

# PRESS RELEASE

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இலங்கை மத்திய வங்கி

CENTRAL BANK OF SRI LANKA

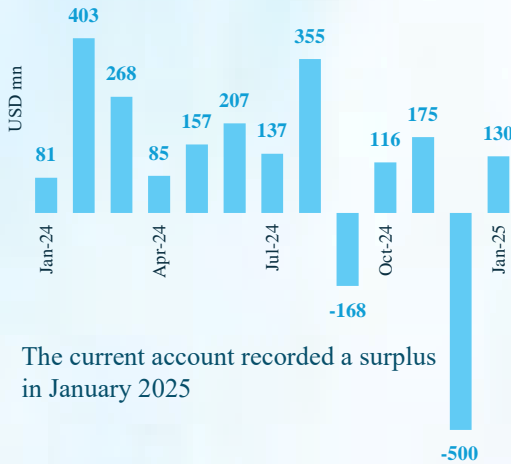
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## External Sector Performance - January 2025

Sri Lanka's external sector continued its positive momentum in January 2025, supported by robust inflows on account of services exports, tourism and workers' remittances despite an expansion in the trade deficit.

### CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE



### MERCHANDISE TRADE

Trade deficit continued to increase

Trade Deficit in Jan 2025

**USD 733 mn**



#### EXPORTS

**USD 1,053 mn**

8.5% growth (y-o-y) in Jan 2025

#### IMPORTS

**USD 1,786 mn**

18.1% growth (y-o-y) in Jan 2025

### SERVICES (net)



**Jan 2025: USD 418 mn**

Jan 2024: USD 398 mn

Supported by:

Tourism (growth (y-o-y): 17.2%)

IT/BPO (growth (y-o-y): 21.6%)

### TOURIST ARRIVALS

252,761 in Jan 2025

Highest monthly tourist arrivals in a month of January in history



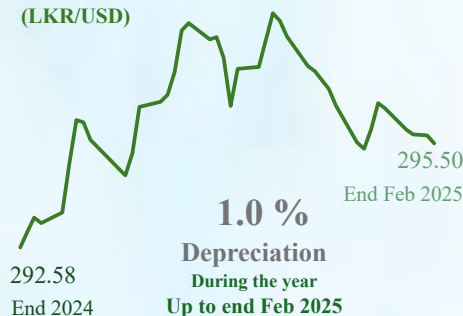
### WORKERS' REMITTANCES

**USD 573 mn**

17.5% growth (y-o-y) in Jan 2025



### EXCHANGE RATE (LKR/USD)



### GROSS OFFICIAL RESERVES \*

**USD 6.1 bn** as at end Jan 2025



**3.8** Months of Imports Coverage

\* Including the swap facility with the People's Bank of China

### GOVERNMENT SECURITIES & CSE FLOWS

Jan 2025

Govt. Securities (net)

**USD 34 mn**

Inflows: USD 54 mn  
Outflows: USD 20 mn

CSE (net) \*\*

**USD -22 mn**

Inflows: USD 18 mn  
Outflows: USD 39 mn

\*\* including primary and secondary markets

## EXTERNAL SECTOR PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

**January 2025**

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka commenced publishing the monthly external sector current account statistics from January 2025. This is the first time current account statistics are published on a monthly basis.

- ❖ The current account recorded a higher surplus for January 2025 compared to January 2024 due to the improvement in the surplus in the services and secondary income accounts despite the wider trade deficit.
- ❖ The growth of import expenditure outpaced the growth in export earnings, widening the merchandise trade deficit (y-o-y) in January 2025.
- ❖ The terms of trade improved in January 2025, as the increase in export prices exceeded the increase in import prices compared to January 2024.
- ❖ Earnings from tourism improved to an estimated US dollars 401 million in January 2025 with arrivals recording historically highest monthly level for any of January.
- ❖ Workers' remittances continued the growth trend in January 2025 (y-o-y). Based on the provisional data, total departures for foreign employment were recorded at 25,536 during the month of January 2025.
- ❖ Foreign investments in the government securities market recorded net inflows while the foreign investments in the CSE recorded net outflows (including primary and secondary markets) during the month.
- ❖ Gross official reserves (GOR) remained healthy at US dollars 6.1 billion by end January 2025. GOR include the swap facility with the People's Bank of China (PBOC).
- ❖ Following a depreciation in January 2025, the Sri Lanka rupee has appreciated in February 2025.

Detailed statistics are available in the Monthly External Sector Bulletin, and in the External Sector Statistics web pages in the CBSL website, which can be accessed through the following web links:

<https://www.cbsl.gov.lk/en/external-sector-bulletin>

<https://www.cbsl.gov.lk/en/statistics/statistical-tables/external-sector>

### Summary of External Sector Performance (a)

Category	Jan 2024 (USD mn)	Jan 2025 (USD mn)	Change (%)	2023 (USD mn)	2024 (USD mn)	Change (%)
<b>Current Account Balance</b>	<b>81.0</b>	<b>130.2</b>	<b>60.6</b>	<b>1,439.6</b>	<b>1,316.4</b>	<b>-8.6</b>
<b>Trade Balance</b>	<b>-541.1</b>	<b>-732.7</b>		<b>-4,900.4</b>	<b>-6,069.4</b>	
Merchandise Exports	970.7	1,052.8	8.5	11,910.7	12,772.0	7.2
Merchandise Imports	1,511.8	1,785.5	18.1	16,811.1	18,841.4	12.1
<b>Services Account (net)</b>	<b>397.7</b>	<b>418.3</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>3,053.0</b>	<b>3,434.9</b>	<b>12.5</b>
Services - Inflows	618.1	705.7	14.2	5,416.3	6,910.1	27.6
<i>of which,</i>						
Tourist Earnings (b)	341.8	400.7	17.2	2,068.0	3,168.6	53.2
Sea and Air Transport Services	142.4	168.0	18.0	1,549.2	1,793.1	15.7
Computer and IT/BPO services	55.9	68.0	21.6	794.9	848.4	6.7
Services - Outflows	220.4	287.4	30.4	2,363.3	3,475.1	47.0
<i>of which,</i>						
Travel Abroad	48.3	52.4	8.5	503.1	755.4	50.2
Sea and Air Transport Services	64.4	112.0	73.9	725.8	1,010.8	39.2
<b>Primary Income Account (net)</b>	<b>-254.3</b>	<b>-113.0</b>	<b>-55.5</b>	<b>-2,547.2</b>	<b>-2,486.8</b>	<b>-2.4</b>
Primary Income Account - Inflows	37.5	54.5	45.2	459.5	606.4	32.0
Primary Income Account - Outflows	291.8	167.6	-42.6	3,006.7	3,093.2	2.9
<i>of which,</i>						
Direct Investment related	68.3	80.1	17.3	915.8	884.7	-3.4
Portfolio Investment related	57.6	27.5	-52.3	854.0	825.2	-3.4
Other Investment Interest	164.1	57.9	-64.7	1,206.7	1,363.1	13.0
<b>Secondary Income Account (net)</b>	<b>478.6</b>	<b>557.7</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>5,834.2</b>	<b>6,437.6</b>	<b>10.3</b>
<i>of which,</i>						
Workers' Remittances - Inflows	487.6	573.0	17.5	5,969.6	6,575.4	10.1
Personal Transfers - Outflows	10.0	16.0	60.2	155.0	145.9	-5.9
<b>Main Flows to the Financial Account</b>						
Net Flows to the CSE (c)	-5.2	-21.7	319.0	18.2	33.0	81.1
Net Flows to the G-Sec. Market	-10.3	34.0	-431.1	210.0	-178.9	-185.2
Change in Reserves (d)	103.7	-56.5	-154.5	2,494.5	1,729.8	-30.7

**Sources:** Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL), Sri Lanka Customs (SLC), Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE)

- (a) Provisional
- (b) Based on the survey conducted by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority
- (c) Includes primary and secondary transactions
- (d) Includes valuation changes that impact reserve asset position