

PRESS RELEASE

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 இலங்கை மத்திய வங்கி
 CENTRAL BANK OF SRI LANKA

Issued By Economic Research Department

Date 29 May 2026

External Sector Performance – April 2026

TOTAL EXPORTS (Goods and Services)

USD 1,588 mn
 1.1% ▲ in Apr 2026 (y-o-y)

USD 6,978 mn
 0.4% ▲ in Jan-Apr 2026 (y-o-y)

Goods Exports

USD 1,074 mn
 10.9% ▲ in Apr 2026 (y-o-y)

USD 4,535 mn
 5.1% ▲ in Jan-Apr 2026 (y-o-y)

Services Exports

USD 514 mn
 -14.7% ▼ in Apr 2026 (y-o-y)

USD 2,443 mn
 -7.4% ▼ in Jan-Apr 2026 (y-o-y)



TOURIST EARNINGS

USD 157 mn*
 (Tourist arrivals: 135,643)
 in Apr 2026

USD 1,111 mn
 (Tourist arrivals: 876,277)
 in Jan-Apr 2026

* Based on the revised survey results of Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority.



MERCHANDISE TRADE DEFICIT

USD 1,383 mn
 in Apr 2026

USD 3,693 mn
 in Jan-Apr 2026

WORKERS' REMITTANCES **

USD 768 mn
 in Apr 2026

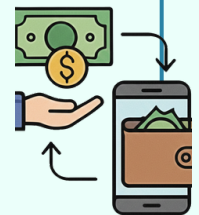
USD 3,063 mn
 in Jan-Apr 2026

** This may include other remittances, such as those received following Cyclone Ditwah.

GROSS OFFICIAL RESERVES ***

USD 6.8 bn
 at end Apr 2026

Import Coverage
3.5 Months



*** This includes the swap facility with the People's Bank of China.

GOODS IMPORTS

USD 2,457 mn
 45.7% ▲ in Apr 2026 (y-o-y)

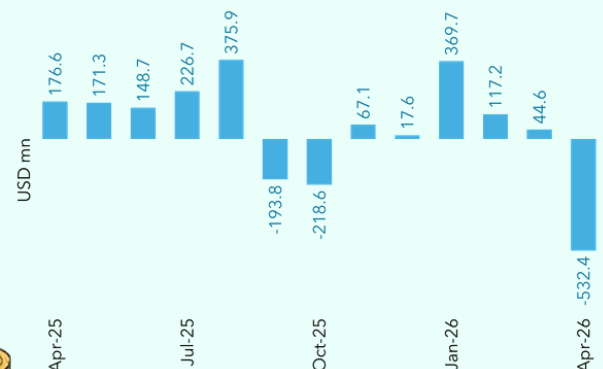
USD 8,228 mn
 25.2% ▲ in Jan-Apr 2026 (y-o-y)



CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE

USD -532 mn
 in April 2026

USD -0.9 mn
 in Jan-Apr 2026



EXCHANGE RATE (LKR per USD)

309.99
 End 2025

327.82
 End May 2026

5.4%

Year to Date Depreciation
 at end May 2026

292.58
 End 2024



EXTERNAL SECTOR PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

April 2026

- The impact of the war in the Middle East was reflected in the performance of the External Sector in April 2026 as well. The external current account recorded a deficit in April 2026 compared to the surplus recorded during January through March 2026. This was mainly driven by the widened trade deficit, a moderation in the services surplus, and higher primary income account deficit, despite an increase in workers' remittances compared to a year earlier. Consequently, the external current account recorded a marginal deficit during January to April 2026.
- The merchandise trade deficit widened in April 2026, reflecting stronger growth in imports relative to exports. Further, during January–April 2026, the trade deficit widened to US\$ 3.7 billion, compared to US\$ 2.3 billion in the corresponding period of 2025.
- Expenditure on fuel imports increased notably by 149.9% on a year-on-year basis to US\$ 886 million in April 2026, driven by the surge in fuel prices in the global markets amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and higher import volumes.
- Expenditure on motor vehicle imports, including both personal and commercial vehicles, amounted to US\$ 208 million in April 2026, bringing total expenditure on motor vehicle imports to US\$ 821 million during January–April 2026.
- The terms of trade deteriorated on a year-on-year basis in April 2026, as the increase in import prices exceeded the increase in export prices. Meanwhile, the terms of trade also deteriorated during January–April 2026 compared to the corresponding period of the previous year.
- The surplus in the services account declined by 37.8%, year-on-year, to US\$ 229 million in April 2026, primarily due to the reduction in tourist earnings. The cumulative surplus also contracted by 24.3% during January to April 2026 compared to the corresponding period of 2025.
- Tourist arrivals declined for the second consecutive month in April 2026 to 135,643, recording a year-on-year contraction of 22.3%, owing to the impact of Middle East conflict. Tourist earnings¹ were estimated at US\$ 157 million in April 2026, reflecting a year-on-year decline of 38.8%, and the cumulative earnings during first four months of 2026 declined by 19.4% amounting to US\$ 1,111 million compared to the corresponding period of the previous year.
- Workers' remittances,² amounting to US\$ 768 million in April 2026, continued to sustain the positive momentum observed in recent months. On a cumulative basis, workers' remittances during the first four months of the year recorded a year-on-year growth of 24.5% to US\$ 3,063 million.
- Foreign investments in the government securities market recorded a marginal net inflow of US\$ 2 million, while foreign investments in the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), including both primary and secondary market transactions, recorded a net outflow of US\$ 16 million during the month of April 2026.
- Gross official reserves (GOR), including the swap facility with the People's Bank of China (PBOC), stood around US\$ 6.8 billion by end April 2026, amidst sizeable external debt service payments and net foreign exchange sales by the Central Bank.
- As of end May 2026, the Sri Lanka rupee had depreciated by 5.4% against the US dollar on a year-to-date basis, reflecting heightened external sector pressures following the effects of the escalation of the Middle East conflict since late February 2026. This depreciation is in line with the currency depreciation trend that was observed in peer economies.
- Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board completed the combined Fifth and Sixth Reviews of the Extended Fund Facility for Sri Lanka on 27 May 2026, providing Sri Lanka with immediate access to SDR 508 million (about US\$ 695 million) to support economic policies and reforms.

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>

¹ Average spending per day is revised from August 2025 onwards based on survey results conducted by SLTDA.

² This may include other remittances, such as those received following Cyclone Ditwah.

Summary of External Sector Performance (a)

Category	Apr 2025 (USD mn)	Apr 2026 (USD mn)	Change (%)	Jan - Apr 2025 (USD mn)	Jan - Apr 2026 (USD mn)	Change (%)
Current Account Balance	176.6	-532.4	-401.4	1,124.4	-0.9	-100.1
Trade Balance	-717.7	-1,382.6		-2,257.3	-3,692.9	
Merchandise Exports	968.2	1,074.1	10.9	4,315.6	4,534.9	5.1
Merchandise Imports	1,685.9	2,456.7	45.7	6,572.9	8,227.9	25.2
Services Account (net)	368.2	229.2	-37.8	1,588.2	1,202.3	-24.3
Services - Inflows	602.5	513.7	-14.7	2,636.7	2,443.5	-7.4
<i>of which,</i>						
Tourist Earnings (b)	256.7	157.1	-38.8	1,379.0	1,111.0	-19.4
Sea and Air Transport Services	199.5	181.0	-9.2	688.5	642.8	-6.6
Computer and IT/BPO services	61.6	59.8	-3.0	263.7	237.2	-10.0
Services - Outflows	234.3	284.5	21.4	1,049.4	1,241.2	18.3
<i>of which,</i>						
Travel Abroad	53.1	86.1	62.0	252.3	455.3	80.4
Sea and Air Transport Services	75.7	87.7	15.9	345.0	290.7	-15.7
Primary Income Account (net)	-108.0	-133.3		-613.6	-528.7	
Primary Income Account - Inflows	82.5	43.9	-46.8	232.6	227.5	-2.2
Primary Income Account - Outflows	190.5	177.1	-7.0	846.2	756.2	-10.6
<i>of which,</i>						
Direct Investment related	80.0	91.2	14.0	357.9	310.1	-13.3
Portfolio Investment related	40.3	34.9	-13.5	157.4	190.9	21.3
Other Investment Interest	67.5	48.4	-28.3	321.5	247.1	-23.2
Secondary Income Account (net)	634.1	754.3	18.9	2,407.1	3,018.5	25.4
<i>of which,</i>						
Workers' Remittances - Inflows ¹	646.1	767.9	18.8	2,460.5	3,062.8	24.5
Personal Transfers - Outflows	12.1	16.9	39.6	54.1	47.8	-11.7
Main Flows to the Financial Account						
Net Flows to the CSE (c)	2.7	-15.7		-33.3	-78.1	
Net Flows to the G-Sec. Market	-12.2	2.0		80.3	8.2	
Change in Reserves (d)	-203.6	-260.1		205.0	-72.0	

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

(a) Provisional

(b) Tourist earnings are calculated based on tourist arrivals, average stay period and average spending per day. Average stay period changes monthly and is based on tourist immigration data. Average spending per day is revised from August 2025 onwards based on revised survey results conducted by SLTDA.

(c) Includes primary and secondary transactions

(d) Includes valuation changes that impact reserve asset position

¹ This may include other remittances, such as those received following Cyclone Ditwah.