NATIONAL CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (NCPI) – SEPTEMBER, 2026 (Base 2021=100)

21 October 2026

Department of Census and Statistics
Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

The Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) has released the National Consumer Price Index (NCPI) for September 2026, together with the updated index reference period and the corresponding inflation rates.

The NCPI, which was previously based on the index reference period 2013=100, has been rebased to 2021=100. The updated NCPI has been published monthly since January 2023, with a 21-day time lag, covering the entire country.

In line with international recommendations and best practices, the index weights are based on each item's share of total household consumption expenditure in Sri Lanka. Provincial weights are determined according to each province's share of total national consumption expenditure. The index weights are derived from expenditure data collected through the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) conducted in 2019. The HIES 2019 covered all categories of household consumption expenditure and was broadly representative of households across the country.

The national consumer basket of the updated NCPI includes 485 items representing the consumption expenditure of all households in Sri Lanka. For the compilation of the NCPI, three price quotations for each item are collected from every district town. Prices for certain items are collected weekly, while others are collected fortnightly, monthly, or quarterly. The frequency of price collection is determined based on the average frequency of price changes observed for each item.

- The All Items NCPI (Base: 2021=100) for September 2026 stood at 224.2, reflecting an increase of 0.3 index points compared to August 2026.
- The overall inflation rate, as measured by the NCPI (Base: 2021=100) on a year-on-year basis, was 8.1% in September 2026.

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Source Publication
http://www.statistics.gov.lk/InflationAndPrices/StaticalInformation/MonthlyNCPI

01. Month on Month (M on M) change of NCPI (Base 2021=100):

The NCPI for all items in September 2026 is 224.2, compared to 223.9 in August 2026, reflecting an increase of 0.3 index points or 0.11%. This corresponds to an increase in the expenditure value of Rs. 123.85 in the market basket.

Monthly changes in index numbers, expenditure values, and percentage changes in index numbers are presented in Table 01.

Table 01: Monthly Changes by Main Groups of Market Basket

Main Group	Index Number			Monthly Changes of the Expenditure Value (Rs.)			Monthly change of the index (%)[1]		
	Sep. 2025	Aug. 2026	Sep. 2026	Sep. 2025	Aug. 2026	Sep. 2026	Sep. 2025	Aug. 2026	Sep. 2026
All Items	207.4	223.9	224.2	103.84	291.15	123.85	0.10	0.26	0.11
Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages	236.6	251.9	253.0	57.08	198.42	214.98	0.05	0.18	0.19
Non Food	188.5	205.9	205.6	46.76	92.73	-91.12	0.04	0.08	-0.08
Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco and Narcotics	255.5	257.7	259.0	13.33	15.75	12.42	0.01	0.01	0.01
Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels	149.8	160.6	160.4	0.00	-17.34	-24.54	0.00	-0.02	-0.02
Furnishing, Household Equipment and Routine Household Maintenance	216.6	224.3	225.4	33.41	18.92	15.92	0.03	0.02	0.01
Health	204.5	215.2	216.5	0.00	1.19	22.16	0.00	0.00	0.02
Transport	220.9	265.3	262.3	-81.65	41.18	-169.13	-0.08	0.04	-0.15
Education	200.2	216.7	218.4	43.36	0.00	33.49	0.04	0.00	0.03
Restaurants and Hotels	239.7	263.1	263.6	20.89	9.42	11.46	0.02	0.01	0.01
Miscellaneous Goods and Services	210.8	227.8	228.5	6.17	17.07	10.71	0.01	0.02	0.01
Other groups	178.0	182.5	182.4	11.24	6.54	-3.61	0.01	0.01	0.00

Source: Department of Census and Statistics

Note 1: The market basket consists of 12 main groups. Significant monthly changes were observed in nine main groups in September 2026, details of which are presented in Table 02.

Note 2: For September 2026, insignificant groups: 'Clothing and Footwear', and 'Recreation and Culture' and unchanged group: 'Communication' are considered as the 'Other Groups'.

Note 3: The monthly percentage change in the index is calculated using expenditure values.

Note 4: The percentages of items may not tally with the overall percentage due to rounding.

Contribution to Month-on-Month Changes:

Contributions to the NCPI on a month-on-month basis (September 2026 compared with August 2026) are presented in Table 02. The month-on-month change was mainly driven by increase in food items by 0.19% and decrease in non-food items by 0.08%.

1.1.1. Contribution of Food items: 0.19%

As shown in Table 02, upward contributions to the index were observed from Big Onions (0.15%), Fresh Fruits (0.11%), Milk Powder (0.11%), Limes (0.06%), Coconuts (0.05%), Sugar (0.03%), Potatoes (0.02%), Bread (Normal) (0.02%), Red Onions (0.01%), Chicken (0.01%), Wheat Flour (0.01%), and Soya Meat (0.01%).

However, downward contributions to the index were observed from Fresh Fish (0.18%), Green Chillies (0.11%), Eggs (0.04%), Vegetables (0.04%), Rice (0.03%), Dried Fish (0.03%), and Ginger (0.01%).

1.1.2. Contribution of Non-food items: - 0.08%

The decrease in the index values of the non-food group in September 2026 compared to the previous month was mainly due to price decreases in the following groups: 'Transport' (Petrol) (0.15%), and 'Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels' (LP Gas) (0.02%). However, price increases were reported in the groups of 'Education' (School fees (International)) (0.03%), 'Health' (0.02%), 'Furnishing, Household Equipment and Routine Household Maintenance' (0.01%), 'Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco and Narcotics' (0.01%), 'Restaurants and Hotels' (0.01%), and 'Miscellaneous Goods and Services' (0.01%). Further, very slight price decreases were observed in the groups of 'Clothing and Footwear', and 'Recreation and Culture'. Meanwhile, the price index of the 'Communication' group remained unchanged during the month.

Table 02: Contribution to the changes in NCPI from August 2026 to September 2026 (Base 2021=100)

Sub Group/Commodity	Value change			
	Rs. cts	% Change		
		Increase	Decrease	Net effect
Food	214.98	0.62	0.43	0.19
Big Onions	166.88	0.15		
Fresh Fruits	129.95	0.11		
Banana	*79.60*	*0.07*		
Papaw	*19.26*	*0.02*		
Mangoes	*20.95*	*0.02*		
Milk Powder	125.50	0.11		
Limes	73.13	0.06		
Coconuts	51.74	0.05		
Sugar	30.93	0.03		
Potatoes	27.68	0.02		
Bread (Normal)	20.51	0.02		
Red onions	15.49	0.01		
Chicken	14.80	0.01		
Wheat Flour	11.20	0.01		

Soya Meat	7.38	0.01		
Fresh Fish	-208.73		0.18	
Green Chilies	-130.59		0.11	
Eggs	-44.23		0.04	
Vegetables	-41.30		0.04	
Rice	-29.59		0.03	
Dried Fish	-29.13		0.03	
Sprats	*-27.50*		*0.02*	
Ginger	-10.23		0.01	
Other Food Items	33.59	0.03		
Non Food	-91.12	0.09	0.17	-0.08
Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco and Narcotics	12.42	0.01		
Arrack	*7.61*	*0.01*		
Housing, Water, Electricity & Other Fuels	-24.54		0.02	
LP Gas	*-24.54*		0.02	
Furnishing, household equipment and routine household maintenance	15.92	0.01		
Washing soap	*9.64*	*0.01*		
Health	22.16	0.02		
Purchase of medical/ pharmacy products	*18.36*	*0.02*		
Transport	-169.13		0.15	
Petrol	*-160.96*		*0.14*	
Vehicle maintenance expenses (Repair charges)	*19.00*	*0.02*		
Air lines fare	*-26.19*		*0.02*	
Education	33.49	0.03		
School fees (International)	*31.18*	*0.03*		
Restaurants and hotels	11.46	0.01		
Miscellaneous Goods & Services	10.71	0.01		
Beauty products	*6.18*	*0.01*		
Other Groups	-3.61		0.00	
All Items	123.85			0.11

Source: Department of Census and Statistics

Note 5: Percentage of items does not tally with overall percentage due to rounding off

Inflation

The NCPI is a macroeconomic indicator used to measure inflation, which is defined as a sustained increase in the general price level of goods and services. Inflation is expressed as an annual percentage change in the NCPI. It is commonly measured in two ways. The first is year-on-year (point-to-point) inflation, which refers to the percentage change in the current month's NCPI compared to the same month of the previous year. The second is moving average inflation, which refers to the percentage difference between the average NCPI over the last 12 months and the average of the previous 12 months.

Table 03: Movements of the NCPI (Base: 2021=100)

Year	Month	All Item				Food				Non Food			
		Index Number	% Change Month on Month	Inflation %		Index Number	% Change Month on Month	Inflation %		Index Number	% Change Month on Month	Inflation %	
				Y on Y	12 Month Moving Avg.			Y on Y	12 Month Moving Avg.			Y on Y	12 Month Moving Avg.
2025	September	**207.4**	0.1	2.1	-0.9	**236.6**	0.1	3.8	1.6	**188.5**	0.1	0.7	-2.8
	October	**207.5**	0.0	2.7	-0.6	**236.4**	-0.1	4.1	1.8	**188.8**	0.2	1.5	-2.5
	November	**207.2**	-0.1	2.4	-0.2	**236.1**	-0.1	3.6	2.1	**188.6**	-0.1	1.5	-2.1
	December	**210.5**	1.6	2.9	0.2	**244.3**	3.5	4.4	2.5	**188.7**	0.1	1.6	-1.7
2026	January	**211.4**	0.4	2.4	0.7	**244.3**	0.0	3.4	3.1	**190.1**	0.7	1.6	-1.1
	February	**209.4**	-0.9	1.6	1.2	**239.4**	-2.0	1.1	3.3	**190.1**	0.0	1.9	-0.5
	March	**210.9**	0.7	2.4	1.5	**237.9**	-0.6	0.7	3.2	**193.5**	1.8	3.8	0.2
	April	**216.3**	2.6	4.7	2.0	**240.4**	1.1	1.1	3.1	**200.8**	3.8	7.8	1.1
	May	**218.8**	1.2	5.4	2.4	**244.3**	1.6	1.5	2.7	**202.3**	0.7	8.6	2.2
	June	**222.3**	1.6	6.5	2.9	**250.5**	2.5	3.3	2.7	**204.1**	0.9	9.3	3.2
	July	**223.4**	0.5	7.2	3.5	**250.9**	0.2	4.9	2.9	**205.6**	0.7	9.2	4.0
	August	**223.9**	0.2	8.1	4.1	**251.9**	0.4	6.6	3.2	**205.9**	0.1	9.3	4.7
	September	**224.2**	0.1	8.1	4.5	**253.0**	0.4	6.9	3.5	**205.6**	-0.1	9.1	5.4

Source: Department of Census and Statistics

Note 6: The month-on-month percentage change and the year-on-year inflation rate were calculated using rounded index numbers.

2.1. Year -on-Year Inflation

The overall inflation rate, as measured by the NCPI on a year-on-year basis, remained unchanged in September 2026, at 8.1% which was reported in August 2026 (Table 03). The year-on-year inflation of the food group increased to 6.9% in September 2026 from 6.6% in August 2026, while that of the non-food group decreased to 9.1% from 9.3% during the same period.

Contribution to Year-on-Year inflation:

On a year-on-year basis, the contribution of food commodities to inflation was 3.11% in September 2026 compared with September 2025 (Table 04).

The contribution of non-food items was 5.00 %. This was mainly due to price increases in the following groups: 'Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco and Narcotics' (0.03%), 'Clothing and Footwear' (0.11%), 'Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels' (1.17%), 'Furnishing, Household Equipment and Routine Household Maintenance' (0.13%), 'Health' (0.19%), 'Transport' (2.20%), 'Communication'(0.01%), 'Recreation and Culture' (0.03%), 'Education' (0.34%), 'Restaurants and Hotels' (0.51%), and 'Miscellaneous Goods and Services' (0.28%).

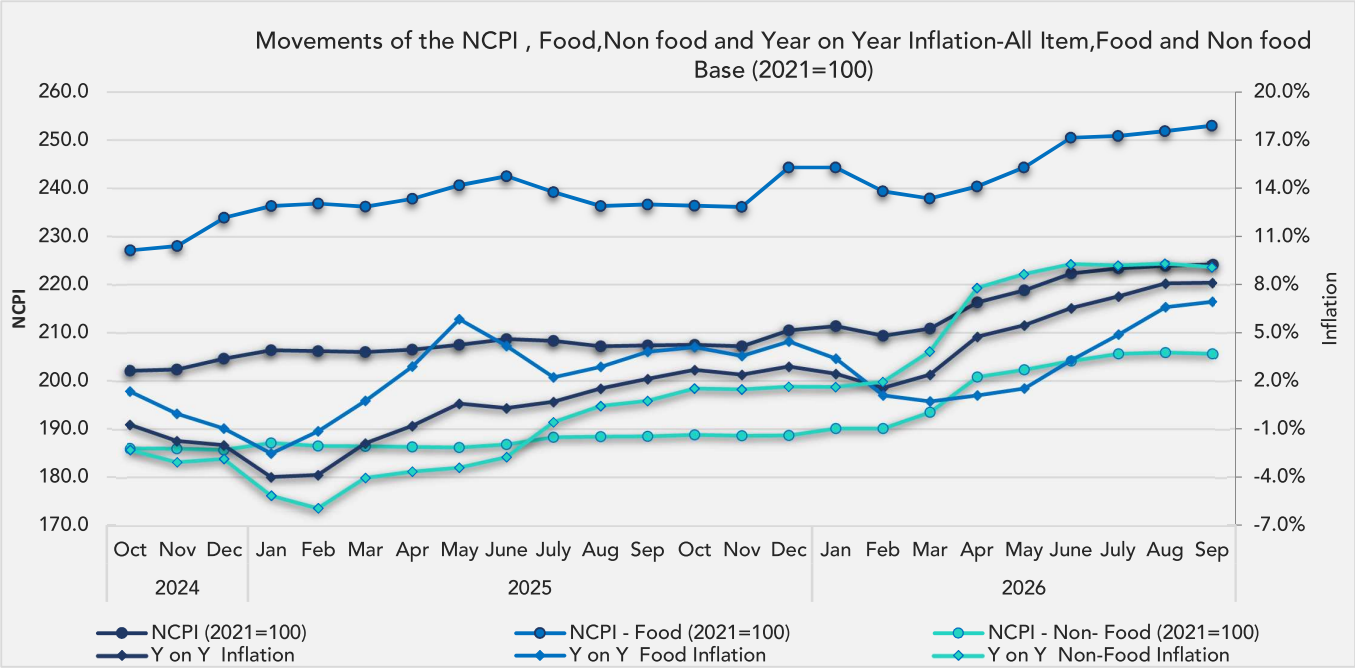
Table 04: Contribution to the changes in NCPI (Base 2021=100) on year on year basis September 2026 as compared to September 2025

Sub Group/Commodity	Value change			
	Rs. cts	% Change		
		Increase %	Decrease %	Net effect %
Food	3268.40			3.11
Fresh Fish	*678.10*	*0.64*		
Dried Fish	*442.46*	*0.42*		
Big Onions	*413.93*	*0.39*		
Vegetables	*333.20*	*0.32*		
Green Chilies	*293.50*	*0.28*		
Fresh Fruits	*284.95*	*0.27*		
Milk Powder	*229.79*	*0.22*		
Dried Chilies	*171.95*	*0.16*		
Eggs	*127.18*	*0.12*		
Chili Powder	*124.08*	*0.12*		
Chicken	*77.46*	*0.07*		
Coconuts	*-503.05*		*0.48*	
Rice	*-243.52*		*0.23*	
Ginger	*-33.19*		*0.03*	
Non Food	5259.71	5.00	0.00	5.00
Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco and Narcotics	33.48	0.03		
Arrack	10.44	0.01		
Beetle Leaves	*10.84*	*0.01*		
Bulathwita	*17.17*	*0.02*		
Clothing and Footwear	120.34	0.11		
Clothing	*116.99*	*0.11*		
Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels	1233.72	1.17		
Housing Rent	*486.82*	*0.46*		
Materials for Maintenance	*314.91*	*0.30*		
Electricity Bill	*141.86*	*0.13*		
L. P. Gas	*241.51*	*0.23*		
Kerosene Oil	*44.37*	*0.04*		
Furnishings, Household Equipment and Routing Household Maintenance	134.40	0.13		
Washing soap	*32.98*	*0.03*		
Washing powder	*25.34*	*0.02*		
Health	198.70	0.19		
Purchase of medical/ pharmacy products	*17.05*	*0.02*		
Fees to Private Medical Practices	*114.58*	*0.11*		
Consultation Fees to Specialists	*35.09*	*0.03*		
Payments. to Medical Laboratories	*12.98*	*0.01*		
Transport	2311.83	2.20		
Motor Cars	*98.91*	*0.09*		
Petrol	*1108.81*	*1.05*		
Diesel	*180.88*	*0.17*		
Lubricating Oil	*58.84*	*0.06*		
Cost of Servicing of Vehicles	*106.68*	*0.10*		

Bus Fare	*379.59*	*0.36*	
Three Wheelers Fare	*52.44*	*0.05*	
Transport for Schooling/ Preschooling	*199.11*	*0.19*	
Air Line Fare	*43.36*	*0.04*	
Communication	11.77	0.01	
Recreation and Culture	27.41	0.03	
Television/Video decks	-20.31		0.02
Exercise books and stationeries.	*40.60*	*0.04*	
Education	360.80	0.34	
Tuition Fees	*274.95*	*0.26*	
School Fees (International)	*31.18*	*0.03*	
Course Fees (Higher Education)	*47.63*	*0.05*	
Restaurant and Hotels	531.94	0.51	
Miscellaneous Goods and Services	295.33	0.28	
Hair Cutting and Shaving Charges	*49.49*	*0.05*	
Beauty Products	*32.07*	*0.03*	
Hand bags	*35.65*	*0.03*	
Insurance/ Agrahara	*118.78*	*0.11*	
All Items	8528.11		8.11

Source: Department of Census and Statistics

Note 7: Percentage of items does not tally with overall percentage due to rounding off



Source: Department of Census and Statistics

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