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தொழில் அமைச்சு
Ministry of Labour

ප්‍රගති වාර්තාව
முன்னேற்ற அறிக்கை
Progress Report
2025

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Ministry of Labour

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Chapter One

Introduction

1. Ministry of Labour

1.1. Introduction

The prime mission of the Ministry of Labour is to formulate and implement policies to enhance the contribution of the local labour force to economic development by protecting the occupational rights of private and semi-government employees, ensuring social security, ensuring industrial peace, directing skilled labour to the job market, providing employment, ensuring job security and promoting productivity in the country. In pursuit of this mission, the key function of this Ministry is to formulate policies, plan, implement, monitor and follow up on programmes and projects related to the scope of labour and the scopes of institutions affiliated to the Ministry, based on the tasks assigned and national policies in terms of the Gazette Extraordinary Notification No. 2412/08 dated 25.11.2024, in accordance with the sustainable development goals and international conventions ratified by Sri Lanka the Government.

1.2. Vision, Mission and Objectives

Vision

A satisfied, productive labour force

Mission

Contribute to socio-economic development through industrial peace and cooperation, social protection, safeguarding labour rights and promotion of productivity.

Objectives

- Strengthening employer-employee relations through tripartite empowerment.
- Ensuring working conditions and employee rights align with international standards.
- Elimination of child labour.
- Empowering working women, strengthening occupational safety and occupational laws, rights.
- Enhancing flexibility in labour laws and procedures.
- Formulating effective strategies to ensure social security of working people.

1.3. Key Functions of the Ministry

- Policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and following up of programmes and projects in relation to the subjects of Labour, based on the national policies implemented by the government.
- Dealing with other matters relating to the administration of the Labour Tribunals.
- Formulation and implementation of policies for labour relations standards, employee administration, welfare and health in line with international standards.
- Maintenance of cooperation with International Labour Organization and International Social Security Associations.
- Ratification and implementation of International Labour Organization conventions in Sri Lanka.
- Representing Sri Lanka at the International Labour Conference

- Administration and regulation of Employees' Provident Fund, private provident Fund and private pension schemes.
- Providing guidance and facilitating for labour relations and the resolution of labour disputes.
- Matters relating to formulation and regulation of rules and regulations relevant to labour relations.
- Registration of trade unions and introduction and implementation of positive measures for harnessing activities of all trade unions in the public and private sectors for the country's development.
- Coordinating social security matters with the Ministry of Finance.
- Eliminating barriers for women to effectively occupy executive and management positions.
- Providing the necessary support and guidance for career guidance and career development, and for the collection and analysis of labour market information.
- Providing guidance and facilitating for planning and implementing the necessary training and research to create a labour force that is knowledgeable about labour acts, laws, and regulations.
- Providing the necessary guidelines and facilitating to establish and enhance occupational safety and health in the workplace, in line with the modern world and international standards.
- Providing public services within the purview of the Ministry in an efficient and public friendly manner

1.4. Divisions under the Ministry

1.4.1. Administration and Establishments Division

Overseeing the overall administration, management, maintenance, training and coordination of the Ministry and its affiliated institutions falls under the purview of this division. It is also responsible for human resources management and related functions.

Accordingly,

- Maintaining personal files of all public officers attached to the Ministry and the ancillary staff of the Hon.Ministers and establishment activities related to them and updating information on the staff.
- Establishment and administrative affairs to be concerned at the ministerial level in respect of the officers working in the departments and statutory bodies under the Ministry
- Preparation of cabinet memoranda and taking action in respect of cabinet decisions.
- Providing answers to referrals made by the Consultative Committee and Public Petitions Committee as well as parliamentary questions
- Administration of vehicles of the Ministry, provision of necessary infrastructure facilities, training activities, management of capital goods and equipment, activities relating to overtime, holiday payments, Agrahara insu000000rance and approval of distress loans.

- Submission of annual reports and performance reports of the Ministry and all departments and statutory institutions under the Ministry to Parliament.
- Collection and submission of declarations of assets and liabilities of relevant officers in accordance with the regulations of the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption.
- Handling reservations, maintenance, and administrative activities of the Ministry's circuit bungalow in Ampara.
- Managing matters related to lands and buildings owned by the Ministry and by departments and statutory institutions under it.
- Handling matters related to the appointment of boards of directors of statutory institutions functioning under the Ministry.
- Handling activities related to July strike compensation payments.

1.4.2. Development Division

This division comprises three principal sections: Development, Foreign Relations, and Legal. It is entrusted with the administration and coordination of all matters pertaining to these sections. As a member state of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Sri Lanka maintains active engagement with the organization. Guided by internationally recognized conventions and recommendations, the division is responsible for the formulation of policy decisions aimed at safeguarding labour rights within the country and addressing issues arising in the labour sector. The principal functions undertaken by this division are outlined below:

- Submitting to the International Labour Organization, as required, reports on the progress made in implementing within Sri Lanka the conventions of the ILO that have been ratified by Sri Lanka.
- Informing the international community, as necessary, of the progress achieved by Sri Lanka in relation to the labour sector.
- Taking necessary measures to resolve issues prevailing in the labour sector by obtaining financial and technical assistance from the International Labour Organization.
- Taking appropriate action to update existing labour laws, amend them in line with emerging trends, introduce new laws, implement them, and conduct follow-up reviews.
- Entering into new memoranda of understanding/agreements with foreign counterparts relating to the labour sector, as well as updating and reviewing the effectiveness of existing agreements or understandings.
- Engaging in regional and global dialogues and related activities with foreign stakeholders concerning labour matters, including participation in joint committee meetings.
- Organizing special programmes conducted by the Ministry (such as mobile service programmes).
- Acting as the principal stakeholder for care cooperative programmes implemented with the financial and technical assistance of the International Labour Organization.

- Managing and following up on public complaints referred from the Presidential Secretariat, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Hon. Minister, as well as those received directly by the Ministry.

1.4.3. Planning and Monitoring Division

Devising plans of the Ministry and all institutions under its purview required for navigating the development plans towards the set targets, and the implementation of them, progress review and follow up thereof are the key functions of this division. In addition, the division executes the following duties as well.

- Preparing, implementing, and reporting on strategic plans and annual action plans in alignment with the national policy framework.
- Preparing the annual action plan, outlining the development goals of the Ministry and its affiliated institutions, and submitting it to the relevant stakeholders and making them implement the plan, at the same time, monitoring and encouraging the achievement of the targets through progress review and follow up thereof.
- Coordinating with the Presidential Secretariat, Ministry of Finance, Department of Project Management and Monitoring and Department of National Planning in terms of National Budget Circular and submission of progress reports monthly and quarterly.
- Identifying and submit project proposals for preparation of annual budget estimates.
- Preparing the annual performance report detailing the progress achieved by the Ministry and submission of progress report for the committee stage debate of the budget.
- Appraising development project proposals related to the curriculum and referring to the Department of National Planning as appropriate.
- Contributing as relevant to action plans implemented by various Ministries.

1.4.4. Finance Division

The core responsibility of the Accounts Division is to take necessary measures for efficient, effective and economical administration of financial resources allocated from the annual budget to the Ministry in compliance with state policies.

- Conducting Annual Board of Survey as per Public Finance Circular 01/2020
- Preparation of reports related to the agency of the financial authority and carrying out the work of delegation of financial powers
- Preparation of Annual Budget Estimate
- Preparation of Annual Financial Statement
- Preparation of Committee Report on Public Accounts
- Submission of monthly and quarterly financial reports to the General Treasury and other relevant institutions.
- Updating and maintaining the audit query documents and forwarding the answers to the relevant audit queries to the Auditor General

1.4.5. Internal Audit Division

The internal audit activities of the Ministry are carried out in terms of as per the appointments made in terms of Section 40 of the National Audit Act to ensure that the responsibility of the Chief Accounting Officer is carried out as set out in Section 38(b) and (f) of the said Act and requirements of Circular No. 01/2019 dated 12/01/2019 of the Department of Management Audit and the powers vested in the Internal Audit Division in terms of FR 133 and FR 134.

The responsibility conducting the relevant internal audit activities of the Ministry of Labour and Departments and Institutions under it and carrying out special investigations as per the requirement also fall under the scope of internal audit.

- Assessing the effectiveness of the internal audit and control system within the organization.
- Examining whether the institutions comply with the Establishment Code of the Government, the Finance Regulations of the Government, and the Finance Regulations and circulars, as well as other supplementary instructions periodically issued by the Ministry of Public Administration and the General Treasury.
- Efficient management of internal audit activities in alignment with the mission and objectives of the Ministry of Labour, its departments, and other affiliated institutions, adhering to audit principles and systems.
- Assessing the control systems established to ensure adherence to policies, plans, procedures, laws, and regulations that may significantly impact the activities of the Ministry.
- Evaluating and verifying the measures taken to protect assets and verify the existence of assets.
- Evaluation of activities or programs and verification of information to ascertain whether physical and financial progress has been achieved in accordance with the established objectives of the Ministry
- Provide guidance to establish appropriate internal control processes and risk management processes for each division of the organization
- Communicating findings post-audit and submitting necessary corrections thereafter.
- Preparation and implementation of annual audit plan
- Making necessary arrangements for the submission of reports to the Department of Management Audit by the due date.
- Convening the Audit and Management Committee meeting and conducting the necessary activities
- Performing and reporting on specific duties as assigned by management from time to time.

1.5 Staff Composition of the Ministry

Table 1.1 –Composition of the Staff of the Ministry and Other Institutions and Departments as at 30.09.2025

	Institution	Senior Level		Tertiary level		Secondary level		Primary Level		Other		Total		
		No. Approved	No. Employed	No. Approved	No. Employed	No. Approved	No. Employed	No. Approved	No. Employed	No. Approved	No. Employed	No. Approved	No. Employed	Percentage of vacancies
1	Ministry of Labour	18	15	3	2	72	43	35	24	1	1	129	85	34%
2	Department of Labour	218	121	667	488	1,993	1602	467	397	–	–	3,345	2608	22%
3	Department of Manpower & Employment	20	10	5	1	620	581	15	12	–	–	660	604	8.48%
4	National Institute of Labour Studies	9	3	13	5	18	7	5	2	–	–	45	17	62%
5	National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health	7	2	3	3	10	6	5	5	–	–	25	16	36%
6	Office of the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation	5	3	2	1	31	24	5	5	–	–	44	33	25%
7	Shrama Vasana Fund	1	1	5	3	8	5	4	2	–	–	18	11	38%
	Total	278	155	698	503	2752	2268	536	447	1	1	4266	3374	20%

1.6. Institutions Affiliated to the Ministry

1.6.1. Department of Labour

The primary mandate of the Department of Labour is to safeguard the rights conferred upon employees in Sri Lanka's private and semi-government sectors under labour legislation, to foster harmonious employer–employee relations, and to establish a conducive working environment through the maintenance of industrial peace at the institutional level.

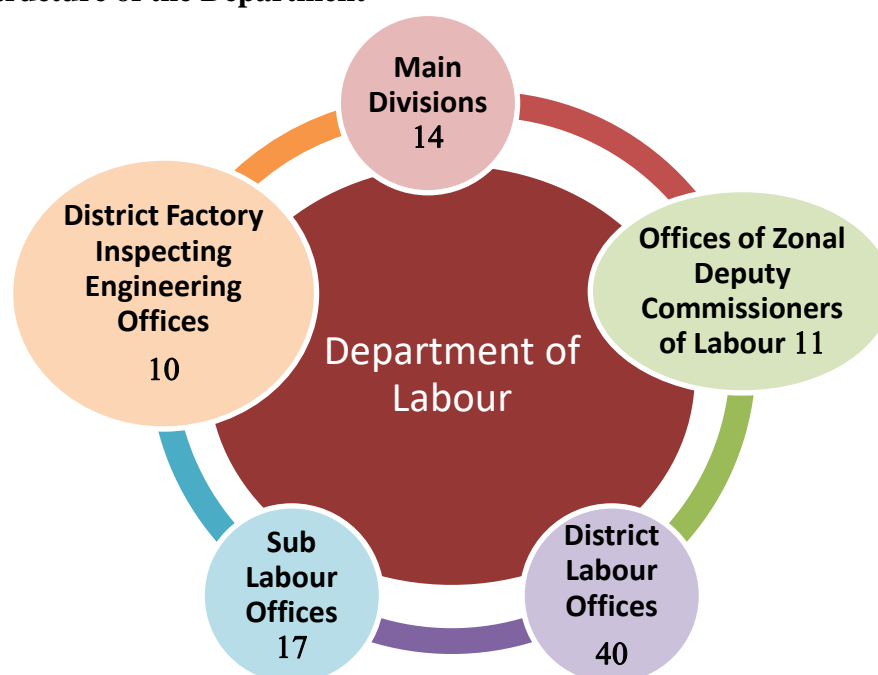
With a proud history spanning over a century, the Department of Labour is presently engaged in enhancing the efficiency and accessibility of its services by leveraging modern technology. Recognizing the importance of minimizing the necessity for beneficiaries to visit the Department's head or regional offices, initiatives have been undertaken to provide services in a more flexible and convenient manner through digital platforms. Furthermore, steps have been initiated to digitalize the Department's overall operations.

Accordingly, the Department functions proactively to promote industrial harmony by nurturing constructive employer–employee relationships and strengthening the protection of workers' rights.

Key Functions

- Making arrangements to enhance employer-employee relations at the institutional level by promoting social dialogue.
- Ensuring the protection of workers' rights through the enforcement of labour laws.
- Settling industrial disputes through resolution, collective agreements, and arbitration.
- Providing social security for employees through the Employees' Provident Fund.
- Addressing the occupational safety and health of employees.
- Eliminating of child labour
- Taking necessary action to ensure the occupational safety and protection of employed women and young persons.
- Safeguarding labour standards by strengthening wages and conditions of employment.
- Collecting, analyzing, and publishing data as required for decision making related to the labour sector.

Structure of the Department



Main Divisions of the Department of Labour

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| ✓ Industrial Relations Division | ✓ Enforcement Division |
| ✓ Special Investigations Division | ✓ Administration Division |
| ✓ Labour Standards Division | ✓ Finance Division |
| ✓ Industrial Safety Division | ✓ Planning, Research, Training, and Publication Division |
| ✓ Occupational Hygiene Division | ✓ Information Technology Division |
| ✓ Women and Children's Affairs Division | ✓ Internal Audit Division |
| ✓ Employees' Provident Fund Division | ✓ Statistics Division |

1.6.2. Department of Manpower and Employment

A country's manpower, or human resources, has a decisive influence on its development and progress. The impact of a nation's human resources is immense in fostering positive growth and performance in key developmental factors such as economic development, innovation and creativity, labour productivity, global competitiveness, social stability, health and well-being, demographic dividends, social progress, adaptability to technological change, and the advancement of human capital. The correlation between a country's development and these key factors is established

through the efficiency and productivity of its human resources. With the objective of aligning Sri Lanka's human resources with both global and domestic labour market trends, the Department of Manpower and Employment was established and commenced operations on 01.01.2010, in accordance with the provisions of the Gazette Notification dated 12.02.2010.

Key Functions

In accordance with the provisions of the Gazette Extraordinary Notification No. 1640/31 dated 12.02.2010, the following functions have been assigned to the Department through the Gazette establishing its formation.

- Formulation and implementation of National Manpower and Employment Policy.
- Job creation and promotion activities.
- Career guidance activities.
- Collection, analysis and dissemination of labour market information
- All services related to public employment service.

As the responsibility of preparing and implementing a National Manpower and Employment Policy stated as the first task has now been assigned to the National Human Resource Development Council, the department contributes to accomplishing the above objectives as a stakeholder institution.

1.6.3. National Institute of Labour Studies

The National Institute of Labour Studies (NILS), which currently operates under the Ministry of Labour, was established on 11 September 2007 and is governed by the provisions of the National Institute of Labour Studies Act No. 12 of 2010. The Institute is administered by a governing board comprising representatives of the tripartite partners in the labour sector employers, employees, and the government.

The primary function of the Institute is to plan and implement the necessary training and research activities required to develop an informed and productive labour force that is knowledgeable about labour laws, regulations, and procedures. With the objective of providing a more effective service to trade union activists and worker representatives, the National Institute of Labour Studies is presently located on the second floor of the Department of Labour Secretariat Building.

Key Functions

- Conducting labour study programmes in collaboration with local or foreign institutions, taking steps to ensure the welfare of workers to make them active participants in the development process.
- Conducting seminars, workshops, conferences and meetings on labour studies and publishing magazines, journals, periodicals, and books.
- Conducting research, surveys and making arrangements for courses related to labour studies, establishing and maintaining library and information services.

- Working in close cooperation with national and foreign institutions, organizations, associations, and societies with similar objectives.
- Conducting courses, including diploma programmes in labour studies, in collaboration with universities and similar institutions and awarding certificates and diplomas as necessary
- Engaging in activities aimed at maintaining industrial peace.

1.6.4. National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health

With the objective of creating a safe and healthy workforce in Sri Lanka through the adoption of sound occupational safety measures and good health practices, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) was established as an affiliated institution under the then Ministry of Labour and Labour Relations, by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health Act No. 38 of 2009.

This institute works on to creating a prolific workforce in Sri Lanka through daily environmental measurement surveys, risk assessment and medical examinations as well as trainings conducted as special programmes, projects and activities carried out on the basis of international cooperation with other countries.

Key Functions

- Advising the Government in the formulation of a national policy on occupational safety and health concerning the working environment of both employers and employees, taking into account their safety, job security, and the nature of employment.
- Providing guidance to the Government on the measures that should be taken to prevent accidents and injuries occurring in workplaces in connection with employment.
- Conducting and supporting investigations, educational programmes, surveys, and research related to occupational safety and health.
- Providing advisory services to any institution or individual on the proper use of equipment, hazardous substances, physical, chemical, or biological agents, products, or other dangerous materials.
- In collaboration with other institutions or with universities in Sri Lanka or abroad, or independently, providing education and necessary training on occupational safety and health and related subjects to employers, residents, employees, or any other persons requiring such training, and awarding certificates or diplomas upon completion of such education or training.
- Providing services related to the proper use of equipment, hazardous substances, physical, chemical, or biological agents or products, as well as on the prevention of psychosocial and identified hazards.
- Supplying information to the Minister regarding legal requirements on standards, symbols, labels, and regulatory guidance related to occupational safety and health, and assessing whether such requirements are being properly implemented and effectively carried out.

- Assisting in the collection, preparation, dissemination, and publication of information related to occupational safety and health.
- Organizing and supporting conferences, workshops, and other programmes related to occupational safety and health.
- Coordinating inter-ministerial projects, programmes, and activities concerning occupational safety and health.
- Establishing and maintaining libraries and laboratories to promote and enhance training in occupational safety and health.
- Developing research and specialized laboratories.
- Maintaining relationships with national and international institutions, universities, and other organizations engaged in occupational safety and health.
- Establishing national standards in the fields of occupational safety and health.

1.6.5. Office of the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation

The Workmen's Compensation Ordinance No. 19 of 1934 was enacted to provide compensation in respect of accidents occurring in the course of employment. Several amendments have been made to this Ordinance on different occasions, and the latest amendment was effected by Act No. 10 of 2022. The Workmen's Compensation Court, which exercises the powers of a District Judge and a Magistrate, consists of 14 circuit courts covering the entire island. The judicial officers appointed by the Judicial Service Commission include the Commissioner of Workmen's Compensation, the Additional Commissioner of Workmen's Compensation, and the Deputy Commissioner of Workmen's Compensation, among others, making up a total of 43 positions, which also include a Class I post of the Sri Lanka Accountants' Service and a post of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service. The main objectives of the Office of the Workmen's Compensation Commissioner are to pay compensation to employees injured in accidents arising out of and in the course of their employment, to pay compensation to employees suffering from diseases contracted due to the nature of their employment, and to pay compensation to the dependents of employees who die as a result of such accidents occurring in the course of employment.

For judicial proceedings relating to workmen's compensation, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Civil Procedure Code, and the Evidence Ordinance are applicable, and the appeal procedure is similar to that of a District Court.

Key Functions

- Paying compensation to employees in the public and private sectors in respect of accidents, occupational diseases, or deaths occurring in the course of employment (According to the latest amendment Act No. 10 of 2022, the maximum amount of compensation payable is Rs. 2,000,000).
- Maintaining accounts at the National Savings Bank, under the custody of the Commissioner of Workmen's Compensation, on behalf of minors until they reach the age of majority and carrying out the related administrative functions.

- In instances where employers evade the payment of compensation due to employees injured in accidents, taking legal action to confiscate their movable and immovable property, selling such property at public auction, and paying compensation from the proceeds.
- Issuing, renewing, and cancelling Workmen's Compensation Insurance Licences.
- Conducting on-site inspections at locations where accidents involving employees have occurred.
- Paying compensation to employees working on ships and aircraft registered in Sri Lanka for accidents occurring outside the country.

1.6.6. Shrama Vasana Fund

The Shrama Vasana Fund, established under the Shrama Vasana Fund Act No. 12 of 1998 (as amended by Act No. 15 of 2019), is an institution functioning under the Ministry of Labour that was initiated for the welfare of workers. Since its inception, the Fund has implemented various welfare programmes in accordance with the 06 objectives outlined in the Act, contributing to the well-being and advancement of Sri Lankan employees.

At present, the main source of income for the Shrama Vasana Fund is the revenue generated from the "NLB Jaya" lottery, conducted by the National Lotteries Board on Saturdays and Sundays. This income depends on the sale of lottery tickets, and with the increase in lottery sales, the services and welfare activities carried out for the benefit of workers can also be further expanded.

Key Functions

- Promotion of the welfare of employees and their dependants.
- Providing financial and other assistance to employees when the institutions they were working in, are closed down without prior notice.
- Providing medical and other facilities to employees and their dependants in times of emergency
- Providing temporary assistance to employees when inquiries are instituted against them.
- Providing financial and other benefits to employees or their dependents, in times of distress.
- Presenting gifts to persons who have rendered outstanding service to employee welfare.
- Providing financial relief to obtain legal assistance to employees where proceedings in respect of termination of employment of an employee or of an industrial dispute, is initiated or pending under the provisions of any written law, before the Commissioner General of Labour, a Labour Tribunal, an Arbitrator or an Industrial Court or any court of law.

Chapter Two

Progress Achieved by the Ministry

2. Progress achieved during the year 2025

According to the data of the Department of Census and Statistics for the year 2024, Sri Lanka's labour force amounts to 8.32 million, of which 7.95 million are employed. Among them, excluding government employees, those engaged in their own businesses, and those contributing to family enterprises, this Ministry holds the responsibility of maintaining industrial peace within the country by implementing mechanisms to safeguard the professional rights, occupational safety and health, and social security of employees in the private and semi-government sectors. Through these efforts, the Ministry contributes to the socio-economic development of the country. To fulfil this responsibility, the Ministry and its affiliated institutions are currently implementing a wide range of programmes.

Accordingly, this chapter presents a summary of the progress achieved as of 30th September 2025 in relation to the programmes implemented by the Ministry and its affiliated institutions to fulfil their respective objectives.

2.1. Legal Affairs

2.1.1. Strengthening the legal framework to safeguard employees' occupational rights.

It is a timely responsibility of this Ministry to formulate legislative provisions that align with accepted national and international social and economic conditions as well as labour principles and standards, with the objective of creating an investor-friendly environment within Sri Lanka and facilitating the country's future development. At present, approximately 50 Acts and Ordinances are in force to ensure the rights and welfare of the labour community in Sri Lanka. From the inception of the Department of Labour, these legal provisions have been established to safeguard workers' rights. In order to address present and future challenges, and to ensure the protection of working people's rights while eliminating complexities among existing laws and simplifying them to guarantee benefits for all stakeholders, necessary steps have been taken to amend the relevant Acts and Ordinances.

- **Amendment of labour laws with provisions that align with current needs**

The existing labour laws enforced by the Department of Labour are insufficient to respond to current socio-economic transformations and the evolving nature of the world of work. There is a growing need for a labour law framework that safeguards employee rights, while facilitating business continuity and attracting foreign investment. Furthermore, it is necessary to eliminate existing complexities among the laws and simplify them to ensure benefits for all stakeholders. To achieve this, a committee of experts was appointed with Cabinet approval granted on 04 August 2025, to amend the current legal provisions. The committee is in the process of reviewing and updating 14 existing labour Acts and Ordinances to align them with Government policy and to introduce the required amendments.

- **Enactment of the National Minimum Wage of Workers (Amendment) Act No. 11 of 2025, the Budgetary Relief Allowance of Workers (Amendment) Act No. 09 of 2025, and the Budgetary Relief Allowance of Workers (Amendment) Act No. 10 of 2025.**

In line with the 2025 Budget proposals and with the objective of increasing wages of employees in the private sector, the above Acts were passed by Parliament on 22 July 2025, to be effective from 01.04.2025. Accordingly, provisions were enacted to increase the national minimum monthly wage to Rs. 27,000.00 and the national minimum daily wage to Rs. 1,080.00 with effect from 01 April 2025, and further to increase the national minimum monthly wage to Rs. 30,000.00 and the daily wage to Rs. 1,200.00 with effect from 01.01.2026.

- **Amendment of the Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act No. 19 of 1954 to allow female employees to engage in night work as food and beverage stewardesses in residential hotels**

Given the rapid growth of the tourism sector at present, there is a timely need to relax existing legal restrictions in order to create more opportunities for female labour participation in providing hotel and accommodation services required for the industry. Accordingly, approval of the Cabinet of Ministers is to be sought to submit to Parliament the draft bill to amend the 3rd Regulation made under Section 66 of the aforementioned Act, enabling female employees to be engaged in night duties as food and beverage stewardesses in residential hotels.

- **Amendment of the Employees' Provident Fund Act, No. 15 of 1958, to enhance employee welfare and align with current requirements**

In accordance with Cabinet Decision No. CP/24/1234/625/017 dated 01.07.2024, instructions were issued to the Legal Draftsman on 06.08.2024 to prepare a draft Bill to amend the Employees' Provident Fund Act. Furthermore, taking into consideration the new Government policies, additional amendments have been identified with the objective of providing a more efficient service to the members of the Employees' Provident Fund, and actions are currently being taken to obtain the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers for these amendments.

- **Amendment of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health Act, No. 38 of 2009**

In accordance with Cabinet Decision No. CP/23/0396/625/003 dated 07.03.2023, the draft amendment Bill prepared by the Legal Draftsman is currently being further reviewed to ensure alignment with the policies of the new Government, "A Thriving Nation– A Better Life," and to update the Act to suit contemporary needs. Accordingly, steps are being taken to reorganize the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health as an institution that confers professional qualifications in the field of occupational safety and health, taking into consideration emerging global and market demands. Provisions will also be introduced to enable the Institute to enter into agreements with local and foreign institutions for awarding such qualifications. The amended draft, incorporating these provisions, will be submitted for the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers.

- **Amendment of the fines related to offences under the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act No. 47 of 1956.**

Under the existing legal provisions, the fine imposed for offences related to the employment of children in maritime services, industrial enterprises, or for engaging children in other forms of employment that constitute hazardous child labour, is currently Rs. 10,000. With the objective of further deterring individuals from committing such offences, Cabinet approval has been obtained to draft amendments to increase the minimum fine to Rs. 100,000, and the necessary instructions have been issued to the Legal Draftsman.

- **Obtaining recommendations regarding the implementation of the Industrial Disputes (Special Provisions) Act, No. 19 of 2022**

Due to the existing workload of Magistrates' Courts which exercise judicial powers under several labour enactments and concurrently handle criminal cases and other matters the Department of Labour faces prolonged delays in concluding legal proceedings. Therefore, the Industrial Disputes (Special Provisions) Act, No. 19 of 2022, was enacted with the intention of transferring the judicial authority vested in Magistrates' Courts in relation to labour law matters to Labour Tribunals. Actions are currently being taken to obtain recommendations for the implementation of this Act from a committee that includes representatives of the Judicial Service Commission.

- **Memorandum of Understanding between the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) under the Ministry of Labour and Changshin University, South Korea**

In order to collaborate with foreign institutions that offer academic qualifications, a Memorandum of Understanding has been forwarded for the concurrence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and Changshin University of South Korea. Under this agreement, Sri Lankan students will be directed for programmes related to occupational safety, language proficiency, and industry-based practical training.

2.2. Development Affairs

- In alignment with the National Social Protection Strategy of Sri Lanka, developed and published under the leadership of the National Planning Department, Operations Committees are to be established to formulate an operational plan covering the social protection and labour market components that are to be implemented by the Ministry of Labour, with the technical support and coordination of the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- In accordance with the Five-Year National Action Plan (2025–2029) related to the National Child Protection Policy prepared by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Affairs, a review is currently being conducted on the responsibilities to be carried out by this Ministry and the Department.

- In the year 2025, the Ministry of Labour received 1,465 public complaints, of which 777 complaints have been resolved through the intervention of the relevant institutions and officials.
- Through the Internal Affairs Unit of the Ministry, corruption-risk assessments are carried out, public complaints are received and examined, and appropriate actions are taken. Reports are also forwarded to the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption, thereby contributing to the National Anti-Corruption Compliance Assessment.

2.3. Foreign Relations

2.3.1. Upholding International Labour Standards

- Under Article 22 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organization (ILO), reports for five (05) Conventions for the year 2025 have been prepared, and all five reports have been submitted to the ILO.
- Under Article 19 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organization (ILO), a report relating to one (01) non-ratified Convention has been prepared and submitted to the ILO.
- Two meetings of the National Steering Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour (NSCECL) were held, and all related coordination activities were carried out. It has been decided to conduct a “Child Activity Survey” next year. Further, targeted interventions will be implemented to address issues relating to child labour in the estate sector, fisheries sector, and the informal sector. Inspection activities will be further strengthened, group inspections will be conducted, and awareness programmes will be carried out in all districts with the support of Community Police.
- Coordinating all arrangements related to facilitating the participation of tripartite delegates at the annual International Labour Conference held in Geneva, as well as carrying out the required follow-up actions. Accordingly, the International Labour Conference was held from 02.06.2025 to 13.06.2025, and 11 delegates participated, representing Sri Lanka.
- Unlike in previous years, meetings of the National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC) were held regularly. During 2025, five (05) council meetings and six (06) sub-committee meetings were conducted. Through these meetings, tripartite consensus was achieved to introduce significant legislative reforms, including increasing the national minimum wage, relaxing night-work regulations for women, and extending the five-day working week. Additionally, the NLAC was restructured during the year, and for the first time, steps were taken to include three women’s trade unions to ensure representation of the women’s constituency.
- The Ministry of Labour, with the technical assistance of the International Labour Organization (ILO), has planned the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for the next five years, and three consultative meetings have already been held. Through this process, policy direction for the labour sector for the upcoming five years has been formulated with the participation of trade unions and employer organizations.

- Submission of visa request letters to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for officials of the International Labour Organization arriving in Sri Lanka to provide technical assistance. Accordingly, 20 visa request letters have been submitted during the period from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025.
- Awareness activities have been organized to inform relevant stakeholders regarding the ratification of the ILO Convention on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work (C190). The necessary legal procedures relating to this will be carried out by the committee that has received Cabinet approval to amend the existing labour laws.
- An internal committee has been appointed to identify the legal gaps related to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention (C155) and to draft the necessary regulations. Discussions are currently underway to introduce relevant regulatory provisions in line with Government policy.
- Work is underway to gather information to expand social protection coverage for service providers and to introduce an insurance-based scheme for maternity and unemployment benefits. With the assistance of the International Labour Organization (ILO), an actuarial study on maternity insurance has been conducted, and the findings are being validated through a workshop involving tripartite stakeholders. Based on this validation, the final report is currently being prepared. In addition, the Ministry has initiated discussions with relevant stakeholder institutions to explore different options for financing maternity benefits.
- The Ministry of Labour, together with the International Labour Organization, organized a Regional Living Wage Conference in Colombo on 23 September 2025, with the participation of approximately 70 delegates representing 16 countries.
- With the financial support of the International Labour Organization, a Training of Trainers programme was held on the theme of “Forced Labour.” Ten (10) Police Officers, five (05) Foreign Employment Officers, and fifteen (15) Labour Department officers participated. Using these trained officers as resource personnel, an additional group of forty (40) officers were trained, funded by the Ministry.

2.4. Planning and Monitoring Division

- Under the implementation of the Government Policy Statement “A Thriving Nation, A Beautiful Life,” the Action Plan of this Ministry for the year 2025 has been prepared and is being implemented. The Action Plan for the year 2026 is currently being formulated, and accordingly, a Strategic Plan for the period 2025–2029 is also being developed.
- The Annual Performance Report of Ministry of Labour for the year 2024, containing data and information from the Ministry and its affiliated institutions, was prepared and submitted to Parliament in July 2025.
- The Progress Report for the year 2024, covering data and information from the Ministry and its affiliated institutions up to the third quarter of 2024, has been

completed, and the preparation of the Progress Report for the year 2025 is currently underway.

- Under the headship of the Hon.Minister, Deputy Minister and the Secretary, 13 meetings including monthly and quarterly progress review meetings attended by heads of institutions were conducted up to 30.09.2025.
- Under the preparation of annual action plans of the Ministry and its affiliated institutions, the conduct of quarterly progress review meetings, and the preparation of quarterly progress reports, activities scheduled up to the third quarter have been completed.
- Preparation of the Organizational Results Framework (ORF) applicable to the Ministry and reporting its progress has been carried out. Accordingly, the Results Framework covering the period 2025–2029 has been finalized.
- The Decent Work Programme operates under four main pillars: employment creation, promotion and national productivity, rights at work, and social protection and social dialogue. In addition to these four pillars, programmes are being implemented covering the areas of productivity enhancement and gender equality, with coordination across all relevant sectors. Under the Decent Work Programme, an allocation of Rs. 24 million has been made to the Ministry for the year 2025 to implement various programmes and projects. These funds are to be released to the Department of Labour, the Department of Manpower and Employment, and the National Institute of Labour Studies, through which the respective programmes will be implemented.
- The Department of Labour implements programmes through its divisions utilizing the funds allocated under the Decent Work Programme. Accordingly:
 - The Women and Children’s Affairs Division, through Community Police Committees, conducted 38 island-wide programmes aimed at socializing the responsibility of eliminating child labour, with the participation of 23,546 beneficiaries.
 - The Industrial Relations and Productivity Division, for the promotion of social dialogue and workplace cooperation, conducted 232 programmes with the participation of approximately 300 employers and 8,800 employees. The Statistics Division is currently preparing the report on the 2025 Child Labour Study (Western Province) covering 1,000 household units.
 - The Industrial Safety Division and the Occupational Hygiene Division, jointly conducted 21 programmes for 833 beneficiaries in the small and medium-scale industrial sector, with the objective of establishing a culture of workplace safety. In addition, the Occupational Hygiene Division has planned to conduct 10 programmes to enhance occupational safety and health knowledge among 1,066 sanitary workers employed within the Colombo District.

- Training programmes have been conducted to enhance the skills of Labour Officers and officers handling industrial disputes. Four (04) training programmes were held, with the participation of 219 officers.
- The Department of Manpower and Employment, under the Decent Work Programme, conducted 08 programmes with the participation of 319 beneficiaries, focusing on extending dignity of work to workers in the informal sector, covering the areas of occupational safety and health, digital literacy and technology, market access, and financial inclusion.
- The National Institute of Labour Studies, under the Decent Work Programme, conducted 11 programmes aimed at strengthening employer–employee relations and creating a positive working environment in tea, rubber, garment factories, and plantation companies. Through these programmes, 534 workers in sectors such as plantations and apparel in Hatton, Matara, Koggala, Biagama and surrounding areas received training and knowledge. These programmes are expected to improve awareness on workers’ rights, workplace safety, and employment conditions, while strengthening employer–employee relations and fostering a safe and positive workplace culture. As of 30 .09.2025, expenditure incurred under this programme amounts to Rs. 1.61 million.

Additionally, the Ministry of Labour, with the technical assistance of the International Labour Organization (ILO), has planned the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for the next five years, and three consultative meetings have already been held. Through this process, policy direction for the labour sector for the coming five-year period has been formulated with the participation of trade unions and employer organizations.

2.5. Administrative and Establishment Affairs

- From January to September 2025, the Ministry submitted 20 Cabinet Memoranda to the Cabinet of Ministers, of which 15 have received Cabinet Decisions. The remaining memoranda have been referred to various institutions for observations, approvals, or other necessary actions due to different reasons.
- Compensation of Rs. 82,841,400.00 has been paid to the employees of the Thulihiriya-Pugoda National Textile Corporation who lost their jobs due to a strike in 1978. Applications were invited from those who had not come forward to receive compensation so far, and 87 applications have been received for this by 2025.09.30. Provisions of Rs. 1,125,162.21 and Rs. 2,440,000.38 have been allocated for the payment of compensation to 05 employees of Kabul Lace and 15 employees of Kabul Lanka respectively.
- A total of 21 requests were received under the Right to Information Act, and information has been provided in response to all such requests.
- Appointments were made to members of 07 Wages Boards, and those appointments have been gazetted.
- For the capacity development of officers of the Ministry and affiliated institutions, officers at managerial, secondary, and tertiary levels were facilitated to participate in

22 subject-related training programmes and 2 workshops conducted by various institutions during the review period.

Table 2.1 - Progress of establishment affairs

	Activity	Progress
01	Answers to Parliamentary Oral Questions	10
02	Submission of Annual Reports for Cabinet Approval	2
03	Submission of Annual Reports to Parliament	3
04	Observations to Cabinet Memoranda	4

2.6. Financial progress related to the Ministry's expenditure heads

Table 2.2 - Financial progress related to the expenditure heads of the Ministry - as of 30.09.2025

	Institution	Exp. Head		Net Provisions (Rs. 000')	Expenditure (Rs. 000')	Balance provision (Rs. 000')	Expenditure Percentage (%)
01	Ministry of Labour	193	Recurrent	320,000	202,264	117,736	63%
			Capital	55,000	13,053	41,947	24%
02	Office of the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation		Recurrent	50,000	35,078	14,922	70%
			Capital	3,000	874	2,126	29%
	Sub Total - 01		Recurrent	370,000	237,342	132,658	64%
			Capital	58,000	13,927	44,073	24%
03	Department of Labour	221	Recurrent	3,400,000	2,272,060	1,127,939	67%
			Capital	1,620,000	179,230	1,440,770	11%
04	Department of Manpower and Employment	328	Recurrent	597,000	454,826	142,174	76%
			Capital	25,000	11,273	13,727	45%
	Sub Total - 02		Recurrent	4,367,000	2,964,228	1,402,771	68%
			Capital	1,703,000	204,430	1,498,570	12%
	Sum Total			6,070,000	3,168,658	2,901,341	52%

2.7. Department of Labour

2.7.1. Progress regarding EPF

- **Payment of benefits of EPF**

The Employees' Provident Fund has been established by the Employees' Provident Fund Act, No. 15 of 1958 for the social security of the employees of the private sector and the semi-government sector in Sri Lanka. The administrative functions of this fund are carried out by the Department of Labour and its funds are managed by the Monetary Board of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. Accordingly, the functions performed by the Department of Labour from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025 are as follows.

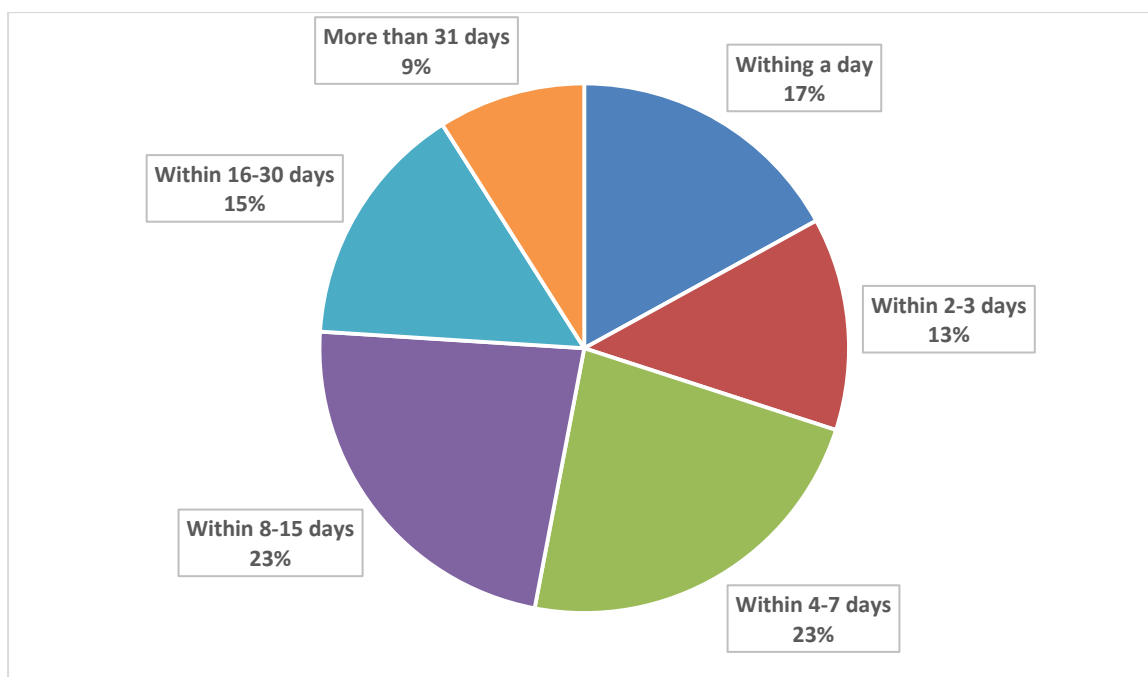
Table 2.3 – Number of decision letters sent for payment of EPF benefits from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

Benefit	Number in operation as at 01.01.2025	Number of applications received from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025	Number of decision letters sent from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025	Number in operation as at 30.09.2025
Benefits for deceased members	1,591	4,857	4,840	1,608
30% pre-retirement benefits	567	15,510	15,138	939
Payment of EPF benefits on leaving service having reached retirement age	4,286	69,232	68,761	4,757
Payment of benefits to female employees upon leaving service upon marital reasons	1,342	12,249	12,217	1,374
Payment of benefits upon leaving service due to total disability	71	765	785	51
Payment of benefits for taking up permanent residence in a foreign country	235	1,858	1,815	278
Payment of benefits upon leaving service having received a permanent & pensionable appointment in public or provincial public service	354	3,797	3,847	304
Payment of benefits to employees, who leave service due to closing of a state corporation/ board, removal of employees for cost cutting	206	183	185	204

purposes, or transformation of the institution to a company				
Total number of beneficiaries	8,652	108,451	107,588	9,515

The efficiency of the Employees' Provident Fund benefit payments mentioned above is illustrated in the chart below. Accordingly, decision letters have been issued for 76% of the applications within a period of less than two weeks.

Graph 2.1 - Time taken to issue decision letters for the payment of Employees' Provident Fund benefits – From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025



- **Sending notices to charge contributions from employers who default on contributions**

First notices and red notices are issued for employers who fail to make contributions as stipulated and if such notices are not properly responded to, action is taken to constitute legal actions and recover the contributions together with the surcharge and account them.

Table 2.4 – Progress of Issuing Notifications from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

Number of First Notices Sent	Amount Recovered from First Notices (Rs.Mn.)	Number of Red Notices Sent	Amount Recovered from Red Notices. (Rs.Mn.)
8,075	916	9,407	722

- **Registration of new institutions and members under the Employees' Provident Fund**

Measures were taken to increase the registration of new institutions and to promote the enrollment of members under the Employees' Provident Fund. These activities were carried out through the Department's official social media platforms as well as participation in various media programmes. In addition, posters, leaflets, and stickers were printed and distributed for this purpose.



- **Institutions registered, institutions closed, and member registrations under the Employees' Provident Fund from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025**

Table 2.5 - Information on institutions registered, institutions closed, and member registrations under the Employees' Provident Fund from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

Registered institutions from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025		Number of institutions closed from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025
Number of institutions	Number of employees	
8,362	560,199	5,214

- **Measures taken to promote the Employees' Provident Fund and improve the efficiency of providing services to clients**

– **Execution of Mobile Service Programmes**

Mobile service programmes for the registration of members under the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), including “AH registrations,” were initiated and conducted from January 2025. These programmes were carried out in 49 institutions located in various parts of the country, through which services were provided to 4,535 employees.

- **Implementation of a special mobile service week at district and sub-labour offices**

A Special Mobile Service Week was conducted from 22 to 26 September 2025 at all District and Sub-Labour Offices to provide the following services to employees in the private and semi-government sectors:

Accordingly, a total of 32,937 beneficiaries received the following services through these programmes.

Table 2.6 - Services received from the mobile service programme held during the week of 2025.09.22 - 2025.09.26 and clients

Task	Number of beneficiaries
Checking the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) member account details/balances	8337
Department of Labor member information revisions	1296
Acceptance of documents related to amendments to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka	777
Registration of members	8956
Number of members whose biographical information were only obtained regarding their registration (information entered into the data system the previous day)	2433
Acceptance of complaints	649
Providing advice to members	7306
Other (institutional awareness etc.)	3183
Total	32,937

- **Development of software for online registration of employers and members**

Work on developing software to facilitate the online registration of employers and members under the Employees' Provident Fund began in the previous year, and it is currently in its final stage. Pilot testing of this system is expected to take place in October 2025. Through this new software system, beneficiaries will be able to submit applications and complete the registration process online without having to visit the Department of Labour offices for registration under the Employees' Provident Fund.

- **Establishment of an integrated data system**

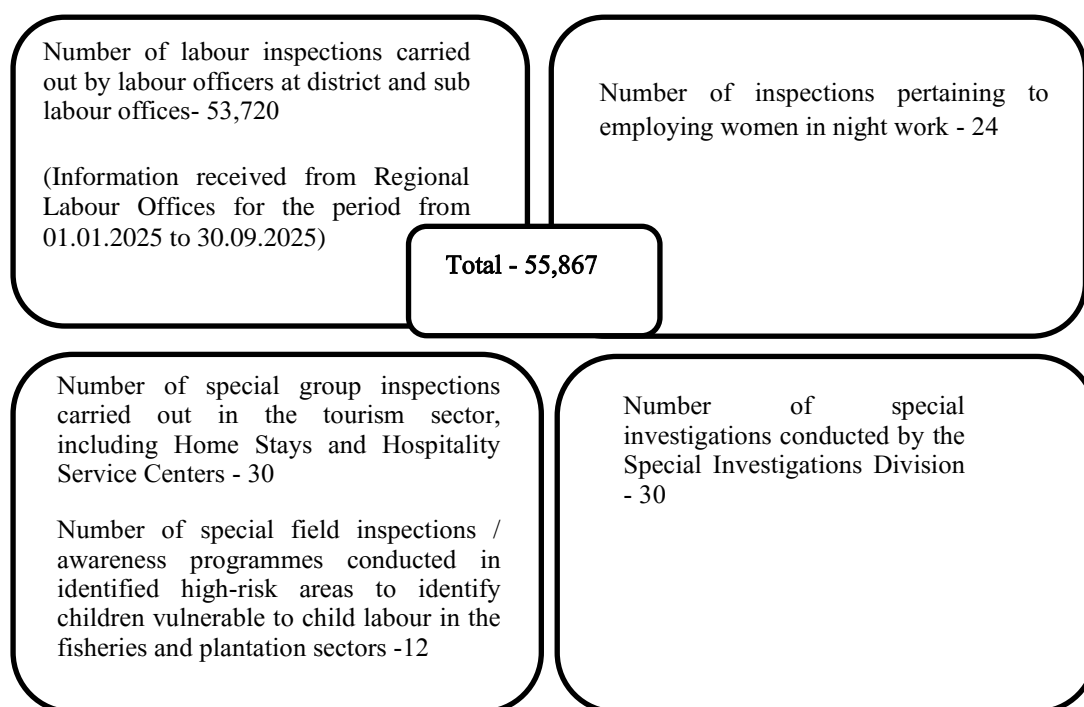
An agreement has been reached to develop an integrated data system for both the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and the Department of Labour, as a solution to the various challenges arising from the current use of two separate data systems for Employees' Provident Fund operations, particularly the difficulties faced by beneficiaries in obtaining EPF benefits.

Accordingly, action has been taken to obtain the services of a consultant for the development of the integrated data system. The consultant has submitted an assessment report on the existing conditions, key issues, and risk areas related to the Employees'

Provident Fund systems. The detailed report (Detailed Design) containing further information is scheduled to be submitted in due course.

2.7.2. Conducting Field Inspections

Information related to the inspections carried out from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025 to verify whether employers have properly complied with the legal provisions relating to the employment of workers is as follows



Furthermore, initial steps have been commenced to develop the necessary software to enable Labour Officers and District Factory Inspecting Engineers to submit inspection reports digitally through an online application following field inspections.

2.7.3. Industrial Relation

- **Redressal of complaints of infringement of statutory rights and settlement of industrial disputes**

Measures were taken to deal with the complaints on infringement of statutory rights and industrial disputes made by employees or trade unions to the department's head office and district and sub-offices. In addition, requests made to the Commissioner General of Labour by individuals who were dissatisfied with the inquiries or institutional inspections carried out in relation to those investigations were, where necessary, referred for further investigation. Accordingly, 15,144 complaints were received in the year 2024, and 12,786 complaints have been received during the period from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025.

Facilities have been provided for any individual wishing to submit a complaint to the Department of Labour to do so online through the electronic service available at <https://cms.labourdept.gov.lk/>. Accordingly, the development of this Complaint Management System is continuing. A separate module for submitting complaints related

to occupational safety and health was developed in 2025 and has now been integrated into the system, while the module on judicial cases is currently under development. The system is expected to be further enhanced based on beneficiary requirements.

- **Conduct of arbitrations**

Industrial disputes that cannot be resolved by Regional Labour Offices or by the Industrial Relations Division of the Head Office are referred for conciliation or to the Industrial Court. During the period from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 204 disputes, including 69 referred for conciliation, were scheduled to be addressed. Of these, inquiries relating to 94 disputes were completed, and 62 determinations were issued, while 32 determinations are to be issued in due course. Accordingly, as of 30.09.2025, further action was ongoing in relation to 110 disputes.

- **Persuasion of both employer and employee parties for collective agreements**

By entering into collective agreements, employees are granted benefits beyond those provided by labour laws, while employers gain the opportunity to receive more productive services from employees under the agreed terms.

Social dialogue promotes the development of such collective agreements between the employer and employee parties. During the period from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, including 17 newly gazetted collective agreements and extensions of existing collective agreements, a total of 226 collective agreements were in effect as at 30.09. 2025.

- **Registration of trade unions**

Registration of every trade union with the Registrar of Trade Unions of the Department of Labour is a mandatory requirement under the Trade Unions Ordinance. Accordingly, from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 80 trade unions/associations were registered with the Department. During the same period, 96 trade unions were cancelled. Therefore, as at 30.09.2025, the total number of valid trade unions stands at 2,125.

- **Interventions to settle strikes**

Whenever situations arise that may develop into an industrial dispute or a strike, the Department intervenes immediately to prevent such situations. In the event a strike does occur, action is taken to resolve the related dispute. Information regarding strikes reported during the period from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025 is as follows.

Table 2.7 - Data Reported on Strikes – From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

Field	No. of strikes reported	No. of employees participated	No. of human-days lost
Estate	01	140	280
Construction	03	420	2,206
Production	09	4,198	9,932
Total	13	4,758	12,418

- **Maintaining a dialogue between the employer and the employee two parties**

To promote industrial peace and create a productive work environment in the private and semi-government sectors, the Department organized and conducted programmes aimed at enhancing social dialogue, workplace cooperation, and awareness of labour laws among both employers and employees in these institutions.

Accordingly, from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, the Social Dialogue and Workplace Cooperation Promotion Division conducted 178 awareness programmes, with the participation of 7,141 individuals.

In addition to these awareness programmes, a total of 51 advisory councils were convened, consisting of 11 regional advisory councils and 40 district advisory councils. A total of 1,959 employers and employees participated in these councils. These advisory councils have served as a platform to minimize industrial relations issues at the regional level. Furthermore, if matters requiring attention at the national level are raised through these councils, such matters are submitted to the National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC) for further consideration.

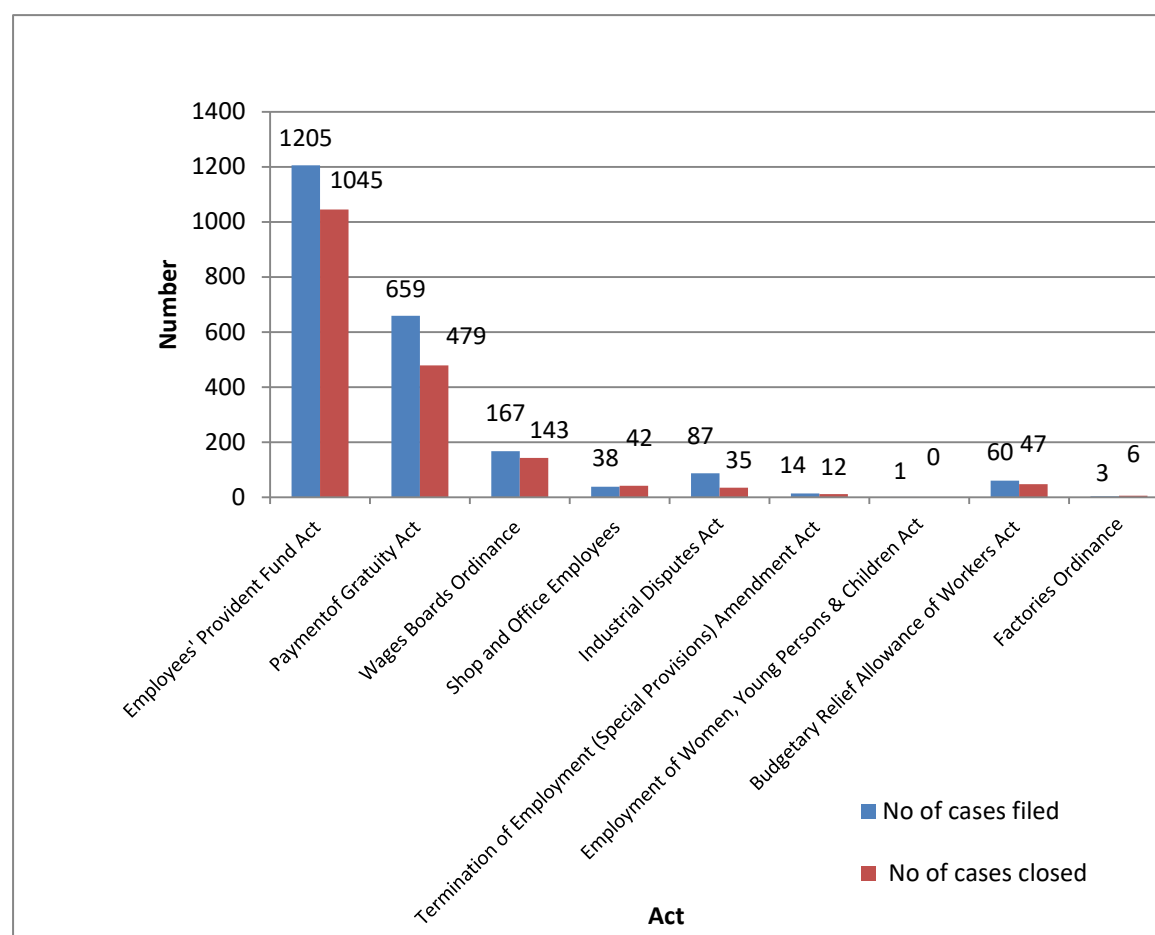
- **Training of trainers for the promotion of social dialogue and workplace cooperation**

In order to enhance the effectiveness of programmes conducted by the Social Dialogue and Workplace Cooperation Promotion Division at a national level, the need to train officers of the Department at the Regional Labour Office level was identified. Accordingly, suitable officers were selected from regional offices to be trained as trainers, and Training of Trainers programmes were conducted. This programme is being implemented in two phases. The first phase was conducted in March 2025, with the participation of 63 trainees. In addition to enhancing knowledge on social dialogue and workplace cooperation, this programme also focused on developing soft skills, including presentation skills, among the trainers. The second phase of this programme is scheduled to be held in the fourth quarter of this year.

2.7.4. Legal Protection to Safeguard the Rights of Employment of Employees

The Department enforces a number of Acts for the protection of rights of workers. Accordingly, the Department of Labour conducts judicial proceedings against employers who violate these laws and thereby safeguard the rights of the employees. Accordingly, the progress regarding judicial proceedings conducted by the Department from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025 is as follows.

Graph 2.2 - Cases filed in Magistrate Courts and closed cases – From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025.



Note – Information regarding legal actions taken by the regional labour offices has been presented in the above table.

Table 2.8 - Information on legal actions initiated through direct intervention of the Enforcement Division (excluding Magistrate's Court cases)

Court	No. of cases pending as on 01.01.2025	Number of cases filed from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025	Number of cases concluded as at 30.09.2025	Number of pending cases as at 30.09.2025
Supreme Court	143	30	04	169
Appeals court	440	30	52	418
High Court	104	18	18	104
Commercial High Court	137	1	1	137

- **Review of the proposed Employment Act**

To assist the Ministry of Labour in reviewing the provisions of the proposed Employment Act, the Department has established three committees and is currently carrying out review activities. These committees cover three key areas: conditions of employment, industrial relations, and occupational safety and health. After separate discussions by each committee, consolidated committee discussions will be conducted, and the review report is scheduled to be submitted in the fourth quarter of 2025.

- **Drafting and amending regulations under the Factories Ordinance No. 45 of 1942**

Two regulations that need to be drafted and amended under the Factories Ordinance No. 45 of 1942 have been identified, and work is currently underway to amend them.

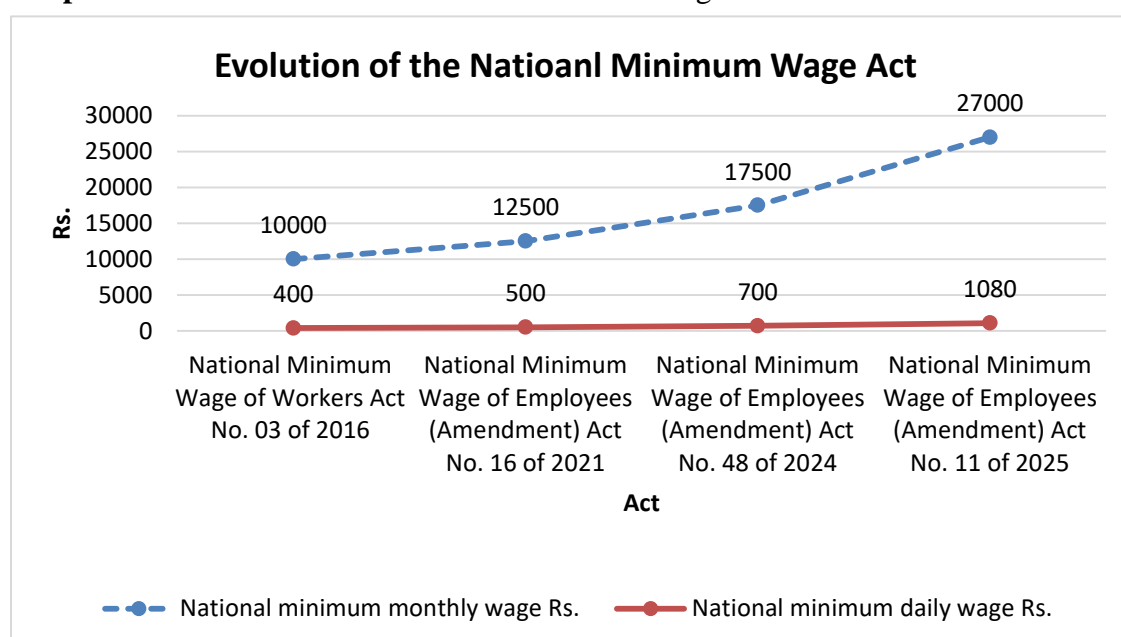
2.7.5. Protection and Promotion of Labour Standards

Updating the wages and conditions of employment of private sector employees and safeguarding those rights is a primary responsibility of the Department. Accordingly, the following activities related to this subject area were carried out from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025.

- **Amendment of the National Minimum Wage**

Under the National Minimum Wage of Workers (Amendment) Act, No. 11 of 2025, the national minimum monthly wage was increased to Rs. 27,000.00 and the national minimum daily wage to Rs. 1,080.00, with effect from 01 April 2025. In relation to the revision of the national minimum monthly and daily wages, actions were taken to inform employers through a newspaper notice dated 27.08.2025, and both employee and employer parties were notified through a newspaper notice dated 27.07.2025.

Graph 2.3 - Evolution of the National Minimum Wage Act



- **Granting approval for a 05-day working week**

From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 331 applications were received from employers seeking approval to implement the five-day working week, of which 285 applications have been approved.

In the year 2024, a total of 339 applications were received from employers seeking approval to implement the five-day working week, and 320 applications were approved.

- **Examination of the legal validity of collective agreements**

From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 18 requests were received for the verification of the legal validity of collective agreements. Including the requests carried forward from the previous year, action has been taken to grant approval for 23 requests.

In the year 2024, a total of 39 requests were received for the verification of the legal validity of collective agreements, and action was taken to grant approval for 21 of those requests.

- **Granting approval for requests relating to wage deductions under the Wages Boards Ordinance and the Shop and Office Employees Act**

Under the Wages Board Ordinance and the Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act, 198 requests were received for wage deductions during the period 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025. Including the requests carried forward from the previous year, action has been taken to grant approval for 139 requests.

In the year 2024, a total of 262 requests were received in this regard, and action was taken to grant approval for 124 requests, including those carried forward from the year 2023.

- **Providing clarifications and interpretations for inquiries made by employers and employees regarding acts and ordinances**

From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 37 inquiries were submitted by both employer and employee parties regarding statutory provisions. Clarifications and interpretations were provided for 34 of those inquiries.

In the year 2024, a total of 70 inquiries were received in this regard, and responses were provided for 69 of those inquiries.

- **Activities related to Wages Boards**

The list of Wages Boards that are in the process of being convened in the year 2025 is as follows.

- Tea Growing and Manufacturing Trade
- Rubber Growing and Raw Rubber Manufacturing Trade
- Coconut Growing Trade
- Garment Manufacturing Trade

- Rubber, Plastic and Petroleum Resin-Based Products Manufacturing Trade
- Motor Transport Trade
- Hotel and Catering Trade
- Security Services Trade
- Textile Manufacturing Trade
- Wholesale and Retail Trade
- Sanitation Services Trade

- **Identifying issues in service agreements of private sector employees**

For this purpose, a committee was appointed this year and further action has been initiated. Accordingly, it is expected to study service agreements, identify existing issues, and, where necessary, introduce legal amendments to minimize those issues.

2.7.6 Protection of the rights of employed women and young persons, and elimination of child labour

The Department of Labour is responsible for ensuring that labour laws are enforced in a manner that protects the rights of women in employment, and for periodically reviewing these laws and recommending necessary amendments to enable effective female labour force participation in the country. Additionally, the Department undertakes actions to eliminate child labour in Sri Lanka.

Accordingly, the following activities were carried out from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025.

- **Conducting investigations into complaints related to child labour**

From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 47 complaints related to child labour were received. Including the complaints carried forward from the previous year, action has been taken to resolve 14 complaints. Among these, 02 complaints were confirmed to involve child labour, and necessary legal proceedings are currently being undertaken in that regard.

- **Granting approval for the engagement of women in night work and conducting investigations into complaints regarding infringement of employment conditions related to night work for women**

During the period from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, based on requests received from establishments, 554 approvals were granted for engaging women in night work.

From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, 02 complaints were received regarding infringement of employment conditions related to women engaged in night work, and investigations into these complaints are currently in progress.

- **Undertaking initiatives to completely eliminate child labour from Sri Lanka.**

It was identified that the most practical way to deliver the message on the elimination of child labour and the civic responsibility associated with it to the grassroots level is

through the Community Policing Committees of the Sri Lanka Police. Accordingly, this initiative, which was commenced in 2024, has been continued throughout 2025 as well.

Accordingly, in 2024, Training of Trainers sessions were conducted for 4 police divisions in the Colombo District, out of the 45 police divisions of the Sri Lanka Police Department. In 2025, with the intention of expanding this programme islandwide, Training of Trainers sessions planned for 41 police divisions were successfully completed, covering all 11 police zonal offices, with the collaboration of the Department of Labour and support from the Sri Lanka Police Department.

In addition, a programme to review and present the initiatives and activities carried out to date for the elimination of child labour was held on 20 June 2025 at the Head Office premises, under the patronage of the Hon. Minister of Labour and the Secretary to the Ministry. The event was conducted with the participation of officers from the Department of Labour and the Sri Lanka Police Department, members of the National Steering Committee, and the support of all relevant stakeholders. Approximately 240 police officers and a number of officers from the Department of Labour attended the programme.

The first meeting of the National Steering Committee on the Elimination of Child Labour in Sri Lanka for the year 2025 was held on 11.03.2025 at the auditorium of the Labour Secretariat. During this meeting, the draft Action Plan on Child Labour for the year 2025 was presented, and proposals related to it submitted by participating stakeholders were discussed. It was emphasized that awareness should be raised at grassroots level to prevent child labour, and concerns were also highlighted regarding the potential rise of child labour risks through outgrower systems associated with plantation sectors. The second meeting of the Committee for the year 2025 was held on 07.08.2025 at the same venue.

- **Special field inspections and awareness programmes conducted in identified high-risk areas to identify children vulnerable to child labour in the fisheries and plantation sectors**

A total of 12 awareness programmes related to the fisheries and plantation sectors were conducted from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, with the participation of 124 individuals. These awareness activities were carried out through lectures, house-to-house visits, distribution of leaflets, and public announcements using sound systems. No children at risk of child labour were identified during these programmes.

- **Conducting special team inspections covering the tourism sector, including home stays and hospitality service centers**

As of 30.09.2025, a total of 30 special team inspections were conducted by the Women and Children's Affairs Division, in collaboration with Regional Labour Offices and District Labour Offices. A total of 109 individuals participated in these inspections, covering 78 institutions. No instances of child labour were detected during these inspections.

- **Obtaining pledges of non-use of child labour**



The programme to obtain pledges from employers stating that child labour is not used in their institutions was initiated in 2024 and continued in 2025. Accordingly, from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, four (04) awareness programmes were conducted for small and medium-scale employers regarding the elimination of child labour, and pledges were obtained.

During the period 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 679 pledges were received from employers. Accordingly, as at 30.09.2025, the cumulative number of employers who have provided such undertakings stands at 1,124.

Employers are able to provide their undertakings through a QR code, and in recognition of employers who submit these undertakings, arrangements have been made to print and issue a sticker next year, which can be displayed at the workplace as a mark of acknowledgement.

- **Awareness on labour laws relating to night work for women and maternity benefits**

Four (04) awareness programmes were conducted to educate female employees working in factories who contribute significantly to the labour force in the manufacturing sector regarding labour laws applicable to night work for women and maternity benefits. A total of 115 female employees were covered through these programmes.

2.7.7. Ensuring a Safe and Decent Work Environment for Employee Occupational Safety

It is the responsibility of the Department of Labour to minimise physical harm and accidents to workers engaged in employment within factories. Matters relating to the occupational safety, health, and welfare of workers employed in factories in Sri Lanka are carried out under the Factories Ordinance No. 45 of 1942.

To ensure a safe working environment, the Department carried out the following key activities from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025.

- Under the Factories (Registration and Approval of Factory Buildings) Regulations, No. 01 of 2019, a total of 1,843 factories were registered from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025. Accordingly, the total number of factories registered under these regulations as at 30.09.2025 is 8,457. In the year 2024, the number of factories registered was 2,221.
- From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, 167 factory building plans were examined and approved. In the year 2024, the number of approved factory building plans was 244.

- District Factory Inspecting Engineers inspected 1,847 factories from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025. For the year 2024, this number was 2,578.
- From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, 38 fatal accidents and 1,035 non-fatal accidents were reported and investigated. In the year 2024, there were 47 fatal accidents and 1,606 non-fatal accidents reported and investigated.
- From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, authorized officers submitted 9,638 reports on inspections of high-risk machinery. In the year 2024, this number was 11,965.
- Bipartite Safety Committees were established to enhance employee safety. The main objective of establishing these committees is to foster a safety culture within factories by ensuring occupational safety. Accordingly, 202 Bipartite Safety Committees were established in the year 2024, covering all industrial sectors. From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, 56 Bipartite Safety Committees were established. As at 30.09.2025, the total number of established Bipartite Safety Committees is 933.

2.7.8. Activities carried out to ensure a safe and decent work environment for employee occupational safety

To ensure health and safety in workplaces, the Department takes action to scientifically identify whether there are any health hazards or potentially dangerous situations at workplaces, and to take measures to prevent such risks, while also raising awareness on the actions that should be taken to mitigate them. Accordingly, the following activities were carried out from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025.

- **Obtaining environmental measurements and conducting occupational health and safety assessments**

When carrying out factory inspections for obtaining environmental measurements and conducting occupational health and safety assessments, an initial evaluation is conducted to determine the level of housekeeping within the factory and the welfare facilities provided to employees. Thereafter, to assess whether the working environment within the factory is conducive and safe for employees, measurements are taken for lighting levels, noise levels, heat stress, and ventilation using appropriate instruments. In addition, assessments are carried out to identify other potential risk factors.

Accordingly, from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, environmental measurements were obtained in 237 factories, and occupational health and safety assessments were conducted in 248 factories. Based on these assessments, necessary recommendations were issued to ensure that working environments in those factories are maintained at favorable standards.

Table 2.9 – Actions taken to resolve issues related to occupational safety and health in various institutions during the period from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

Number of institutions where interventions were made and problematic conditions were resolved	Type of issues encountered	Output of the activity
<p>13</p> <p>(Manufacturing institutions – 11, Semi-government institution – 01, Service sector institution – 01)</p>	<p>Issues such as excessive noise, high temperatures, exposure to toxic chemical fumes, lack of adequate sanitary facilities, absence of basic amenities, and failure to provide protective equipment at workplaces.</p>	<p>Necessary interventions were made to address and resolve occupational safety and health issues identified in 13 institutions. Through these actions, measures were taken to safeguard the occupational safety and health standards of 2,187 employees.</p> <p>By ensuring a safer, more comfortable, and healthier working environment, employees are able to perform their duties efficiently while maintaining good physical and mental well-being. This contributes to increased focus, reduced fatigue and discomfort, and higher productivity. Consequently, institutional goals can be achieved more effectively, and the quality of services improves. In particular, this initiative has a positive impact on the growth of domestic production.</p>

By organizing and conducting awareness programmes for employers and employees on occupational safety and health, it becomes possible to minimise workplace hazards and create a safer working environment. Accordingly, the following table presents information on the awareness programmes conducted by the Industrial Safety Division and the Occupational Hygiene Division from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025.

Through these awareness programmes, knowledge was enhanced on occupational safety and health, the use of personal protective equipment, the safe handling of chemicals, and first aid.

Table 2.10 – Information on awareness programmes conducted for employees by the Industrial Safety Division during the period from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

Name of the programme	Number of programmes conducted	Number of participants / number of beneficiaries	Results of the programme
Conducting awareness programmes to enhance knowledge on occupational health and safety among sanitary workers employed in all Municipal Councils, Urban Councils, and Pradeshiya Sabhas in the Colombo District	10	1,066	<p>According to the analysis of pre- and post-questionnaire data, the overall improvement in the knowledge of participants is 27.5%. Sanitary workers belong to an occupation with limited access to education and training, and therefore, their systematic understanding of occupational health and safety is relatively low.</p> <p>Therefore, an increase of 27.5% in knowledge following a short-term programme is considered a significant achievement. Accordingly, it is expected to continue this programme in the coming years, expanding it to cover other regions as well.</p>
Raising awareness on the laws and regulations of the Factories Ordinance related to occupational health and safety, and establishing a safety culture within the small and medium-scale sector	21	833	(According to the analysis of pre- and post-questionnaire data,) The overall improvement in participants' performance as a result of these awareness programmes is

			approximately 41.8%.
Conducting awareness programmes to promote knowledge on occupational health and safety among workers and employers in the informal sector	15	957	<p>Through these awareness programmes, knowledge related to occupational safety and health, the use of personal protective equipment, the safe handling of chemicals, and first aid is enhanced.</p> <p>(According to the analysis of pre- and post-questionnaire data,) The overall improvement in participants' knowledge and awareness as a result of these programmes is approximately 45%.</p>

Training modules have been developed to enhance knowledge on fatal accidents occurring in factories, occupational diseases, and occupational health and safety. It is expected that these modules will be used in future awareness programmes conducted for employers and employees in factories, students in vocational training institutions, and Labour Department officers.

2.7.9. Department Website

Through the official website of the Department of Labour, www.labourdept.gov.lk, beneficiaries are able to download necessary application forms, templates, guidelines, labour ordinances, and other required documents, including Wages Board decisions that employers are required to follow. These details are continuously updated. In addition, access to the Department's e-services has also been included on the website and is being further developed.

2.7.10. Media Activities of the Department

The Department maintains an official YouTube channel, Facebook page, and Twitter account, and disseminates updated information to the public through these platforms.

In addition, with the objective of communicating information on the activities and services of the Department of Labour more efficiently to the public through mass media and social media, preliminary arrangements were initiated in the year 2025 to establish a dedicated Media Unit. It is expected that, in the coming years, this unit will be

strengthened with the required human and physical resources and will function as a fully effective media unit.

2.7.11. Library of the Department of Labour

The Department of Labour maintains the leading library in Sri Lanka containing ordinances, books, and publications related to the labour sector. This library provides access to all labour-related ordinances, books, and publications for the staff of the Department of Labour, the Ministry of Labour, and its affiliated institutions, as well as for external readers.

2.7.12. Information and Communication Activities

- **Publication activities**

- **Kathikawa Magazine**

The objective of publishing the Kathikawa magazine is to contribute to minimizing disputes within institutions by providing the necessary knowledge to foster harmonious relationships between employers and employees. Accordingly, articles for the 2025 edition of the Kathikawa magazine are currently being compiled, and the magazine is expected to be published in the fourth quarter of 2025.

- **Declaration of the Success Stories**

Information has been collected on institutions that, through social dialogue programmes, have strengthened harmonious relationships between employers and employees, enhanced institutional efficiency, and contributed significantly to the national economy, so that their paths to success may be showcased as models for other institutions. A publication containing these success stories is expected to be released in the fourth quarter of 2025.

- **Surveys and studies related to the labour sector**

- **Annual Survey of Private and Semi-Government Sector Employment) 2025**

The primary purpose of preparing this report is to present labour statistics that assist the Ministry of Labour, the Department of Labour, and other institutions in decision-making. Information is being collected up to September 2025 by distributing questionnaires to institutions.

The matters included in this annual report are as follows:

- Monthly Nominal Earning
- Low Pay Rate by economic activity, occupation, and gender
- Gender Wage Gap by economic activity, occupation, and gender
- Labour Cost by economic activity, occupation, and gender

- **Bullatin of Labour Demand**

The objective of this publication is to assess the job vacancies that exist in the private and semi-government sectors in Sri Lanka. The publication for the year 2024 has been completed.

- **Labour Statistics**

The objective of this publication is to present statistical information on the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), the Deposit of Employers' Securities, workplace accidents and compensation payments, labour force data in Sri Lanka, complaints related to child labour, strikes, and other related labour statistics. The preparation of the report, which includes information for the year 2024, is in the final stages.

- **Study on Child Labour 2025 – Western Province**

A study on child labour was conducted in 2024 with the objectives of understanding the status of child labour in the Colombo District, assessing the progress of activities undertaken to eliminate child labour, collecting data on the socio-economic conditions of families with child labourers, and identifying measures needed to eradicate child labour. As the second phase of this initiative, a study on child labour in the Western Province was carried out in 2025.

For this study, a sample of 1,000 households within the Western Province was selected. As at 30.09.2025, data collection, data entry, analysis, and report preparation have been completed, and printing is expected to be finalized during the fourth quarter.

- **A Pilot Study in selected five garment factories to study the impact of prolonged standing on the health of the workers**

The primary objective of this study is to examine whether prolonged standing during work in garment factories leads to health issues among employees. The study was conducted covering 13,040 employees from six garment manufacturing institutions. As of 30.09.2025, 75% of the data analysis has been completed, and the study report is expected to be presented in the fourth quarter.

• **Observance of major commemorative days**

- **International Women's Day Commemoration Programme 2025**

In line with International Women's Day, the Department of Labour organized and conducted 11 special awareness programmes across the island on 07.03.2025, with the main programme coordinated by the Western Province 1 Labour Office. A total of 450 participants representing various sectors attended this programme.

Alongside this programme, awareness on labour laws affecting women was also raised through television and radio programmes. In addition, information related to the programme was promoted through the official social media platforms of the Department of Labour, including YouTube and Facebook



Photograph 2.1 - International Women's Day Commemoration Programme 2025

- **World Day Against Child Labour Programme – 2025**

In recognition of the International Day Against Child Labour, an awareness programme was conducted on 12.06.2025 in the Grandpass area within the Colombo North Police Division, in the form of an anti-child labour awareness march. During this event, awareness activities were carried out for approximately 300–400 participants.



Photograph 2.2 - Anti-child labour march held on 12.06.2025 covering the Grandpass area of the Colombo North Police Division on the occasion of the International Day Against Child Labor

- **World Children's Day Celebration Programme – 2025**

In line with World Children's Day, which is commemorated annually on October 1st, the Department of Labour organized three programmes this year in the areas of Jaffna, Hatton, and Chilaw. These programmes aimed not only at eliminating child labour and its

worst forms and enforcing related legal provisions, but also at moving beyond enforcement towards broader awareness and prevention efforts.

The Jaffna programme was held on 22 September 2025 at Jaffna Vaitheeswaran School. Under the theme “Our Little World of Children,” activities were organized for students from Grade 1 to Grade 5 to create drawings, while students from Grade 6 to Grade 11 and their parents were formally made aware of child labour and its impacts. Additionally, a drama performance was presented to raise awareness about eliminating child labour. Awareness materials were also distributed by officials in areas where children vulnerable to child labour reside, in order to educate the community.

The programme in the Hatton area was organized to be held on October 01, and the programme in the Halawatha area was organized to be held on October 03.

- World Day for Safety

In commemoration of the World Day for Safety and Health at Work held on 28.04.2025, awareness programmes on occupational safety, health, and occupational well-being were conducted for factory and construction site workers, as well as for students of technical colleges undergoing vocational training.

2.7.13. Human Resource Management of the Department

During the first three quarters of 2025, the Department carried out its routine human resource administration activities, which included identifying staff requirements, recruiting personnel as needed, granting promotions, evaluating employee performance, providing salary increments, making transfers, facilitating retirements, administering leave, and handling disciplinary matters of staff members. From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, seven efficiency bar examinations were conducted, with 74 officers participating in these examinations.

In addition, the Department identified the training needs of the entire staff and accordingly organized and conducted internal training programmes. Officers were also nominated to training courses conducted by external institutions. Furthermore, based on service requirements, the Department provided necessary financial provisions for officers to pursue degree and postgraduate studies, and carried out the required coordination for foreign training opportunities.

Table 2.11 – Training programmes organized and conducted by the Planning, Research, Training and Publications Division from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

Name of the training programme	Officer Category	Number of programmes	Number of Officers
Brainstorming Session for the Future Direction of the Department of Labour	Staff officers	01	30

CMS System Training Programme (Online)	Dep.Commissioner of Labour/ As. Commissioner of Labour and other relevant officers	02	120
EPF Monitoring System and Claim System Training Programme	Dep.Commissioner of Labour/ As. Commissioner of Labour	02	150
Training Programme on Resolving Industrial Disputes (Under the Decent Work Programme)	Labour Officers	04	219
Training Programme on Labour Laws, Soft Skills, and Office Management	Labour Officers	02	100
Training Programme on Public Relations, Soft Skills, and the Exemplary Public Servant	M.S.O / D.O	04	450
	Security Guards	01	21
Tamil Language Training Programmes	M.S.O / D.O/ K.K.S	03	210
Total		19	1,300

Table 2.12 – Reference of officers for Foreign Training / Workshops and other training programmes from 01.01.2025 to 30.09. 2025

Type of the training programme	Number of programmes	Number of officers
Post graduate	05	05
Participation in Foreign Training and Workshops	10	13
Local training programmes organized and conducted by the International Labour Organization	08	70
Programmes organized and conducted by the International Labour Organization (conducted online)	01	03
Referring Officers for Training in Other Institutions	08	11
Total	32	102

A total of 13 officers participated in overseas training programmes, conferences, and workshops. The selection of officers for these training programmes was based on the criteria established by the Ministry of Labour for selecting officers for foreign training. This process ensured transparency and provided equal opportunities for all qualified officers to be selected for overseas training programmes.

Furthermore, beginning from the year 2025, officers who participate in overseas training programmes are required to conduct a brief presentation upon their return, sharing the knowledge and experience gained with other officers of the Department. This initiative is also expected to contribute towards identifying new project proposals.

A series of online programmes titled “DoL – E Learning Hub” was commenced in September 2025, and is conducted once every two weeks to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience relating to the implementation of labour laws. This enables officers to share practical insights and strengthen institutional capacity in enforcing labour legislation.

2.7.14. Development of the Department’s Infrastructure

With the objective of providing a more efficient service to beneficiaries across the island, the Department has taken steps to develop infrastructure at the Head Office and regional offices located throughout the country, based on necessity.

Accordingly, minor renovation work was carried out as required at regional offices, and interior modifications were made to the floors of the “Mehewara Piyesa” building and the Labour Secretariat building.

With the objective of providing a more efficient service to the beneficiaries of the Department of Labour, a budget allocation of Rs. 756.8 million has been made for 2025 to improve physical infrastructure at the Labour Secretariat building, the “Mehewara Piyesa” building, and regional offices of the Department located across the island. These development projects are currently being implemented. In particular, renovation work on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th floors of the Labour Secretariat building, to make them suitable for District Labour Offices, is in its final stage.

2.7.15 Guiding the Department towards Its Objectives through Performance Supervision

In alignment with international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the national policy statement “A Thriving Nation, a Beautiful Life,” steps have been taken to prepare the Labour Department’s Five-Year Strategic Plan for 2025–2029. This plan focuses on enabling the Department to effectively implement activities assigned to it under these policy directives by enhancing service delivery efficiency to beneficiaries, adopting modern technology, and prioritizing human resource development. Accordingly, the progress of activities scheduled for the year 2025 has been periodically reviewed.

A new mechanism has been formulated and implemented by the Regional Deputy Labour Commissioners to continuously monitor the progress of District Labour Offices and Sub-Labour Offices on a monthly and quarterly basis. To ensure uniformity across all offices, standardized formats for preparing and submitting progress reports have also been introduced.

Additionally, arrangements have been made to conduct 11 regional progress review meetings under the leadership of the Commissioner General of Labour. The first meeting is scheduled to be held on 02.10.2025 for the Central Province, while the meetings for the remaining ten regions are expected to be conducted during the upcoming months of 2025.

An awareness conference was held on 22 and 23.08.2025 for the heads of divisions and regional offices of the Department of Labour. During this conference, extensive discussions were held regarding the current progress of the Department and its future direction. Additionally, external institutions such as the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and the Department of Management Services have expressed their ideas at this conference. From next year onward, it is expected that this conference will be held twice a year.

2.8. Department of Manpower and Employment

- **Providing opportunities for women who face difficulties or lack interest in entering the labor market, and for persons with disabilities, to engage in production processes based on their preference**

Under this initiative, programmes are being implemented in collaboration with institutions to provide part-time, remote, or flexible employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, and to extend the necessary support at the Divisional Secretariat level for their employment. Accordingly, since 2022, a total of 715 persons with disabilities have been employed under this programme, implemented jointly with the Department of Social Services with technical assistance from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). As of 30.09.2025, the number of individuals employed under this initiative stands at 330. This programme is observed to be highly successful, and further actions are planned from the year 2026 onwards to enhance employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

- **Implementation of vocational training internship programmes to provide practical experience for Advanced Level students, enabling them to enter the world of work with the necessary skills.(Vocational Training Institute Visit)**

Within Sri Lanka's school education system, only a very small percentage of students qualify for admission to state universities after completing the Advanced Level examination. According to statistical data, nearly 120,000 students enter the world of work each year without any form of skills development. The prevailing social perception that only those who fail examinations should pursue vocational education must be changed. However, if students are made aware during their school years of the importance of acquiring skills and connecting with the world of work, they will be more

encouraged to choose a vocational training programme after completing their school education.

To create awareness among students while they are still in school about the importance of entering the world of work with practical skills, and to motivate them to select vocational training programmes after completing their school education, the Department of Manpower and Employment conducts a series of district-level programmes providing Advanced Level students with practical exposure to the world of work. From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 42 such programmes were conducted, and number of participants were 3,179.

- **Conducting a survey and collecting data on the interest in the hospitality sector among registered job seekers**

In Sri Lanka, as in many other countries around the world, a large number of women remain outside the formal workforce due to their responsibilities in caring for children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Additionally, with the rapidly increasing elderly population, the demand for caregiving continues to rise each day. Accordingly, It is expected that there will be significant growth in the “Care Economy” within our country.

As there is a growing domestic demand for caregiving services, a survey on the interest of registered job seekers in caregiving employment was launched by the Department on 10 September 2025. This survey is being conducted across selected Divisional Secretariat Divisions covering the entire country. Based on the results of this survey, which is being carried out in collaboration with the National Institute of Labour Studies, it is expected to develop a new training programme for caregiving services.

Through this, a foundation is created to achieve long-term goals such as the creation and promotion of new employment opportunities, increasing women’s labour force participation, preparing the country to face the challenges arising from an ageing population, and ensuring better social protection, especially by providing fair and adequate care for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and those with chronic illnesses.

- **Conducting programmes to provide job seekers with practical exposure to the world of work (Empower Youth Programme)**

This programme is conducted with the objective of reducing Sri Lanka’s skills mismatch by preparing young people to face future challenges effectively through leadership, creativity, and readiness aligned with labour market demands. The two-day programme is implemented in collaboration with the private sector. On the first day, participants are encouraged to develop a positive mindset about the future, build self-motivation to enter the world of work, and gain a basic understanding of the workplace. On the second day, participants are given the opportunity to observe internationally and nationally recognized institutions in order to gain real-life exposure to the world of work. From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 57 programmes have been conducted, benefiting 2,153 participants.

- **Conducting awareness programmes for informal sector workers interested in entrepreneurship on digital marketing.**

As part of entrepreneurship development for workers in the informal sector, a digital platform for production and marketing has been introduced. Accordingly, areas such as digital marketing, online marketing, and e-commerce platforms are introduced and knowledge in these fields is enhanced. From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, 49 programmes were conducted, benefiting 1,862 participants.

- **Conducting awareness programmes aimed at improving the working conditions of employees in the informal sector and guiding job seekers towards entrepreneurship.**

Programmes are being implemented to provide the necessary knowledge and motivation to self-employed individuals engaged in selected informal employment sectors, in order to enhance their working conditions and ensure dignity of labour. Accordingly, these programmes include providing personalised career guidance, directing them to obtain NVQ certification through the RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) process, and encouraging them to connect with business networks. These initiatives are carried out at the village level, targeting small groups.

Through this initiative, the productivity, quality, and efficiency of these workers' activities are improved, while also creating opportunities for them to obtain formal registrations or licenses for their businesses. Furthermore, the enhanced skills enable them to earn higher wages or charge higher prices, among other benefits. From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 77 programmes have been conducted, with 2,743 beneficiaries.

- **Maintaining the Public Employment Service**

Through the data system of the Department of Manpower and Employment, job seekers and employers are registered, and the Public Employment Service is delivered. Under this system, registered job seekers are provided with career guidance aimed at achieving professional development by identifying their self-assessment and personal attributes. They are also directed to the most suitable employment opportunities and training programmes.

- **Conducting District and Regional Job Fairs and Career Fairs.**

The main objective of this programme is to facilitate employment opportunities for both registered/ non-registered job seekers within the jurisdiction of district and divisional secretariat areas. Employers, training institutes, and vocational training organizations participate in these events. During district job fair programmes, job/ training seekers who attend are registered in the department's database through the online system.

At these events, motivation towards various employment opportunities is created through programmes on attitude development, awareness of future job sectors, and new trends in

the labour market. Through this process, job seekers are informed about private sector employers and are referred for interviews.

Based on the qualifications of the job seekers, private institutions offering employment recruit them to fill vacancies within their organisations. The department also conducts follow-up monitoring regarding those who gain employment through this process.

In addition, job seekers who require further training are referred to relevant training institutions. This enables them to develop skills that align with the demands of the labour market.

A key function of this job fair programme is to categorise all participating job seekers as follows, group them accordingly, and then plan and implement the necessary follow-up programmes for each category.

- Individuals seeking employment
- Individuals who require career guidance
- Individuals interested in developing as entrepreneurs
- Individuals identified as having training needs

Table 2.13 - The progress of District and Divisional Job Fairs conducted from 01.01.2025 to 30.09. 2025 is shown below.

	Programme	Number of programme s held	Number of beneficiaries
1	District Job Fair and Career Fair	21	8,631
2	Divisional Job Fair and Career Fair	199	24,669
3	Number of Registered Job Seekers		44,447
4	Number of Registered Employers/Organizations	-	376
5	Job Seekers Referred for Employment	-	6,301
6	Job Seekers Successfully Employed	-	3,862
7	Individual Career Guidance Provided	-	26,579
8	Referrals for Training	-	8,133

- **Conducting regular surveys in the districts of Matara, Kurunegala, and Hambantota to gather information on employment training opportunities, part-time job opportunities, and job opportunities available for persons with disabilities in the private sector, with the aim of attracting and retaining the youth within the active labour market.**

Although there is a high availability of employment opportunities in the labour market, the participation of individuals in these opportunities remains low. Therefore, with the objective of identifying available employment opportunities and directing unemployed youth to contribute to national development, a regular programme for employment surveys and research was conducted in the Matara District, targeting private sector institutions that provide employment in the districts of Matara, Hambantota, and

Kurunegala. During this programme, 1,064 job vacancies were identified, of which 36 were suitable for persons with disabilities. Through this initiative, 20 young individuals and 02 persons with disabilities were successfully employed.

- **Implementation of programmes to provide Advanced Level students with knowledge about the future labour market and the opportunities available to enter it, under the “Work Force Sri Lanka” programme.**

To transform Sri Lanka into a developed nation, a complete transformation of its economy and society is required. In achieving this transformation, school students carry a special responsibility and role. Therefore, students must be made aware of the need to identify higher education pathways that align with the demands of the labour market.

The “Work Force Sri Lanka” programme is implemented with the objective of identifying students’ potential, creating opportunities for them to explore the world of work, enabling them to choose a suitable career path, prepare for it, enter the workforce, grow within it, and contribute to the country’s national productivity. This programme is primarily targeted at students sitting for the G.C.E. Advanced Level examination.

Through this programme, school students are expected to be supported in making informed decisions about future careers, to gain an understanding of their social responsibility by actively contributing to the labour force, and to be made aware of emerging employment trends in the coming years. From 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025, a total of 162 programmes were conducted for Advanced Level students, with the participation of 19,990 students.

- **Conducting career guidance programmes for Grade 9, GCE Ordinary Level, and GCE Advanced Level students.**

A programme is conducted to raise awareness among Grade 9 students with the objective of guiding them correctly for the GCE Ordinary Level examination. This is done by identifying each child’s intelligence strengths and future aspirations using the Multiple IQ Tests, and helping them select the most appropriate subject streams accordingly.

A programme is conducted to create awareness among GCE Ordinary Level students with the objective of guiding them to choose their Advanced Level subject streams based on their skills and interests, identify future career goals, and understand alternative education or vocational pathways where necessary. This programme includes identifying students’ interests and abilities, guiding them in selecting appropriate A/L subjects, and providing career counselling to help them achieve their educational and professional goals.

A programme is implemented to create awareness among Advanced Level students with the objective of helping them develop self-assessment, plan their life goals, and build the psychological resilience required to enter the future world of work. This is carried out in response to the competitive nature of the current education system and aims to guide students towards personal development and career readiness. Through this programme, students are educated on self-evaluation and personality development, setting life goals,

and gaining an understanding of pathways available after school such as higher education, vocational training courses, and employment opportunities.

Table 2.14 - Progress of Career Guidance Programmes Conducted from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

Name of the programme	Number of school	Number of students
Awareness Programme for Grade 9 Students	1,954	63,853
Awareness Programme for G.C.E. Ordinary Level Students	2,485	69,647
Awareness Programme for G.C.E. Advanced Level Students	1,173	35,606

2.9. National Institute of Labour Studies (NILS)

The National Institute of Labour Studies (NILS) conducts training and educational programmes under five main thematic areas to develop a productive labour force that contributes to socio-economic development while maintaining positive labour relations. These thematic areas are:

- Labour Law and Industrial Relations
- Human Resource Management
- Labour Migration
- Procurement and Contract Administration
- Business Management

These training programmes are categorized as follows:

- Diploma Courses
- Certificate Courses
- Short-Term Training Courses (one-day, two-day, three-day, and five-day programmes)
- Programmes Conducted on Request of Client Institutions
- Special One-Day Workshops
- Examinations

• Physical and Financial Progress Achieved from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

For the year 2025, the National Institute of Labour Studies planned a revenue target of Rs. 79.42 million. Accordingly, by 30 September 2025, the institute has succeeded in generating Rs. 56.57 million.

Table 2.15 - Progress of the Programmes Implemented by the National Institute of Labour Studies from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025

No.	Activity	Programme (As at 30.09.2025)			
		Physical target	Physical progress	Financial target (Rs.mn.)	Financial progress (Rs.mn.)
1	Diploma Programmes	9	8	33.08	23.25
2	Certificate Programmes	26	27	13.35	15.76
3	Short Terms Programmes (1 Day/ 2 Day/ 3 Day)	30	50	4.5	9.01
4	Requested Programmes by Institute	30	23	4	2.14
5	Conducting Efficiency Bar, Promotion & Recruiting Examinations	15	15	5	4.84
6	Providing Consultancy Services	1	1	0.33	0.13
7	Special One Day Programmes in Labour Related Subjects (Workshops)	2	2	2.5	1.45
Total		113	126	62.76	56.57

The outstanding achievements secured by the National Institute of Labour Studies during the year 2025 thus far are as follows:

- Establishment and maintenance of an e-library connected to the institute's official website. Through this initiative, trainees of the institute and other relevant stakeholders are able to easily access information related to both local and international labour markets.
- Operation of "Nily" – a trilingual AI-powered chatbot (Sinhala, Tamil, and English), providing 24/7 service to respond to inquiries and resolve issues related to the institute.
- Conducting a national-level survey, in collaboration with the Department of Manpower and Employment, on the demand for care services within the Care Economy, with attention given to the rapidly increasing elderly population, the rise in female labor force participation, and the creation of employment opportunities.
- Providing advisory services to the Central Environmental Authority regarding the improvement of its Financial, Institutional, and Human Resource divisions.

- Initiation of training programmes for public sector employees on the use of Artificial Intelligence to carry out official duties.

Table 2.16 - Financial progress of National Institute of Labour Studies

	Annual Budget	Monthly Budget	Budget Target for the 3rd Quarter as of 30.09.2025	Actual Budget for the 3rd Quarter as of 30.09.2025
<u>Income</u>				
Training	72,420,000.00	6,035,000.00	57,760,000.00	51,747,876.96
Examinations	7,000,000.00	583,333.33	5,000,000.00	4,828,597.00
Fixed Deposit	8,000,000.00	666,666.67	6,000,000.00	5,839,127.43
Total	87,420,000.00	7,285,000.00	68,760,000.00	62,415,601.39
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Personal Emoluments	24,800,000.00	2,066,666.67	18,600,000.00	15,814,184.08
Programme Activities	29,000,000.00	2,416,666.67	21,750,000.00	21,050,537.30
Traveling Expenses	800,000.00	66,666.67	600,000.00	69,600.00
Supplies & Consumable Items	4,860,000.00	405,000.00	3,645,000.00	3,439,530.80
Maintanance	5,000,000.00	416,666.67	3,750,000.00	2,154,155.89
Contractual Services	8,470,000.00	705,833.33	6,352,500.00	6,218,981.55
Other Operating Expenses	2,124,000.00	177,000.00	1,593,000.00	1,068,050.50
Total	75,054,000.00	6,254,500.00	56,290,500.00	49,815,040.12
Surplus/ (Deficit)	12,366,000.00	1,030,500.00	12,469,500.00	12,600,561.27

2.10. National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health

To minimize occupational accidents occurring at workplaces, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) conducts Diploma and Certificate courses to train Occupational Safety Officers, along with various other programmes related to occupational safety and health. The Institute also carries out environmental measurements at workplaces and conducts risk assessments to identify potential hazards. The progress of the programmes conducted by the Institute up to 30 September 2025 is as follows.

2.10.1. Improving Occupational Safety and Health

- **Environmental Surveys**

To ensure the occupational safety of employees working in factories, assessments are carried out to determine whether their working environment is maintained at an acceptable level. During these assessments, various environmental factors such as air quality, fumes, dust levels inside the factory, noise and sound measurements, as well as temperature levels are examined. High-precision instruments are used for these measurements to determine whether the environmental conditions are conducive to the health and safety of employees. If the environmental conditions are found to be inadequate, the relevant parties are provided with necessary technical advice to maintain proper standards, and employees are made aware of the importance of working in a safe and healthy environment. As of 30 September 2025, a total of 134 environmental surveys have been conducted.

- **Medical Examinations**

With the objective of enhancing productivity by retaining a healthy and disease-free workforce in the labour market, medical examinations are carried out to assess whether employees are in an appropriate state of health to continue in their respective occupations. These medical assessments include hearing tests, blood investigations, evaluation of fitness to work, lung function tests, vision tests, and other relevant examinations. Through these assessments, occupational diseases or health conditions prevalent among workers are identified, and it is determined whether they are medically fit to remain in their current occupation. Individuals diagnosed with health issues are continuously informed of their condition, and necessary medical advice and guidance are provided accordingly. This service is carried out by visiting the required institutions to conduct on-site medical examinations, and where necessary, employees may also receive medical examinations at the institution itself. Up to 30 September 2025, a total of 10 medical examinations have been conducted.

- **Consultancy Services and Hazard Identification by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)**

After inspecting factories or workplaces, existing hazardous conditions are identified, and a report is issued. Recommendations are then provided to minimize or eliminate these hazards or deficiencies. As of 30 September 2025, three hazard assessment inspections have been conducted. In addition, 22 on-site training programmes have been carried out in 2025.

National Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health (English Medium)

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) carries the national responsibility of producing Safety Officers, who are the essential human resource required to ensure safe workplaces throughout Sri Lanka. Through this program, the Institute provides the necessary theoretical knowledge to health and safety officers via

lectures, while also offering practical training by visiting workplaces. The knowledge and competency of the trainees are assessed through evaluation reports, presentations, and examinations, and Diploma certificates are awarded to those who successfully meet the required standards. Completing this course is also considered a qualification for overseas employment, and many of the students who have successfully completed the programme are currently employed both locally and internationally. Under this programme, the courses for batches 26, 27, and 28 were completed in the year 2024, with 94 students successfully completing their training. Batches 29 and 30 commenced in the year 2025, with 90 students enrolled. These courses are scheduled to be completed in 2026.

National Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health (Sinhala Medium)

In order to fulfil the national responsibility of producing qualified health and safety officers required to establish safe workplaces across Sri Lanka, the National Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health is conducted in the Sinhala medium by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Through this programme, the theoretical knowledge required by health and safety officers is delivered via lectures, while the necessary practical knowledge is continuously provided through on-site training at workplaces. In addition, the students' knowledge is evaluated through assessment reports, presentations, and examinations, and successful candidates are awarded the Diploma certificate. In the year 2025, the 5th student intake (batch) of this programme was commenced. The 4th batch commenced in 2024 with the participation of 14 students and was completed in June 2025. The 5th batch commenced in June 2025 with the participation of 45 students.

National Certificate Course in Occupational Safety and Health

As of 30 September 2025, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has conducted three Certificate Courses in Occupational Safety and Health. In 2025, the 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, and 62nd batches of the Certificate Course were initiated. These programmes have served as a platform to minimise occupational risks and workplace accidents. Through this training, the Institute has produced qualified Occupational Safety and Health Officers required by both local and multinational companies. A significant number of officers trained by NIOSH are currently employed in various industries. Their commitment and expertise have made a valuable contribution to building a culture of occupational safety. This course is open to anyone who has passed the Advanced Level examination and has an interest in occupational safety and health. Under this programme, the courses for batches 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, and 57 were conducted and completed in the year 2024, with 189 students successfully completing the course. The courses for batches 58, 59, and 60 commenced in the year 2025 and have now been completed, with 135 students successfully completing the programme. The courses for batches 61 and 62 have commenced and are currently ongoing, with a total participation of 92 students.

Foundation Course on National Occupational Safety and Health

This course has been designed for individuals who show an interest in occupational safety and health. Those who successfully complete the course will also be facilitated for placement in institutions by our institute. The objective of this programme is to direct and employ school leavers who have completed the Ordinary Level and Advanced Level examinations, and to guide them towards careers in the field of occupational safety and health.

Course on Environmental Management for Executive-Grade Officers

This course was first started in 2020 and is aimed at in-service managers. The 4th batch of this course was completed in 2025 with 26 officers.

- **Special Achievements**

- As of 30.09.2025, visa applications have been submitted for fourteen (14) students who passed the G.C.E. Advanced Level examination and completed the Diploma in National Occupational Safety and Health, to pursue degree studies at Changshin University in South Korea.
- The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health contributed to national development during the years 2023/2024 by remitting Rs. 12 million to the General Treasury and Rs. 25 million as income tax.
- In line with government policies, and to ensure transparency in financial transactions of state institutions while moving towards a more accountable public service, the gov.pay system was implemented starting from 17 September 2025.
- The National Occupational Safety and Health Policy is currently being formulated and necessary steps are being taken to obtain approval.
- Steps have been initiated to amend the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health Act No. 38 of 2009 in line with current needs.

- **Other Programmes**

Special Social Welfare Programmes Conducted by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), with the Approval of the Board of Directors, in Addition to Regular Occupational Safety and Health Activities up to 30 September 2025

Special Social Welfare Programmes Conducted by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health During the First Quarter

- On 14 February 2025, a practical first aid training programme, medical camp, and awareness programme were conducted to promote occupational safety among factory workers in the Ekala Industrial Zone and surrounding factories.

- On 14 February 2025, an awareness programme was also conducted to promote occupational safety among students undergoing vocational training at technical colleges (Katunayake) located near the Ekala Industrial Zone.

Special social welfare programmes conducted by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health during the second quarter in conjunction with World Safety Day

- Conducting a promotional programme on occupational safety and health through Haritha Television in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) – 09.04.2025
- Conducting an awareness programme on occupational and chemical safety for workers engaged in domestic greenhouse (polytunnel) agriculture in the Western Province – 28.04.2025
- Conducting an awareness programme on occupational safety and health for students undergoing vocational training – 28.04.2025
- Conducting an awareness programme on fire safety for employees of small and medium-scale factories – 28.04.2025
- Conducting a practical first aid training programme to promote occupational safety for employees working in commercial establishments around Colombo – 28.04.2025
- Conducting a programme on safety when working at heights with the objective of improving occupational safety in factories – 28.04.2025
- Conducting an online awareness programme in line with World Environment Day – 05.06.2025

Special social welfare programmes planned to be conducted by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) for the third quarter.

- Conducting an occupational safety awareness programme for drivers of the Western Provincial Passenger Transport Authority – on 03.09.2025.
- Conducting a programme jointly by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health and the Construction Development Authority on 17.09.2025, with the objective of promoting occupational safety and health of workers in small- and medium-scale construction sites in the construction sector.
- Conducting a programme to promote occupational safety and health for students who have left school and are currently following vocational training, in preparation for entering the workplace -on 17.09.2025.
- Conducting an occupational safety and health awareness programme for students of the Jaffna Technical College who are currently following vocational training in preparation for entering the workplace, jointly with the Industrial Safety Division of the Department of Labour – 22.09.2025.

- Conducting an occupational safety awareness programme for factory workers jointly with the Industrial Safety Division of the Department of Labour – 22.09.2025.

2.11. Office of the Commissioner for Workmen’s Compensation

The Office of the Commissioner of Workmen’s Compensation is responsible for paying compensation to employees who are injured during employment, those who suffer from occupational diseases due to the nature of their work, and to the dependents of workers who die as a result of workplace accidents.

Table 2.17 - Number of case files pending as of 30.09.2025

Number of case files pending for court proceedings as of 01.01.2025	393
Number of case files initiated from 01.01.2025 to 31.12.2025 (Fatal – 112 and Non-fatal – 193)	305
Total number of case files pending as at 30.09.2025	698
Number of case files concluded during the period from 01.01.2025 to 30.09.2025	265
Number of case files pending as at 30.09.2025	433

2.12. Shrama Vasana Fund

The Shrama Vasana Fund implements welfare programmes aimed at uplifting the living standards of the working community. Under these initiatives, the Fund conducts island-wide programmes such as eye clinics, medical camps, scholarships for children of deceased workers, provision of school supplies, livelihood assistance, support for technical education, and other welfare activities.

From January to September 2025, the programmes carried out by the Shrama Vasana Fund are as follows:

- **Awareness Programmes**

One of the primary objectives of establishing the Shrama Vasana Fund is to promote the welfare of employees. Looking back at the past several years, it has become clear that a large number of industrial accidents in Sri Lanka have occurred due to reasons such as workers’ negligence and reluctance to use safety equipment.

As a preventive measure to reduce such accidents, factories where accidents had been reported or where hazardous conditions existed were identified, and training workshops and awareness programmes on safe working practices were conducted by engineers with expertise in the field.

Additionally, to raise awareness among both employees and employers regarding problematic situations that arise under labour laws and regulations, awareness programmes were conducted with the support of experienced professionals in the field.

These awareness programmes have been highly successful. Employees and the working community have become more knowledgeable about labour laws, and the awareness initiatives on occupational safety and health have helped to minimize industrial accidents.

Table 2.18 - Details of the conduct of awareness programmes

Programme	Targeted Institution/ Venue	No of beneficiaries
Conducting an awareness programme on social dialogue and workplace cooperation	Topicoir Lanka (Pvt.) Ltd., Bingiriya.	32
	Euro Substance (Pvt) Ltd., Thambuththegama.	84
	Ritz Clothing, Nikawaratiya.	29
	Ritz Clothing, Elawaka.	121
	Ebony Factory, Nikawaratiya.	115
	Design Studio (Pvt.) Ltd, Wariyapola.	50
	Sumithra Garments, Hasalaka.	46
	Nethmi Fashion , Mahiyangana.	42
	SLTB Depot , Mahiyangana.	32
	Dole Lanka Export, Mahiyangana.	22
	Danidu Mills, Mahiyangana.	24
	SRG Holding (Pvt.) Ltd., Dehiatthakandiya.	20
	Deer Park Hotel, Girithale.	20
	Crown Polysac, Polonnaruwa.	85
	Vinter Quiels (Pvt.) Ltd., Lankapura.	45
	District Labour Office, Polonnaruwa.	30
	Sisiltan Estate, Pinnawala.	64

	Balangoda Plantation, Balangoda.	45
Conducting three programmes on occupational safety, first aid workshops, and awareness on occupational safety and health.	NERD, Ekala Industrial Zone	48 152 53
	FIBC (Pvt.) Ltd, Polonnaruwa.	30
	Habarana Village Hotel, Habarana.	35
	CIB Shopping Center, Polonnaruwa.	20
	NIOSH, Jawatte.	72
Conducting an awareness programme on occupational safety and health.	For manufacturers engaged in fireworks production – Katana	60
	For manufacturers engaged in brace ware production – Katana	35
	Reecha Paper Factory - Jaffna	20
	District Secretariat Auditorium – Jaffna	50
Conducting an awareness programme on occupational and health safety and workplace cooperation.	Uva Wellassa University, Badulla.	34
	Golden Buds (Pvt.) Ltd. - Badulla.	16
	Demodara Tea Factory - Badulla.	24
Awareness programme on occupational safety and non-communicable diseases	District Secretariat Auditorium – Jaffna	40

• Fatal Accident Scholarship Programme

This programme is implemented for the school-going children of workers in Sri Lanka who have died or become fully disabled due to accidents that occurred in workplaces or factories.

Based on information received from Factory Inspecting Engineers regarding industrial accidents that occur at factories, workplaces or service institutions, and the information

obtained through the Office of the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation, eligible beneficiaries are identified. Children of workers who have died or become fully disabled (from pre-school education up to university education, i.e. ages 3 to 25) qualify for assistance under this programme. These children are provided with a fixed deposit of Rs. 50,000 and educational supplies.

From January to September 2025, benefits have been provided to 49 scholarship recipients. An expenditure of Rs. 3,246,488.16 has been incurred for this purpose.

- **Legal Aid Programme**

This programme is implemented to provide assistance to employees of the private sector in instances where they have been unfairly dismissed, when establishments are closed without prior notice, and when complaints have been filed before the Commissioner of Workmen's Compensation.

Table 2.19 - Information on the Legal Aid Programmes

Name of the Programme	Number of Beneficiaries	Total Expenditure (Rs.)
Legal Aid	20	290,000.00
Legal Aid Appeals and Reinstatements	2	80,000.00

- **Medical Assistance Programme**

This programme is implemented to provide assistance to employees who suffer from occupational diseases or industrial illnesses that arise during the course of employment. Under this initiative, medical assistance amounting to Rs. 310,000.00 has been provided to 09 beneficiaries.

- **Medical Camps**

Under the initiative to conduct medical camps to identify workers in factories located in high-risk areas who are affected by occupational diseases, 02 medical camps were held during the period up to 30 September 2025. An expenditure of Rs. 780,000.00 was incurred for these activities.

- **Growth of the Shrama Vasana Fund**

Table 2.20 - Growth of the Shrama Vasana Fund

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Till 2025 Sep. 30
Value of the Fund (Rs. Mn.)	332	347	378	410	350	432
Growth of the fund	-	15	31	32	-	82

Chapter Three

Future Plans and Programs of the Ministry

3. Future Plans and Programmes of the Ministry

The Ministry bears a timely responsibility to establish legal provisions that foster an employer-employee friendly atmosphere within a decent work environment, aligned with current national and international socio-economic dynamics. To cultivate a productive labour force and promote amicable employer-employee relations, existing labour laws and regulations will be amended to comply with ratified international labour conventions while reflecting the country's evolving socio-economic landscape and the demands of the current world of work. The Ministry remains dedicated to safeguarding the rights and enhancing the welfare of the workforce. Accordingly, the Ministry and its affiliated institutions have formulated their future plans based on the following key considerations.

- Government Policy Statement “A Thriving Nation- A Beautiful Life!”
- Vision, Mission and Objectives of the Ministry
- Duties and functions assigned to the Ministry by the Gazette Extraordinary No. 2412/08 dated 25/11/2024.
- Sustainable Development Goals relevant to the scope of the Ministry
- Matters included in the international conventions and agreements that Sri Lanka has recognized and agreed to in the labour sector.

3.1. Ministry of Labour

➤ Strengthening the legal framework related to the labour sector

The Ministry is presently taking measures to revise outdated labour laws to ensure their alignment with the contemporary world of work and to eliminate inconsistencies among various Acts, thereby simplifying them and guaranteeing benefits for all stakeholders.

Accordingly, with the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers, a draft Labour Relations Act has been prepared to remove existing disparities among laws and to incorporate flexible employment conditions. At present, a committee appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers is reviewing whether the draft conforms to government policies, and based on its recommendations, the draft will be amended as necessary and resubmitted for Cabinet approval.

Steps have also been taken to amend the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health Act with the aim of establishing an occupational safety culture in Sri Lanka and creating a safe, healthy, and accident-free working environment. Through this, it is expected to develop the necessary human resources required to build a safe and healthy workforce within a secure work environment, while also generating income opportunities.

In order to provide better benefits to the millions of working people whose retirement security depends on the Employees' Provident Fund, the EPF Act is being amended to align the Fund's management with international standards, enhance stakeholder confidence, and ensure conformity with the conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) ratified by Sri Lanka.

➤ **Safeguarding the employer-employee rights amidst globalization and open economic policies**

- **Enhancement of social security coverage**

At present, the system in operation is one in which termination benefits and maternity benefits are borne by the employer. It is important to implement this mechanism within an insurance-based system, and for that purpose, the Ministry will continuously engage in discussions with stakeholders to establish the necessary legal framework. Furthermore, as the existing mechanisms are not sufficiently effective in meeting the social security needs of employees, consideration will be given to implementing a retirement pension scheme for the private sector and an insurance scheme for occupational accidents, as well as to expanding social security coverage to the informal sector. Improving social security largely depends on the collaboration of several state institutions, and through coordinated efforts with them, it is expected to enhance and broaden social security coverage. The National Social Security Policy of Sri Lanka, which has already been formulated, will serve as the foundation for this purpose.

- **Introduction of a Maternity Insurance Scheme**

Steps will be taken to increase female labour force participation, which has remained at around 31% for several decades. In this regard, the proposed amendments to labour legislation will introduce the necessary legal provisions to address issues such as workplace discrimination, workplace violence, and the establishment of flexible working environments, in order to enhance women's participation in the workforce. As the current employer-funded mechanism for providing maternity benefits places a heavy financial burden on employers and adversely affects female labour force participation, measures will be taken to introduce a maternity insurance scheme aimed at encouraging and increasing women's participation in the labour force.

- **2025–2030 Five-Year Decent Work Programme**

With the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and in consultation with trade unions and employers, steps have already been taken to formulate a five-year national Decent Work Programme for the period 2025–2030, aimed at strengthening labour policies in Sri Lanka. In addition, necessary measures are being taken to ratify Convention C188 on Work in Fishing, which will contribute to improving decent working conditions for the fishing community, and this process is expected to be completed by the end of 2025.

- **Supporting the Sri Lanka National Social Protection Policy**

In line with the National Social Protection Policy of Sri Lanka prepared and published by the Ministry of Finance, a ten-year Social Protection Strategic Roadmap (2025–2035) has

now been identified under four main components: social assistance, social welfare, social insurance, and labour market and productive inclusion. Under this framework, with regard to the social welfare component to be developed under the leadership of the National Planning Department, the Ministry will serve as a key stakeholder, providing technical input and coordination for the social welfare sector with the technical assistance of the International Labour Organization.

- **Supporting the National Child Protection Policy**

In accordance with the five-year National Action Plan (2025–2029) formulated under the National Child Protection Policy prepared by the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, this Ministry and its departments are reviewing the implementation of the tasks that they are required to carry out under the said policy.

3.2. Department of Labour

- 02 regulations prepared under the Factories Ordinance No. 45 of 1942, which are required to be formulated and amended in order to conduct inspections on employee health protection according to the nature of work in identified industrial institutions and to issue relevant certifications, have been identified in 2025. Work on amending these regulations has already been initiated and is in progress. In the coming year, 15 additional regulations that need to be prepared have been identified, and necessary arrangements have been made to proceed with their formulation.
- A committee has been appointed in 2025 to identify issues existing in service minutes of private sector employees, in order to resolve problems in service regulations and amend them as necessary. Accordingly, it is expected to study service agreements, identify existing issues, and carry out the required legal amendments to minimize such problems.
- Preliminary work is expected to commence in the coming year to formulate a National Salary Structure aimed at minimizing wage disparities among private sector employees and motivating workers.
- It is proposed to identify possible inequalities that may exist in the selection process for employment opportunities in the private sector and to prepare appropriate guidelines to eliminate such disparities, ensuring equal opportunities for all. For this purpose, a suitable committee will be appointed in the future to carry out the relevant activities.
- It is also a timely necessity to promote and improve opportunities for employees to work efficiently and conveniently from home by utilizing modern technology. Work from home provides numerous benefits such as achieving a work-life balance, improving productivity by reducing travel time, and increasing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and women. Therefore, identifying sectors where work from home can be effectively implemented, and where necessary, amending labour laws to ensure the protection of employee rights in such sectors have

been recognized as priorities. Actions have been planned accordingly to strengthen the relevant legal framework.

- In line with the fundamental principles of the International Labour Organization (ILO), and with the aim of protecting labour rights including fair treatment, fair wages, and safe working conditions, it is expected to develop a Trade Union Data Management System (TU-DMS) with the technical assistance of the ILO. Preliminary discussions in this regard have already been held with the International Labour Organization.
- Various programmes are organized annually by the Department to promote industrial harmony and create a work environment that ensures industrial peace between employers and employees in institutions belonging to the private and semi-government sectors. These programmes aim to strengthen labour relations through collective mediation based on consensus and cooperation, empowering workers, enhancing productivity, and ensuring democratic accountability among all parties. They also establish mechanisms to resolve industrial disputes and conflicts democratically through stakeholder engagement. Accordingly, activities such as implementing social dialogue promotion programmes, publishing the “Kathikawa” magazine, conducting regional and district advisory committee meetings, awarding Social Dialogue Excellence Certificates, and implementing training-of-trainers programmes for officers of the Department of Labour are planned to be carried out in the coming years as well.
- In order to establish a responsive public sector that provides transparent and efficient services to citizens, the need for digitalization within the Department of Labour has been identified, with the aim of delivering the services provided by the Department more efficiently to beneficiaries as part of the broader initiative to digitalize major public institutions. Accordingly, it is expected to introduce digital solutions for the services offered by the Department of Labour in the future.
- As a solution to the various difficulties that have arisen due to the use of two separate data systems by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and the Department of Labour in carrying out activities related to the Employees’ Provident Fund (particularly the difficulties faced by beneficiaries when obtaining EPF benefits), preliminary discussions have been initiated to develop a unified data system for both institutions, and further actions are expected to be taken in this regard.
- Steps have been taken to develop a new software system to facilitate online registration of employers and members under the Employees’ Provident Fund (Digital EPF) in order to provide electronic services under the EPF. This system is expected to be implemented in the near future. Through this new software system, beneficiaries will be able to submit applications related to EPF registration and complete the registration process online, without having to visit the Department of Labour offices in person.
- Facilities have been provided to submit complaints to the Department of Labour through the online system available at <https://cms.labourdept.gov.lk/>. The development of this Complaint Management System is currently ongoing. Under this initiative, a separate module for the inclusion of complaints related to occupational health and

safety was developed and integrated into the system in 2025, while the legal module is also being developed. It is expected to further enhance this system based on the needs of service recipients.

- There exists a need to scan old files related particularly to the Employees' Provident Fund in order to store them electronically. Furthermore, the necessity of establishing an electronic document archive to digitally store departmental records has also been identified. Accordingly, preliminary steps for this have already been initiated, and further activities are expected to be carried out in 2026.
- It is also planned to develop the required software to enable Labour Officers and District Factory Inspecting Engineers to submit their inspection reports through a digital application, thereby streamlining the submission process.
- In order to provide a more attractive service environment for beneficiaries, the renovation and interior design work of the ground floor of the Mehewara Piyesa building and the interior design of the auditoriums are expected to be completed in 2026. In addition, it is proposed to carry out renovation work on the required floors of the Department of Labour Secretariat building, as well as maintenance work of regional office buildings located across the island.

3.3. Department of Manpower and Employment

➤ **In line with the Government Policy Statement “A Thriving Nation – A Beautiful Life and the Action Plan 2025, the following projects and programmes are proposed to be implemented by the Department in the coming period.**

- Since it has been proposed to liquify the National Council for Human Resource Development of Sri Lanka, it is expected that the Department of Manpower and Employment will undertake one of its main responsibilities — providing recommendations for the formulation of policies relating to human resource development. For this purpose, a concept paper will be submitted to obtain the necessary approval.
- As the Department of Manpower and Employment is expected to be transformed into a data- and service-centered institution based on government policies, the Department will identify the required staff cadre and obtain approval to recruit and engage the necessary personnel for this purpose.
- Building and managing integrated databases and online systems, with the support of the Ministry of Digital Economy, to register beneficiaries of the Department and to provide related services through a web-based mechanism.
- The Department will collaborate with institutions such as the Department of Census and Statistics, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) to conduct integrated studies related to the labour force.
- In relation to increasing female labour force participation in Sri Lanka, identifying existing employment opportunities within the country and promoting those

opportunities. (e.g., jobs related to the care of children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.)

- Strengthening the existing relationships between the Department and its partner institutions, both local and international (e.g., ILO, JICA), to ensure the provision of more effective and efficient services by the Department.
- Raising awareness among workers in the informal sector and relevant stakeholders regarding the importance of enhancing the dignity and recognition of labour in the informal employment sector.
- Providing opportunities for women and persons with disabilities who face difficulties in entering, or show disinterest in entering, the formal labour market to engage voluntarily in productive processes according to their preferences.
 - ✓ Implementing programmes, in collaboration with institutions, to provide part-time, remote, or flexible employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.
 - ✓ Providing necessary assistance at the Divisional Secretariat Division level to facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities.
 - ✓ Implementing programmes to systematically integrate children currently under probationary care or in rehabilitation camps into the formal labour market.
- Ensuring the right of young men and women to engage in suitable employment is protected by the Government
 - ✓ Safeguarding access to appropriate employment opportunities.
 - ✓ Conducting Employer Forums with the primary objective of facilitating mutually beneficial relationships between the Department and employers who can offer services through the Department, thereby promoting both employment generation and service provision through strong partnerships.
 - ✓ Conducting a survey (NEET Group Survey) covering all 25 districts to identify young individuals and vulnerable groups in Sri Lanka who are not engaged in employment, education, or training (NEET), with the aim of integrating them into the active labour force. Subsequently, implementing programs to enable their participation in the active workforce.
 - ✓ Providing career guidance to job seekers registered with the Department by assisting them in identifying their self-assessment outcomes and personal strengths to achieve professional development and directing them towards the most suitable employment and training opportunities.
- Establishing an information bureau to collect data on unemployed youth, setting up an employment bank to direct them toward job vacancies, and managing it through an online platform with the objective of systematically reducing unemployment.
 - ✓ Registering both job seekers and employers through the data system of the Department of Manpower and Employment, thereby providing a public employment service.

- ✓ Establishing and maintaining a Digital Job Sourcing and Delivery Platform to provide services to job seekers and employing institutions.
- Providing technical education with vocational skills targeting youth who have passed the G.C.E. Advanced Level examination but were unable to gain admission to state universities.
 - ✓ Ensuring secured vocational pathways for school dropouts.
 - ✓ Organizing district and regional job fairs as well as vocational fairs.
 - ✓ Providing individual career guidance services.
- **In addition, with the objective of realizing the principles outlined in the Government Policy Statement, the Department also implements the following programmes. Followings programmes are carried out with the aim of realizing the principles of “A Disciplined Citizen – A Developed Human Resource” stated in the Government Policy Declaration.**
 - Conducting career guidance programmes for students in Grade 9, G.C.E. Ordinary Level, and G.C.E. Advanced Level classes.
 - Implementing Vocational Training Institute Visit programmes for Advanced Level students to provide them with practical exposure, enabling them to enter the world of work equipped with skills.
 - Conducting programs to provide knowledge about the future job market and the opportunities available to enter it, for G.C.E. Advanced Level students.
- **In line with the principles outlined in the Government Policy Statement “A Thriving Nation – A Fulfilling Youth”, the following programmes are implemented with the objective of realizing those principles.**
 - Conducting programs to provide practical exposure to the world of work for job seekers. (Empower Youth)
 - Conducting surveys in selected districts to identify training opportunities and part-time employment opportunities available in the private sector, with the aim of attracting and retaining young people in the active labour market.
- **In line with the principles of the Government Policy Statement “An Efficient Workforce - A Dignified Professional Life”, the following programmes are implemented with the objective of realizing these principles.**
 - Implementing pilot programmes to integrate workers in the informal sector into social security schemes.
 - Conducting awareness programmes aimed at improving the employment conditions of workers in the informal sector and guiding job seekers towards entrepreneurship.

- **In line with the principles outlined in the Government Policy Statement “A Digital Government - An International Partnership”, the following programme is implemented with the objective of realizing those principles.**
- Conducting awareness programmes for job seekers who show an interest in entrepreneurship, focusing on digital marketing.

3.4. National Institute of Labour Studies

- Under the Decent Work Programme, ensuring all employees have a fair, dignified, and safe working environment, knowledge will be provided to prevent discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation, and to identify and correct the gender pay gap among employees. In addition, organizing awareness programmes and training courses to empower the workforce employed in plantation companies and factories located within investment promotion zones.
- To ensure transparency and provide the public with detailed information on the operations of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), the website of the National Institute of Labour Studies (NILS) will be used as a medium for institutional information dissemination. Furthermore, distributing information through an e-Library platform.
- Under labour market surveys and studies, conducting a survey on the professionalization of care services (Care Giver / Care Worker) within Sri Lanka’s care economy, and providing relevant training programmes accordingly.
- Implementing national awareness campaigns to educate the public on labour laws, social security, and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).
- Currently, only the diploma and certificate courses are conducted by this institute and establishing collaborations with state universities or international universities to enable students who have completed these programmes to further their studies up to degree level.
- Organizing awareness programs for public sector officials on enhancing service efficiency through the use of information technology and artificial intelligence (AI).
- Ensuring the National Institute of Labour Studies (NILS) continues to operate on a self-financing basis, by adopting new technological methods to make its training programmes more accessible to the public.

3.5. National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health

- In accordance with the National Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Policy formulated in 2025, actions will be implemented through training and research activities to promote the effective execution of Occupational Safety and Health assessments and industrial certification. Additionally, the establishment of a Learning Management System (LMS) is planned to support this process. Through this initiative, it is expected to introduce new technologies aimed at improving occupational safety and health within factories.

- The continuation of training programmes currently being conducted will be ensured, with the objective of increasing the number of individuals possessing specialized knowledge in the field of occupational safety and health.
 - ✓ Advanced National Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health (NVQ Level **06**)
 - ✓ Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health (English Medium) (NVQ Level **05**)
 - ✓ Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health (Sinhala Medium) (NVQ Level **05**)
 - ✓ Certificate Course in Occupational Safety and Health (NVQ Level **04**)
 - ✓ Foundation Course in Occupational Safety and Health
 - ✓ Course on Environmental Management for Executive Grade Officers
- Activities being implemented and planned to be implemented for enhancing knowledge on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) within institutions
 - ✓ Conducting training programmes on occupational safety and health for professionals in the construction sector
 - ✓ Occupational Safety and Health programme in the plantation sector
 - ✓ Training programmes for boiler operators
 - ✓ Work study programmes on industrial operations
 - ✓ Training programmes for nurses working in the industrial sector
 - ✓ Occupational Safety and Health programmes for office staff
 - ✓ Occupational Safety and Health in laboratories
 - ✓ The safe handling of chemical substances
 - ✓ Safety and health programmes for food handlers
 - ✓ Stress management training programmes
 - ✓ Obtaining environmental measurements and issuing recommendations to ensure occupational safety in factory workplaces
 - ✓ Conducting audits related to worker safety and security in the working environment
 - ✓ Training programmes on occupational safety and health for caregivers (caregivers and housemaids)
 - ✓ Training programmes on occupational safety and health for professionals working at heights
 - ✓ Conducting risk assessments and providing recommendations to ensure employee safety in the working environment

3.6. Shrama Vasana Fund

The Shrama Vasana Fund, established under Act No. 12 of 1998, is an institution operating under the Ministry of Labour that implements programmes aimed at the welfare of employees. Its main financial source is the revenue generated through the “NLB Jaya” lottery conducted jointly with the National Lotteries Board. The Labour Welfare Fund carries out its programmes under 06 key objectives with the aim of enhancing the well-

being of the working population. According to a recent decision taken by the Government, the Shrama Vasana Fund is currently undergoing restructuring in order to provide greater benefits to a wider labour community. Measures are also being taken to increase the income generated from the lottery and to expand the Fund's services across the island.