Statistics

As the tourism sector continues to grow, the Line Ministry is actively working to further develop the industry in line with the new tourism policy introduced by the government. This policy, under the theme "Towards an Inclusive Tourism Economy" is based on the manifesto "A Thriving Nation - A Beautiful Life." Accordingly, the Ministry is focusing on restructuring government tourism institutions and on implementing development projects to enhance the infrastructure of tourism destinations in 2025.

1.2. Divisions of the Tourism Section

The Tourism Section operates under five main divisions namely Administration Division, Finance Division, Internal Audit Division, Planning Division and Development Division.

1.2.1. Administration Division

This division functions under the supervision of the Additional Secretary (Administration). All administrative functions of the Tourism Section are carried out effectively by the Administration Division while developing the human resources. Moreover, the necessary intervention is also made for the administrative functions of the institutions/departments under the purview of the Ministry and the government and non-government institutions including the Parliament and the Cabinet Office are also coordinated by the division.

Key Functions

- Recruitment, promotion, placement and retirement of the staff
- Implementation of capacity development programs to enhance the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the staff
- Maintenance of the up-to-date database of the staff
- Maintenance of vehicles and management of transport facilities
- Maintenance and development of the infrastructure.
- Coordination with external bodies including Parliament and Management of the communication
- Discipline and Grievance Management
- Facilitating, guiding and overseeing the activities of the statutory bodies coming under the purview of the Tourism Section
- Preparation of Cabinet Memorandum
- Answers for the parliamentary questions asked for oral answers under standing orders
- Maintenance of organizational productivity at a high level

Cadre Details

The approved cadre of the Ministry is 115 and the existing cadre is 79 as at 31.12.2024.

Service Category	Approved Cadre	Existing Cadre	Vacancies
Senior	19	13	6
Tertiary	5	3	2
Secondary	69	49	20
Primary	22	14	8
Total	115	79	36

Table 1: Cadre details

Source: Administrative Division

Performance

Details of the Training Programmes

During the period under review, steps were taken to provide training with the aim of strengthening the capacity, knowledge and skills of the staff.

No	Name of the Programme	Country	Number of Officials Participated
01	Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Joint working Group on Tourism	Nepal	02
02.	Inter National Conference on “the Main Directions and opportunities of Tourism Development	Turkmenistan	02
03.	Seminar for Young Diplomats	China	01
04.	Seminar on Natural Heritage Protection and Management for BRI Countries	China	01
05.	Seminar on Eco Tourism Development	China	02
06.	JICA Knowledge Co -Creation Program: Sustainable Tourism Development with Cultural Heritage and Local Community	Japan	01
07.	Seminar on Tourism Resources Exploitation and Environmental Protection in Developing Countries	China	01
08.	South Asia Sub regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Programs working Group Meeting and Senior Officials Meeting	Bhutan	01
09.	ADB: Delivering Value – Added Tourism Solutions in Asia and the Pacific Learning program	Thailand	01

Table 2: Details of the Training Programmes
Source: Administration Division

1.2.2. Finance Division

This division is responsible for the management of financial resources in the Tourism Section of the Ministry. Finance Division provides a range of supportive services including budget estimate activities, payroll system, financial operations, assets management, financial reporting and other financial - related services.

Key Functions

- Preparation of draft Annual Budget Estimates and Budget Control.
- Preparation and presenting final accounts.
- Maintain the Advance “B” Accounts of Public Officers.
- Preparation of staff wages and payment of salaries on due date and making payments in relation to the capital and recurrent expenditure.
- Monitoring and control the impress requirement and presenting the annual cash flow.
- Assets management and organize annual stock verification.
- Preparation and submission of Financial Report.
- Handling of all audit queries of the National Audit office.
- Monitor and advice on Financial Management of the Ministry (Tourism Section) and the Institution come under the purview of the Tourism Section.
- Running management information systems. (CIGAS, ITMIS)
- Implementation of financial policies in accordance with the prevailing laws, rules, regulations and circulars.

Financial Progress - as at 31.12.2024

Ministry of Tourism and Land (Tourism Section) Head No: 122 01 – Operational Activities 01 – Administration and Establishment Service						
Object	Item	Description	Rs. Revised Total Allocation	Rs. Total Expenditure	Rs. Balance Allocation	Percentage
		Recurrent Expenditure	32,360,000.00	15,408,600.37	16,951,399.63	47.62%
		Personal Emoluments	9,200,000.00	3,230,899.62	5,969,100.38	35.12%
1001		Salaries and Wages	5,000,000.00	1,573,247.45	3,426,752.55	31.46%
1002		Overtime and Holiday Payments	1,400,000.00	342,452.42	1,057,547.58	24.46%
1003		Other Allowances	2,800,000.00	1,315,199.75	1,484,800.25	46.97%
		Travelling Expenses	3,500,000.00	36,600.00	3,463,400.00	1.05%
1101		Domestic	1,000,000.00	36,600.00	963,400.00	3.66%
1102		Foreign	2,500,000.00	-	2,500,000.00	0.00%
		Supplies	6,380,000.00	3,762,105.52	2,617,894.48	58.97%
1201		Stationary and Office Requisites	700,000.00	89,307.25	610,692.75	12.76%
1202		Fuel	5,630,000.00	3,672,798.27	1,957,201.73	65.24%
	002	Fuel Allowances	5,530,000.00	3,652,833.27	1,877,166.73	66.05%
	010	Fuel for other purpose	100,000.00	19,965.00	80,035.00	19.97%
1203		Diets and Uniforms	50,000.00	-	50,000.00	0.00%
	002	Uniforms	50,000.00	-	50,000.00	0.00%
		Maintenance Expenditure	3,970,000.00	2,572,612.00	1,397,388.00	64.80%
1301		Vehicles	3,000,000.00	2,305,212.00	694,788.00	76.84%
1302		Plant and Machinery	250,000.00	-	250,000.00	0.00%
1303		Buildings and Structures	720,000.00	267,400.00	452,600.00	37.14%
		Services	8,760,000.00	5,762,754.11	2,997,245.89	65.78%
1401		Transport	1,790,000.00	836,540.58	953,459.42	46.73%
1402		Postal and Communication	500,000.00	186,776.99	313,223.01	37.36%
1403		Electricity and Water	4,150,000.00	3,980,137.47	169,862.53	95.91%
1404		Rents and Local Taxes	920,000.00	-	920,000.00	0.00%
1409		Other	1,400,000.00	759,299.07	640,700.93	54.24%
	138	Machinery and office Equipment Service Agreement	400,000.00	21,486.62	378,513.38	5.37%
	139	Vehicle Insurance	700,000.00	608,612.87	91,387.13	86.94%
	140	Miscellaneous Service Expenditure	300,000.00	129,199.58	170,800.42	43.07%
		Transfers	550,000.00	43,629.12	506,370.88	7.93%
1502		Retirement Benefit	550,000.00	43,629.12	506,370.88	7.93%
		Capital Expenditure	3,500,000.00	-	3,500,000.00	0.00%
		Rehabilitation and improvement of Capital Assets	2,500,000.00	-	2,500,000.00	0.00%
2002		Plant, Machinery and Equipment	500,000.00	-	500,000.00	0.00%
2003		Vehicles	2,000,000.00	-	2,000,000.00	0.00%
		Acquisition of Capital Assets	1,000,000.00	-	1,000,000.00	0.00%
2102		Furniture and Office Equipments	500,000.00	-	500,000.00	0.00%
2103		Plant, Machinery and Equipment	500,000.00	-	500,000.00	0.00%
		Grand Total	35,860,000.00	15,408,600.37	20,451,399.63	42.97%

Table 3: Financial Progress

Source: Accounts Division

Ministry of Tourism and Land (Tourism Section) Head No: 122 01 – Operational Activities 05 – Administration and Establishment Service						
Object	Item	Description	Rs. Revised Total Allocation	Rs. Total Expenditure	Rs. Balance Allocation	Percentage
		Recurrent Expenditure	141,600,000.00	127,060,861.46	14,539,138.54	89.73%
		Personal Emoluments	75,710,000.00	66,868,208.31	8,841,791.69	88.32%
1001		Salaries and Wages	48,000,000.00	39,437,321.64	8,562,678.36	82.16%
1002		Overtime and Holiday Payments	1,900,000.00	1,633,787.50	266,212.50	85.99%
1003		Other Allowances	25,810,000.00	25,797,099.17	12,900.83	99.95%
		Travelling Expenses	2,805,000.00	2,113,074.97	691,925.03	75.33%
1101		Domestic	700,000.00	561,030.00	138,970.00	80.15%
1102		Foreign	2,105,000.00	1,552,044.97	552,955.03	73.73%
		Supplies	11,350,000.00	10,756,081.37	593,918.63	94.77%
1201		Stationary and Office Requisites	2,500,000.00	2,342,218.24	157,781.76	93.69%
1202		Fuel	8,800,000.00	8,377,863.13	422,136.87	95.20%
	002	Fuel Allowances	5,300,000.00	4,938,757.03	361,242.97	93.18%
	009	Fuel for Pool Vehicles	3,000,000.00	2,945,396.48	54,603.52	98.18%
	010	Fuel for other purpose	500,000.00	493,709.62	6,290.38	98.74%
1203		Diets and Uniforms	50,000.00	36,000.00	14,000.00	72.00%
	002	Uniforms	50,000.00	36,000.00	14,000.00	72.00%
		Maintenance Expenditure	7,500,000.00	6,313,156.02	1,186,843.98	84.18%
1301		Vehicles	6,000,000.00	5,841,982.12	158,017.88	97.37%
1302		Plant and Machinery	700,000.00	330,108.90	369,891.10	47.16%
1303		Buildings and Structures	800,000.00	141,065.00	658,935.00	17.63%
		Services	40,320,000.00	38,215,627.11	2,104,372.89	94.78%
1401		Transport	3,100,000.00	3,009,999.99	90,000.01	97.10%
1402		Postal and Communication	1,430,000.00	1,257,740.16	172,259.84	87.95%
1403		Electricity and Water	6,100,000.00	5,462,643.79	637,356.21	89.55%
1404		Rents and Local Taxes	25,190,000.00	25,185,826.89	4,173.11	99.98%
1405		Cleaning and janitorial Services	3,000,000.00	2,191,597.50	808,402.50	73.05%
1407		Security Services	1,500,000.00	1,107,818.78	392,181.22	73.85%
1409		Other	3,700,000.00	2,604,106.61	1,095,893.39	70.38%
	138	Machinery and office Equipment				
	138	Service Agreement	300,000.00	213,070.00	86,930.00	71.02%
	139	Vehicle Insurance	800,000.00	628,967.29	171,032.71	78.62%
	140	Miscellaneous Service Expenditure	2,600,000.00	1,762,069.32	837,930.68	67.77%
		Transfers	215,000.00	190,607.07	24,392.93	88.65%
1506		Property Loan Interest to Public Servants	215,000.00	190,607.07	24,392.93	88.65%
		Capital Expenditure	8,500,000.00	2,025,415.50	6,474,584.50	23.83%
		Rehabilitation and improvement of Capital Assets	5,000,000.00	1,722,053.50	3,277,946.50	34.44%
2001		Building and Structure	2,000,000.00	-	2,000,000.00	0.00%
2002		Plant, Machinery and Equipment	500,000.00	-	500,000.00	0.00%
2003		Vehicles	2,500,000.00	1,722,053.50	777,946.50	68.88%
		Acquisition of Capital Assets	3,000,000.00	180,962.00	2,819,038.00	6.03%
2102		Furniture and Office Equipments	1,000,000.00	178,962.00	821,038.00	17.90%
2103		Plant, Machinery and Equipment	2,000,000.00	2,000.00	1,998,000.00	0.10%
		Capacity Buiding	500,000.00	122,400.00	377,600.00	24.48%
2401		Staff Training	500,000.00	122,400.00	377,600.00	24.48%
		Grand Total	150,100,000.00	129,086,276.96	21,013,723.04	86.00%

Table 4: Financial Progress
Source: Accounts Division

Ministry of Tourism and Land (Tourism Section) Head No: 122 02 – Development Activities 06 – Tourism Sector Development								
Sub Project	Object	Item	Finance Code	Description	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Percentage
					Revised Total Allocation	Total Expenditure	Balance Allocation	
	2202	17		Development Assistance	610,000,000.00	20,413,070.45	589,586,929.55	3.35%
010	2509			Markert Development Facility Project- (GOSL/Australia	220,000,000.00	-	220,000,000.00	-
			13		200,000,000.00		200,000,000.00	0.00%
			17		20,000,000.00		20,000,000.00	0.00%
011	2509			Indo-Pacific Opportunity Project (IPOP)- (GOSL/USAID)	161,000,000.00	-	161,000,000.00	-
			13		160,000,000.00		160,000,000.00	0.00%
			17		1,000,000.00		1,000,000.00	0.00%
012	2509			Tousrim Resilience Project (GOSL/European Union)	116,000,000.00	-	116,000,000.00	-
			13		100,000,000.00		100,000,000.00	0.00%
			17		16,000,000.00		16,000,000.00	0.00%
015	2001			Development of pinnawala Kithulgala Tousrist Corridor -Building and Structures	24,846,293.16	2,371,748.00	22,474,545.16	9.55%
015	2105			Development of pinnawala Kithulgala Tousrist Corridor -Land and Land Improvement	703,440,231.85	49,401,758.91	654,038,472.94	7.02%
015	2103			Development of pinnawala Kithulgala Tousrist Corridor -Plant, Machinery and Equipment	1,092,577.60		1,092,577.60	0.00%
015	2104			Development of pinnawala Kithulgala Tousrist Corridor-Building and Structures-	20,620,897.39	6,075,542.85	14,545,354.54	29.46%
Total					1,857,000,000.00	78,262,120.21	1,778,737,879.79	4.2%

Table 5: Financial Progress
Source: Accounts Division

1.2.3. Internal Audit Division

The Internal Audit Division of the Ministry of Tourism is functioning under a Chief Internal Auditor who is directly responsible to the secretary of Ministry as per F. R 134(1) and 40 (3) of National Audit Act No 19 of 2019. The Division consists of a staff with three Development Officers. Followings are the function of the Internal Audit Division

The Internal Audit Division may carry out system audit, financial audit and performance audit covering all areas such as approved annual budget, action plan, new budget proposals and in addition to that, special investigation to ensure effective performance in the Ministry and institutions

The following Programmers & Projects are functioning under the Tourism Sector.

122-01-01	Operational Activities and Minister's Office
122-01-05	Operational Activities, Administration & Establishment Services
122-02-06	Development Activities & Tourism promotion

Key Functions

- Ascertaining whether the system of the internal check and control exercised in the ministry for the prevention of errors & frauds are effective in design as well as in actual operations.
- Ascertaining the reliability of accounting & other records and seeking that the accounting methods employed provide the information necessary for the preparation of correct financial statements.
- Appraising the quality of performance of staff in carrying out the responsibility assigned to them.
- Ascertaining the extent to which the Ministry's assets are safeguarded from losses of all kinds.
- Ascertaining whether the regulations such as E-code, FR, and other government circulars are being followed.
- Ascertaining the effectiveness of the system of internal control system adopted in preventing as well as detecting waste, idle capacity and extravagance.
- Carry out special investigations when necessary.
- Examine the accounting procedure of the Ministry and its operations which have any financial implications and verifying the safety, economical and proper use of property and assets of the Ministry.
- Carry out management auditing of the related institutions

Performance

- Following documents related on the year 2024 have been prepared.
 - Internal Audit Plan 2024 and Risk Register 2024.
- Fourteen Internal Audit queries have been issued following the inspection of the Ministry and the inspection.

- 4 AMC meeting has been held with institutions for the year.
- 7 inquiries have been progressed

1.2.4. Planning and Monitoring Division

This division is responsible for planning and monitoring. The main functions of this division are, planning, coordinating and facilitating the national development policies, programmes and projects prepared for the tourism industry. This division maintains a proper coordination with the Department of National Planning, the Department of External Resources, Department of National Budget and the Department of Project Management and Monitoring in order to be successful at the above functions.

Key Functions

- To identify new trends and planning in account of improvement of the tourism sector.
- Preparation of the action plan of the Ministry in accordance with the Treasury provisions for each year.
- To monitor and review progress monthly/quarterly against the action plan. Organizing progress review meetings according to quarterly financial and physical progress against the Annual Action Plan.
- Handling a result-based project evaluation as per the annual progress report of the Ministry.
- Preparation of the annual budget and performance report and submission of the same to relevant authorities.
- Evaluation of new project proposals being submitted from Departments and agencies to the Ministry and submission of the same to the Department of National Planning and Department of Project Management and Monitoring.

Performance

- The Annual Performance Report and Accounts of the Tourism Section for the year 2023 was prepared and submitted to the Parliament.
- Preparation of the action plan for the year 2024 and taken necessary arrangements to prepare the action plan for the year 2025.
- Hold four quarterly progress review meetings for the institutions under the purview of the Tourism Section.
- Submission of relevant proposals to the National Planning Department and the National Budget Department for the allocation of provisions from the budget 2025.
- Appointment of committees, conducting progress review meetings and follow up functions were carried out as per the instructions given by the Presidential Secretariat regarding the

preparation of Tourism Master Plans for Ella, Nuwara Eliya and Arugambay and further development activities of those.

- Formulation of National Tourism Policy for Sri Lanka and Submitted to Cabinet of Ministers approval. This National Tourism Policy will be amalgamated in accordance with the new tourism policy introduced by the government.

1.2.5. Development Division

This division is responsible for the implementation of the annual action plan of the tourism section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism and carries out all the development works related to the institutions under the purview of this Ministry (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB), Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM). Further, the division carries out all the international relations activities under the ministry's purview. Furthermore, other Government institutions, bilateral and multilateral development partners and private sector stakeholders are coordinated by the division related explicitly to the development work with the aim of facilitating the tourism industry.

Key Functions

- Implementation of the development projects under the annual budgetary allocation in order to achieve the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the Ministry.
- Carryout all the development works related to the institutions under the purview of this Tourism Section (Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB), Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM)
- To coordinate and implementation of international cooperation in the field of tourism development
- Coordinate with other government institutions, bilateral and multilateral development partners and private sector stakeholders related explicitly to the development work.
- To identify new trends in tourism development activities

1.3. Programs and Projects

1.3.1. Development of Tourist Attractions

The Ministry has allocated Rs. 610 million to develop common amenities and infrastructure at tourist destinations. The major objectives of the project are to ensure the sustainable growth of the tourism industry by developing tourist attractions in rural areas, providing quality services to tourists, increasing tourist footfall, and creating opportunities for tourists to contribute to the local economy.

It was reported that Rs. 458.4 million has been utilized at the end of December 2024 and the progress details are provided in the below Table 6.

S/N	Name of Development Projects	Total Estimated Cost Rs.	Expenditure as at 31.12.2024 Rs.	Status
1	Development of Eco Park and Beach Park in Habaraduwa	10,000,000.00	6,939,642.77	Completed
2	Infrastructure Development for the Habaraduwa Haritha Werala Park	1,759,312.59	1,495,220.98	Completed
3	Reconstruction of Sunandarama Second Lane Road, Mirissa	1,686,141.83	1,538,150.60	Completed
4	Development of the Wallawattha Road Mahawidiya at Mirissa Beach	1,268,886.61	1,030,451.64	Completed
5	Improvement of Mirissa Udupila Maha Ela	3,069,000.00	2,535,423.60	Completed
6	Rehabilitation of beach access road near Paradise Beach Resort in Grama Niladhari Domain, Mirissa, South (Tourism Zone Development Project)	1,278,180.28	1,113,443.00	Completed
7	Construction of proposed Access Road for Waterfall and Viewpoint, Panwila, Kandy	4,000,000.00	3,892,446.24	Completed
8	Streamlining drainage at Victoria Children's Park in Nuwara Eliya	9,078,251.67	-	Work in progress
9	Development the Pedestrian lane from Sampath Bank to Dharmapala roundabout, Nuwara Eliya	9,851,047.09	-	Work in progress
10	Development of the women's toilet surrounded land near the children's park and foot path at Victoria Park, Nuwara Eliya	9,320,729.46	-	Work in progress
11	Installation of Street light poles in the lane at upper Gregory Lake, Nuwara Eliya	1,842,329.60	1,778,400.00	Completed
12	Improvement of an existing footpath to Kolapathana waterfall and improvement of the public bathing point at (Pihilla)at Mandaramnuwara	2,766,400.00	-	Work in progress
13	Construction of an open type observation deck for a viewing point at Mandaramnuwara	6,357,400.00	-	Work in progress
14	Development of Ella Chat Area Stage 1 (Development of Beera Ella Kandura Project)	53,683,200.00	-	Work in progress
15	Development of Ella Chat Area Stage 2	49,766,400.00	166,167.60	Completed the survey plans

S/N	Name of Development Projects	Total Estimated Cost Rs.	Expenditure as at 31.12.2024 Rs.	Status
16	Improvement of Walking Path from Ella Town to Passara Road	54,232,576.00	230,000.00	Completed the survey plans
17	Fixing name boards in the Pahaiyangala Viharaya, Bulathsinhala	324,200.51	297,010.00	Completed
18	Development of Infrastructure Facilities in Pahiyangala Viharaya, Bulathsinhala	4,978,738.88	4,860,621.59	Completed
19	Name Board of Ahasbokkuwa in Kaluthara	30,000.00	29,100.00	Completed
20	Development of Kabaragoi Waterfall, Kaluthara	2,000,000.00	1,940,000.00	Completed
21	Construction of Rest Area for Makeliya waterfall, Kaluthara	1,500,000.00	1,455,000.00	Completed
22	Name Board & Light for Atwaltota Ella, Kaluthara	180,000.00	174,000.00	Completed
23	Development of Tourist facilities at Rambadagalla Ridi Viharaya, Ridigama	9,843,531.27	29,000.00	Work in progress
24	Conservation of Lavangama Tanpita Viharaya, Ruwanwella, Kegalle	1,326,312.90	-	Work in progress
25	Development Galoya Eco Park - Developed infrastructure facilities, Hingurakgoda, Polonnaruwa	7,891,712.61	-	Completed 6,691,803.25 (Bills in Hand)
26	Development Galoya Eco Park - Rehabilitation of Ihalakanda of Galoya ECO Park, Hingurakgoda, Polonnaruwa	2,469,050.00	2,469,050.00	Completed
27	Development Galoya Eco Park - Habited Management, Hingurakgoda, Polonnaruwa	1,273,752.61	1,234,106.60	Completed
28	Development Galoya Eco Park (Camping Area), Hingurakgoda, Polonnaruwa	1,889,277.85	509,897.06	Completed (Bills in hand 1,239,567.48)
29	Construction of Box Culvert in Iregeoya Road, Hingurakgoda, Polonnaruwa	3,123,927.26	3,076,666.70	Completed
30	Construction of Box Culvert in Circular Road, Hingurakgoda, Polonnaruwa	3,680,848.55	3,489,874.53	Completed
31	Construction of sanitary facilities at Mangala Rajamaha Vihara at Seruwila	10,000,000.00	3,500,000.00	Work in progress
32	Infrastructure Development for the Kokkilai Puliyamunai lagoon Eco Tourism, Mullaitivu	9,587,378.97	8,036,787.00	Completed

S/N	Name of Development Projects	Total Estimated Cost Rs.	Expenditure as at 31.12.2024 Rs.	Status
33	Obtaining Blue Flag Certification to Beaches in Pasikuda and Arugambay	45,600,000.00	-	Work in progress
34	Adoptation of Renovate Dutch Fort (Kalpitiya and Mannar)	100,000,000.00	2,780,288.04	Work in progress
35	Construction of Proposed Shelter for Natha Dewalaya, Kandy	9,837,413.38	-	Work in progress
36	Construction of Seethagagula Megoda Ambalama Sanitary facility in Sripadaya	1,540,526.43	1,363,297.73	Completed
37	Construction of Seethagagula Egoda Ambalama Sanitary facility in Sripadaya	3,382,274.22	3,283,761.38	Completed
38	Purchasing of Life Serving Equipment for Ethukala Life Serving Points	437,370.00	-	Work in progress
	Providing lifesaving equipment for Bentota Life Saving Points	6,929,610.00	269,717.50	Completed constructions
39	Complete the Tourism Master Plan for North Western Province	5,000,000.00	0.00	Work in progress
40	Construction of toilet system in Kuruwita Bopath Falls area - II Phase	661,088.37	661,088.37	Completed
	Grand Total	458,446,868.94	60,839,701.30	

Table 6: Progress of Development Assistance Projects

Source: Development Division

1.3.2 Development of Pinnawala – Kithulgala Tourism Corridor

The Pinnawala and Kithulgala areas are highly sought-after tourist attractions. Therefore, a provision of Rs. 750 million was allocated in the 2024 budget proposal for the development of the Pinnawala-Kithulgala tourist belt. This initiative aims to enhance key areas such as the Kithulgala water canoeing site, Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage, and their surroundings, transforming them into a well-equipped tourist zone.

Accordingly, infrastructure and visitor facilities, including access roads, amenities, sanitary facilities (such as water and washrooms), and vehicle parks, have been developed. These implementations were carried out through the Urban Development Authority and the District Secretariat of Kegalle. The progress is summarized in Table 7 below.

S/ N	Name of Development Projects	Allocation 2024 Rs.	Expenditure as at 31.12.2024 Rs.	Status
1	Development of the remaining part of the walking path from near Hiriwadunna bridge to Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage - 1.4 km	16,712,298.30	2,763,450.90	Work in progress
2	Concreting and developing difficult areas on the Belilena - Handun Ella (via Yahinda) road	74,393,523.60	57,187,331.61	Completed
3	Development of the access road to Uruladeniya tank	9,291,282.00	7,910,700.35	Completed
4	Development of the Holombuwa Sthripura Purana Gallen Vihara Road and construction of a car park	6,533,736.00	5,344,508.28	Completed
5	Construction of a drain for the drainage of water in the Yattogoda Yatalena temple premises.	9,085,173.89	-	Completed (Bills in Hand Rs. 4,603,656.80)
	Construction of an access road to the Yattogoda Yatalena temple and the Siyambalapitiya Lake via the rubber plantation.	9,848,621.40	8,370,401.60	Completed
	Construction of an access road to the Yattogoda Yatalena temple and the Siyambalapitiya Lake the village.	9,679,940.00	7,532,946.80	Completed
	Construction and improvement of the internal road system and parking facilities in the Yattogoda Yatalena temple premises.	7,367,217.00	4,455,384.92	Completed
6	Construction of two toilets for local and foreign tourists at the premises of Baarandi Temple.	7,391,374.60	1,222,195.80	Work in progress
7	Construction of two toilets for local and foreign tourists at the premises of Seethawaka Royal Palace	9,880,853.20	1,625,559.72	Completed
8	Development of the car park and construction of a toilet system for tourists in the Daliwala Kotawehera Temple premises	2,348,669.59	2,312,403.33	Completed
9	Construction of the access road to the Makandawa Rain Forest (Parawalathenna Makandawa Temple road)	19,608,559.14	15,703,358.50	Completed
10	Renovation of the Kalukohuthenna Bridge (Renovation of the wire bridge with new cables and plates)	14,931,381.87	9,163,982.80	Completed
11	Development of the existing latex collection center as a sales outlet for Kithul products.	548,907.30	543,974.54	Completed

S/ N	Name of Development Projects	Allocation 2024 Rs.	Expenditure as at 31.12.2024 Rs.	Status
12	Development of infrastructure in the Batalegala area.	3,000,000.00	2,379,771.38	Completed
13	Construction of a safety handrail at Belungala Narangala	1,000,000.00	990,301.00	Completed
14	Restoration of paintings, sculptures and murals in the Bisowela Rajamaha	133,890.00	125,420.00	Completed
	Renovating the Hevisi Mandapa of the Bisowela Rajamaha Viharaya in the ancient style	1,543,808.20	1,296,945.00	Completed
15	Repair of the roof of the main cave of Yattogoda Yatalaena Viharaya	3,835,722.00	1,209,882.00	
	Chemical preservation inside the cave of the Yattogoda Yatalena Temple		727,880.20	Completed
	Renovation of the floor of the cave of the Yatalena temple in Yattogoda		312,675.00	Completed
	Preparing the electrical system at the Yatalena Temple in Yattogoda		1,387,983.00	Completed
16	Repairing the existing electrical system at the Dedigama Kotawehera temple premises and constructing lamp posts at the required places, modernizing the brick drainage system around the Kotawehera Stupa, laying turf at the required places and beautifying the area around major trees, installation of benches to rest and construction of the sand terrace.	2,305,836.50	2,178,633.80	Completed
	Construction of the entrance to the Kotawehera premises	810,000.00	689,975.00	Completed
17	Development of the access road to the historical Lenakaduwa Temple in Ihala Lenagala	1,925,000.00	1,197,813.24	Completed
18	Development of the access road and stairs at Ambalena (Malandeniya)	3,828,000.00	1,582,165.16	Completed
19	Development of entrance, sanitation system in the Kurulu Kale	3,000,000.00	2,790,167.45	Completed
20	Widening and construction of the access road to King Rajasinghe's Tomb	603,957.27	488,331.17	Completed
21	Conservation of the Ruakashal Cable Bridge in Dehiowita , built during the imperial period.	3,852,583.79	2,998,637.65	Completed
	Total	223,460,335.65	144,492,780.20	

Table 7: Progress of Pinnewala – Kithulgala Tourism Corridor

Source: Development Division

1.3.3 Issuance of Vehicle Permits and Visa

According to Cabinet Decision No. 24/0644/615/003-I and Cabinet Memorandum No. MT/2024/05, both dated 01.04.2024, 210 vehicle permits were issued to hotels and Destination Management Companies (DMCs). Additionally, Cabinet Decisions Nos. 24/1650/601/099 of 21.08.2024 and 24/1793/619/029 of 02.09.2024 approved the implementation of visa-free entry for tourism purposes for citizens of 39 countries.

1.3.4 Expo 2025

The Government of Japan has invited Sri Lanka to participate in the World Expo 2025 to be held in Osaka from 13 April to 13 October 2025 under the theme “Designing Future Society for our Lives”.

- Sri Lanka focuses mainly on the “Sustainable Management of Marine Resources” (Marine Tourism).
- The primary focus is on improving the image of the country instead of promoting tourism.
- The Ministry of Tourism was designated as the responsible agency as per Cabinet Decision No.: අමප/21/1312/313/044, dated 2021.08.02 taken on the Cabinet Memorandum No. 2021/48 submitted by Former Hon. Minister of Trade.
- As per Cabinet Decision No.: අමප/23/0430/615/016, dated 27.02.2023, the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau was authorized to register for Expo 2025 in Osaka, Japan.
- The Managing Director of the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau has been appointed as the Commissioner General of the Sri Lanka Expo Secretariat.
- The provisional estimated cost of the exhibition is approximately Rs. 248 million, of which 50% will be borne by the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau.

1.3.5 Bilateral Relations

This Ministry has signed bilateral agreements/MoUs on tourism cooperation with the following countries.

The country signed the MoU	Date of Signing	Current Progress
Pakistan	2021.02.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was proposed to establish a Joint Steering Committee for further actions. The names of representatives of this Ministry and the institutions affiliated to the Ministry representing Sri Lanka for the said Joint Steering Committee have been proposed and forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
South Africa	2015.02.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cabinet of Ministers has approved the signing of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding as per the Cabinet decision No. 403/20/1732/327/018, dated 2021.01.05. The Ministry has already informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take the necessary steps to sign this Memorandum of Understanding
Malaysia	2016.12.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The observations related to the signing of the new Memorandum of Understanding have been forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
Philippines	2019.01.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Joint Steering Committee for the implementation of the MoU has been established with the nominations of both countries.
Maldives	2003.05.06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government of Maldives expressed its willingness to continue the implementation of the MoU and requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to remove the section mentioned in Article 03 (a) of the MoU, which was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 2023.06.05. The Government of Maldives has requested an extension to further review the Article 3.
Cambodia	2022.05.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MoU has been signed.
Oman	2024.02.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MoU has been signed.

Table 8: Details of Bilateral Relations
Source: Development Division

The bilateral agreements to be signed in future with Bangladesh, Estonia, Georgia, Indonesia, Iraq, China and Nepal.

1.3.6 Re- Organization of Tourism related Para- Public Institutions

A Cabinet Memorandum seeking approval to improve governance, promote Sri Lanka as a sustainable and safe tourism destination, enhance private sector participation, and reorganize tourism-related para-public institutions has been submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers.

1.3.7 Foreign Funded Projects

Four grant projects were implemented; However, the projects were directly managed by the donors. The division provided necessary coordination and follow-up support.

1.3.7.1 Knowledge Support Technical Assistance KSTA 9881 (ADB)

Objectives of the project are to build a resilient and Competitive tourism sector aftermath of the Easter attack in 2019 and the Covid pandemic. Time Duration was from 24.12.2019 to 02.12.2024. Estimated Total Cost was USD 1.5 million funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Implementing Agencies were Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, (SLTTP), Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM)

It was achieved the 100 % physical progress including, trained 120 number of homestay operation and coaches, received standards for homestay operations, established 75 websites and social media profiles, completed two awareness programs in Kandy and Galle districts (A total of 50 students in 2 districts), Revised curriculum of SLITHM. In addition, under the Development of Marine Tourism, completed Road Map first phase Kalpitiya, Galle and Trincomalee. Marine Tourism Road Map Second phase (North Province) is in progress as the stakeholder validation is pending expected to be completed in June.

1.3.7.2 Tourism Resilience Project (Pekoe Trail)

Objectives of the project are to develop a heritage walking trail network in the Central and Uva provinces as the “signature experience” linked to a small grant program to encourage business startups in order to ensure SME participation and fill in service or product gaps.

Duration of the project was from May 2021 to April 2024 and Total Estimated Cost was Euro 2.5 million funded by European Union (EU). Implementing Agencies were SLTDA, EU, USAID YOULEAD, AIESEC,

Completed 62 SME emergency grants and 2 of 20 Economic opportunity grants are underway (78% Achieved), opened stage 1 (Hanthana to Galle) and Galaha to Loolkandura) of the Pekoe Trails, conducted promotions and destination marketing, trained 100+ SMEs, completed the contact work readiness skills development training and trained 200 SMEs by short courses.

1.3.7.3 Market Development Facility (MDF)

Objective of the project is to foster inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction; Time Duration is from 01 March 2022 to 30 June 2027 and Estimated Total Cost is AUD 12.1 million funded by Government of Australia.

Implementing Agency is Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia.

Agreement was signed on 30.01.2021 and first steering committee meeting was conducted on 09.05.2024.

1.3.7.4 USAID Indo Pacific Opportunity Project.

Objective of the project is to identify areas of growth for micro, small and medium enterprises in the Tourism Industry to develop a sustainability framework for Sri Lanka Tourism industry to develop a Sri Lanka Tourism Development “Land Bank”.

Time Duration was from 31.07.2022 to 31.08.2024 and Estimated Total Cost was USD 3.206 million funded by USAID. Implementing Agencies were SLTDA and USAID

Completed the identification of area of growth for micro, small and medium enterprises in the Tourism Industry, development a sustainable framework for Sri Lanka Tourism Industry and Development of “Land Bank” is in progress.



PROGRESS REPORT

2024

**SRI LANKA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**

Content

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The Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) serves as the principal government agency overseeing tourism in Sri Lanka. Established under Section 2 of the Tourism Act No. 38 of 2005, SLTDA is dedicated to positioning Sri Lanka as Asia's leading tourism destination. Its core responsibilities include planning, development, regulation, and policy implementation within the tourism and related industries.

Vision

"To be recognized as the world's finest island for compact, authentic and diverse experience"

Mission

"To be a high value destination offering extraordinary experiences that reflect Sri Lanka's natural and cultural heritage, socially inclusive and environmentally responsible and provide economic benefits to communities and the country"

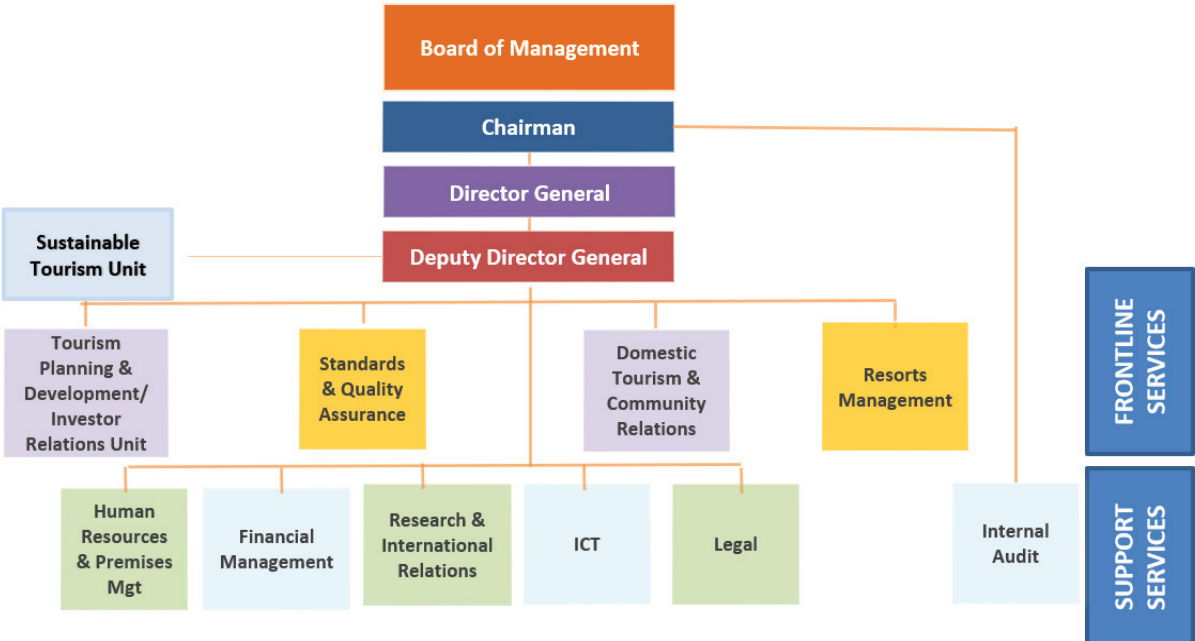
Objectives

The objectives of the SLTDA as per the Section 3A of Tourism Act No. 38 of 2005

- a) To develop Sri Lanka as a tourist and travel destination both in Sri Lanka and abroad.
- b) To advise the Minister in charge on the subject of Tourism on matters relating to travel and the tourism industry, within the policy formulated by the Cabinet of Ministers, in relation to this sector.
- c) To provide guidance to the SLTPB to develop, promote and market Sri Lanka as a tourist and travel destination both in Sri Lanka and abroad.
- d) To provide guidance to the SLITHM to undertake human resource training and development activities.
- e) To work towards the enhancement of the tourism and travel sectors in order to secure a contribution for the expansion and development of Sri Lanka's economy.
- f) To develop and promote adequate, attractive, and efficient tourist services, inclusive of the hospitality industry in a sustainable manner.
- g) To license and accredit tourist enterprises in order to develop, enforce and maintain locally and internationally accepted standards in relation to the tourism industry and other related industries.
- h) To encourage persons or bodies of persons in the private sector to participate in the promotion of the tourism industry and the promotional and training activities connected with such industry.

i) To do all such other acts as may be necessary or conducive to the attainment of all or any of the above objectives.

Organogram



Introduction

The Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) is the principal government agency responsible for the strategic planning, development, regulation, and policy implementation of the nation's tourism sector. The year 2024 witnessed a significant resurgence in Sri Lanka's tourism sector. Sri Lanka welcomed 2,053,465 tourist arrivals and the key source markets included India, Russia, UK, Germany and China. This marked improvement underscores the effectiveness of SLTDA's initiatives and the growing global appeal of Sri Lanka as a travel destination. In the year 2024, SLTDA undertook a series of initiatives aimed at revitalizing and enhancing the tourism landscape of Sri Lanka. These efforts were designed to attract a diverse range of visitors, improve infrastructure, and promote Sri Lanka as a premier travel destination. This report provides an overview of the activities and programmes undertaken during the year 2024.

Tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka concluded 2024 with an optimistic outlook for its tourism industry, welcoming 248,592 tourists in December. This figure represents a 35% increase from November and an 18.18% rise compared to December 2023. By the end of the month, total arrivals reached 2,053,465, indicating a steady recovery in the sector. Europe has emerged as a dominant force in Sri Lanka's tourism landscape, accounting for 51.9% of total visitors, while Asia and the Pacific follow closely with 41% of arrivals. The Americas contribute 5.1%, and the Middle East and Africa account for 1.1% and 1%, respectively, enriching the diversity of the tourism market.

Month	2023	2024	% Change 2024/23
January	102,545	208,253	103.08
February	107,639	218,350	102.08
March	125,495	209,181	66.7
April	105,498	148,867	41.1
May	83,309	112,128	34.6
June	100,388	113,470	13.0
July	143,039	187,810	31.30
August	136,405	164,609	20.7
September	111,938	122,140	9.11
October	109,199	135,907	24.5
November	151,496	184,158	21.6
December	210,352	248,592	18.18
TOTAL	1,487,303	2,053,465	38.07

Progress review of the divisions

Research and International Relations Division

The Research and International Relations Division plays a pivotal role in the country's tourism sector. Its primary functions include the efficient collection, analysis, and dissemination of tourism-related research and statistics, which are essential for informed decision-making and strategic planning within the industry. Additionally, the division is responsible for handling the International relations, events and liaising with donors.

Activity with a short description	Budgetary allocation LKR	Outcome	KPI
Participate in International conferences, meetings and events organized by UN Tourism and PATA- 14 officials of SLTDA participated at various events organized by UN Tourism and PATA	15 Mn	Networking opportunities with global tourism leaders and stakeholders. Insights into innovative approaches for promoting Sri Lanka as a competitive tourist destination.	No of participants Financial progress
World Tourism Day 2024 -The National Celebration of World Tourism Day 2025 took place at the Cinnamon Grand Colombo under the theme "Tourism and Peace.	10 Mn	Increased public awareness about tourism's role as a catalyst for peace, fostering cross-cultural dialogue and creating economic opportunities for local communities.	No of participants- (physical and online) Financial progress No of media articles about the event Social media reach
Tourism Awards 2024-The Research and International Relations Division of SLTDA successfully organized the 7th edition of the Sri Lanka Tourism Awards, held on 20 th December, 2024, at Cinnamon Life, City of Dreams.	30 Mn	Enhanced service standards, encourage best practices, and cultivate a culture of excellence and innovation within the tourism industry	No. of applications No. of award recipients Financial progress Social media reach No. of articles published
Conduct studies for Tourism Satellite Accounts	25Mn	Conduct the inbound, outbound and domestic tourism surveys and use the data to compile the TSA	Compilation of TSA
Informal sector service Providers: The study focused	10 Mn	Understand the profile of the informal sector and utilize	Completion of the survey

Activity with a short description	Budgetary allocation LKR	Outcome	KPI
on gathering the details from informal service providers in Sigiriya. The total sample covered was 200.		the details for the current ongoing developments at Sigiriya	
Workforce employment survey: Survey on Tour Guides: The study focused on creating a profile of the current guides operating in Sri Lanka and estimating the future demand	10 Mn (Funding received from S4IG)	Understand the profile of the tour guides currently operating in the industry and understand the future demand	Completion of the survey
Survey on travel trade industry: The study focused on understanding the travel industry of Sri Lanka	10 Mn	Understand the travel trade industry of Sri Lanka	Completion of the survey
Survey on Sri Lankan industry insights: The study focused on understanding the tourism businesses operating in Sri Lanka	10 Mn	Understand the Sri Lankan industry	Completion of the survey
Publish periodic reports: The tourism statistics and other tourism related details are published in the form of reports	1 Mn	Publication and dissemination of reports	Number of reports published.
Improve tourism statistics and data management	10 Mn	Diversify the sources of tourism statistics and enrich the current sources	Number of reports published and sources of information
Visitor satisfaction survey at Sigiriya and survey on departing tourists	9Mn	Explore the current visitor satisfaction of tourists visiting Sigiriya and create a profile of tourists visiting Sri Lanka	Publication of reports based on the findings



Mr. Anton Dilesh, Assistant Director of Tourism Planning and Development Division of SLTDA participated in the PATA Destination Marketing Forum 2024 held in Thailand from 12th -14th November as a speaker.

World Tourism Day 2024-



Sri Lanka Tourism Awards 2024



Research Publications



Resorts Management Division

The Resorts Management Division plays a pivotal role in promoting domestic tourism by managing a network of trading and non-trading Resorts across the country.

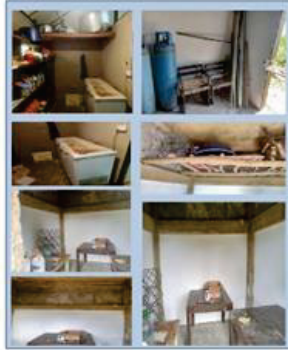
Activity with a short description	Budgetary allocation	Outcome	KPI
Obtain Approvals from the SLTDA board to carryout routine and preventive maintenance		Routine color washing NHR's Routine maintenance Improved standards of rooms and other areas	Guest satisfaction Increased sales 104.8 million 37.8% sales increase
Empowered managers to decide on rates (obtained approvals from the SLTDA board)		1.Increase sales during low demand days and give loyal and prospective customers a discount to promote	Increase of sales Rs.104.8 mn 37.8% sales increase
Implementation of 5S in the head office and the resort		Improved resorts/office efficiency	Improved work conditions / Implementation of 5S
Rate revision to maximize profitability		Increase in sales	Increase in sales Sales increase 37%
Special Logo Designs for NHR's		Creating the brand identity	Brand reach /social media reach

Activity with a short description	Budgetary allocation	Outcome	KPI
Creation of flyers for Fb and tiktok videos and social media campaign		<p>Social media presence / Brand awareness</p> <p>103 flyers for FB</p> <p>4 tiktok videos</p>	<p>Reach</p> <p>FB Reach – approximately 535.5 k</p> <p>Followers- 1.6k</p> <p>Tik tok reach - 34.7k</p> <p>Followers - 236</p> <p>Increase in sales – Rs.108.4 Mn – 37% increase</p>
Daily sales reporting via google sheet		Daily sales update by the staff to determine the status	Ease in decision making /
Energy saving instructions		Decrease in consumption	5% decrease on electricity bills
Finalized designs of Name boards for NHR's		Visibility	Was not able due to the concerns made by the Director Finance though the TEC was completed
Sourcing of 4 smart phones for NHR's		Connectivity/ Prompt responses	Was not able due to the concerns made by the Procurement division though the TEC was completed / However a business number was introduced and 83 queries have been made by prospective parties out of which 43 businesses closed.

Activity with a short description	Budgetary allocation	Outcome	KPI
Streamline the booking process of Staff		Avoid last minute cancellations / No - shows	No last minute cancellations/No-shows since September 2024
Implementation of the new staff reservation form		Clear correspondence on bookings	0 complaints / clear booking details
Food testing of new product		Bottled fried Karawila	100% testing completed, ready to release to the NHR's
Planning of the Wedding shoot proposal		8-10 weddings 12-14 wedding shoots per month at NHR-N'Eliya and B'wela	Increase the sales by 60%-70% Rs.167/- mn Increase room sales FB reach 1 million / 6000 followers Tik tok reach -25.0 k, followers 6000
Implementation of QR codes for feedback, energy saving initiatives,			
Event Location Promotion (Bandarawela/Nuwaraeliya)		Sales increase in Nuwaraeliya	136% sales increase in Nuwaraeliya and 10% sales increase in Bandarawela

5s Implementation in Resorts

Nuwara Eliya NHR



Logo Design



Interactive Media:



Implementation of Energy Saving Initiatives in the Division & Promoting the Resort in the SLTDA Building

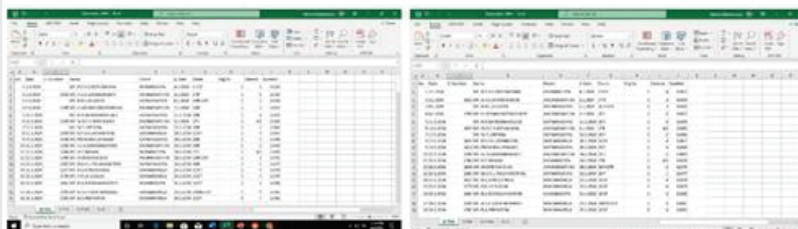


Energy saving initiatives



Enter Staff Booking Data to a Excel Sheet

This initiative is taken to increase the efficiency and productivity, also for the convenience of the reservation staff member.



Launching a New Food Product



Food product that we intended to sell in our National Holiday Resorts, prepared by the Chef of National Holiday Resort Kataragama, still in the initiation stage as per the instruction of the Industrial Development Board.

Event Location promoting post for NHR Bandarawela & Nuwara-eliya in Month of December



Implementation of QR Code for Feedbacks, Energy Saving Initiatives, Thank You Cards and Warning Signs to all Four NHRs.



WE VALUE YOUR OPINION!



Scan the QR code above to share your feedback. Your input not only encourages our staff but also helps us improve.

Connect with us via WhatsApp

077 - 561 9052

Resort: Bandarawela National Holiday Resort, Kataragama

TURN OFF THE LIGHTS



WHEN YOU LEAVE THE ROOM

Above 03 are printed as stickers



Legal Division

The Legal Division within SLTDA plays a pivotal role in rendering legal services to the other divisions of SLTDA to ensure the smooth flow of activities.

Activity	Budgetary allocation	Outcome	KPI
Execution of Lease Agreements			
02nos of Lease Agreements		Executed	Successful execution of lease agreements
Service Agreements			
10 nos of Service Agreements		Completed	Successful execution of service agreements
Court cases			
04 nos o Court Cases- Supreme Court		Pending	
12 nos Court of Appeal – Against SLTDA		Pending	
02 nos of Court of Appeal cases filed by SLTDA		Pending	
07 nos of District Court - Filed against SLTDA		Pending	Successful completion of the court cases
03 nos of District Court cases filed by SLTDA		Pending	
02 nos of Magistrate Court - Filed Against SLTDA		Pending	

Activity	Budgetary allocation	Outcome	KPI
11 nos of Cases filed by SLTDA		Pending	
Legal Opinion			
Nearly 25 nos of opinions given to S & QA Division and other Divisions			Successful execution of the relevant task
Complaints handling			
Complaints were handled which directed by Chairman/DG Some were directed to Tourist Police to get necessary action and some of them were totally resolved and some of them are in the process of resolving			Number of cases resolved

Standards and Quality Assurance Division

The Standards and Quality Assurance (SQA) Division plays a pivotal role in regulating and enhancing the quality of tourism services across Sri Lanka.

Standards & Quality Assurance Division - 2024			
Activity with a Short Description	Budgetary allocation	Outcome	KPI
<p>Conducting Awareness & Mobile Services:</p> <p>In line with one of SLTDA's objectives, the purpose of this</p>	Rs.2,762,200.95	Conducted 17 Awareness and Mobile	No. of Awareness and Mobile programs

activity is to raise awareness within the industry about the importance of providing guests with standardized and high-quality services to ensure compliance with registration requirements.		programs island-wide.	
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Foreign Funded Projects			
Activity with a Short Description	Budget	Outcome	KPI
<p>1. E learning Platform for Homestays (ADB):</p> <p>An e-learning platform with 09 modules covering all aspects of homestay operations has been developed with the support of ADB to enhance the skills and knowledge of homestay owners, their families, and operators, enabling registered homestays to improve their services effectively.</p>	N/A	Enhance the skills acquired and knowledge gained about homestays.	Developed E-Learning Platform

Domestic tourism and community relations



Domestic tourism and community relations

The Domestic Tourism and Community Relations Division of SLTDA focuses on promoting domestic tourism and fostering positive relationships between local communities and the tourism sector.

Activity with a short description	Budgetary allocation	Outcome	KPI
Provincial Tourism Development Projects			
Completed construction of a building for craftsmen/artisans at Madunagala Hot Water Springs in Southern Province to improve Provincial Level Domestic Tourism Initiatives	2 Mn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Provides a dedicated space for craftsmen to sell their work, promoting local entrepreneurship and increase income opportunities * Enhances the visitor experience and attract more tourists at Madunagala Hot Water Springs by offering cultural and artisanal products. * Generate a sustainable economic activity that benefitted for environment, cultural values and the community 	Project completed

Completed Police Post in Mount Lavinia, Western Province	8.531 Mn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Enhanced police presence can Improved public Safety, discourage criminal activities in the area and faster response times to emergencies or incidents * Enhanced security can attract more businesses and tourism to the area, increasing the local economy. * Reduces anti-social behavior and improves overall discipline in public spaces 	Construction completed
Development of Shanthipura view point as a tourist attraction in Nuwara Eliya in collaboration with Sri Lanka Air Force –	47 Mn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attracts more domestic and international tourists to Nuwara Eliya due to the enhanced viewpoint experience * leads to higher revenue for local businesses, such as restaurants, souvenir shops, and accommodation providers * Develop tourist and scenic attractions in high altitude in Nuwara Eliya and, further famous its 	

		status as "Little England."	
Capacity Building			
Conducted 2 refresher programmes for 67 tourist drivers to refresh the knowledge of tourist drivers prior to renewing tourist driver ID	0.5 Mn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Drivers gain updated, and upgraded knowledge on safety regulations, customer service, and tourism trends, improving their service delivery * Refresher training reinforces adherence to road safety and traffic laws, reducing the risk of accidents and to ensures drivers comply with industry and government standards. 	2 refresher programs for refresh the knowledge of 67 trained tourist drivers
Conducted Five Four-Day Training Programmes for 860 Tourist Drivers to Enhance Their Skills and Capacity to provide a better service for tourists	0 .00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Enhanced skills and knowledge of drivers navigation, communication, customer service, and safety procedures., * Improved Service Quality and Tourists receive professional and friendly service, 	* No. of trained Tourist Drivers with required qualification
Issued 1,010 Tourist Driver ID Cards following the Training and Refresher Programmes	0.5 Mn	* To give a recognition and formal identification	Follows completion of both training

(New and Renewals) to recognize Tourist Drivers for Their contribution to safer, more effective, and quality services		of 1,010 tourist drivers through the issuance of ID cards. * This highlights their contribution to providing safer, more effective, and higher-quality services in the tourism sector following training and refresher programmes.	and refresher programs tourist driver ID cards issued
Provincial progress review meeting conducted with 70 representations from 9 districts.	3.0 Mn	* improved coordination and communication between representatives from 9 districts, enabling better monitoring, evaluation, and planning of provincial-level initiatives through the participation of 70 stakeholders in the progress review meeting.	70 representatives from the all 9 districts participated for regional coordination
Empowering SMEs, Youth, and Tourism Stakeholders: Workshops, Training, and Promotions			
Workshops for SME sector conducted at Kurunegala, Wayaba Province and Attanagalla, Western Province and 155 micro/small/medium entrepreneurs supported.	2.0 Mn	empowerment and support of micro, small, and medium entrepreneurs (MSMEs) through capacity-building workshops	155 entrepreneurs supported covering micro, small, and medium enterprises

		* This initiative enhances their skills, knowledge, and ability to contribute effectively to the SME sector	
Two of training programmes for 218 school children on the 'Available Opportunities in the Tourism Sector' held in Hambantota	5.0 Mn	218 school children in Hambantota were educated and made aware of the available opportunities in the tourism sector through two training programmes, promoting them to explore potential careers in tourism.	2 training programs conducted at Hambantota and 218 school children participated; Average 109 per programme
Two Knowledge sharing sessions on lifesaving for 46 hoteliers, ensuring visitors' safety and protection conducted in the Southern Province		* enhanced capacity of 46 hoteliers in the Southern Province to ensure visitor safety and protection through lifesaving knowledge and skills gained from two knowledge-sharing sessions. * This contributes to improved safety standards and emergency preparedness in the region's hospitality sector.	2 knowledge sharing sessions trained 46 hoteliers for safety and protection measures

Tourism Day Promotional Programme at Haputhale, Uva Province Created awareness for approx.1500 young persons		increased awareness and promotion of tourism in Haputhale, Uva Province, through the Tourism Day Promotional Programme. This initiative likely fostered community engagement, highlighted local attractions, and encouraged both domestic and international tourism in the area.	2 Tourism Day Promotional Programmes conducted * 1500 (approx.) young persons were awarded
Fostering Tourism Awareness and Sustainability: Youth Engagement, Service Quality Improvement, and Coastal Cleanups			
Awareness on tourism related initiatives conducted in Galle, Kuliyaipitiya and Mahiyanganaya for 1500 young persons to create awareness/capacity building of local communities on sustainable Tourism Development and its Opportunities	5 Mn	* 1,500 young individuals from Galle, Kuliyaipitiya, and Mahiyanganaya gained awareness and enhanced their capacity to engage in sustainable tourism development. * empowered local communities by educating them about the opportunities in tourism	2 sessions conducted in Southern Province, 46 hoteliers participated, Average of 23 participants per session
Awareness programme conducted to streamline the	0.47 Mn	* Improvement in the quality of service	one Awareness programme

process and improving the quality of service providers about 150 participants (specially for drivers), concerning cruise tourism in Hambantota, Southern Province,		provided by drivers and other stakeholders in Hambantota, in the context of cruise tourism. * This initiative streamlined processes and enhanced professionalism, ensuring a better experience for cruise tourists and contributing to the growth of the local tourism sector.	conducted for 150 participants who provided tourist transport service providers
Beach Cleaning programmes were conducted in Preethipura - Wattala, Weligama and Kalpitiya to promote environmental sustainability, health and safety, local engagement and enhancement of attractive tourist destinations. approx. 150 participants were attended to 3 locations and beach strips were cleaned in collaboration with government and non-government ag	0.9 Mn	* Improved cleanliness of coastal areas, reduced marine pollution and plastic waste, Enhanced natural coastal ecosystems * Health and Safety Benefits: * Community Engagement in environmental conservation, coastal preservation, community bonds	*3 beach cleaning programmes were conducted * approx. 150 participants were attended * 50 persons in one programme in average
Emergency relief provided for 13 tourists to ensure and promote an appropriate degree of protection of tourists in emergency situations	0.9 Mn	* Successfully provided immediate assistance to 13 tourists in emergency situations * Showed capability to respond to tourist	13 tourists faced to emergency situations were provided facilities for

		emergencies * Enhanced destination reputation and Built confidence for tourist safety	emergency Relief
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Human Resource Profile

CADRE INFORMATION										
Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority										
as at 31.12.2024										
S No.	Designation	Salary Code	Service Level	Approved	Existing Cadre				Vacant	Over Cadre
					Permenant	Casual	Contract	Other		
1	Chairman			1						
2	Director General	HM 2-2	Senior	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
3	Deputy Director General	HM 2-1	Senior	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
4	Director	HM 1-1	Senior	9	7	0	0	0	2	0
5	Deputy/ Assistant Director	MM 1-2	Senior	30	26	0	0	0	4	0
6	Junior Manager	JM 1-2	Tertiary	33	30	0	0	0	3	0
7	Management Assistant	MA 1-2	Secondary	52	42	0	0	1	9	0
8	Driver	PL 3	Primary	13	11	0	0	0	2	0
9	Multi Duty Technician	PL 3	Primary	8	5	0	0	0	3	0
10	Cook	PL 2	Primary	16	14	0	0	0	2	0
11	Pump Operator	PL 2	Primary	7	5	0	0	0	2	0
12	Life Saving Guard	PL 2	Primary	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
13	Waiter/ Room Boy	PL 1	Primary	25	22	0	0	0	3	0
14	Labourer/ Office Aide	PL 1	Primary	27	17	0	0	0	10	0
Total				225	183	0	0	1	41	0

Tourism Planning and Development Division

Project Activity	Budget Allocation (Rs.Mn)	Outcome	KPI
Development of the Yala Wild Resort			
Construction of Resort Entrance Structure with security office	20.00	Due to CAPEX expenditure restrictions and delay in construction approval by the DWLC, the project got delayed. We have already developed the draft design and selected the consultancy firm.	Completion of the entrance structure.
Other infrastructure facilities recommended by the master plan	4.00	Plan for the road repair work with permanent solutions for rainy season issues developed and included for the 2025 budget, as all hotel stakeholders agreed that continuous annual repair work may not be the long-term solution.	Have the Yala resort internal road properly maintained.
Promoting Yala Wild Resort as a Sustainable and a World Class Resort	0.50	SLTDA together with Yala hoteliers initiated to declare the Yala resort area as Palatupana Special Protected Area. To facilitate activities, started working DWL and Survey department to reopen boundaries and clearly demarcate the 1-mile buffer zone, to consider activities like ponds etc..	Completion of installing proper sign boards
Project Total - Yala Wild Resort Development	25.50		
Development of Kalpitiya Island Resort			

Project Activity	Budget Allocation (Rs.Mn)	Outcome	KPI
Refurbishment of the Existing TIC in Palaviya (to be handed over to SLTDA by the DS through the MoTL) as the SLTDA site Office	25.00	Completed survey works of the land and architectural design and procurement process in progress to award the contract	Completion of TIC renovation works.
Development of a Common Jetty to facilitate the investor projects within the island resort (as a part of the infrastructure facilities)	3.00	The SLTDA had initial discussions with the PRDA to start the design work of the common Jetty in the main land. We are in contact with the DS and have requested for a suitable location to proceed with the jetty.	Hiring a consultant to design and supervise the construction of common jetty. (Provincial Road Development Authority)
Project Total - Kalpitiya Island Resort Development	28.00		
Development of Dedduwa Lake Resort			
Perform initial research, feasibility & develop a Master Plan	2.00	TOR for the master plan prepared and working on to clear demarcation of the land boundaries to proceed.	Clear the encroachment issues and complete the fencing works and master plan to be ready for investment opportunities.
Boundary opening & Fencing work of the Dedduwa resort outer boundaries	0.50	Fencing work could not process further due to encroachment issues, price escalations and less support from ground level government officers. We have requested for another meeting with the DS Bentota to address this matter.	
Land Acquisition for Beach access	0.50	The initial work for survey work commenced with the assistance of DS Bentota and owners were identified.	Survey done for required lands with owner identifications

Project Activity	Budget Allocation (Rs.Mn)	Outcome	KPI
			for the DS to proceed
Project Total - Dedduwa Lake Resort development	240.00		
Development of Kuchchaweli Beach Resort			
Establish a temporary site office with sufficient space to accommodate tourist police. (Converted container cabins)	0.50	Due to CAPEX expenditure restrictions, we did not move forward as planned. Instead working on proper office design works with the appointed consultancy firm to commence in 2025.	Completion of a temporary office.
Develop the internal road network in lot no. 5 of the resort area.	15.00		
Project Total - Kuchchaweli Beach Resort Development	15.50		
New Resort Development Projects			
Development of a new tourism Resort in Delft Island - Jaffna.	1.00	Continuously following up with DS and Land commissioner to expedite the vesting process, which progressed well during the year.	To complete the land vesting purpose.
Development of a new tourism Resort in Mannar.	1.00	Following up with DS to proceed the acquisition process.	To complete the land acquisition process

Project Activity	Budget Allocation (Rs.Mn)	Outcome	KPI
Development of Rasoolthottam Land in Trincomalee	2.50	Still about 20% encroachment cases are in legal process for clearance and once the entire property is cleared, we intend to proceed to develop a detailed master plan with fencing. TOR already prepared for this purpose. For few properties, proposals were considered and processed.	To complete the Surveying, Fencing & Master plan preparation with developments taking place.
Project Total - New Resort Development Projects	4.50		
Maintaining and Refurbishing of NHR-Bentota			
Design development, Documentation and Bidding of works which include Street Lighting within the resort area, construction of a dipping pool at Sulanka Bungalow, repair/maintain Internal Road Network, Landscaping (Main office/CSTP area and Sulanka Bungalow), rehabilitation of ponds, renovating Security points, adding 2 new Life Saving units, upgrade office area and rest/wash rooms and boundary fencing where necessary	50.00	Due to CAPEX expenditure restrictions, most of the planned work got delayed to start. Towards the latter part of the year, for key identified works including street lighting, road repair, landscaping, lifesaving units the procurement process was initiated and in progress.	Well maintained and upgrade facilities within NHR Bentota.
Construction of a new waste water treatment plant	3.00	Initial feasibility study on CSTP done and report submission expected.	Availability of CSTP Study report with possible options.
Capital purchases	1.00	Key required items purchasing initiated.	Availability of key operational items
Project Total - NHR Bentota	54.00		
Maintaining and Refurbishing of NHR-Passikudah			

Project Activity	Budget Allocation (Rs.Mn)	Outcome	KPI
Design development, Documentation and Bidding of works which include New Entrance Structure, construction of 4 new life saving units, Children's park in the public beach area, pump house renovation, refurbishment of office area, landscaping and beautification of common areas and a cultural centre for activities and boundary fencing where necessary.	15.00	Due to CAPEX expenditure restrictions, the planned work got delayed to start. However, towards the latter part of the year, we appointed a consultancy firm and key identified works including entrance structure and other developments designs done to proceed in 2025.	Well maintained and upgrade facilities within NHR Passikudah.
Capital purchase	1.00	Key required items purchased	Availability of key operational items
Project Total - NHR Passikudah	16.00		
Supporting & Promoting Provincial Level Tourism Products and Services			
Implementing International Standard Signs & Symbols in Provinces - Develop an action plan with timelines to cover all provinces and sites.	5.00	Worked with the Western province tourism bureau and in the last quarter of year they submitted quotations, designs and documents for processing the sign board and symbol installation, which is in the evaluation and finalization process.	To have proper tourism sign boards installed at least in province during the year.
Capacity building for tourism service providers	1.00	Completed a tourism awareness and zone development program in Bulathsinhala of the Western province.	To work with provincial councils and implement tourism development and awareness building programs as per the need.
Project Total New - Supporting & Promoting Provincial Level Tourism Products and Services	6.00		

Project Activity	Budget Allocation (Rs.Mn)	Outcome	KPI
Development of Zoning Plans (TDMP - Tourism Development Master plan)			
Preparation of TDMPs (Zoning Plans) through the UDA	10.00	The Kalpitiya and Hikkaduwa zoning plan preparations progressed and interim reports submitted and draft final reports are in preparation by the UDA. Also, Nuwara Eliya plan finalization progressed with new inputs.	Completion of Tourism Development Master Plans of Nuwara Eliya, Kalpitiya and Hikkaduwa.
Project Total - TDMP Preparation	10.00		
Development of Marine Tourism in Sri Lanka (Foreign Funded - ADB)			
Development of Marine Tourism Road Map and Strategic plan for Sri Lanka with assistance from the ADB	15.00	Marine Tourism Road Map with short, medium- and long-term action points finalized and the report printing is in progress by the ADB to have the launch by early 2025.	Launching of the Marine tourism road map
Project Total -Development of marine tourism strategic plan and road map support of ADB	15.00		
Preparation of Land Bank (Foreign Funded - USAID IPOPOP)			
Community Based Tourism Development Project funded by Korea Tourism Organization	200	Construction of Tourist Service center and community capacity building	Completed the construction
Preparation of Land bank with the assistance of the USAID	1.00	All work related to developing a Land Bank MIS (Management Information System) implemented with the assistance of the USAID IPOPOP project with a dedicated team and the land bank MIS was launched in August 2024.	Launching of the Land bank MIS.

Project Activity	Budget Allocation (Rs.Mn)	Outcome	KPI
Project Total - Assisting the Landbank development	201.00		
Refurbishing of Office areas of TPD & IRU for effective functioning			
Design office area of the TPD section with new furniture, partitions & ceiling along with refurbished pantry/toilet.	6.00	Due to CAPEX expenditure restrictions, the implementation got delayed. However, the design is completed and furniture/interior work finalization is in progress to commence and complete by early 2025.	Completion of TPD & IRU office areas with appropriate furniture, fittings and record/filing system
Purchasing a 55" digital smart screen for the meeting room of the TPD section	0.75		
Rearrangement of work stations in the IRU section with network cabling and power connections	2.50		
Purchasing a 65" digital smart screen with a stand to review architectural drawings and presentations of the IRU	1.00		
Project Total - Refurbishing of TPD & IRU	10.25		
Total			

Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM)



Progress Report - 2024



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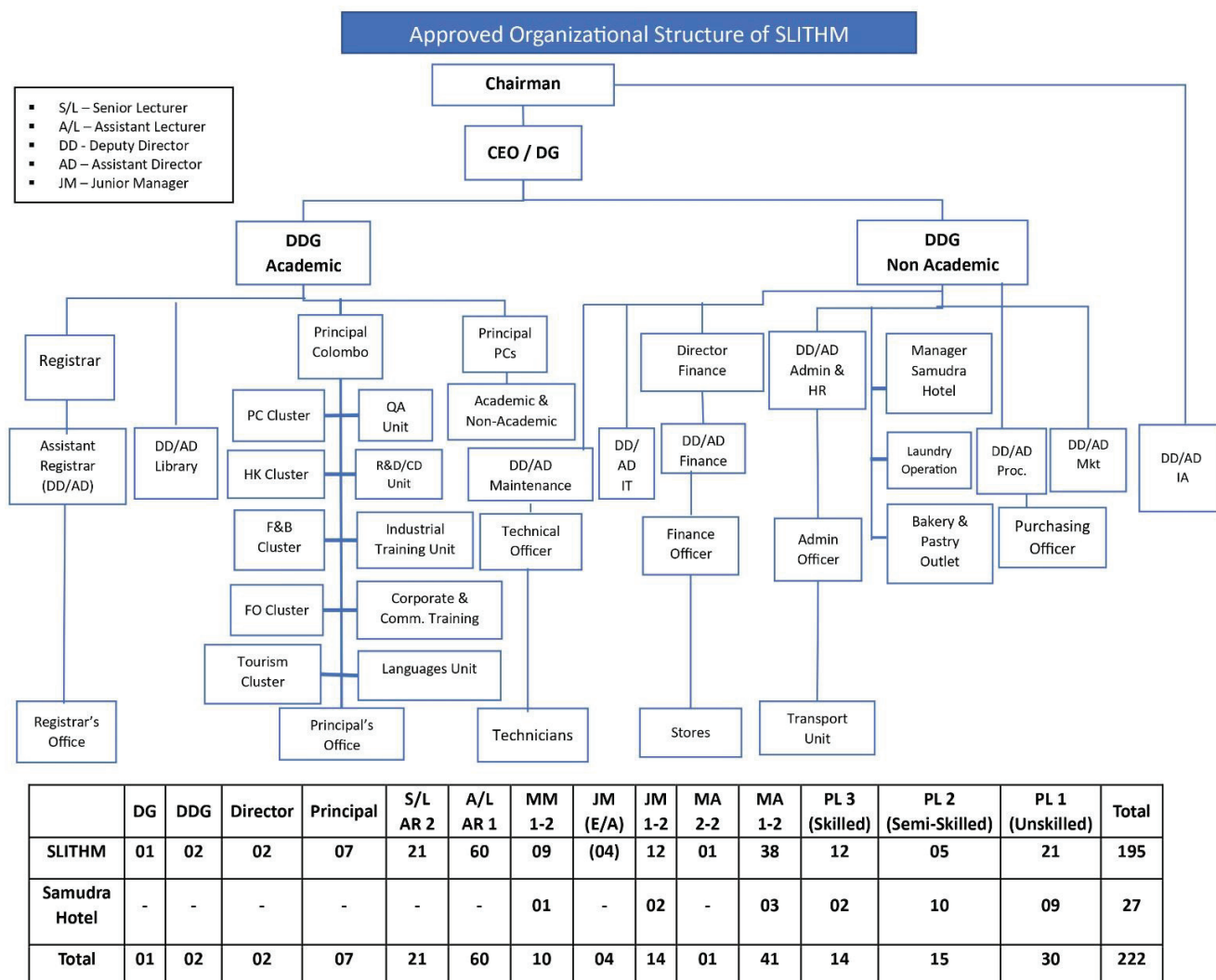
01. VISION AND MISSION

Vision: “To be the Center of Excellence in Training and Education for Human Resource Development of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry in Asia”.

Mission: To provide application-oriented international standard education and training to produce competent and committed Human Resources to meet the demands of the Hospitality and Tourism Industry.



02. ORGANOGRAM



03.EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM) kept up its significant progress in making the future workforce of the tourism and hospitality sector in Sri Lanka in different disciplines in 2024. As the key objective, SLITHM was able to train more than 5,000 students from its regular courses, especially by conducting craft level, certificate level, intermediate level, advanced level, 3-year management diploma, pastry and bakery courses, and tourist guide programmes. In addition, the Institute focused on enhancing its curriculum, strengthening industry partnerships locally and internationally, and offering specialized training programmes (income generation programmes) to meet the demands of the sector's dynamic dynamic needs.

In response to emerging trends in the tourism and hospitality sector, SLITHM introduced new income generation programmes that align with the industry demand. Also, the upgrading of the curriculum especially ensured that students were prepared for the evolving challenges and opportunities within the industry. Additionally, the Institute strongly emphasized practical experience by expanding its network of industry partners. Collaborations with renowned international tourism and hospitality schools opened up new avenues for students to participate in exchange programs, gaining exposure to global best practices in hospitality management. This enhanced the Institute's role in giving the students to gain exposure on global perspectives. In terms of the above facts, the Institute made a substantial progress in strengthening its education programmes; both regular and income-generating programmes.

Despite these successes, the Institute faced a few critical challenges, particularly with the recruiting and retaining of qualified academic professionals, the economic downturn, rapid changes in global travel trends, and the ongoing recovery of the tourism sector post-pandemic. These challenges emphasized the need for continuous adaptation and innovation to stay aligned with industry developments. The Institute is committed to addressing these challenges by continuously refining its programmes, integrating emerging technologies, reviewing existing SORs, conducting new training programmes, and maintaining strong industry connections through its Alumni. Accordingly, SLITHM aims to expand its market reach while incorporating sustainability into its core programmes. With a steady focus on innovation, quality education, and strong partnerships, the Institute is well-positioned to play a pivotal role in catering to the growing demand in the industry. The Institute remains committed to equipping its students with the skills, knowledge and competencies to thrive an highly and increasingly competitive global market.

04.INTRODUCTION

The Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management (SLITHM) is the premier Institute in Sri Lanka, to train young men and women in the Tourism and Hospitality Industries. It was established in 1964 as the Ceylon Hotel School and is now managed by The Ministry of Tourism. The Head Office of SLITHM co-locates with the Western Provincial School in Colombo. Provincial schools are located in Anuradhapura, Bandarawela, Kandy, Koggala, Ratnapura, Kurunegala, Batticaloa and Jaffna to train and educate students islandwide.

The SLITHM provides a comprehensive professional training to address the evolving demands of the local and international tourism and hospitality industries, producing well-trained and highly motivated management professionals. This initiative supports the national interest on the development needs of the tourism and hospitality industry.

In its first decade, the institution focused on developing individuals for top and middle management roles within the industry, complemented by short craft-level courses to supply skilled labor for various departments within the hospitality sector. Over the years, SLITHM has continuously refined its programs to align with the dynamic needs of Sri Lanka's and Asia's global evolving industrial markets. This adaptability has led to the introduction of new training schemes tailored to industry-specific fields. The programs provide multiple entry and exit points, offering students a flexibility in their learning paths. Additionally, they recognize prior learning, benefiting individuals with practical industry experience who seek to enhance their expertise with a credible professional certification. At SLITHM, diverse courses empower students with limitless opportunities to build successful careers in the corporate world.

05.PROGRESS REVIEW OF THE DIVISIONS

SLITHM has prepared its Action Plan based on the corporate plan 2022-2026. Accordingly, the activities of the institute have been categorized into five main goals as mentioned below.

1. Enhance the quality and quantity of Human Resources Development in the fields related to Tourism and Hospitality.
2. Strengthen the collaboration with external (local and foreign) universities, institutes, and agencies.
3. Revisit the existing policies to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.
4. Develop and implement an effective and efficient Marketing Plan.
5. Enhance the financial stability and invest in the expansion of operations of the institute.

5.1 Academic and Registrar's Offices

Goals	Main & Sub Activities	Targets/KPIs	Status as of 31.12.2024
1.	Develop and implement the annual Prospectus (6,628 Students)		Total 5,101 Registered, 4,652 Completed
	1.1 Craft Level (1st Intake) - 3 months	920 Students	637 Registered, 521 Completed
	1.2 Craft Level (2nd Intake) (Regular + 13-Year MoE programme)	1,000 Students	833 Registered, 729 Completed
	1.3 Certificate Level (1st Intake) - 5 months	1,020 Students	1097 Registered, 974 Completed
	1.4 Certificate Level (2nd Intake) - 5 months	1,020 Students	1091 Registered, 1047 Completed
	1.5 Intermediate Level	100 Students	34 Registered, 32 Completed
	1.6 Advanced Level	100 Students	32 Registered, 32 Completed
	1.7 03 Year Management Diploma (19th Batch)- 2024	70 Students	69 Registered, 64 Ongoing
	1.8 03 Year Management Diploma (18th batch)-2023	76 Students	75 Registered, 66 Ongoing
	1.9 03 Year Management Diploma (17th batch)-2022	30 Students	30 Registered, 25 Ongoing
	1.10 03 Year Management Diploma (16th batch)-2022	22 Students	20 Registered, 17 Ongoing
	1.11 Certificate course in Pastry & Bakery (5 months) - First Intake	35 Students	39 Registered, 28 Completed
	1.12 Certificate course in Pastry & Bakery (5 months) - Second Intake	35 Students	33 Registered, 29 Completed
	1.13 Pastry & Bakery (3 months) - First Intake	60 Students	63 Registered, 60 Completed
	1.14 Pastry & Bakery (3 months) - Second Intake	60 Students	68 Registered, 67 Completed

1.15	National Tourist Guide Programme	40 Students	40 Registered, 39 Completed
1.16	Chauffeur Tourist Guide Programme	100 Students	40 Registered, 37 Completed (Colombo), 25 Registered, 21 Completed (Anuradhapura)
1.17	Tourist Drivers Training Programme	1,150 Students	679 Registered, 674 Completed
1.18	Refresher Training Programme for Tourist Guides	40 Students	12 Registered, 12 Completed
1.19	Tourist Drivers' Refresher Programme	750 Students	184 Registered, 184 Completed
1.20	Conducting Graduation Ceremony	107 Students to be graduated	81 students graduated - The graduation ceremony was conducted on 22nd March 2024.
2.	Conduct a research/survey to determine future HR demand and Supply in the Hotel Sector	Establishment of an R&D unit in SLITHM	Collaborated with TVEC and SLTDA to identify the HR demand. However, it was not successfully completed. A third can research to identify the HR demand on a payment basis.
3.	Research Symposium for Academic and Students	One Symposium for students and Academics coinciding with an innovation fair	Innovation Fair 2024 was conducted on 13th September 2024. The research symposium scheduled for 06th January 2025.
4.	Review the existing list of programmes and revise		
4.1	Obtain the Degree status for the Three-Year Diploma Programme under the UGC Framework	Obtain degree status - commence the programme in 2025	Institutional Review report received and approval obtained. The compliance report of the subject review was submitted on 28.06.2024 to the Ministry of Education. The second report on the SR compliance report has been received from MOE. The report with the recommended gaps in the second compliance report was submitted to MOE. Waiting for their approval.
4.2	Map certificate programmes for NVQ 5 and 6 Levels	Obtain NVQ 5 and 6 standards and train the relevant staff	Curriculum mapping of a four-year management diploma into NVQ 5 and 6 levels is ongoing and progressing. It will

					be completed within the first quarter of 2025.
5.	Develop new products and training materials				
	5.1	Develop new training materials for craft level and certificate levels	Develop the teacher guidebook for Craft Level	Progressing through UNDP funds and ADB funds.	
	5.2	New executive diploma programmes (Front Office, Housekeeping, F&B, Professional Cookery)	Completion of curricula, printing study materials, and stakeholder awareness	The curriculum outline completed to start the programmes in 2025.	
	5.3	Curriculum Development	Applicable to the staff of SLITHM	Approved by AAB and BOM. This has been implemented with the support of ADB (balance amount of the district-level programme). Still ongoing.	
	5.4	Develop a common disciplinary procedure for SLITHM	Discussion among SLITHM, SLTDA, SLTPB, and SLCB to commence the consultative programme	Completed for students.	
6.	Introduce a program evaluation scheme				
	6.1	Incorporate the developed evaluation scheme into LMS	Registrar's office to supervise the evaluation summary	Incorporated it into the Student Management System.	
	6.2	NVQ through RPL	To commence operations in all schools except JAF & BAT	Ongoing	
7.	Collaborate with Local and Foreign Educational Institutes				
	7.1	Collaborate with local universities/institutions	Identify and collaborate with suitable institutes	Ongoing with TVEC, Gampaha Wickremarachchi University of Indigenous Medicine, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, Korea Lanka Hotel School, National School of Business Management, Housekeeping and F&B Programmes for unemployed youth in Katharagama, and	

					Sri Lanka Hospitality Graduate Association (SLHGA).
7.2	Collaborate with identified foreign reputed universities/institutions	Continuation of the networking with ITH, Salzburg University			Curriculum development has been completed with the support of S4IG for tourist guide programmes. And ongoing with Salzburg University in Austria, ADB for degree awarding status.
8.	Income generating programmes – 687 students Registered and 665 students completed (All income generating programmes will be conducted under the guidance of the relevant Cluster Head and the Lecturer in Charge of the programme)				
	1. NVQ 4- Tour Guide	30 Participants			The programme will be rescheduled based on the market demand
	2. Foundation Level Pastry & Bakery (3 intakes)	325 Participants			85 students completed, 85 students registered (CMB, ANU, KUR)
	3. NVQ Lvl 4 Food & Beverage (2 intakes)	170 Participants			44 students completed for Ratnapura
	4. Apprenticeship Prog. -Hotel Operations (Intake-1)	65 Participants			19 Students completed (CMB - Land Use Policy Dep-F&B)
	5. Apprenticeship Prog. -Hotel Operations (Intake-2)	25 Participants			6 students completed (Airforce)
	6. Telephone Skills & Etiquette	160 Participants			65 students completed (KUR - three intakes)
	7. Barista Course	210 Participants			75 students completed (KUR - four intakes)
	8. Buttlar Training	80 Participants			38 students completed (BAN)
	9. Professional Cookery	135 Participants			52 students completed (KAN, KUR)
	10. Foundation Level Commercial Cookery	135 Participants			22 students registered and ongoing (CMB)
	11. Short Course in Food & Beverage (2 intakes)	50 Participants			Craft Level Restaurant & Bar programme (52 students) in collaboration with Katharagama Dewalaya and 36 students (BAN)
	12. Heritage & Story Telling (2 intakes)	40 Participants			62 students Completed (3 batches) Anuradhapura
	13. Basic Housekeeping (2intakes)	250 Participants			34 students completed (BAN)
	14. Short Courses for Room Attendants	25 Participants			34 students completed (the KOG-Galle District Short Term Training Programme

				in Hospitality) and 38 students (the Craft Level HK programme in collaboration with Katharagama Dewalaya)
15.	Bell Desk Operation (2 intakes)		50 Participants	The programme will be rescheduled based on the market demand.
16.	Customer Service Agent		210 Participants	
17.	English Language Programme		50 Participants	The programme will be rescheduled based on the market demand
18.	Bartender		30 Participants	
19.	Nutrition/Food Safety/Costing		30 Participants	
20.	Pastry, Dessert preparation (5batches)		100 Participants	25 students completed (KUR)
21.	Professional Presentation Skills		60 Participants	The programme will be rescheduled based on the market demand
22.	Mocktail Preparation (2 batches)		85 Participants	
23.	Diploma in Pastry & Bakery		35 Participants	Curriculum development completed
24.	Area Tourist Guide Programme		150 Participants	The programme will be rescheduled based on the market demand
9.	Programmes to support the strategic plan for tourism development			
9.1	Programmes to reach out to communities			
9.2	Programmes to increase youth involvement			Craft Level Restaurant & Bar programme (52 students) and Housekeeping programme (38 students) were completed with funding assistance from Katharagama Dewalaya.
9.3	Programmes to build the capacities of those who are already engaged in tourism-related activities			Programmes were conducted for the SL Air Force and Land Use Policy Department to train their security staff.
9.4	Programmes to cater to human resource development in niche markets and products			A programme in wellness tourism was commenced with the Gampaha Wickremarachchi University of Indigenous Medicine.
10.	Programmes to support policy-based activities in Tourism, supported by international donor agencies			
10.1	Bridging the skills gap of employees of SLTDA, SLITHM, SLTPB, and Conventions Bureau		These were identified during the discussions	

			that the Ministry of Tourism had with ADB for obtaining policy-based loan assistance for 2023.	
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5.2 Human Resource and Administration Division

No	Main & Sub Activities	Targets/KPIs	Status as of 31.12.2024
1.	Update the special pool of resource persons when necessary	Creating a pool of visiting lecturers through a paper advertisement	Recruited visiting lecturers and renewed contracts for all schools
2.	Develop a common disciplinary procedure for SLITHM	Discussion among SLITHM, SLTDA, SLTPB, SLCB to commence the consultative programme	Completed for students.
3.	New schools and Acquisitions		
3.1	Ratnapura	To complete the transfer of the UDA land identified for SLITHM Ratnapura	The initial stage of the transferring of the UDA land - which land is identified for SLITHM Rathnapura. (Completed risk assessment on land with high extension power line).
3.2	Batticaloa	Identify a suitable mode of relocation	Finding a suitable location and extending the current agreement for a 1 year
3.3	Kurunegala	To complete the transfer of the government land identified for SLITHM Kurunegala	Agreed to pay lease payment (280,000.00) of the Kurunegala building for 2024 after the approval. (Discussions are going on regarding some of the provisions in the agreement). Expansion of facilities is under discussion.
3.4	Jaffna	To completely transfer the identified land and design the building	The land transfer certificate was received on 03.06.2024.
3.5	Koggala	To identify a suitable place for relocation	Need to identify a suitable location. Informed the Principal to find a suitable location
3.6	Anuradhapura	To identify a suitable place for relocation	N/A

4.	Develop competencies of staff (training for employees - Local and Foreign)	Implementing the training as per the HRD Plan	<p><u>Key Local training and Awareness Programmes:</u></p> <p>01. Conducted a workshop on Ethics and discipline for Driver and Minor staff on 15th and 16th February 2024 for 2 non-academic members at SDFL.</p> <p>02. Participated in the seminar on preparing Bidding Documents on 4th April 2024 at PRAG Institute.</p> <p>03. One non-academic member participated in a workshop on Effective Managerial Skills for administrative officers & HR Managers of the public & Private sectors on 10th & 11th June 2024.</p> <p>04. Ms. J.P. Perera - Management Assistant – Workshop of Inventory Management, Annual Inventory Survey and Asset Utilization conducted by SDFL - 20th & 21st August 2024.</p> <p>05. නෙරංජන් පද්මකුමාර - ඉදිකිරීම් යන්ත්‍රෝපකරණ සුඛුණු මධ්‍යස්ථානය (CETRAC) මගින් සංවිධානය කරනු ලැබූ, "විද්‍යාත්මක, පිරිමැසුම්දායක සහ ආරක්ෂිත රිය පැදවීම" එක්දින වැඩමුළුව - 2024 අගෝස්තු 27.</p> <p>06. Ms. Achini Nakandala - Deputy Director (HR and Admin) – National Certificate in Industrial Relations and Labor Law Applications – National Institute of Labor Studies – 28.08.2024 to 29.11.2024 (4 Months Course).</p> <p><u>Key Foreign Training Programmes:</u></p> <p>01. The Chairman of SLITHM participated in an International Digital Rural Revitalization Study & Collaboration Visit in Chongqing China on 09th - 20th January 2024.</p> <p>02. One academic member participated in the World Food Competition in India on 11th - 15th March 2024.</p> <p>03. Two academic members participated in the Culinary Arts of the Masterclass Programme in Nepal (Kathmandu) in March 2024.</p> <p>04. The Chairman of SLITHM participated in the Tourism Collaboration with Malaysia on 14th - 19th April 2024.</p> <p>05. Two academic members participated in Asia Tourism Forum 2024 Committee - in Palembang, Indonesia on 05th - 10th May</p>
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			<p>2024.</p> <p>06. The Director General participated in a seminar on Ecotourism Development in China from 04th July 2024 to 23rd July 2024.</p> <p>07. One academic member participated (Senior Lecturer - Mrs. W N B Mendis) in the International Tourism Education Experts workshop in Vienna, Austria on 7th & 8th October 2024.</p> <p>08. Two academic members participated in a training sessions on Barista & Coffee Art, brewing processes and beer serving, cocktail and tropical drink, and Restaurant Service Management in Indonesia from 04th November to 09th November 2024.</p>
5.	Introducing the Performance Management System	Continuation of PMS	Continuation of PMS
6.	Recruitment	To fill the required vacancies with suitable candidates	<p>01. Recruited Administrative Officer in January 2024.</p> <p>02. Recruited 02 Assistant Lecturers for Provincial colleges Rathnapura and Koggala, Assistant Director of Finance (ADF), and One office aid for the Principal office in Colombo in February 2024.</p> <p>03. Recruited Assistant Director (Information Technology) in April 2024.</p> <p>04. Recruited 01 Management Assistant (secondment basis) in May 2024 and released him for Government service again on 06th September 2024.</p> <p>05. Recruited Assistant Director (Maintenance), 01 Senior Lecturer (Contract basis), 01 Programme Officer, 04 Management Assistants (01 for Jaffna /01 for HR unit/ 01 for Finance unit/ 01 for registrar office Colombo), 01 Assistant Lecturer Provincial College Kandy, 01 Assistant Lecturer Provincial college Anuradhapura (Contract basis), and Deputy Director HR & Admin (secondment basis) in July 2024.</p> <p>06. Recruited Director Finance (DF), 02 Management Assistants (01 for Kurunegala / 01 for Colombo Finance unit), 02 Assistant Lecturers for Colombo school in August 2024.</p> <p>07. Recruited DDG Non-academic (secondment basis), 01</p>

			Assistant Lecturer for Bandarawela Provincial College (contract basis) in September 2024.
7.	Develop a Code of Conduct for the staff of SLITHM		Draft completed
8.	Review academic and non-academic SOR	Obtain approval from DMS	Proposed new cadre and submitted for Board of Management. Further discussions are going on and informed verbally to the Department of Management Services in a meeting conducted on 11.10.2024.

5.3 Information Technology (IT) Division

No	Main & Sub Activities	Targets/KPIs	Status as of 31.12.2024
1.	Information Technology Development		
	1.1 Improvements to the Student Management System	Identified components to be incorporated into the SMS	Payment slip upload and timetable uploading through Excel functions were enabled. The system assistant has visited all provincial schools. A New Annual Maintenance agreement has been signed. After that, several improvements were identified, and the proposal from the supplier. Those improvements will be made in the year 2025.
	1.2 Improvements to the Stores Management System	Identified components to be incorporated into the SMS	Had continuous discussions with the supplier regarding several points and making adjustments. Dashboard and notifications issues have been completed. There were several issues on stock/GRN and rectified.
	1.3 Improvements of the SLITHM Website	Identified components to be included to the website	Latest News & Content update when required.
	1.4 Library Management System	System in place	We have Upgraded the Ubuntu OS of the server and also installed the latest version of the "Koha" Library system. Furthermore, the vendor has mentioned that we have to enter the MARC addresses of the books in order to the system to be operated as it is meant to be. However, SLITHM needs to have a republication right for the books to fetch the MARC addresses of the books. Implementataion of MARK address system to consider in 2025.

1.5	Network Infrastructure Development in Kandy	Improved internet facilities	Shifted to the next year 2025.
1.6	CCTV Installation in Kandy SLITHM School	Completion of the CCTV installation	
1.7	CCTV Installation in Bandarawela SLITHM School	Completion of the CCTV installation	
1.8	CCTV Installation in Ratnapura SLITHM School	Completion of the CCTV installation	
1.9	Network Infrastructure Development in Kurunegala	Improved internet facilities	This will be implemented once the acquisition process of the new premises is completed.
1.10	CCTV Installation in Kurunegala SLITHM School	Completion of the CCTV installation	
1.11	CCTV Extension for the Colombo School	Completion of the CCTV installation	A service has been conducted on the current system. However, the upgrading process was held until the completion of the 7th-floor renovation. This will be commenced after the ongoing renovation of the premises.
1.12	Smart Classroom Studio - Colombo School	Completion of the smart classroom studio	
1.13	Auditorium Development	Completion of the works related to the IT	Shifted to the year 2025
1.14	Smart Classrooms		
1.15	Installation of HR System	Completion of the system.	A decision was given by the BOM to introduce an ERP system for all four institutes instead of the installation of the individual system.
1.16	E-Learning System	Completion of the system.	
1.17	Advanced Library System	Completion of the system.	Shifted to the year 2025
1.18	MS office 365 license installation	For all locations	
1.19	Integrated Accounting Module	Completion of the system - end of 2023	

1.20	Invoicing software for Samudra and Laundry	System in place	
1.21	Purchase of Property Management System	Completion of the system.	Shifted to the year 2025

5.4 Marketing Division

No	Main & Sub Activities	Targets/KPIs	Status as of 31.12.2024
1.	Launch a special marketing campaign to attract foreign students.	Conduct a needs assessment	Scheduled to be carried out in 2025 with the overall feasibility study
2.	Publish newspaper supplements and other marketing material annually		
2.1	Newspaper advertisements	To cover all intakes of all the courses as well as the graduation - 10 Ads	8 advertisements
2.2	Newspaper articles	6 araticles	6 Articles published - Graduation ceremony 2024
2.3	Developing brochures, banners, posters and other marketing material	Increase the demand for the less popular courses	Ongoing - New e-flyers (4 numbers) were designed at the end of Nov. 2024 and circulated among interested parties and social media flatforms to attract more applicants for the next year intakes.
3.	Brand and Digital Media Marketing		
3.1	Conducting Events	Number of events to be conducted - 10	07 events were conducted and participated (<i>Glocal Fair-2024 Gampha, Workshop conducted by the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment on Policy development of Migrant employees, Workshop conducted by Sri Lanka Tourism about the progress of Tourism in provinces, New Year Festival In Maharagama organized by the National Youth Council, Sancharaka Udawa -2024, Graduation event, The "Smart Youth 2024" Exhibition & Night in Galle organized by the National Youth Service Council, The "Smart Youth 2024" Exhibition & Night in Kuliyaipitiya organized by the National Youth Service Council</i>).

3.2	Newspaper articles	6 ararticles	6 Articles published - Graduation ceremony 2024
3.3	TV Ads	Number of Fly Ads - 2 (Depending on the need/ based on academic requests)	03 ads
3.4	TV and Radio Programmes	5 programmes per year	03 praogrammes
3.5	Develop the database for courses	Disseminate course information to a wider audience	Ongoing
3.6	Marketing campaigns in Provincial Colleges	5 School campaigns	Kurunegala / Galle / Bandarawela / Batticaloa / Jaffna
3.7	Social Media Campaign Management	Take SLITHM and its programmes/services to a wider audience and increase the number of viewers on SLITHM's social media	Ongoing
3.8	Search engine optimization, Google Ads	Increase the active viewerships of SLITHM on web space	Ongoing
3.9	Networking and Partnering: Establishment of Tourism Clubs in the schools	Establishing tourism clubs among 3 provinces	A board paper will be submitted to the December month on the establishment of tourism clubs

5.5 Maintenance Division

No	Main & Sub Activities	Targets/KPIs	Status as of 31.12.2024
Improve infrastructure facilities			
1	Classroom renovation in 8th floor - Colombo	Completion of the work before 31st December 2024	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
2	Class rooms Condition upgrading in 3rd floor, 5th floor - Colombo		Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
3	Auditorium renovation - Colombo		Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
4	Auditorium roof renovation - Colombo		Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
5	Lower ground floor area arrangement - Colombo		Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
6	Pastry and Bakery kitchen tile work (Colombo)		Job is awadered. Work statred.

7	Garbage hut construction - Colombo	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
8	AC replacement in office areas - Colombo	Completed
9	Electrical System Upgrading - Colombo	Ongoing - The generator is at the repairing process
10	Supply and fix new exhaust System (Second Floor) - Colombo	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
11	Refurbishment of Finance Division - Colombo	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
12	External Painting SLITHM-BUILDING - Colombo	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
13	General Maintenance - Colombo	Ongoing- Most of the Minor Maintenance works of the building were carried out using this allocation.
14	Laundry equipment repair - Colombo	Conducting based on the request
15	Samudra Hotel Rooms renovation and maintenance - Colombo	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
16	Renovation of Samudra linen room and mini store - Colombo	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
17	Renovation of the Resident Manager's quarters and two rooms on the 6th floor (scheduled to commence after the evacuation of Tourist Police)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
18	Interior design of second-floor training restaurant - Colombo	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
19	Renovation of second-floor kitchen (Wash up areas) - Colombo	Completed
20	Laundry counter renovation	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget due to not vacating tourist police.
21	Fix lightning conductor for building (Bandarawela)	Not Commenced - Reconsider in 2025
22	Deep well and sump 1.5m (Bandarawela)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
23	Two LED tv (32') for mockup rooms (Bandarawela)	Completed
24	Two ACs to Restaurant (Bandarawela)	Completed
25	Fix the fingerprint machine for the staff (Jaffna)	Completed
26	Enhance the facilities/ equipments (Jaffna)	This work is not necessary at the moment as confined by the Principal
27	Colour wash building (usable area) (Jaffna)	Commenced - Awarded
28	Temporary Meal Room Construction- (Anuradhapura)	Commenced - BOQ Completed, Carried forwarded to 2025 budget due to insufficient time for completion

29	Building External Painting-(Anuradhapura)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
30	New School Renovation-Mawathagama-(Kurunegala)	Not Commenced - Cannot attend until the completion of aquisition process - Survey process is ongoing
31	Solar Project (Kandy)	Ongoing - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget as per the instructions given by BOM
32	Office partition Work (Kandy)	Ongoing - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget as per the instructions given by BOM
33	Guest Rooms Renovation (Kandy)	Ongoing - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget as per the instructions given by BOM
34	Parking area roof (Kandy)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
35	Exhaust system renovation (Kandy)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
36	Garbage room Construction (Kandy)	Ongoing - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget due to insufficient time for completion
37	Building Painting (Kandy)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
38	Pastry Kitchen Construction (Kandy)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
39	New Telephone system (Koggala)	Completed
40	Fix New AC and Fans for Offices (Koggala)	Completed
41	Electrical System Upgrading- (Koggala)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
42	Mock Up room Renovation (Rathnapura)	Commenced- Under TEC
43	External wall painting and polishing of existing chairs and tables of the restaurant (Rathnapura)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
44	Fix New AC for Office (Batticaloa)	Not Commenced - Carried forwarded to 2025 budget
45	Works carried forward from the 2023 Budget	
45.1	Renovation of Wine Lab 2nd Floor	Completed
45.2	Office construction work - Research unit & Visiting lecturers	Ongoing
45.3	Interior painting work of the lower ground floor	Completed
45.4	Construction Hand Washing Area	Completed
45.5	Interior Work Samudra Bar	Completed
45.6	Supply and Fixing New Ceiling For Lobby Area	Completed
45.7	Laying Carpet & Supply and Fixing Bamboo Blinds	Completed
45.8	Supply and Fixing Mainboard and Laundry Front Board	Completed

45.9	Supply and Delivery 25 No's of Ceiling Fans	Completed
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5.6 Finance Division

No	Main & Sub Activities	Targets/KPIs	Status as of 31.12.2024
1.	Review the existing policies and reformulate		
1.1	Finance Manual (FM)	Obtain approval from PED and Print	The manual is prepared.
1.2	Financial Statements - 2023	Submit to the Government Auditor before 28th Feb. 2024	Completed
1.3	Annual Budget Preparation	Completion and Submission for Board Meeting November 2024	Preparation of the Budget Estimate 2025 is ongoing
1.4	Preparation of monthly financial accounts	Completed By the 15th of the following month and Submitting to the following month's Board Meeting	First, three months' financial reports were submitted to the BOM of SLITHM.
1.5	Board of Survey/Asset Verification	Completion of the work before 31st May 2024	Ongoing

5.7 Laundry and Samudra Training Hotel

No	Main & Sub Activities	Targets/KPIs	Status as of 31.12.2024
5.1	Commercial Operation of Samudra Hotel (Selling guest rooms/nights, external events, Happy Friday, events at the venue - Restaurant and Auditorium etc)	1. Average 100 number of guest nights per month 2. Total events per month - Auditorium - 6, Board Room - 6 3. Samudra restaurant, Food Sales	22.26 Mn income generated (Restaurant income - 12.07 Mn, 48 Auditorium functions - 2.59 Mn, 19 Board room functions - .33 Mn, 23 Bar functions - .55 Mn, 735 room nights - 6.21 Mn)
5.2	Commercial Laundry operation in Colombo	Minimum of 2 Mn per month revenue generation	Income - 9.31 Mn, Cost - 8.22 Mn

5.8 Library

No	Main & Sub Activities	Targets/KPIs	Status as of 31.12.2024
1.	Publications		

1.1	Publishing SLITHM Talk - two times per year	Publish e-versions of 2 SLITHM talk magazines	The 20th Volume of the SLITHM Talk magazine design is ongoing.
1.2	Printing of SLITHM Talk	One per year targeting the graduation	Completed. (One magazine was published for the Graduation in 2024).
2.	Collection Development		
2.1	Developing physical library collection including other reading materials (CD/DVD)	Purchase reading materials required for the proposed Degree programme and the other regular and non-regular programmes	Shifted to next year
2.2	Developing E library collection (e-books)	Improve e collection	400 PDF free books in the system (covering main subjects)
2.3	Expansion of lending facility to provincial schools through LMS & e-library	Enable the lending and distance login facility completely	Ongoing. Some developments are to be done through the IT division.

5.9 Director General's Office

No	Main & Sub Activities	Targets/KPIs	Status as of 31.12.2024
1.	Monitoring & Evaluation		
1.1	Preparation of Action Plan 2025	Complete the Action Plan by mid-December 2024	Completed
1.2	Board Meetings	12 Meetings	10 meetings were conducted and 4 special board meetings
1.3	Audit and Management Committee Meetings	4 Meetings	3 meetings were conducted.
1.4	Academic Affairs Board Meetings	4 Meetings	2 meetings were conducted.
1.5	Examination Committee Meetings	4 Meetings	3 meetings were conducted.
1.6	Progress monitoring meetings	Conducting 12 monthly meetings	7 meetings were conducted
1.7	Preparation Annual Report	Submit the printed annual report before the 30th of May	The draft report is completed.

1.8	Preparation of Progress Reports	Submit to Ministry, AMC meetings	Preparing based on the requests.
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Expected Outcome

- Enhanced opportunities for training and employment in the hospitality industry for the youth in Sri Lanka.
- SLITHM to remain as the leading institution for hospitality training in Sri Lanka to cater to the training requirement in the emerging niche areas in tourism such as wellness tourism, heritage tourism, and eco-tourism.

06.HUMAN RESOURCE PROFILE (CADRE)

The approved cadre of the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management was approved on the 22nd of February 2018 by the Department of Management Services, Ministry of Finance and Mass Media.

Existing and Approved cadre of SLITHM

No	Designation	Salary Code	Approved Cadre	Available Cadre	Vacancy
01	Director General/CEO	HM2-2	01	01	-
02	Deputy Director General (Academic)	HM1-3	01	01	-
03	Deputy Director General (Non-Academic)	HM1-3	01	01	-
04	Principal	HM1-1	07	07	-
05	Registrar	HM1-1	01	01	-
06	Director Finance	HM1-1	01	01	-
07	Senior Lecturer	AR2	21	12	09
08	Assistant Lecturer/Lecturer	AR1	60	47	13
09	Deputy Director/Assistant Director (Maintenance)	MM1-2	01	01	-
10	Deputy Director /Assistant Director (Library)	MM1-2	01	01	-
11	Deputy Director /Assistant Director (HR & Admin)	MM1-2	01	01	-
12	Deputy Director /Assistant Director (Finance)	MM1-2	01	01	-
13	Deputy Director /Assistant Director (Internal Audit)	MM1-2	01	01	-
14	Deputy Director /Assistant Director (IT)	MM1-2	01	01	-
15	Deputy Director /Assistant Registrar	MM1-2	01	-	01
16	Deputy Director /Assistant Director (Marketing & PR)	MM1-2	01	01	-
17	Deputy Director /Assistant Director (Procurement)	MM1-2	01	01	-
18	Executive Assistant	JM1-2	04	02	-
19	PA to Chairman/DG	JM1-2	01	01	-
20	Finance Officer	JM1-2	01	01	-
21	Programme Coordinator	JM1-2	01	01	-
22	Admin Officer	JM1-2	01	01	-
23	Purchasing Officer	JM1-2	01	01	-
24	Technical Officer	JM1-2	01	01	-
25	Programme Officer Examination	JM1-2	01	01	-
26	Laundry Operation Officer	JM1-2	01	-	01
27	Pastry & Bakery Officer	JM1-2	01	-	01

28	Admin & Finance Officer	JM1-2	03	03	-
29	Management Assistant (Tech)	MA2-2	01	01	-
30	Management Assistant (Non-Tech)	MA1-2	38	36	02
31	Driver	PL3	06	05	01
32	Technician	PL3	06	06	-
33	Comics – Pastry & Bakery	PL2	02	-	02
34	Handyman	PL2	01	01	-
35	Supervisor-Laundry	PL2	01	-	01
36	Stores Attendant	PL 2	01	01	-
37	Office Aide	PL1	14	13	01
38	Bakery Aide	PL1	01	01	-
39	Laundry Operator	PL1	06	04	02
Total			195	161	32

Existing and Approved cadre of SLITHM (Samudra Hotel)

No	Designation	Salary Code	Approved Cadre	Available Cadre	Vacancy
01	Manager	MM 1-2	01	01	-
02	Food & Beverage Officer	JM 1-2	01	-	01
03	Room Division Officer	JM 1-2	01	-	01
04	Receptionist /Telephone Operator	MA1-2	03	03	-
05	Senior Cook	PL 3	02	01	01
06	Cook/Assistant Cook	PL 2	06	02	04
07	Captain	PL 2	01	-	01
08	Barman	PL2	02	01	01
09	HK Supervisor /Linen Keeper	PL 2	01	01	-
10	Steward/Waiter	PL1	04	03	01
11	Food & Beverage Attendant	PL 1	01	01	-
12	Bell Attendant	PL 1	01	01	-
13	Room Attendant	PL 1	01	-	01
14	Kitchen Attendant	PL 1	01	01	-
15	Public Area Attendant	PL 1	01	01	-
	Total		27	16	11

07. FINANCIAL REPORTS

Approved Annual Budget and Actual Expenditure of 2024 as of 30.11.2024.

Code	Description	Budget 2024	Actual Income/ Expenditure up to 30.11.2024
400	School Income	178,843,390.00	153,999,871.00
410	Hotel Income	20,462,938.00	22,903,150.00
420	Laundry Income	10,975,698.00	9,091,162.00
430	Statutory Income	658,734,186.00	436,096,711.00
440	Other Income	67,954,264.00	33,390,089.00
	Total Revenue	936,970,476.00	650,746,983.00
500	Salaries & Employee Benefits	342,915,900.00	259,375,411.00
530	Fees & Payment for non-employee	58,705,900.00	42,967,758.00
550	General Administration & Establishment Expenditure	183,543,796.00	131,356,311.00
580	Maintenance Expenses	48,601,176.00	27,029,620.00
600	Supplies and consumables used	108,313,171.00	86,920,803.00
700	Finance Cost	495,001.00	476,738.00
750	Other Expenses	2,720,000.00	75,684.00
770	Levy Payment for Treasury	100,000,000.00	100,000,000.00
	Total Recurrent Expenditure	845,294,945.00	646,539,127.00
	Total Income	936,970,476.00	650,746,983.00
Less	Net Cost of Operation	(845,294,945.00)	(646,539,127.00)
Less	Capital Expenditure	(136,649,700.00)	(42,961,257.00)
	Budgetary Excess/ Deficits	(44,974,169.00)	(38,753,401.00)

The below table shows the financial summary for 2024.

Category	Budget Allocation (Rs)	Actual Expenditure (Rs) (30.11.2024)
Revenue	936,970,476.00	650,746,983.00
Recurrent Expenditure	845,294,945.00	646,539,127.00
Capital Expenditure	136,649,700.00	42,961,257.00
Budgetary Excess/ Deficits	(44,974,169.00)	(38,753,401.00)

Certified By
Shamila Fernando
Director Finance

Recommended By
C. Addarawatta
DDG (N/A)

Kanisha Jayatunga
DDG (A)

Approved By
Jeevanthie Senanayake
Director General

Sri Lanka

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**Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion
Bureau**

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**SRI LANKA TOURISM PROMOTION BUREAU****➤ Introduction**

Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) is established under the Tourism Act No. 38 of 2005 of the Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. The Bureau is currently functioning under the Ministry of Tourism & Lands. The Bureau plays a key role in promoting and marketing Sri Lanka as a tourist and travel destination globally. SLTPB is mainly conducting activities in areas of Marketing, Advertising, Public Relations, Events and New Product Development.

➤ Objectives

These objectives are applicable for SLTPB on the scale that the promotion of Sri Lanka as a brand towards increasing the tourist arrivals that would support the achievement of targeted foreign exchange earnings to revive the economy of Sri Lanka.

1. Achieve a target foreign exchange earnings of \$5 billion from tourism by 2025.
2. Increase daily tourist in-country spend to \$185-\$225 from a baseline of \$181

➤ Vision

“To be recognized as the world’s finest island destination for memorable, authentic and diverse experiences.”

➤ Mission

“To be a high-value destination offering extraordinary experiences that reflect Sri Lanka’s natural and cultural heritage, are socially inclusive and environmentally responsible, and provide economic benefits to communities and the country”.

➤ **Details of the projects or activities implemented up to 31.12.2024**

Marketing

➤ **Agents, Blogger and Media Familiarization tours (FAM tours)**

The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau has successfully conducted several Agents, Blogger, and Media Familiarization (FAM) tours as part of its strategy to showcase the island's unique attractions. Together, these initiatives have significantly enhanced international awareness and appreciation of Sri Lanka as a vibrant travel destination, attracting diverse audiences eager to experience its charm.

Key media project as follows

- Explored the diverse cultural and natural offerings of Sri Lanka Writer, Contributing Editor, **UK**
- Natural History Writer, June, **UK** -immersing themselves in the island's rich biodiversity.
- Focusing on the compelling wildlife experiences that Sri Lanka boasts-Celebrity Wildlife Writer, August, **UK**
- Highlighting the island's culinary delights and gastronomic adventures- Media fam, Food & Travel Magazine / September, **UK**
- Media fam - / August (05 pax) Austria - Media fam tour (04 pax) June, **France**
- Bloggers (02 pax) / 12 - 24 January 2024, **Poland**
- Blogger (01) pax / 1 - 14 March 2024 , **Poland**
- VIP Instagram & Blogger (01 pax) / - March, **Poland**
- Celebrity (02 pax) / May, Poland
- Celebrity (02 pax) / / August, Poland
- Trade FAM - 25th November to 01st December 2024, **Russia**
- Media fam (01 pax), - 05th to 11th July, **Turkey**
- Media FAM for TRT Documentary channel, - 30 July - 07 August 2024, **Turkey**
- Buddhist Fam - May (10 pax) / **India**
- JTBC TV Korean media, **Korea**

➤ **Output/ Outcome**

Awareness of the destination and overall strategy of Sri Lanka Tourism. Showcase/promote Sri Lanka's products as well as niche tourism products which are attractive. Exchange the tour operator and travel agent lists of relevant countries and Sri Lanka among the travel trade. Gain media coverage through the international media. Increase destination awareness among potential travellers. To increase the destination awareness among the existing frequent travellers and potential travellers.

➤ **Travel, Tourism Fairs, Road Shows, Press conferences & Networking events**

Throughout 2024, the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau actively engaged in a variety of initiatives, including travel and tourism fairs, roadshows, press conferences, and networking events. These efforts were designed to strengthen relationships within the global travel community and promote Sri Lanka as an attractive destination. By participating in major travel fairs and hosting roadshows in key markets, the bureau showcased the island's unique offerings, from its stunning beaches and lush landscapes to its rich cultural heritage. Press conferences facilitated direct communication with media representatives, ensuring that compelling stories about Sri Lanka reached a wider audience. Additionally, networking events provided valuable opportunities for stakeholders, industry partners, and travel agents to connect, collaborate, and share insights, ultimately driving tourism growth and fostering a deeper understanding of Sri Lanka's potential as a premier travel destination.

➤ **Travel, Tourism Fairs, Road Shows, press conferences & Networking events conducted by SLTPB**

- Vakantiebeurs, 10 -14 January 2024, Utrecht, **Netherlands**
- FITUR, 24 - 28 January 2024, Madrid, **Spain**
- BIT, 04 - 06 February 2024, Milan, **Italy**
- OTM, 08 - 10 February 2024, Mumbai, **India**
- SATTE, 22 - 24 February 2024, New Delhi, **India**
- Networking Sessions, 09 & 20 February 2024, New Delhi, Mumbai, **India**
- ITB, 05 - 07 March 2024, Berlin, **Germany**
- IMM, 13 March 2024, Paris, **France**
- Holiday World, 15 - 17 March 2024, Prague, **Czech Republic**
- Ferien, 14 - 17 March 2024, Vienna, **Austria**
- Networking sessions, Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney 19 - 25 March 2024, **Australia**
- MITT, 19 - 21 March 2024, **Russia**
- Roadshow, 18 April 2024, Istanbul, **Turkey**

- Road shows in Nanjing, Wuhan, Xiamen, 20 - 26 April 2024, **China**
- IWTE Wellness Expo, 08 - 10 May 2024, Tokyo, **Japan**
- SITF, 09 - 12 May 2024, **South Korea**
- GITF, 06 - 08 May 2024, Beijing, **China**
- RTF, 27 - 29 May 2024, **Saudi Arabia**
- ATM, 06 - 09 May, **UAE**
- Networking sessions Indore, Baroda, Surat, 10 - 14 June 2024, **India**
- Bird Fair, 12 - 14 July, London, **UK**
- Road shows in Beijing & Hong Kong, 12-17 July 2024, **Hong Kong**
- Networking session, Kolkata, 10 July, **India**
- TTF, Kolkata, 12 - 14 July, **India**
- IITM, 26 - 28 July 2024, Bangalore, **India**
- IITM, 02 - 04 August 2024, Chennai, **India**
- IFTM, 17 - 19 September 2024, Paris, **France**
- Leisure, 17 - 19 September 2024, Moscow, **Russia**
- JATA, 26 - 29 September 2024, Tokyo, **Japan**
- TTG, Rimini, 09 - 11 October 2024, Italy
- TT Warsaw, 28 - 30 November 2024, **Poland**
- World Travel Market (WTM), 05 - 07 November 2024, London, **UK**
- ILTM, Paris, 2 - 5 December 2024, **France**

➤ **Output/ Outcome**

Increase the number of tourist arrivals from target markets and also to increase a growth of segment of high spenders of the arrivals. Increase the number of journalists and new tour operators/ professionals to visit Sri Lanka in parallel increase social media attention to the destination. Showcase Sri Lanka as a desirable tourist destination to the travel industry members. Create the platform for Sri Lankan DMCs/ hoteliers to get more and more business contacts.

To communicate the positive message on Sri Lanka Tourism with the new developments that occurred in a couple of years for international visitors and also to present Sri Lanka Tourism products to the focused countries and destination awareness. To increase the top of the mind, recall about Sri Lanka Tourism with the resumption of direct connectivity.



ITB, Germany



WTM, UK



ILTM, Cannes, France

➤ Wanderlust Reader Travel awards 2024

Sri Lanka has been honoured with the prestigious title of **Most Desirable Island in the World** at the Wanderlust Reader Travel Awards 2024. Renowned for its breathtaking landscapes, rich biodiversity, and diverse culture, Sri Lanka offers an unparalleled travel experience. From the pristine beaches along the coastline to the lush tea plantations in the central highlands and the vibrant wildlife in its national parks, every corner of this island is a testament to nature's beauty. Visitors are captivated by the warm hospitality of the locals, the delicious cuisine, and the ancient historical sites, such as the iconic Sigiriya Rock Fortress and the sacred city of Kandy. This recognition not only highlights Sri Lanka's allure but also its potential as a premier destination for travellers seeking adventure, tranquillity, and cultural richness.

➤ Most Desirable Island World -Sri Lanka



Award accepted by the Chairman on behalf of Sri Lanka

➤ **Mission Support Activities**

- Sri Lanka Cricket Tour in England promotional Event - August 2024, **UK**
- Consumer promotion activation in shopping malls - March, **Austria**
- Participated for International Tourism Fair SUMMER 2024 in Yekaterinburg, / 29th March and 17th to 18th May 2024, **Russia**
- Participated for International Tourism Fair Leisure 2024 / 17th 20th April 2024, **Belarus**
- Participated Sri Lanka Destination Promotion event in Istanbul / 20th February 2024, **Turkey**
- Sri Lanka Festival, Yoyogi Park, Tokyo (June), **Japan**
- Media briefing event, October 2024, Vietnam
- Pars International Tourism Exhibition in Shiraz - Iran
- Tourism Promotional Event - **Jordan**
- Sri Lanka Roadshow - **Oman**

➤ **Output / Outcome**

To communicate the positive message on Sri Lanka Tourism and also to present Sri Lanka Tourism products to the travellers. Increase the number of arrivals to Sri Lanka. Obtain maximum media exposure over Sri Lanka Tourism through the activities organized by the Sri Lanka missions.

Total Marketing Promotion Expenditure (cash basis) up to 31.12.2024: Rs.1,532,561,911/-

Physical progress: 80.77 % completed.

Public Relations

➤ Visiting Journalists & Blogger Programs (VJP & VBP)



By targeting Key International travel influencers & Mainstream Media Publications, - VJP & VBP Unit undertook Destination Promotional Familiarization programs (Pressed Trips) under the Visiting Blogger Program (VBP) and Visiting Journalist Programs (VJP) assigned for the year 2024

Both projects mainly concentrated on digitally positioning Sri Lanka as a “Bucket List Destination” for targeted global travel seekers in all segments considering multiple geographic regions of inbound tourism in Sri Lanka and the demographics of the various potential tourists. Both projects focus on promoting the range of tourism products available to explore on the Island.

Targeted Segments:

- Family Travelers
- Adventure travellers
- Luxury Travel &Honeymoon Seekers
- Ayurveda &Wellness
- Culture Travel seekers: Culinary/Heritage /Archaeology/Lifestyle
- Ramayana & Buddhist pilgrimages
- Sun, Sand & Sea Holiday Seekers

Key Inbound Destinations:

India, UK, Europe (Germany, France, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, all established & emerging markets), Australia, Russia, USA, Middle East and other East Asian Emerging Markets

➤ Focused Promotional Regions

- Western Province: Colombo/Kaluthara/ Negombo
- Uva Province: Haputhale / Ella / Bandarawela/ Mahiyanganaya/ Badulla
- Sabaragamuwa : Rathnapura / Udawalawa
- Central Province: Dambulla / Matale / Kandy / Knuckles Mountain Range
- North Central Province: Anuradhapura / Polonnaruwa / Habarana
- NorthernProvince:Jaffna/Vavuniya/Nagadeepa
- SouthernProvince:Bentota/Galle/Matara/Yala/Mirissa/

➤ Outcome:

Within the year 2024, VBP and VJP organized "Creative Destination Experiential Trips"for carefully selected mainstream international media outlets and international traveled influencers to promote Sri Lanka as an "Unforgettable Holiday Maker" with an emphasis on sustainably driven tourism development where tourist opportunities would have shared among local stakeholders with a minimal negative impact towards the nature, wild life and local culture. Both media projects aimed to raise awareness of Sri Lanka as a country with great diversity that could easily accommodate different viewpoints towards Sri Lankan Tourism.

➤ **Overall Progress with KPIs 2024**

TotalNo.of Journalists & Influencers Invited (VJP/VPB)	No.of Journalists/ Travel Influencers Country of Origin	Key focus markets	Total No. of Promotional Deliverables (VJP/VPB): Pots / Articles / Vlogs/TV Shows	Combined Reach (Circulation + Readership + Followership + Subscribers + Ave. Monthly page visits)	TotalCombined Media Value (Advertising value equaled) (LKR)
65Pax	UK, India, Germany, Russia, France, Australia, Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Portugal, USA, Singapore,	UK, Germany France, European Countries (both emerging& established), USA, India	1172	633,982,356	258,815,957.51

➤ **Key Earned Media Projects Handled Under VJP& VBP and Achievements:**

- Travel media coverage on Daily Mail-UKbyreachingto364,900,000 Global Readership (ONLINE)
- By hosting 30 mainstream influencers from emerging & established markets, SLTPB has undertaken the biggest international influencer gathering & promotion targeting mainly the 2024/2025 Winter season travellers from emerging European Markets as well as established inbound markets. A total number of30 international travel influencers.
- Culinary Travel Vlog Series with Chopstick Travel featuring Northern & Southern Food Cultures reaching to over 3.9 million of social media followers



- Forbes India Coverage reaching to 130,000 high end Indian online readers
- Mega international Instagrammer Promotion - Summer

Number of Influencers	Main audience geography of the group	Deliverables (IG Posts/ Reels	Engagement	ROI: Expected Media Value (LKR)
07	USA, Italy, Germany, Russia, UK, France, India, Japan, Spain,	140	1,014,639	43,737,123



➤ International Media focused promotion at the International Media Marketplace, UK

Destination Promotion at the IMM (targeting leading international media publications) created direct opportunities to connect with the world's leading travel media publications. This media networking event was a key sourcing strategy to interact and invite top-tier international media under Visiting Journalist Program-2024, this programme was undertaken on 19th and 20th of February.



TBEX-Europe 2024: *This high-profile travel influencer event is considered to be the largest international travel influence and trade related conference, and networking gathering in Europe. Over 300 leading international travel influencers (YouTubers, Instagrammers, Bloggers, and social media content creators) have participated to this event. TBEX Europe 2024 was undertaken in San Sebastian, Spain from May28th-31st 2024.*



➤ Film Tourism Promotions:

➤ Key Projects undertaken:

IIFTC- Bollywood Film Location and Tourism Promotion: Participated at the 11th edition of the India International Film Tourism Conclave (IIFTC), the largest film tourism event in the region, held from October 23rd to 25th, 2024, in Mumbai. The event provided an international platform for Sri Lanka to showcase its unique film locations to over 100 leading Indian film production companies and a multitude of content creators seeking new filming destinations.



.IFFI- 2024 (International Film Festival of India): Participated in the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), held from November 20 to 28 in Goa, India. This participation was initiated following an invitation from Mr. Prithu Kumar, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of India, and supported by the Sri Lanka Consulate General Office in Mumbai.



➤ **Travel Information Counters(TICs)**

➤ **MANAGEMENT OF 1912 TOURISM HOTLINE & VISITOR ASSISTANCE**

*Tourist Information Centres (TICs) play a pivotal role in managing Sri Lanka Tourism's official hotlines, including the **24-hour 1912 Tourism Hotline**. In addition to hotline operations, TIC officers oversee inquiries received via the **info@srilanka.travel** official email.*

In the year 2024, the three TICs have assisted over **9,000 walk-in visitors** and handled more than **39,000 telephone inquiries**, demonstrating their commitment to providing comprehensive support to tourists.

➤ **WELCOMING CRUISE PASSENGERS**

Dance performances were arranged to welcome passengers.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. "Riviera" | 4. "Zuiderdam" |
| 2. "Le Jacques Carter" | 5. "VascodaGama" |
| 3. "Celebrity Millennium" | 6. "Silver Whisper" |

○ **WELCOMING 9 NEW AIRLINES & 203 VIP & SPECIAL GROUPS AT BIA**

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. LOT Polish Airline | 4. CHONGQING Airlines | 7. Air Arabia |
| 2. Cathay Pacific Airlines | 5. Enter Air | 8. Air Astana |
| 3. Maldivian Airlines | 6. Azur Air | 9. Sky Up Airlines |



➤ **ORGANIZING SPECIAL EVENTS**

1. Celebration of World Tourism Day 2024-BIA&Kandy



2. **One Millionth Tourist Arrival** – Arranged a special event to welcome One Millionth Tourist to Sri Lanka at TIC, BIA on 29th June 2024.



3. **Two Millionth Tourist Arrival** – Arranged a special event to welcome Two Millionth Tourist to Sri Lanka at TIC, BIA on 26th December 2024 with the presence of Deputy Minister of Tourism and Chairman, Sri Lanka Tourism.



➤ Local Media unit -SLTPB

During 2024, the Local Media Unit of SLTPB has organized three main Press conferences and has circulated 50 press releases to the Media on different local and foreign promotional activities carried out by SLTPB. This has got published in print as well as on social media platforms and A Local Media Tour to Pinnawala was also arranged during the first quarter of 2024, with the participation of journalists from Ceylon Today, Aruna, Lankadeepa and Daily Mirror, to give an update and a positive outlook about the Pinnawala Elephant orphanage and its current process.

➤ Some of the Articles published in Print Media in 2024



Total Public Relation Expenditure (cash basis) up to 31.12.2024: Rs.89,940,425/-
Physical progress: 81.33 % completed

Events

➤ Gangaramaya Navam Perahara 2024

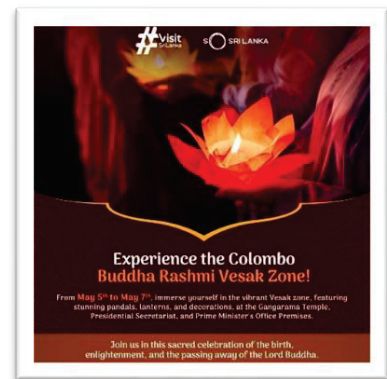
Facilitated with 01Mn sponsorship, publicity given through city hotels, BIA advertising and social media platforms with the purpose of Promoting Sri Lanka as a cultural and religious tourism destination.

➤ Buddha Rashmi Vesak Mangalyaya

Arranged a publicity campaign for the event organized by the Presidential secretariat and Gangaramaya Temple by facilitating city Illumination in the trees at Galle face green.

➤ Sancharaka Udawa

Facilitated with a Sponsorship and the two-day event was showcased in collaboration with SLAITO at BMICH with the objective of support SMEs, DMCs and Travel Agents and other stakeholders of Tourism industry to create awareness, established contact of industry members enhance their knowledge introduce new product and services, promote their product and services and promote lessons on tourist attraction.



Total Event Expenditure (cash basis) up to 31.12.2024: Rs.53,799,150/-

Physical progress: 45.13 % completed

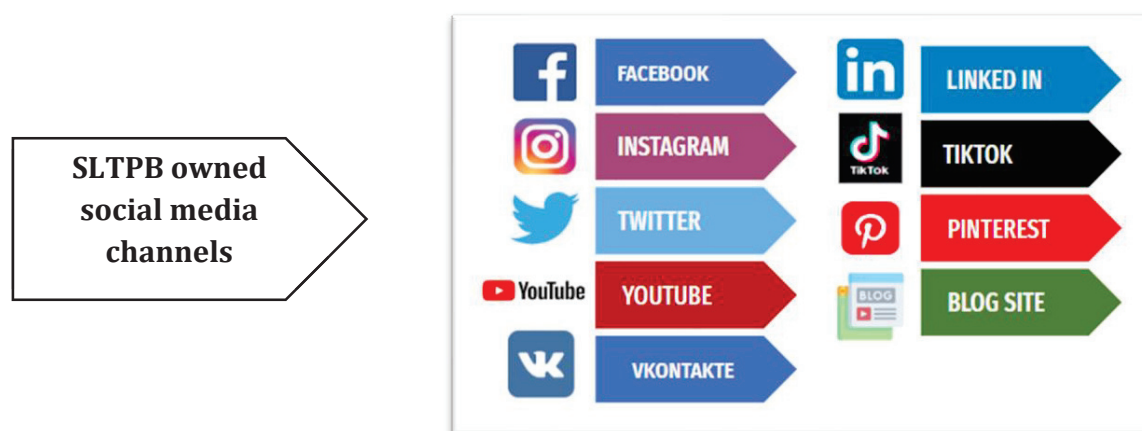
Advertising

➤ Activities Undertaken by the Advertising Division of SLTPB in 2024

➤ Transforming Global Engagement: SLTPB's Social Media Milestones in 2024

In 2024, the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) elevated its digital presence across an array of social media platforms, building on the groundbreaking success of 2023. Through creative storytelling, immersive content, and strategic community engagement, SLTPB captured the hearts of global travelers. By harnessing platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, Pinterest, VK, Telegram, and LinkedIn, the bureau consistently showcased Sri Lanka's unparalleled beauty, culture, and hospitality.

This year's campaigns resonated with millions, cultivating emotional connections, inspiring wanderlust, and ensuring Sri Lanka remained a leading choice for global tourism. SLTPB's innovative use of analytics-driven insights and cross-platform consistency positioned Sri Lanka as a beacon of resilience and allure in the travel industry.



➤ Development of Advertising Materials

A production agency, Aerial View (Pvt) Ltd., was appointed to develop advertising materials for the Sri Lanka rebranding campaign.

Progress: The contract was awarded, film productions commenced, and the first set of deliverables has been successfully completed.

➤ Brand New Website Development and Maintenance Support

A comprehensive plan was established to develop a new website with advanced features, including hosting, content creation, multilingual support, SEO, and a digital asset management system.

Progress: This project will be carried out under the strategic supervision of the UNWTO and will span a two-year contract.

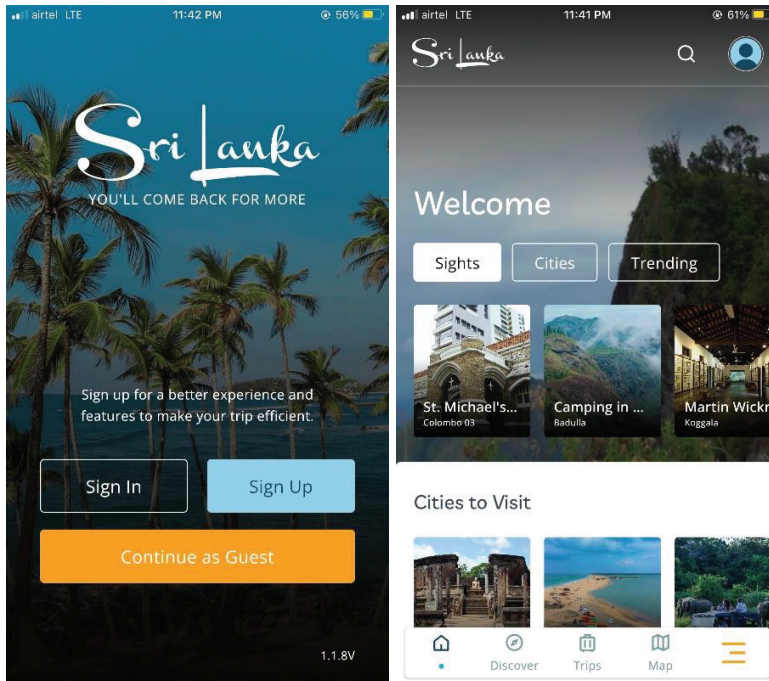
➤ Mobile Application Development (ADB Funded)

Phase 1 of the mobile application development has been completed.

Features:

Over 250 tourism attractions and more than 100 key tourism facts included.

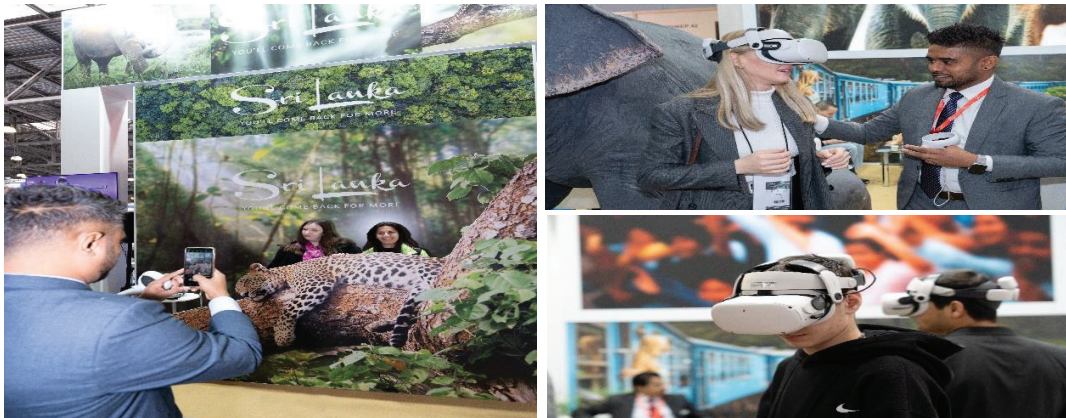
Integration of SLTDA-registered tourism stakeholders into the app.



➤ Interactive Media Showcase at MITT Moscow 2024

Enhanced visitor engagement through the installation of a photo booth and VR video demonstration at the SLTPB Pavilion.

Outcome: The activity received strong participation, showcasing Sri Lanka's attractions through innovative VR technology.



➤ Participation in Asia Dive Expo (ADEX) 2024

Successfully represented Sri Lanka at the Asia Dive Expo, held in Singapore from April 12th to 14th, 2024.

Outcome: Promoted Sri Lanka as a premier diving destination to both consumers and trade audiences.

Networking with marine tourism enthusiasts facilitated the successful execution of marine tourism promotions for Sri Lanka. This collaboration will help SLTPB in developing better content and promotional materials for Sri Lankan marine tourism as a distinct tourism product.

- **Sri Lanka Tourism International Endorsement page updated - 2024 Endorsements updated.**
- Best of the World 2024 National Geographic.

Pekoe Trail which was listed as the National Geographic's best coveted "Best of the Wider World Tourism Project". It was also recognized by the British Guild of Travel Writers (BGTW) at the International Awards UK where Sri Lanka was presented with the Pekoe Trail Award which was another achievement for Sri Lanka Tourism.

* Pekoe Trail – Top 20 Travel Experience in the world - National Geographic's
- The UAE-based Travel Off Path has listed Sri Lanka as one of the fastest-growing tourism destinations in 2024. Noting that Sri Lanka is regularly ranked as one of the values for money locations for digital nomads.
- Sri Lanka as the 4th most popular tourist destination in the world for 2024-Fotbes Magazine.
- Sri Lanka among the top 5 "world Best Countries to visit in your lifetime ,2024-CEOWORLD International Magazine.
- Sri Lanka has been recognized as one of the "3 Must-Visit Travel Destination for summer 2024 by a specialist contributor to the prestigious Forbes magazine.
- Big 7 Travels- "The 20 Best Honeymoon Destinations in the world "Discover the world's most beautiful honeymoon destinations.
- Sri Lanka ranked No. 5 in the as the Best Countries to Visit in a Lifetime in 2024! -The CEOWORLD Magazine website.
- Best International Tourism Board – Accolade at Global Tourism award 2024 organized by Travel World online (TWO)
- Wanderlust-Gold award for Sri Lanka as the Most desirable Island (World)
- Sri Lanka revealed as most popular solo travel destination for 2025.

Total Advertising Expenditure (cash basis) up to 31.12.2024 - Rs. 26,246,017.00
Physical progress: 8.34% completed

New Product Development

➤ Buddhist Trail Promotion

➤ Live Streaming of Kandy Esala Perahera 2024

The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) successfully carried out the live webcast of the Kandy Esala Perahera in collaboration with the Media Bureau of the Temple of the Tooth Relic over the past four years. In 2024, SLTPB broadcasted the final Randoli Perahera in ten languages including German, French, Thai, Hindi, Mandarin, Japanese, English, Korean, Sinhala, and Tamil. This initiative aimed to enhance the global visibility of Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage and to showcase the vibrancy of the nation's traditions.



➤ Buddhist FAM Tour for Indian Buddhist Travel Agents along with Vesak celebration

In the year 2024, with the Vesak celebration, SLTPB invited international Buddhist Travel agents who were handling Buddhist and Pilgrim Tours and members of the Association of Buddhist Tour Operators from India from 22nd May to 29th May 2024 to showcase the vibrant of the country during the Vesak celebration 2024 and to enhance the awareness of the country's rich culture to the globe and conduct a B2B session along with the program and strengthen the network between local and international travel agents as the first ever B2B event for Buddhist and Pilgrim Tours which organized by Sri Lanka Tourism.



➤ **Facilitation for the production of Documentary for Solosmastana and relationship of Thailand and Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau provided air ticket taxes for the Thai Delegation who arrived to create the production of a documentary titled *Solosmastana*, which will highlight 16 significant religious sites in Sri Lanka in collaboration with Sri Lankan Embassy in Thailand, Tourism Authority of Thailand and Thai PBS (the Public Broadcasting Service of Thailand). This documentary aims to promote Buddhist religious tourism between Thailand and Sri Lanka



➤ **Southern MICE EXPO 2024**

Sri Lanka Convention Bureau successfully organized the southern MICE EXPO from 27th to 31st May 2024. As the marketing arm of development of niche tourism products within the southern province, SLTPB collaborated for the theme Gala Night.

➤ **Destination Wedding Promotion**

➤ **EWPC 2024-Turkey**

The Exotic Wedding Planning Conference – EWPC, is one of the biggest series of wedding planning conferences conceptualized to promote learning, networking, and business opportunities in the global wedding planning industry.

As the marketing arm for Destination Wedding, SLTPB participated in The Exotic Wedding Planning Conference for the 1st time. Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau obtained a joint meeting space with the SLCB to feature Sri Lanka. Accompanying our delegation were four industry members, who contributed significantly to our representation alongside Sri Lanka Tourism.



➤ **WOW Awards 2024**

Sri Lanka Tourism represented the WOW Awards and networking during the month of August 2024. The WOW Networking, Conclave and Awards has been the essence of cultivating and celebrating excellence in the creation of LIVE events. This year this event celebrated its 15th anniversary. The WOW Event is the region's largest business & recognition platform for the Experiential Marketing, MICE and LIVE Entertainment & Wedding Industry. More than 4500 delegates met at the WOW Awards Asia in 2024 with participation from 15+ countries. The event was held at the Jio World Convention Center, Mumbai.



➤ **ANANT EPCC 2025**

The Sri Lanka Convention Bureau and the Sri Lankan Tourism Promotion Bureau together with the Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Mumbai organized Sri Lanka's participation at the ANANT Event Planners Culfest and Confluence (EPCC) event in Ahmedabad from 11th - 12th October 2024 representing Sri Lanka as the destination showcase partners. The two-day event consisted of presentations, panel discussions and exploring the latest trends & destinations with a destination spotlight on Sri Lanka.



➤ Ramayan Trail Promotion

Welcome and Facilitation of VVIP Ramayan Delegation to Promote Ramayan in Sri Lanka

Total New Product Development Expenditure (cash basis) up to 31.12.2024:

Rs.28,768,065/-

Physical progress: 60.53 % completed.

➤ Approved Annual Budget 2024

Table No. 4.1.

Expenditure	Approved Budget 2024 Rs.	Revised Budget 2024 Rs.	Expenditure as at 31.12.2024
Marketing Promotions	6,470,000,000	1,884,057,357	1,523,508,841
Industry Support Scheme	10,000,000	0	0
Mission support activities	10,000,000	13,347,000	9,053,070
Working with Tour Operators	500,000,000	0	0
Total Marketing	6,990,000,000	1,897,404,357	1,532,561,911
Visiting Journalist Program (VJP)	34,000,000	39,501,300	10,926,047
Visiting Blogger Program (VBP)	140,000,000	40,639,900	50,070,732
Film Tourism Promotions	81,000,000	3,201,160	3,621,184
Visitor Facilities & Tourist Information Centres	77,000,000	7,050,000	5,207,060
Local Media	18,300,000	1,200,000	1,131,426
Special Project	30,000,000	19,000,000	18,983,976
Total Public Relation	380,300,000	110,592,360	89,940,425
Event	745,355,949	119,200,000	53,799,150
Total Event	745,355,949	119,200,000	53,799,150
Advertising	659,500,000	314,690,456	26,246,017
Total Advertising	659,500,000	314,690,456	26,246,017
New Product Development	262,000,000	47,530,578	28,768,065
Total New Product Development	262,000,000	47,530,578	28,768,065
Strategic Planning & Research	0	100,000	0

Total Strategic Planning & Research	0	100,000	0
Special Projects	230,000,000	27,280,000	2,768,700
Total Special Projects	230,000,000	27,280,000	2,768,065
Production	100,000,000	98,650,000	63,659,361
Administration/Finance/Legal/Internal Audit	331,570,000	253,210,010	187,155,300
General Administration & Finance and other supporting service	431,570,000	251,860,010	250,814,661
Total Expenditure	9,699,225,949	2,868,657,761	1,984,898,929

Source: SLTPB

➤ **Challenges faced during the implementation**

1. Depreciation of the rupee as exchange rate impacts the overall LKR cost estimates of the planned promotional activities.
2. Adhering to the procurement process will require a minimum of 42-day bidding period for international promotions which are not complex in nature (eg; advertising in international magazines, stand construction for events which is 3-4 days, short term social media campaigns/ tactical campaigns etc.)
3. Tourism is a fast-moving industry and our procurement process does not adhere to the speed of the market in a current digital era.
4. Due to past economic and political crises, international suppliers are reluctant to bid for Sri Lanka tourism projects.
5. Lack of staff to implement the projects (ex. Director / Advertising position is vacant for the last 5 years).



Sri Lanka Convention Bureau

Progress Report 2024

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1. Introduction

The Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB), established in 1987, is a statutory body operating under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment, and Tourism. It functions within the framework of the Tourism Act No. 38 of 2005, which serves as the governing legislation for Sri Lanka's tourism sector.

SLCB operates with an annual government budget with 4% income from the Tourism Development Levy and the Embarkation Tax

The Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB) is dedicated to promoting Sri Lanka as a premier destination for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE).

2. Vision and Mission

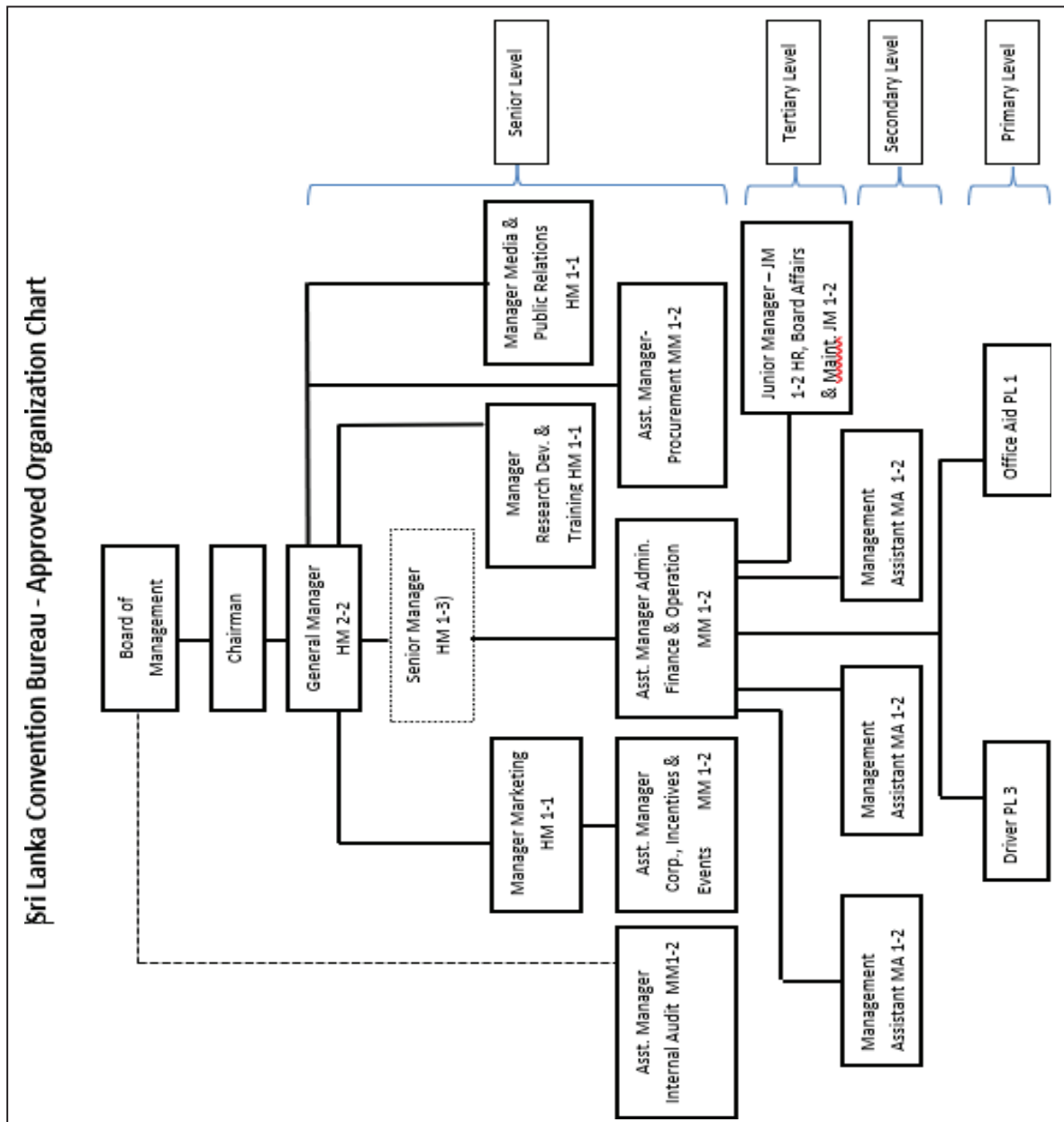
I. Vison

To position Sri Lanka as Asia's most sought-after venue for MICE tourism (Meetings, Incentive Travel, Conferences, Exhibitions and Events)

II. Mission

Sri Lanka Convention bureau will secure optimum revenue in foreign exchange from MICE tourism which will contribute to the national economy by uplifting of the living standards of those who are dependent upon the "Meetings Industry" in Sri Lanka.

3. Organogram



4. Expected Output

- Increase the number of Exhibitions and Conferences held in Sri Lanka.
- Organize MICE promotion programmes in overseas
- Collaboration and Coordination with local MICE industry & Association for hosting international events.
- Formation & implementation of SLCB Event Support scheme.
- Develop a social media marketing campaign to engage in live presence of the Business event sector.
- Affiliations with other Convention Bureau in the region to encourage Association Meetings to rotate among Asian Countries.

5. Expected Outcome

- To promote Sri Lanka as a venue for international, regional and domestic Business events.
- To maintain pace with market expectations
- To increase bid opportunities and conversion rate
- To increase the awareness of the 'Meet in Sri Lanka' concept across the target markets
- To facilitate entertainment events
- To encourage an increase in country capacity for MICE/Business events including Multipurpose venues, internationally branded high-volume hotels, and services to support the growth and servicing of the sector
- Build the image and enhance the profile of the destination
- Attract Investments
- Stimulate Infrastructure Development

6. Financial Progress 2024

Approved Annual Budget 2024: Rs. Mn

Budget Income	:	318
Budgeted Capital Expenditure	:	2.5
Budgeted Recurrent Expenditure	:	318

Actual Income and Expenditure As at 31.12.2024 - Rs. Mn

Actual Income	:	318
Actual Capital Expenditure	:	0.95
Actual Recurrent Expenditure	:	377

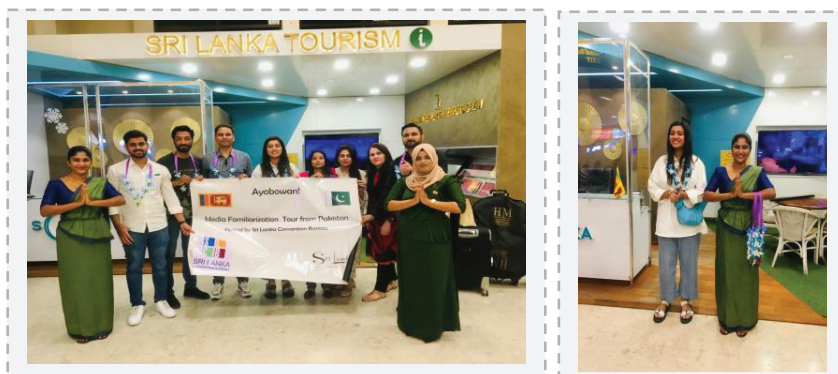
7. Projects or activities during in the year 2024

7.1 Marketing Activities

7.1.1 Familiarization Tours

- I. Name of the Project :** Familiarization Tours 23-28 April 2024
- Activity :** Familiarization Tour for Pakistan Media Delegation
- Location :** Colombo and Down South
- Target Group :** Pakistan MICE travellers
- Start and end date :** January to April 2024
- Achievements :**
- * Built the awareness and promote Sri Lanka as a premier MICE destination for Pakistan MICE market
 - * Get the publicity through all the mass and social media platforms simultaneously
 - * Showcased the MICE venues, business potential and attractions for business and bis-leisure market
 - * Provided the message that the MICE industry Professionals are ready for Business.

Expenditure : LKR 3.35 Mn



- II. Name of the Project :** Familiarization Tours 13-18 September 2024
- Activity :** Familiarization Tour for Chennai Media Delegation
- Location :** Coastal Area in Down South
- Target Group :** Chennai MICE Market
- Start and end date :** July 2024 to September 2024
- Achievements :**
- Built the awareness and promote Sri Lanka as a premier MICE destination for Chennai MICE market
 - * Get the publicity through all the mass and social media platforms simultaneously
 - * Showcased the MICE venues, business potential and attractions for business and bis-leisure market
 - * Provided the message that the MICE industry Professionals are ready for Business.
- Expenditure :** LKR 3.3 Mn



- III. Name of the Project :** Familiarization Tours 5-12 September 2024
- Activity :** Familiarization Tour for China Travel Agents
- Location :** Coastal Area in Down South
- Target Group :** Chinese MICE Market
- Start and end date :** July 2024 to September 2024
- Achievements :** Built the awareness and promote Sri Lanka as a premier MICE destination for Chinese MICE market
- * Get the publicity through all the mass and social media platforms simultaneously
 - * Showcased the MICE venues, business potential and attractions for business and bis-leisure market
 - * Provided the message that the MICE industry Professionals are ready for Business.
- Expenditure :** LKR 3.2 Mn



- IV. Name of the Project :** Familiarization Tours 13-18 October 2024
- Activity :** Familiarization Tour for Gujarat Media Delegation
- Location :** Negombo Coastal Area, Dambulla, Sigiriya and Kandy
- Target Group :** Gujrat MICE Market
- Start and end date :** July 2024 to October 2024
- Achievements :** Built the awareness and promote Sri Lanka as a premier MICE destination for Gujarati MICE market
- * Building the connection between Sri Lankan MICE stakeholders and Chinese Travel Agents in order to increase inbound tourism opportunities
 - * Showcased the MICE venues, business potential and attractions for business and bis-leisure market
 - * Provided the message that the MICE industry Professionals are ready for Business.

Expenditure : LKR 6.5 Mn



7.1.2 MICE Specific Exhibitions

V. Name of the Project : OTM & SATTE 2024 and Tourism Networking Programmes in Mumbai and New Delhi

Activity : Attend OTM 2023 & SATTE, India 2024 in collaboration with the SLTPB

Location : OTM – Mumbai, India & SATTE - Greater Noida, Delhi, India.

Target Group : Indian MICE Market

Start and end date : December 2023 February 2024

Achievements:

- Showcased Sri Lanka as a desirable MICE & tourist destination to Indian travelers and enhanced consumer awareness in the Indian Market and was able to identify present market trends, implications and issues.
- Promote MICE facilities and opportunities of Sri Lanka

Expenditure: LKR 6,562,440.43



VI. Name of the Project : IMEX 2024
Activity : Organize Sri Lanka Pavilion at IMEX 2024
Location : Frankfurt, Germany
Target Group : European and all other countries - MICE Market
Start and end date : January 2024 to May 2024

Achievements:

- meet leading International Cooperates, Agents and create awareness about Sri Lanka and its MICE opportunities Sri Lanka
- Promote MICE facilities and opportunities of Sri Lanka
- Encourage the European and other MICE Agents and Tour Operators who are presently working with Sri Lankan Operators to increase the number of visits/tours to Sri Lanka.

Expenditure : LKR 37,669,374.16



VII. Name of the Project	: IT & CM China 2024
Activity	: Organize Sri Lanka Pavilion at IT & CM China 2024
Location	: Shanghai, China
Target Group	: European and all other countries - MICE Market
Start and end date	: January 2024 to May 2024

Achievements:

meet leading International Cooperates, Agents in Shanghai and create awareness about Sri Lanka and its MICE opportunities Sri Lanka
Promote MICE facilities and opportunities of Sri Lanka
Encourage the Chinese MICE Agents and Tour Operators who are presently working with Sri Lankan Operators to increase the number of visits/tours to Sri Lanka.

Expenditure: LKR 15,393,375.48

VIII. Name of the Project	: Business Luxury Travel Mart (BLTM) Trade Fair
2024 - 29-31 August 2024	
Activity	: Organized Sri Lanka Pavilion at BLTM 2024
Location	: New Delhi, India
Target Group	: Indian MICE Market
Start and end date	: April 2024 - September 2024

Achievements:

- SLCB was awarded as the “Most Promising MICE Destination” at the BLTM exhibition and named as the official partner country of the BLTM 2024

- Made aware of the SLCB MICE Traveler Assistance Scheme among the Indian MICE Agents, Associations & Corporates and encouraged them to include Sri Lanka in their next year's travel plans.
- Promote MICE facilities and opportunities of Sri Lanka
- Sri Lanka Convention Bureau provided sponsorship for the Exhibition Lanyards. All visitors, hosted buyers, and exhibitors at the show received lanyards bearing the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau's logo provide a great publicity for Sri Lanka

Expenditure

: LKR 32,766,421.82



IX. Name of the Project: Incentives, Business Travel & Meetings (IBTM) World Trade Fair 2024 – 19-21 November 2024

Activity : Organized Sri Lanka Pavilion at IBTM World 2024
Location : Barcelona, Spain
Target Group : Global MICE Market
Start and end date : April 2024 – December 2024

Achievements:

- meet leading International Cooperates, Agents and create awareness about Sri Lanka and its MICE opportunities Sri Lanka
- Promote MICE facilities and opportunities of Sri Lanka
- Encourage the European and other MICE Agents and Tour Operators who are presently working with Sri Lankan Operators to increase the number of visits/tours to Sri Lanka.
- Presentation of Destination overview to the hosted buyers

Expenditure

: LKR 37,085,239.63



7.1.3 MICE Specific Country Promotions

X. Name of the Project : India Roadshow -- in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) 10th, 12th & 14th July 2024

Activity : Organized Roadshow in three Indian cities

Location : Indore, Vadodara & Surat

Target Group : Indian Tour operators, MICE Agents, Media and Associations

Start and end date: : February 2024 to August 2024

Achievements:

- Obtained important contacts with journalists, bloggers and other opinion leaders to promote Sri Lanka.
- Obtained maximum media exposure over Sri Lanka tourism and MICE which helped to create further effective awareness on a mass scale.

Expenditure : LKR 7,212,633.81 (LKR 5,041,331.00 - to paid to the SLTPB as the SLCB contribution for joint promotion



XI. Name of the Project: Pakistan MICE Roadshow - 26th & 28th June 2024
Activity : Organizing a MICE Promotion Programme
Location : Karachi & Lahore
Target Group : Pakistan Tour operators, MICE Agents, Media and Associations
Start and end date : February 2024 to July 2024

Achievements:

- Showcased Sri Lanka as a desirable MICE tourist destination to Pakistan travelers and enhanced consumer awareness in Pakistan and identified present market trends and issues.
- Encourage the Pakistan MICE Agents and Tour Operators who are presently working with Sri Lankan Operators to increase the number of visits/tours to Sri Lanka

Expenditure: LKR 23,620,026.95/-



XII. Name of the Project: Sri Lanka Tourism Networking Evening -- in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) 10th July 2024

Activity: Organized Tourism Networking Evening in Kolkata

Location: Ganges Queen (Luxurious Banquet Cruise) in Kolkata

Target Group: Indian Tour operators, MICE Agents, Media and Associations

Start and end date: : April 2024 to August 2024

Achievements:

- Obtained important contacts with journalists, bloggers and other opinion leaders to promote Sri Lanka.

- Obtained maximum media exposure over Sri Lanka tourism and MICE which helped to create further effective awareness on a mass scale.

Expenditure: LKR 17,459,762.47/-



7.1.4. Special Projects

XIII. Name of the Project : Sri Lanka MICE Expo 2024 – Southern Edition
Activity : Organize the Sri Lanka MICE EXPO 2024 – Southern Edition
Location : Colombo, Galle & Hambantota

Target Group : India (New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai) Bangladesh, Pakistan, UAE, Qatar, Germany, Indonesia, UK, Germany, Singapore, Turkey, France, China, Australia (more than 15 countries)

Start and end date: January 2024 to 01st June 2024

Achievements:

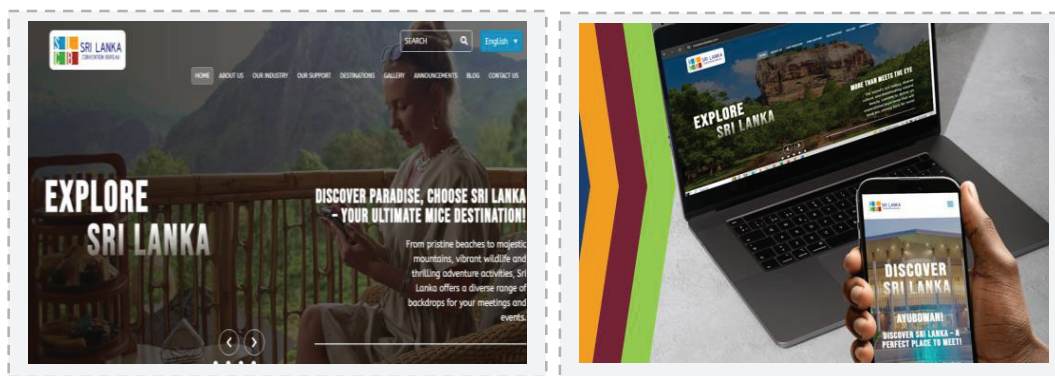
- Promote Sri Lanka as a MICE destination and link Sri Lankan MICE stakeholders with foreign buyers
- Showcased the world, the status of the Sri Lankan MICE industry to the global MICE Stakeholders
- Provided the message that the MICE industry Professionals are ready for Business.
- Showcase Southern Sri Lanka as venue for MICE tourism

Expenditure: LKR 94,863,408.67



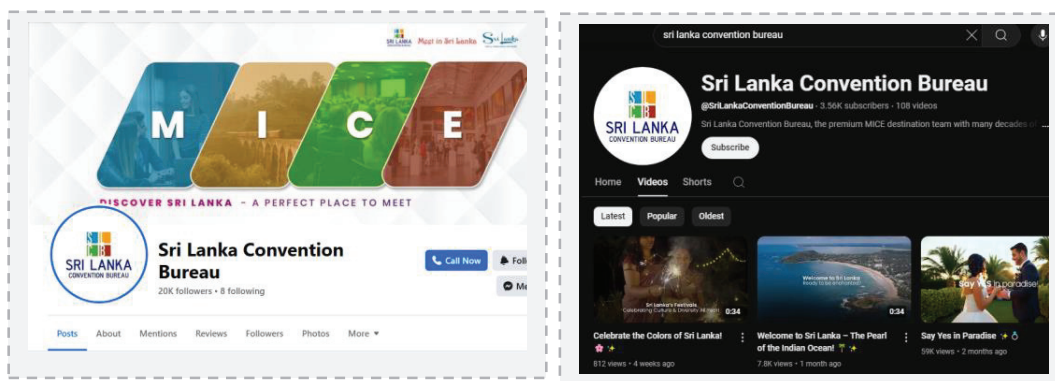
7.1.5. SLCB Website

XIV. Name of the Project	:	SLCB Website
Activity	:	Website Revamping, Maintenance & SEO activates
Location	:	Online/Digital
Target Group	:	Foreign MICE Market and Local MICE Stakeholders
Start and end date:	:	
Achievements	:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Redesigned and launched the new SLCB website with enhanced user experience. * Showcase MICE facilities, and opportunities of Sri Lanka * Increased in organic website traffic through strategic SEO optimization focusing on MICE-related keywords * Developed mobile-responsive design ensuring seamless access across all devices * Implemented multilingual support in key languages (English, Chinese, German, French) to cater to primary source markets
Expenditure	:	LKR 3,267,692.22



7.1.6. SLCB Social Media Campaign

XV. Name of the Project	:	SLCB Social Media Campaign
Activity	:	Social Media content creation, pai media campaign and page Maintenance
Location	:	N/A
Target Group	:	Foreign MICE Market and Local MICE Stake Holders
Date of Commence	:	2022 and ongoing an annual basis
Achievements	:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Facebook - Achieved 13 million page reaches and increased followers to 20.5K * Instagram - Achieved 6.1 million impressions and increased followers to 1.1 K * Google & YouTube - Generated 3.3 million impressions across Google & YouTube platforms * LinkedIn - Expanded organic reach to 15K * X(Twitter) - Achieved 2.9 million impressions and increased followers to 1 K
Expenditure	:	LKR 6.5 Mn



7.1.7 SLCB MICE Traveller Assistance Scheme

XVI. Name of the Project:	SLCB Event Support
Activity:	Support local MICE industry through the SLCB MICE traveler Assistance Scheme
Location:	Sri Lanka
Target Group:	International MICE buyers, Agents, Media & - Associations
Start and end date:	January to December 2024

Achievements

- Increase the awareness of the 'Meet in Sri Lanka' concept across the target markets
- Assist to local MICE Industry to promote Sri Lanka as a preferred destination for MICE Tourism
- Supported for 26 local companies

1. **Expenditure:** LKR 16,326,392.00

7.1.8 Production of Promotional Material

XVII. Name of the Project	:	Production of promotional material and videos
Activity	:	Production of promotional material and videos - Key tags, bags, flyers, porcelain were and videos
Location	:	N/R
Target Group	:	To promote among the interested parties
Start and end date:	:	January 2024 to December 2024
Achievements	:	Availability of promotional material for MICE promotion
Expenditure	:	LKR 5,137,132.50



7.2. Research, Development and Training and Promoting Destination Weddings

- I. Name of the project:** Regional MICE Training Programme for Hotels, Venue providers, and Visitor Experience providers in Southern region: Full-day educational session

Activity	: Conducted an educational session on MICE Activities
Location	: Beruwela
Target Group	: Hoteliers/Venue providers
Date	: 8 May 2024
Achievement	: Educated 40 hoteliers in the southern region
Expenditure	: Rs. 1,917,480.00



Participants at the event

- II. Name of the project:** Regional MICE Training Programme for Hotels, Venue providers, and Visitor Experience providers in Cultural Triangle region: Full-day educational session

Activity	: Conducted an educational session on MICE
Location	: Habarana
Target Group	: Hoteliers/Venue providers
Duration	: 15 October 2024
Achievement	: Educated 40 hoteliers in the Cultural Triangle region

Expenditure : Rs. 2,386,128.00



Panel discussion in progress

III. Name of the project: Regional MICE Training Programme for Hotels, Venue providers, and Visitor Experience providers in Northern region: Full-day educational session

Activity	: Conducted an educational session on MICE
Location	: Jaffna
Target Group	: Hoteliers/Venue providers
Duration	: 26 November 2024
Achievement	: Educated 40 hoteliers in the Northern region
Expenditure	: Rs. 2,118,770.00



Participants representing hoteliers at the event

- IV. Name of the project:** MICE Training programme for Industry and other sectors: Digital Marketing for successful Business events for the MICE Industry
- Activity** : Conducted an education session on using digital marketing for MICE events
- Location** : Colombo
- Target Group** : PCO/DMC/EMC/Hoteliers/ Undergraduates
- Duration** : 27 March 2024
- Achievement** : Educated 100 industry participants
- Expenditure** : Rs. 308,500.00



Two Speakers at the session

-
- V. Name of the project:** MICE Training programme for Industry and other sectors: Awareness programme about the importance of business events for provincial level government organizations and stakeholders to start a dialogue with provincial level government organizations and stakeholders to develop infrastructure for business events: Southern region

- Activity** : Conducted awareness session on the importance of hosting MICE events
- Location** : Galle
- Target Group** : Government Officials in the southern province
- Duration** : 7 May 2024
- Achievement** : Awareness created among 25 government officials
- Expenditure** : Rs. 5,437.00



Awareness session in progress

VI. Name of the project: MICE Training programme for Industry and other sectors: MICE Training Programme for the students who are following hospitality, Tourism and events management degrees in Colombo

Activity	: Conducted an educational session on MICE tourism
Location	: Colombo
Target Group	: Undergraduates/students
Duration	: 3 July 2024
Achievement	: Trained 50 undergraduates
Expenditure	: Rs. 1,386,750.00



Speakers presenting at the event

VII. Name of the project: MICE Training programme for Industry and other sectors: MICE Training Programme for the students who are following hospitality, Tourism and events management degrees in the Northern Region

Activity	: Conducted an educational session on MICE tourism
Location	: Jaffna
Target Group	: Undergraduates/students
Duration	: 27 November 2024
Achievement	: Trained 50 undergraduates

Expenditure : Rs. 1,107,155.00



Group photograph of the students

VIII. Name of the project: MICE Training programme for Industry and other sectors: MICE Training Programme for the students who are following hospitality, Tourism and events management degrees in Uva Wellassa University

Activity : Conducted an educational session on MICE Tourism
Location : Badulla
Target Group : Undergraduates/students
Duration : 17 December 2024
Achievement : Trained 80 undergraduates
Expenditure : Rs. 614,385.00



Participants at the event

IX. Name of the project: MICE Buyer Database
Activity : Hosting of the MICE buyer database
Location : N/A
Target Group : MICE industry
Duration : 1 Jan- 12 November 2024
Achievement : 100% (Completed)

Expenditure : Rs. 4,900.00

X. Name of the project: Gift Items

Activity : Producing of gift items to be used as token of appreciation for speakers/panelists

Location : N/A

Target Group : Resource persons attending MICE Training programmes

Duration : N/A

Achievement : 55% (pending finalization of the tender for gift items)

Expenditure : Rs. 30,429.00

XI. Name of the project: Participate in Weddings Trade Shows/Expo 2024 to promote Destination weddings to Sri Lanka: Exotic Wedding Planners Conference (EWPC) 2024

Activity : Showcased Sri Lanka's products and services to host international destination weddings

Location : Bodrum: Türkiye

Target Group : International wedding planners

Duration : 24-26 April 2024

Achievement : * Increased the awareness on Sri Lanka as a venue for Destination weddings * Created awareness among the international wedding planners on the facilities Sri Lanka have to offer for International Wedding planners. Met and build business relationships with wedding planners to jointly promote Sri Lanka

Expenditure : Rs. 3,233,819,66



B2B session with the wedding planners

XII. Name of the project: Participate in Weddings Trade Shows/Expo2024 to promote Destination weddings to Sri Lanka: WOW networking conclave and awards 2024

Activity : Showcased Sri Lanka's products and services to host Indian destination weddings
Location : Mumbai: India
Target Group : Indian wedding planners
Duration : 17-18 August 2024
Achievement : * Increased the awareness on Sri Lanka as a venue for Destination weddings * Created awareness among the Indian wedding planners on the facilities Sri Lanka have to offer for Indian Wedding planners
Expenditure : Rs. 1,426,910.12



Sri Lanka booth at the event

XIII. Name of the project: Participate in Weddings Trade Shows/Expo2024 to promote Destination weddings to Sri Lanka: ANANT EPCC 2024

Activity : Showcased Sri Lanka's products and services to host Indian destination weddings
Location : Ahmedabad: India
Target Group : Indian wedding planners
Duration : 10-13 October 2024
Achievement : * Increased the awareness on Sri Lanka as a venue for Destination weddings * Created awareness among the Indian wedding planners on the facilities Sri Lanka have to offer for Indian Wedding planners
Expenditure : Rs. 1,913,663.85



Sri Lanka delegation at the event

XIV. **Name of the project:** Provide assistances to the wedding planners

Activity	: Conducted awareness meetings on obtaining approvals/clearances and motivated planners to market Sri Lanka as a venue for Destination weddings
Location	: Colombo
Target Group	: Wedding planners/event organizers/hoteliers
Duration	: 1 January -31 December 2024
Achievement	: Awareness created /Sorted out issues of the planners when hosting destination weddings
Expenditure	: Rs. 71,950.00

7.3 Affiliation with Local & International Association

Name of the project: Support for bidding & assisting the Association Conferences to be held in Sri Lanka

Activity	: Bid proposal preparation & Assisting local Associations
Location	: Colombo
Target Group	: Local Association
Date	: Jan to Dec 2024
Achievement	: 14 International conferences were held *
Expenditure	: Rs10, 002,727.00

*

#	Association Conferences held in 2024
1	Asia Pacific Medical Education Conference (APMEC)
2	Annual International Stillbirth Alliance Conference
3	International Convention on Quality Control Circals (ICQCC)
4	The Annual Academic Session of Sri Lanka College Cardiology
5	National Conference in Library & Information Science & SLLA AGM
6	Asian Conference on Remote Sensing - (ACRS)
7	SAPA Scientific Congress
8	Befrienders Worldwide Conference
9	RESPIRE Annual scientific meeting
10	The 57th Annual Academic Congress
11	International Conference on Endometriosis and Adenomyosis research
12	International Stroke Conference (ISCSL) 2024
13	International Conference Research for Transport and Logistics Industry (R4TLI)
14	Annual Academic Sessions 2024 of the College of the Community Physicians
