

A Brighter Future  
Presidential Election - 2010

Mahinda  
Chintana  
Vision for the Future

*Towards a new Sri Lanka*



In my first term of office,  
I won for you the peace you were  
yearning for.

Doing what I say, and  
saying what I set out to do,  
I have earned your trust and  
confidence.

By presenting the “*Mahinda Chintana -  
Vision for the future*”  
to our religious dignitaries,  
mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and children  
of our Motherland with deep affection,  
I am assuring you of  
my deep commitment  
to fulfill your future aspirations as well.

Together,  
let us embark on this new journey  
to lead our beloved Motherland  
to a  
Brighter Future.



MAHINDA RAJAPAKSA

***“This earth and its vegetation is yours.  
But they should be protected not only for your benefit  
but also for the benefit of future generations. A ruler is only a  
temporary trustee and not an owner of your  
children’s heritage”***

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## **A Brighter Future**

- **Sri Lanka: the emerging “Wonder of Asia”**
- **A prosperous country; a land of plenty**
- **Disciplined and law abiding society**
- **Comforts, convenience and satisfactory life styles**
- **Developed road network and transport system**
- **A unitary state, not to be divided**
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- **A Healthy society**
- **Entrepreneurs with strength to conquer the world**
- **Reawakening the performing arts**
- **People return, rather that migrate**

We defeated terrorism and separatism, which outcome at one time was thought to be impossible. We are now ready to lead our children and our nation to a brighter future as stakeholders of a truly free motherland.





## Sri Lanka: the emerging “Wonder of Asia”

### When the world economies shook, we stayed stable

The people of our country are now awaiting the victory in the “economic war”, in a manner similar to our victory in the war against terrorism. I am well prepared and ready to face this challenge. I also truly believe that our economy should be independent, resilient and disciplined, with a strong growth focus, operating as per international standards, whilst maintaining our local identity. Therefore, over the next six years, I will lay special emphasis on implementing our country’s National Economic Policy; which takes our collective aspirations into account.

When I first assumed office as President, after 57 years of independence, our per capita income had progressed only to around US \$ 1,000, at a very slow pace. However, during my tenure of office in the past 4 years, we were able to quickly generate exceptional growth and increase our per capita income to over US \$ 2,000. This was possible because we implemented the necessary measures to put into effect, the sound national economic policies as set out in the *Mahinda Chintana* which nurtured and protected our national economy.

Over the next six years, I will dedicate myself to increase our per capita income to well above US \$ 4,000, thereby placing our country in the ranks of middle income nations.

The fact that able to achieve a sustained and uninterrupted growth in a most challenging era while facing the ongoing conflict was an amazing achievement. I am therefore confident that we will be able to now maintain a continuous growth rate of 8% per annum, during the next six years.





During the crisis, we observed how the economies of certain developed nations which followed the neo liberal economic policy models failed in the face of the global economic crisis. If we too had followed the same economic models, as was suggested by some of our opponents, our economy would have suffered from the same unfortunate fate. We are today more stable than ever, with the achievement of sound macro-economic indicators. In fact, it is due to this fact that, “The Economist” magazine recently identified Sri Lanka as one among the top six countries that are expected to record the highest economic growth levels in the next few years. Last year, we also achieved the honour of being placed second in the list of the world’s fastest developing stock markets.

In the next few years, we will face two major economic challenges. One, will be to ensure that the growing economic prosperity and the benefits of recent developments will filter down to all our people. Second, will be to lay the foundation for long term sustainable development. In the same manner that we faced and overcame the previous challenges, I am certain that we can face and emerge victorious against these new challenges as well.

## **Sri Lanka as a dynamic global hub**

The objective of our next massive leap forward is to transform Sri Lanka into a strategically important economic centre of the world. My determination therefore, is to transform Sri Lanka to be the Pearl of the Asian Silk Route once again, in modern terms. Using our strategic geographical location effectively. I will develop our Motherland as a Naval, Aviation, Commercial, Energy and Knowledge hub, serving as a key link between the East and West.

### ***A much sought after Naval Hub***

During King Parakramabahu’s era, our nation was widely recognized as having one of the most superior navies of the region.





I strongly believe that we have inherited a special naval prowess and aptitude from our ancestors' superior naval techniques. By building on that strength and our rich naval traditions, I am certain we can once again convert Sri Lanka to being the naval centre point along the Indian Ocean Silk Route within the next ten years. Through such strategy, we will be able to become a significant naval service centre for ships navigating past our seas. Such an outcome will also lead to an unprecedented revolution in our country's naval and shipping history. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of our people will benefit by the employment opportunities that will arise when these initiatives bear fruit, since many will enter the workforce as trained sailors, technicians, food technologists, bunker suppliers and many other vocations and professions.

### ***Hambantota Port***

- In the midst of tremendous obstacles, we commenced the construction of the Hambantota Port by committing a substantial investment during the year 2008. I am therefore happy to note that we now expect the first ship to be anchored at this new Port by November 2012.
- The new Hambantota Port is located within 10 nautical miles from the world's biggest Silk Route shipping lane. Around 70,000 – 80,000 vessels annually, or around 200 vessels daily, sail past Hambantota.
- With the functioning of the Hambantota Port, it is very likely that over 10,000 vessels will dock at the new Port, annually, thereby generating around Rs. 50 billion in foreign exchange. Further, since this port is expected to operate as a free port, it is also possible that the actual income earned from its operations could even be double such amount.
- On that basis, in a manner similar to the way in which we eradicated terrorism, I am certain we will be able to





eradicate poverty in our country permanently, by developing the Port sector.

- The geographical zones that will benefit from this development will positively touch many difficult areas including Hambantota, Tanamalvila and Embilipitiya, and such developments will change forever, the life styles of those living in those areas.

### ***South Colombo Port***

- As is well known, the construction of the South Colombo Port is now in progress and the new Port is expected to commence it's commercial operations by the year 2012.
- The mega vessels which are now not in able to access the Colombo Port will then be able to enter the new Port and the container handling capacity will then double. The new Port will reduce the time taken for import and export procedures, while increased competition between marine companies will lead to reduced shipping charges. The new Port will also enable farmers to export their products to markets worldwide. In this manner, the economic benefits will not only be accruing to the country, but also directly to our farmers and entrepreneurs.

### ***Galle Port to a Tourism Port***

- The construction work that has already commenced in the Galle Port will be completed during this year.
- Hardly any passenger ships sailing in international shipping lanes now call over in Sri Lanka. The reason behind such occurrence is that the Colombo Port is not sufficiently attractive to passenger ships, and unfortunately there are no other Ports in Sri Lanka with the required facilities.







- Historically, the City of Galle has been attractive to tourists, and by developing the Galle Port, it is believed that, in addition to passenger ships, we can also attract a large number medium and small size vessels. This will pave the way for large numbers of our people engaged in the tourism industry, to earn foreign exchange which can amount to several times the income earned through the Port.

### ***Other Ports***

- Development activities in three other Ports, Oluvil, Kankesanthurai and Trincomalee have already commenced. The development of the Oluvil Port will be completed during this year. The work on the Development Zone associated with the Trincomalee Port has already started. The development of these three ports will primarily promote internal transportation and tourism. This will also provide coverage to the entire country, thus enabling us to eliminate some of the costly and the risky modes of transportation, in the future.

### ***Employment Opportunities***

- When these development activities are completed, it will provide at least 50,000 direct employment opportunities for our trained and untrained young persons. There will also be many thousands of further opportunities for trained persons. Such new job opportunities will be open for the Ordinary Level and Advanced Level qualified persons. Accordingly, we have already commenced several island-wide training centres in a number of fields through the Vocational Training Authority to train our youth for these new opportunities.





- In addition, through new services such as ship chandling, tourism, and other shipping services, further indirect employment opportunities of around 3,000 would be created. In that manner, I have planned to ensure the trickling down of the fruits of these major development activities from village to village, from house, to house and finally to every person.
- It is also worthy to note that a new port is constructed in Sri Lanka after about 600 years. The 5 new ports which have commenced construction during the past 4 years, will contribute about 2% to our Gross Domestic Product annually. I will establish 4 economic development centres associated with these new ports, similar to the centres established in the Embilipitiya and Tanamalwila areas, centering the Hambantota Port. Accordingly, the people living in the areas of Trincomalee, Oluwil and Kankesenturai will get opportunities to become service providers to these developments and become direct beneficiaries.

### ***An Aviation Hub***

When reference is made to an aircraft in ancient history, the reference made is to the folk story where our King Ravana is said to have flown on his “Flying Peacock”. More recently, during the second world war, the British Empire chose Sri Lanka as the naval and aviation headquarters and stationed Lord Mountbatten, the Commander of the entire British fleet, in Sri Lanka thereby recognizing Sri Lanka as the country which is strategically positioned on the path of most air and naval routes. Unfortunately however, we have not been able to capitalize on these strengths and become an aviation hub to the world, as has been successfully done by Dubai and Singapore.





We now need to meet this challenge as well. That is why, we have launched several massive infrastructure development projects with the intention of conquering the skies. I have modernized the Bandaranaike International Airport at Katunayake and also commenced work on constructing the new airport at Mattala in the South. In addition, I will develop and modernize fourteen airports across the country for internal aviation as well as commence services to India and other Regional Countries. Work has already commenced to construct a modern road network connecting all these airports, and this will pave the way for generating employment opportunities in the aviation industry, airport and aviation engineering, assembling maintenance and repair of aircraft, and many other associate industries.

### ***Conquering the wide open skies and space***

Our skillful and energetic youth have displayed their outstanding abilities through the humanitarian operations that they undertook not only in land, but also the ocean and the skies. It is a great strength to us. Now the time has come, not only to conquer the skies, but also space.

- I will implement a program to share space related knowledge with our neighboring countries. Based on that, Sri Lanka will strive to obtain the ownership of a satellite in the near future.
- I also wish to see Sri Lankan scientists designing and releasing a satellite within the next decade, thereby bringing great pride and honour to our Motherland.

### ***Mattala - Second International Airport***

After independence, this is the first time that a new Airport is being constructed in Sri Lanka. The new international airport in Mattala with a runway of 4 kilometers, will be Sri Lanka's second international airport.





- I believe this new development will promote the tourism industry in the South as well as investment and industries in these areas.

### ***Modernisation of the Katunayake International Airport***

- We have already commenced the modifications and improvement of the Bandaranaike International Airport, with new facilities including the providing of landing facilities to new large aircraft such as A380. These new improvements will serve to attract more passengers and also improve our competitive edge, vis-\_-vis other airports in the region.
- The development of domestic airports in Palali, Amparai and Ratmalana will also be carried out and would be a logical extension of our facilities in domestic transportation.
- These giant projects will provide around 5,000 new direct jobs and a further 15,000 jobs in an indirect manner through the supply of goods and services in related areas. In this manner, the results of our development activities will filter down to each and every household and person of our country.

### ***A Commercial Hub***

I have overcome the first challenge of making Sri Lanka a commercial hub by improving the physical infrastructure and by upgrading the human resources. As a result of our efforts, our stock market and foreign investments have steadily improved. We need to support this momentum to higher levels. Through such efforts, I am hoping to establish Sri Lanka as one of Asia's foremost commercial centers in the fields of commercial services, international banking and international investments.





## ***An Energy Hub***

The world economy suffered a massive shock in the year 2008 as a result of global oil prices increasing threefold. Therefore, not much imagination is needed to predict the magnitude of the shock when one day, world oil supplies finally runs dry. Today, we are experiencing the period of maximum oil consumption in world history. In another five decades, oil will no longer be a source of energy.

It is in this background that we are seeking to develop our own energy resources. Our scientists and experts have now been able to determine as to the exact demarcation of our national and international maritime boundaries through the research of the ocean floor and these findings have already been communicated to the United Nations Organization. Following the total wipe out of the LTTE, who were claiming around two thirds of our seas, a golden opportunity has dawned to harness the wealth from our seas, as never before envisaged. I believe that we can now lay claim to a sea area, 23 times larger than the total land area of our country. The resources arising from this vast ocean area, will benefit our future generations, and I am proud to have been able to achieve such an outcome.

I am also pleased that I was able to defeat the conspiracy to grant oil exploration rights to a Norwegian Company, TGS Nopec, through the operation of an illegal ceasefire agreement through which the Northern and Eastern sea coast of our country were to be handed over to the brutal terrorist outfit, LTTE. I annulled such an illegal ceasefire agreement. As a result, we are now able to reap the benefits of our seas, and in turn, divert such benefits into resurrecting our national economy, which we have been able to free from the clutches of dubious international organizations and ruthless terrorists.





The first ever oil well in Sri Lanka, will be dredged this year. Further, during the next decade, we will harness our own oil, gas and mineral sand resources which could be used to generate nuclear power as well. New oil refineries will be built in Hambantota and Sapugaskanda and we will acquire the technical know-how in order to deal in the international oil trade. Our electricity generation system has been developed systematically over the past few years and we have now been able to provide electricity without interruption. In the future, we will be able to have vehicles driven with oil produced locally, and electricity being generated by oil produced in our country. Our country will then grow to become a regional energy centre. Through such outcome, thousands of our people will benefit by new employment opportunities, and our national income too, will double in the next five years.

### ***Knowledge Hub***

In ancient times our Buddhist monasteries were seats of learning that spread the teaching of the Buddha to the rest of Asia. Many aesthetic subjects that originated in these monastic centres of learning greatly contributed to the knowledge foundation of the world. History records that these centres of excellence in areas such as naval, irrigation, management and architecture have served to spread this knowledge throughout the far eastern continent. However, during the last few decades what we witnessed was a disaster in terms of wisdom and knowledge. As a result, more and more professionals who were developed through our free education system left our shores, leading to a brain drain in our society. Further, as a result of insufficient and ineffective education systems of the past, we were creating a large number of unemployed graduates, leading to their being subjected to tear gas, tyre pyres consequent to the evil politicization of their problems by certain wicked persons.





I have already introduced a mechanism to effect a reverse brain drain in order to obtain the knowledge and services of local experts who have excelled internationally. I will soon improve this mechanism and ensure that all such resources are attracted to return to our country, instead of leaving the country.

I will also make significant changes in the education structure of universities, technical colleges and tertiary and secondary education institutions. Programmes associated with the modern knowledge in the fields of communication, naval, aero, commercial and environmental friendly activities will be generate so that we can create trained persons in these fields. I will also commence training programmes that directly target foreign markets as well.

I will restructure the education and knowledge systems suitably, so that Sri Lanka becomes a key hub for knowledge and learning in the world.

## **The strength of the country is the strength of the village.**

### ***Gama Neguma***

Instead of transforming the village into a prosperous place for its inhabitants, using the village as a mere resource centre for the urban population was the strategy that was implemented during the colonial era. As a result, whilst the city developed with all facilities, villages were turned into places without even a road or a vehicle to carry a patient to a hospital. Due to this philosophy, urban areas became densely populated with industrious people, while people with less means were left behind in the village. The pathetic and sorrowful situation of children from the villages leaving behind their village schools and moving towards urban schools commenced from that point onwards.





Political parties with cruel and hateful tendencies soon took advantage of this situation and misled our youth and turned them into insurgents which led to hundreds of thousands of such youth being murdered.

Farmers who had treated their lands with utmost devotion were turned labourers in their own lands since they had to sell their lands in order to survive. All governments that came into power after Independence should take the responsibility for this very sad and distressing outcome.

- Until the village is established once again with all the necessary facilities for the people to live comfortably, and until such time the village is restored as a centre of prosperity, the “Gama Naguma” program will be continued.
- All roads in the villages in Sri Lanka will be concreted. Through the implementation of proper strategies in infrastructure, livelihood and social development, I will develop all 16,000 villages in our country to be transferred into prosperous units by the year 2016.

### ***Provincial Development***

- We were able to achieve a speedy development in the North and East, because a special task force was established for the development of those 2 provinces. By making use of such experience, we will implement fast tracked development schemes in 5 provinces titled “Rajarata Navodaya”, “Wayamba Pubuduwa”, “Pubudamu Wellassa”, “Kandurata Udanaya” and “Sabaragamu Arunalokaya”. For this purpose, I will enlist the support of the provincial councils when setting up the task forces.
- I will improve the Colombo City and other key cities to be on par with environment friendly modern cities in middle







income countries while also establishing such cities as commercial hubs in South Asia.

- Hambantota will be established as a Port City, Galle as a Tourist Centre and Matara as the renaissance city of the South.

## A prosperous country; a land of plenty

### Support towards meeting the challenges of life

At the time of my election in 2005, local agriculture was in ruin, and farmers were committing suicide. Institutions that engaged in wholesale trade such as the Paddy Marketing Board and the Food Commissioner's Department, were closed. The institutions that distributed essential goods and services to the general public such as the Marketing Department, CWE and Co-operatives were in shambles. The end result was that a handful of corrupt businessmen were in control of the supply of goods and services, and they could arbitrarily determine the prices of such goods and services.

That is why I am now amazed that the same people who were unable to control costs from 1977 to 2005 onwards, and who directly contributed towards the suppression of the distribution and responsibilities from the state, are today complaining of escalating costs.

During the past four years, by re-establishing the Paddy Marketing Board, by expanding economic centers in all main cities, and by strengthening the CWE and the Co-operatives, I have taken permanent measures to ensure that local produce is easily and conveniently available.

As a result, we now observe an expansion of the income avenues of the farmer community. In order to reduce the cost-of-





living in a sustainable manner, we need to continue the implementation of these measures.

- I will continue to provide the “budget pack” containing essential food items, through the CWE and other private retail outlets as well.
- With the generation of electricity through the Norochcholai coal power plant by the end of this year, electricity costs would reduce. I will transmit the benefits of such low cost electricity to the people through a rebate of 30% to be granted to low income households.
- Until the objective of providing electricity to all by 2012 is achieved, all families who use kerosene oil for lighting purposes, will be provided with 5 liters of kerosene oil per month, free of charge.

### ***Samurdhi Recipient Families***

- If any poor family has been left out from the Samurdhi benefits for whatever reason, steps will be taken to provide such families with the Samurdhi benefits.
- I will increase the Samurdhi benefit to a minimum of Rs. 1000 for all families who, at present, are receiving less.
- In addition, all families with children under the age of 3 years will receive an additional allowance of Rs. 1500.
- All Samurdhi families will be entitled to receive a loan of upto Rs. 100,000 to utilize as capital for the commencement of a business or vocation.
- Such loans will be provided free of interest in the first year and thereafter at a concessionary interest rate of 6%. The government will guarantee such loans.





- In addition to the “Nutrition Pack,” expectant mothers of Samurdhi families will be provided with a “gift pack” containing essential items for the new born as well.
- In order to strengthen and facilitate the delivery of Samurdhi services, regulations will be prepared to recognize the employees of the Samurdhi Authority as government servants with pension rights.
- When providing Samurdhi benefits to families with a disabled children, those benefits will be assured without regard to the economic status of such families.

## Disciplined and law abiding society

### A Prosperous Family

The very existence of the world depends on the affection and love of the mother. It is through this affection and love that children acquire a healthy mind and a balanced personality. It is my belief that whatever may be our achievements, our focus should be on the family, consisting of the mother, father and the children.

### *Pride of place to the mother*

Women make a major contribution to the economy of our country. The contribution of women in the plantation sector, in foreign employment and the apparel sector has increased in significance over the years. In such a context, I believe that the women in our country should not be afforded “equal” status, but should be given “higher priority”. Towards this end, I will implement the following measures.

- Establish a Women’s Entrepreneurship Development Fund to provide financial assistance to enhance self-employment





amongst women and to create additional income generating opportunities for them.

- Ensure that women are assured of wages equal to that of men, wherever they are engaged in similar employment.
- Initiate a Womens' Data Bank to facilitate access to economic and professional data of women.
- Formulate a legal framework to recognize women as the head of the household in instances where she shoulders the responsibility of the family. By doing so, I will eradicate the legal or administrative barriers faced by them, in this regard.
- Implement measures to increase the representation of women within the political and administration framework, so that we could ensure that our educated women are given their due place.
- I will make the participation of women mandatory in decision making and policy matters, through their representation in Jana Sabhas where decisions are taken in relation community development.

### ***Women as Heads of Households***

I believe it is the responsibility of the government to ensure the economic development and security of all women headed households arising due to the conflict in the North and the East, the violence from 1987-89, or other natural factors. In order to discharge such responsibility, I will:

- Introduce a special loan scheme up to a sum of Rs. 200,000/- for such families at a concessionary rate of interest to enable them to engage in appropriate income generation activities.
- **Provide a block of land for cultivation and residential purposes for such landless families.**





- **Allocate a sum of Rs. 400,000 to families with a differently – able child, to ensure that such children access vocational training or any special educational facilities of his/her choice.**

### ***Our loving children***

It is our children who will be the heirs to a free and independent Motherland. To take on this responsibility effectively, they have to be intelligent and wise, while being robust and strong. Therefore, it is my wish to teach them to be proud Sri Lankans who can meet future challenges.

- I will set up a Police Bureau affiliated to the National Child Protection Authority to ensure the protection and security of all children. The Authority will be vested with adequate powers, independence and authority to take action against all forms of child abuse and related crimes.
- A Court system dedicated to deal with grievances relating to children will be introduced so as to ensure that their privacy is assured.
- I will amend the law to ensure that orphaned children who complete 18 years of age and are in Children's Homes but do not yet have adequate protection, be allowed to remain in such homes until their marriage, or permit them to be employed in such homes as and when vacancies arise.
- A mechanism will be introduced through which protection will be granted to children whose mothers or fathers have been imprisoned.

### ***Benefiting by the experience of our senior citizens***

The Sri Lankan population has a high proportion of the elderly. Therefore, it is our responsibility to create an environment for them to live with dignity.





- I will introduce a pension scheme for every citizen over 65 years of age.
- A special bonus interest scheme will be operated for fixed and saving deposits of senior citizens over 60 years of age.
- The benefit titled “Help the Needy Adults” will be increased to Rs. 1,000.
- I will improve the facilities of the Elders Homes maintained by the government. I will also take measures to improve the living conditions of homes run for the elderly by the private sector or other organizations, by providing tax concessions for equipment imported for such homes or facilities.

### ***Support to our Pensioners***

I intend to implement the following measures to ensure that retired public servants who possess a wealth of experience are able to contribute with dignity to the development process of our country.

- While rejecting the perception promoted by previous governments that the monthly pension drawn by public servants is a “charitable donation”, I will take measures to establish that pensions are an honorable and dignified payment in recognition of their valuable contribution to the country.
- I will initiate action to accord further preferential treatment in addition to what is already being accorded, to pensioners who visit public places such as government institutions and banks. I will also introduce a scheme for them to receive similar priority in other institutions as well, upon the production of their Pensioners Identity Card, Senior Citizens Identity Card or Elders Identity Card.





- A scheme will be introduced where the pensions are delivered to the respective residences of the pensioners in order to avoid the waste of their time and effort, in having to collect their pensions.
- I will synchronize the pensions of government servants who have retired prior to 2006 with the respective salary structures of 2006, and make the necessary provision from the next budget.
- A new health insurance scheme for government pensioners will be introduced, subject to a limit of Rs.10,000 per annum, so as assist them to meet expenditure on health-care facilities, medicine and Doctors' consultation charges.

### ***For the "Differently-able"***

In my view, the creation of a social, economic and psychological environment for differently able children and adults to live in dignity, is an important priority. It is also a duty of society to preserve and protect the rights of such persons. I am of course happy to note that, unlike in many other countries, those who are differently able in our country, are often protected and cared for by their family members and relatives. Nevertheless, as a Government we too assume responsibility to provide our differently able citizens with protection and security. For this purpose, I will:

- Allocate a sum of Rs. 400,000 to each differently-able person between the ages of 12 to 22 years, to enable such person to obtain special training and education according to his/her talents and capabilities.
- Establish 3 new fully equipped special educational units for children with sight, hearing or other disabilities.
- Amend the prevailing pension scheme to enable those with physical disabilities to retire at 50 years, those with mental





disabilities to retire at 45 years, and those who have subscribed for their pensions for 20 years, to be eligible for a pension.

- Implement a system that will increase access of public transport for differently able persons.
- Ensure that differently-able persons will have easier access to public places. In particular, all government institutions will ensure such easy access is available.
- Take action to ensure the use of sign language in news broadcasts and other quality programs broadcast through the government and private media institutions, so that those with hearing impairments will be benefited.
- Implement national and international standards, rules and regulations applicable to the fundamental, social and economic rights of the differently-able persons. I also intend to introduce the domestic legislation that may be required to give effect to the implementation of the rights of the differently-able persons under the United Nations Convention on persons with disabilities, and thereby guarantee their social security and living standards whilst making Sri Lanka a truly “Differently able – Friendly Country”.
- Improve the capabilities of differently able sportsmen and sportswomen, by establishing a fund for sports activities for such persons.
- Allocate funds from the budget of the 2010 to provide the necessary financial and technical assistance to persons who are differently-able, to pursue self employment schemes based on their ability and preferences.







## A tribute to our gallant forces

### *Those who contributed to our Freedom*

The war heroes who sacrificed their lives or who were disabled did not belong to a particular race or ethnic group. They did not fight against any race or ethnic group. Their fight was to liberate our frightened citizens in the North, East and the South, from the clutches of terrorism.

Those who suffered most from the bitter reality of the conflict were the wives and children of the brave service personnel who died in action. From the moment they joined the armed forces, the place accorded in their hearts for their wives and children, was replaced by their love for our beloved motherland. The time that should have been spent with their wives and children, was spent in the battle field.

I am painfully aware that some children of deceased soldiers are still waiting for their fathers to return. Their recollection is of a father who returned from the battle field months ago, with gifts for them.

Therefore, I will not hesitate to fulfil my responsibilities to the wives and children of all soldiers, beginning with the first soldier who sacrificed his life against this ruthless terrorism, until the last soldier who sacrificed his life or was disabled in this humanitarian effort.

- All services, police and civil defence personnel who were in the battle front and who were totally or partially disabled will be paid their salary throughout their lives. I will also provide for their protection.
- In order to guarantee the ownership of a house or land for all families of war heroes who were totally disabled, or who died in action, 15 more housing projects will be launched in





various parts of the country. Such projects will be similar to the “Rana Jaya Pura” Housing Project at Ipalogama. A sum of Rs.5,000 million will be allocated for the provision of modern infrastructure facilities under this programme. A plot of land of not less than 10 perches in extent will also be given to such persons for the construction of a house.

- The 10% of the assessed value which is charged at present, when allocating lands to war heroes will be removed.
- Such persons, who were occupying state land without legal sanction or title as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010, will be given title deeds to such lands.
- Priority will be given to those living in Ranaviru Villages and those owning a permanent house, in accessing infrastructure facilities such as water, electricity and roads, under the Maga Neguma, Gama Neguma and rural electrification programmes of the government.
- War heroes who have retired after completing their full period of service, will be given a loan upto Rs.2.0 million for them to commence a small or medium scale industry.
- I will implement a programme to increase awareness and also provide assistance on legal issues, where the husband or a son of any such family has died in action.
- The promotions due shall be granted to differently-able war heroes in terms of their scheme of recruitment and service period, in the event they have been compelled to retire due to a disability suffered in action.
- A Recreation Centre will be established in each camp, for the benefit of such armed service personnel so that they could engage in sports, entertainment and physical exercise. I will strengthen the mobile medical clinic programme that has





been introduced district-wise for war heroes who have suffered disabilities.

- Modern Pilgrim Rests will be established at pilgrim sites including Anuradhapura, Pollonnaruwa, Kataragama, Madhu – Mannar, for disabled service personnel.
- 4 mobile buses will be deployed with facilities to repair artificial limbs and accessories, to avoid service personnel from traveling to the capital city to attend to related repairs.
- The process of paying 25% of the pension presently being paid to parents of war heroes with the consent of their wives, in respect of those missing in action after 21<sup>st</sup> November 2007 or those who have lost their lives prior to that date, will be extended to the mothers and fathers of all war heroes.
- The educational scholarship programme covering children of war heroes who have lost their lives, been disabled, or been declared as missing in action, will be expanded. A new scholarship scheme will be introduced for their higher education. A programme to develop their skills will also be implemented through the War Heroes Sansandaya.

## Armed Forces

- I do not believe the threat to the security of our country has been completely eliminated although the brutal terrorism in our land has been defeated. I am fully aware that it is possible that security threats could emerge in various forms and circumstances. However, I am confident that our brave armed forces will be able to face any challenge, with fortitude for the sake of our country. Therefore, I will ensure that our forces are strong at all times.





- I state with deep responsibility that our security forces have acted with utmost discipline and humanity in keeping with all international conventions, during the humanitarian operations in our war against terror. Therefore, I will solemnly pledge that no person will be allowed to take action against any officer or soldier of our armed forces at an international level, as a result of any betrayal due to any financial inducement or other selfish or unpatriotic reason.
- I believe that countries that are still struggling to combat terrorism could benefit from the knowledge and experience we have gained by confronting terrorism for over 30 years. Therefore, I will establish a Center for War Techniques and Strategy to provide knowledge and technical skills to the forces of other countries, who require such training.
- I will expand the opportunities for officers and members of our Armed Forces to extend their services through the deployment in other countries to provide war health and rehabilitation services.

### ***Police Force***

I am deeply conscious of the fact that the contribution made by the police force in maintaining law and order, is extremely important in our country's post war scenario. The assistance of the Police service will be vital to create an environment conducive to combat the drug menace, control and curb the underworld, establish a disciplined and ethical society, and re-establish civil administration in the Northern and Eastern areas of our country,

- All privileges enjoyed by the members of armed forces who have died or have been disabled in action would be made available to the members of the police service and their families.





- The anomalies in the promotion scheme of the Police service will be rectified. A simple and clear method of resolving any issues with regard to promotions and transfers will be introduced.
- In order to make the Police service a more attractive and dignified public service, several reorganization measures will be undertaken, including the revision of the police uniform.
- Measures will be implemented to provide the necessary technical know how and equipment for the more efficient discharge of police duties. Action will also be taken to provide local and foreign training at all levels.
- As in the case of the armed forces facilities, Rs. 500 million will be allocated to complete the work of the Police Academy to ensure the high standard in the knowledge and dignity of the police force.
- A special housing scheme will be introduced to meet the housing needs of the police force.
- In recognition of the 24 hour service provided by the Police Officers, the 12.5% of the basic salary that is being deducted on account of the house rental from married police officers will be reduced by 50%. The monthly rental being charged for the bachelor's quarters will also be abolished.
- The allowance that is paid for duty outside the service division will be increased.
- A loan scheme will be introduced to fund duty free motor cycles for police officers.





## ***The Civil Defence Force***

The Civil Defence Force will be made a permanent service and all those who complete 20 years of service, will be entitled to a pension.

## **A Service Oriented Public Service**

In reviewing the public service within a framework of social democratic values, I strongly believe that the Public Service should function in the best interest of the general public. This concept was always advocated and promoted by successive governments led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

I strongly believe that it is a known and accepted fact that I have stopped the privatization of state institutions and assets. This was a trend that commenced in 1977 and continued to 2005. However, I have made the state institutions people friendly, efficient and effective institutions. The pension scheme that was deprived for the public sector employees in 2004 was restored by me. I have continued to provide the pensioners with a cost of living allowance.

I have effectively dealt with salary anomalies, and raised the minimum salary level of a public servant from Rs 7,900 to 11,730 in my very first Budget presented to Parliament.

During the past four years I have recruited nearly 500,000 personnel to the Public service as Doctors, Nurses, Administrators, Accountants, Planners, Education Personnel, Teachers, for the Defence Forces and many other fields.

I have carried out the pledge I made in the “*Mahinda Chintana*”, in that I will not sell any Government institutions to the private sector, to the very letter. Even when the country was fighting a fierce war against terrorism, I strengthened the government sector.





It is no secret that the only achievement of the “*Regaining Sri Lanka*” programme from 2001 – 2003, was to drastically slash the public service and to squander the savings gained from such cuts. It is not my policy to reduce the public sector to a handful of people and to increase their salaries. I will therefore endeavor to safeguard the interests of the public servants, by providing adequate salaries and also be sensitive to their other needs, such as housing, pensions, loans, medical insurance and other social welfare benefits.

- Government servants will receive a salary increase of Rs 2500 in the budget of 2010, as done each year since 2005. On that basis, government servants will receive, subject to a minimum of Rs 2,500, the salary increase from this year’s budget.
- The monthly Cost of Living allowance that has been increased to Rs 5,250 from Rs 1,000 will also be increased to deal with the cost of living, after due discussion with the relevant Trade Unions.
- Commencing from next year, as a policy, government salary increases will be made in consultation with representatives of Trade Unions.
- A scheme whereby public servants at all levels will be eligible to benefit from overseas scholarships, will be implemented.
- Public servants will be given an opportunity to serve in our high commissions and embassies around the world, through a secondment scheme.
- Instead of confining the independence and the efficiency of the public service to mere documents and regulations, I am determined to restructure the public sector to be in keeping with the needs of the country.





- Therefore, I will transform the public service into a service oriented, transparent and efficient service through the efforts of a Presidential Task Force.
- A new pension scheme will be introduced to cover all those employed in government corporations, statutory bodies, and semi governmental agencies and to those not entitled to a pension in the private sector.
- I will take immediate action to rectify all salary anomalies, in accordance with the All-island Services Regulation and the Salaries Circular of 2006, within a period of three months, by providing the required human resources and funds.
- I will introduce a scheme whereby Employees in the government sector and corporations in staff grades will be entitled to concessionary duty free vehicle permits.
- Service Regulations will be compiled for graduates employed under the graduate schemes and deployed in the public sector and in corporations, to place them in the relevant grades, provide promotions and due salary increments.
- Public sector employees and government corporation employees who do not have houses will be given upto 10 perches of land. 25,000 of such plots will be distributed.
- The low interest housing loan facility of Rs 2 million provided to around 50,000 government employees, will be extended to a further 50,000 employees within the next few months.
- State funds will be allocated under the housing loan scheme of Corporations and Boards for another 10,000 employees.







- An attractive medical insurance scheme for all employees of state corporations and boards as well as their dependents will be introduced this year.
- An “Employee’s Pension Fund” will be established to cover all government sector and private sector employees, who, at present are not covered by any form of pension scheme.
- A state-of-the-art hospital will be established for the benefit of all government servants in the Kandy District.

## Prosperity through Economic Benefits from Abroad

More Sri Lankans than those employed in the public sector, work abroad and make a substantial contribution to our national development. Since the time I was the Minister of Labour, I have encouraged our youth to take up higher paying jobs outside the country. My consistent efforts in this regard resulted in the increase of male migrant workers by 50%.

- All arrangements have been made to secure more than 50,000 employment opportunities in several countries including Korea, Japan and Libya during the next three years and the process of selection of successful employees will be through a transparent process conducted during the coming months.
- As a result of moving towards a knowledge based development process, I will implement a special programme to expand the opportunities for those with skills in specialized fields such as nursing, nautical services, accountancy, IT, banking, and engineering to enter the international labour market.
- A “Foreign Employees’ Provident Fund” will be maintained in foreign currency for the benefit of all migrant workers.





## Spiritual and Social Development

The spiritual development of man is a mirror of the social development of a country.

Our country is respected due to its rich heritage of Buddhism. Therefore, while protecting and safeguarding all religions, I will accord Buddhism pride of place as the state religion.

- I will launch an extensive assistance program for the improvement and development of the infrastructure of all temples, kovils, churches and mosques and all other religious places of worship in the country.
- I will completely renovate and rehabilitate all religious sites that were destroyed or damaged in the North and East.
- I will provide state patronage to celebrate the 2600<sup>th</sup> 'Sambuddha Jayanthi', which is to be commemorated in the year 2011.

## A society with high values, free from corruption and fraud

Early travelers who visited Sri Lanka, including Robert Knox were struck by our courtesy, hospitality and discipline. Unfortunately, these treasured social values deteriorated after 1977, when our society was directed towards legitimizing and legalizing fraud, corruption and violence, leading to the erosion of our time honoured values.

I will address this social decline and establish high values and ethics by eliminating fraud, corruption and malpractices which have engulfed our society for a long time, and will take whatever measures necessary to eradicate criminal activities.





During the last four years I have ensured transparency in all financial transactions of the state and enforced many regulations to maintain transparency.

To create a society with good values and ethics, the 'Mathata thitha' program, the curtailment of the underworld, the addressing of child abuse, rape and violence against women, were some of the main actions we implemented. The progress we achieved so far has been laudable, but I am fully aware that more needs to be done to achieve our goals.

At the same time, my efforts dedicated over the past 4 years to eliminate terrorism from the country, will remain constant. I will not hesitate to make such a commitment in the future too.

- I will appoint an independent board comprising of independent and politically unbiased intellectuals under a new constitutional amendment, to eliminate all forms of corruption, fraud and malpractices.
- As the first Act of Parliament, I will introduce a special act to eliminate fraud and corruption, malpractices and violation of tender procedures in government corporations, boards and financial institutions.
- Within 100 days of enacting such legislation, the legal and institutional framework will be strengthened and implemented.
- To ensure transparency in the utilization of state funds in village development projects, I will formulate a legal framework to establish committees comprised of religious leaders and credible persons trusted by the community at the level of the Jana Sabha secretariat.
- The gaps in the legal processes will be filled to eliminate all types of underworld activities. The institutional structures required will also be strengthened.





- All relevant institutions will also be instructed to implement the necessary measures to eliminate the use of drugs and substance abuse from society.
- I will allocate Rs. 500 million annually, to strengthen counseling and rehabilitation programmes for those who are addicted to alcohol and drugs.
- The coordination and cooperation of all religious dignitaries of temples, kovils, churches and mosques will be sought for this effort. Institutions that provide such services will be exempted from taxes and financial support will be provided.

## Development of Policies and Strategies

A Centre for Development of Policies and Strategic Planning will be established in place of the Post Monitoring Council. This Council will compile policies on social development and planning, control of social crimes, maintenance of social discipline, and the establishment of strategies to prevent fraud and corruption.

All activities in the economic front will be regularized by strengthening the Strategic Enterprise Management Agency in order to prepare economic strategic plans.





## Comforts, convenience and satisfactory life styles

*A country with Housing, Electricity, Water and Telecommunication Services for every citizen*

### **“Houses for all” for prosperous life styles**

Sri Lanka has made significant progress in providing housing to its people, as a result of the housing programmes carried out by many governments in the past. My policy is that every family in Sri Lanka must own a home. To make this policy a reality, I have already implemented many programmes during the last four years. With the end of the war, we now have an opportunity to accelerate these programmes further. The Government has already prepared a plan to construct 600,000 new houses in order to make “house ownership for all” a reality during the next 6 years.

- Priority will be given in this year’s budget to accelerate the resettlement programme in the North and East, while creating 150,000 new homes for those who were internally displaced.
- For the benefit of employees of government and corporations who are in need of housing, 25 Government Housing Schemes similar to Jalthara, Edmonton and Torrington Housing Schemes, which will be based in the respective capital cities of each district, will be started. These projects will be funded by already pledged foreign financing programmes from India, Korea and China.
- In order to fulfill the housing needs of the University communities, necessary funds will be allocated from the next budget to build 5,000 houses in the vicinity of each University, or to grant suitable lands for this purpose.





- Three new Housing Schemes comprising of 15,000 houses will be started solely for the benefit of migrant workers in the districts of Kurunegala, Anuradhapura and Kandy.
- An initial capital of Rs. 5 billion will be allocated from the next budget to implement 20 schemes of high-rise apartment complexes comprising of 40,000 units altogether, in and around Colombo and suburbs, to solve the housing problems faced by the low income dwellers in Colombo.
- In order to relieve the housing problems of villagers, roofing sheets, tiles and cement will be made available at a concessionary price, under the Gama Naguma programme.
- Since the housing difficulties faced by the fisheries community have not been fully solved yet, an initial allocation of Rs. 1500 million will be made for building 30,000 houses in fishing villages and towns.
- I am aware that about 461,000 people who have been settled in the hills after the 1818 and 1848 freedom struggles and the Waste Lands Act, are still living in very difficult conditions. They will be granted funds to rehabilitate their homes immediately. Those who are living in danger due to landslides will also be provided with new homes in secure areas under a new programme.
- One of my major goals is to make the plantation community a house owning society. Accordingly, instead of the present “line rooms”, every plantation worker family will be a proud owner of a new home with basic amenities by the year 2015. While a sum of Rs. 5 billion will be allocated annually for this purpose as part of the Government contribution, foreign financing will also be utilised for this project.
- The programme of converting dwellers of urban flats and other government housing schemes to be the freehold owners of those homes, will be completed in three months.





## Water is our heritage and life

For more than 2,500 years our civilization developed on the basis of irrigation technology. Sri Lankans inherited a legacy of unsurpassed know-how in the technology of building tanks and irrigation canals. Unfortunately, however, this knowledge is no more as it has been destroyed, together with the irrigation tanks during the several centuries of colonial rule.

The farmer, once respected as a person suitable to even occupy the royal throne, became a helpless hired worker. Even to this day, our farmers do not ask for the sun, moon and the stars, but water. Water will be the support they need to keep our country well fed, and secure in food.

We have already fully realized the strategic importance of water as a natural resource.

- Feasibility studies will be undertaken to find methods to use water resources in the South-West of the country. The Kalu and Kelani rivers will be made use of to make the Southern, North-Western, North-Central and Northern Provinces fulfill their agricultural development potential, as well as to quench the thirst in those regions.
- Steps will be taken to eliminate pollution of water resources and wastage. Water supplies will be augmented so as to fulfil the drinking water requirements of the nation.
- I will take the necessary steps to establish the public ownership of water resources and prevent it from becoming the private property of international wheeler-dealers. Proper environmental protection steps will be taken to safeguard the natural setting of the water sources and the upper watersheds of rivers.





- Knowledge and know-how of the local scientists will be used to augment technologies for rain water harvesting.
- A plan will be prepared for the conservation of all tanks in order to maintain the level of the ground water table.
- Steps will be taken to supply additional water to the tanks of the Northern and North-Central provinces under the Moragahakanda and other Mahaweli projects.
- Thirty new irrigation tanks will be constructed, using local technology and labour along the rivers and streams in the northern plains between Malwatu Oya and Yan Oya.
- A North Central canal will be constructed to feed the reservoirs of Vanni from Moragahakanda.
- The water shortages in the areas of Alla Kantale will be permanently solved by implementing the Mahaweli Right Bank development programme.
- Three new tanks will be constructed in association with Mundeni Aru Catchment Project to solve the irrigation water problems in the areas between Amparai and Pottuvil.
- Hada-oya irrigation project will be launched to develop agriculture in the area of Pothuvil.

## **An end to Blackouts; Electricity for everybody, everyday**

To have been able to provide electricity continuously for 24 hours for 4.2 million households out of 4.7 million households in the country throughout the last four years, when many countries in the world, particularly in the SAARC region, had to curtail electricity supply for about 16 hours a day for various reasons, is an important achievement. This electricity coverage represents an increase of the electricity supply from 3.0 million families to 4.2







million. Only another 500,000 families remain to be supplied with electricity in the country. I will take the necessary steps to provide 100% of the households with continuous electricity by the end of 2012 by making use of the foreign support received already for the on going rural electrification programmes.

- Necessary steps will be taken to develop and provide electricity to the industries in our country at a price that they can compete in the international market, and to households and other electricity consumers at an affordable price.
- The first stage of the Kerawalapitiya Combined Cycle Power Plant generating 200 MW of electricity was added to the national grid on 06/11/2008 and the second stage generating 100 MW will be added to the national grid by 15<sup>th</sup> January, making the total electricity generation capacity of 300 MW. A further 300 MW of electricity capacity will be added to the national grid by December 2010 when the first stage of the Puttalam Thermal Power Plant under construction presently, is completed.
- As the second stage of this project, 600 MW Power Station will be constructed, starting from January 2010, and it will be added to the grid by year 2013.
- The 150 MW Upper Kotmale Hydro Power Station will start generating by June 2011.
- Plans have already been completed to start the construction work on the 120 MW Uma Oya Hydro Power Station and 35 MW Broadlands Hydro Power Station with the next 3 months. Further, the Moragolla Hydro Power Station (35 MW) and Gin Ganga Hydro Power Station (45 MW) will be started within this year.
- The construction of a Coal Power Station of a capacity of 1000 MW will be started in Trincomalee within this year.





- Steps will be taken to meet the increasing electricity demand until year 2020 by constructing all necessary power stations on the basis of minimum cost generating plans.
- The contribution to electricity generation from non conventional renewable energy sources in Sri Lanka will be raised to 10% of the total electricity production, by the year 2016.
- In order to minimise the transmission losses and also to introduce modern technologies, steps have already been taken to modernise and start new construction of transmission networks and substations covering all geographical areas of the country. Under the financing arrangements finalized with the Asian Development Bank, many of these projects have already started.
- A high voltage transmission line of 400 MW capacity between Madurai In India and Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka will be constructed starting from this year, thereby enabling India and Sri Lanka to exchange electricity. This will ensure economic benefits to the country by way of trade of the extra electricity, with the ability to import low priced electricity from India as well.
- The people of our country will be given the benefit of the gradual decommissioning of the high cost Diesel generating plants from the grid, with the addition of first 300 MW Coal Power Station in 2010 and Upper Kotmale Power Station in 2011, in the form of reduced electricity bill.

## Instant Global Villages

The young generation of Sri Lanka need to be broadly empowered with modern information and communication technologies. The future market for employment will depend





entirely on these skills. For these reasons, our youth will be given more opportunities to improve their knowledge in these areas and information and communication technology will be introduced for accessing all services in the country. In particular,

- A national space research center will be established.
- Information technology centers will be established in 25 main cities of the country.
- By 2016, Information technology literacy rate will be improved up to 75%.
- The six fold policy for communication technology development will be implemented.
- A chartered institute for information and communication technology will be established.
- A national policy on Information Technology will be framed so as to eliminate legal drawbacks in the field of IT.

## Developed road network and transport system

### A Great Leap for Highways

What we have seen over the past several years even on television has been a decaying road network in which even a patient could not be taken comfortably or conveniently to a hospital. Out of 11,700 km of national road network, less than 2,000 km had been developed throughout the entire 20 year period before I assumed office. However, during the past 4 years, a road network of 2,278 km of roads were broadened and developed while another 2,823 km is now under construction.





I will develop a further 4,000 km of roads during the next 6 years. Of such network, 1,200 km would be roads in the Northern Province. Already, a large segment of trunk roads have been developed with carpeted surfaces thereby facilitating the travel to any destination in a few hours. At the same time, a concrete surfaced rural roads are also being constructed in almost every village.

- Construction work of 370 bridges has been completed while 116 bridges are under construction along the highways.
- The Southern and Katunayake Expressways will be vested with the public very soon.
- Programmes commenced to construct flyovers and vehicle control through signal lights at busy junctions to reduce road congestion and accidents in the City of Colombo and suburban areas.
- I will continue to construct flyovers and vehicular signaling systems at busy junctions during the next 6 years as well.
- Special attention will be paid to develop roads in the up country during the next 6 year period.
- Development work already commenced on 16,500 km of provincial roads, which will be completed during the next 6 years and vested in the public.

## Public Transport - The Way Forward

### *A National Policy with a modern approach*

About 90% of Sri Lankans use public transport services such as trains, buses, three wheelers, etc., for their day to day travel. However, about 10% of the population, who own private vehicles occupy a large section of roads. This situation has given rise to a series of complex social issues. To address this, I believe a well





regulated and modern transport service should be created while setting up an environment in which public transportation is respected and recognized. The knowledge and understanding that I gained as a passenger travelling in private and CTB buses, and trains have guided me in this approach and is ingrained in my mind.

Accordingly, the key components in the government policy on public transport will be to equip public transportation with information technology and to operate it in an environment friendly manner.

The quality improvements and physical development in the public transport system under the Mahinda Chintana programme can obviously be seen by anyone. The increase in the bus fleet of SLTB from 2,100 in 2005 to over 5,000 today and the adding of Power Sets and compartments to the railway system after 15 years significantly improved the train service, that was previously heading to disaster. The change, I see more as a necessity, rather than a miracle. My desire is to unify our motherland through developing the rail track from Kankasanthurai to Kataragama. That will undoubtedly create a permanent bond of friendship between the Sinhala and Tamil people. I invite you to consider my second term in power as the golden era of the public transportation. My philosophy on public transportation lies, not on mere trains or buses, but on a `passenger` centric, practical and modern approach.

- I will prepare an effective national transport policy and transform all transport services including train, bus and three wheelers, into an efficient, well regulated, modern and important service. Information technology will be introduced as the backbone of the public transportation before the end of 2010, thereby providing maximum benefits to the passenger.





- A transport zone will be established integrating all bus stands in Colombo with the Fort railway station to provide effective and efficient services to hundreds and thousands of passengers. This will be a major goal to be achieved in 2010.

### ***Bringing the train back onto the right track***

- Extension of the coastal rail track upto Beliatta, the first extension since independence, will be completed in 2010.
- Yal Devi train will commence operation upto Kankasanthurei by 2011.
- The train operation to Thalaimannar will commence in 2011 after 30 long years.
- The feasibility study and negotiations with Indian government on construction of a rail track from Thalaimannar to India will be done in 2010.
- A Luxury train service between Colombo and Katunayake International Airport will commence in 2010.
- Railway stations at 25 major cities located across the country will be modernized. Bus stands and facilities to park private vehicles and bicycles will be provided at most of these stations.
- A railway yard will be constructed for container transportation, while goods transportation will be a key objective of the train services.
- A special unit will be established within the railway department with the objective of increasing revenue by 25% through the development of lands and properties belonging to the department. This will be done in a way that it will preserve government revenue and public property.





- When the phase two of the Norochcholai power project and Upper Kothmale power plant are in operation in 2012, rail tracks in Colombo and suburban areas will be electrified.
- The feasibility study for constructing a metro rail system in the City of Colombo and in the sub-urban areas will commence in 2010.

Accordingly, the use of electric trains and metro trains in the capital city as the main mode of transport will lead to increase the efficiency and productivity thereby improving the environment and public health.

### ***Putting Buses on the Right Track***

The maintenance of a healthy relationship between SLTB and private bus operators is a very important aspect in public passenger transport service. It is my intention to protect the bus service and its industrial qualities while strengthening the state owned bus fleet as well.

I firmly believe that the operation of bus services across the country according to timetables is very important to the passengers in order to provide maximum support to the country's production process.

- My policy is to pay the highest attention of the school bus service. There were 182 school buses when I came into power in 2005. It has now increased to 634 during the last 3 years. It will be increased to 1,500 during the next 2 years ending 2010, thereby addressing the transport difficulties of school children.
- I will first introduce an electronic ticketing system for `Sisu Sariya` bus service and then extend it to the SLTB and private buses, as well.





- The private school van service will be upgraded and the service will be registered and formalized.
- A special insurance scheme will be introduced for drivers and conductors of both SLTB and private bus service. Steps will be taken to introduce a pension scheme to employees of the private bus service after discussions with private bus owners.
- The Night bus service, morning bus service as well as “Gani Sariya” bus service, which is currently operational in rural areas, will be strengthened and continued, thereby reinforcing the confidence of passengers in these services.
- The feasibility study to operate a BRT special bus service in the City of Colombo has already been completed and this service is expected to be implemented by end 2010.
- Special tax relief and VAT relief will be granted to private bus operators while steps will be taken to address the problems faced by them especially issues in relation to leasing of vehicles, the purchases of spare parts and the new purchase of vehicles.
- The payment of salaries of all employees of the state owned bus service on the same day while providing them with a uniform will also be implemented during the first year of my second term.

### ***Pride of Place to Three Wheelers***

- A social insurance scheme will be introduced covering all three wheel owners of the country.
- Orders will be issued to all Local Government Institutions requesting them to provide suitable parking spaces in all cities.







- Special tax relief and soft loans will be introduced to encourage the introduction of environment friendly three wheelers.
- A special programme will be introduced in 2010 to ensure professional dignity, respect and safety of all three wheel owners and drivers.

## **A Unitary state, not to be divided**

### **A United Motherland – A Nation with one vision**

As in the Eastern Province, Provincial Council Elections will be held in the Northern Province within a short period of time to establish democracy. Thereby new representatives will be included in the All Party Conference and I believe that this would be a forum to arrive at a true national concurrence.

#### ***One country – One Law***

After several decades, we are now able to function as one country under one law. At this Presidential Election Campaign, I have decided to place my views frankly before the country so that we can engage in an open and intellectual discourse regarding a new Constitution.

#### ***Supremacy to the village – Jana sabha***

In my previous Mahinda Chintana policy statement, I stated that my main expectation is to break the fundamentalist concepts of a traditional homeland and a separate state, and empower the citizens of this country to arrive at a peaceful political solution which would devolve power to all its citizens.





- In accordance I established 'Jana Sabhas' parallel to the 'Gama Neguma' programme to develop the villages that are the bed rock of provincial governance.
- Moving on, I will legislate 'Jana Sabhas' that will be established in all Grama Niladari Divisions and will be the focal point for local development, co-existence and harmony and social development.
- I will assign all development activities pertaining to the "Gama Neguma", programme including decision making, implementation, operation and maintenance and the prevention of corruption and fraud to the 'Jana Sabhas'

### ***From the Jana Sabhawa to the Gam Sabhawa***

I will establish Gam Sabhas comprised of several Jana Sabhas as the first unit of local representation. The villagers will be vested with power to appoint a political representative to the Gam Sabha.

Traditionally the Gam Sabhas and the Grama Rajya system were the successful administrative units. These were established by King Pandhukabhaya when he initiated a national revival. The 'Gam Rajya' and 'Panchayat' system in Southern India and in some other parts of India, have similar characteristics. The British abolished the 'Gam Sabha' system during the colonial era, but later reinstated the system as they too were aware of its success. Our society has changed. Therefore I intend to adapt the 'Jana Sabha' and 'Gam Sabha' system to suit the modern cities and future society.

### ***From Gam Sabhas to Pradeshiya Sabhas – Urban Councils***

Prdeshiya Sabhas and Urban Councils comprising of several Gam Sabhas will be the fundamental and strongest unit of national administration. The demarcation of Prdeshiya Sabha and Urban Council limits will be regulated taking into consideration the current population, society, culture and environment.





New proposals will be executed to amend the electoral process for Pradeshiya Sabhas. The new process will be set up to elect the majority representation from Gam Sabha limits and the minority representation on a proportionate basis.

The Pradeshiya Sabha and Urban Council Ordinance will be amended to vest new powers and to ensure mutual coordination.

### ***Provincial Councils***

After two decades, we now have experience regarding the Provincial Council system. Different opinions and views regarding the relevance or irrelevance and features of the system are discussed. There are those who are in favour of the system and those who are not. However, it is an intrinsic part of the constitution through the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment and is a functional system. I am in favour of an open discussion on the amendment to the Provincial Council System. This discourse will be the basis for the discussion that I intend to initiate with all political parties and organizations.

In the past, several proposals have been made regarding Rata Sabhas, District Development Councils, and Regional Councils. These proposals too can be discussed at this forum. What we need is not a divided system but a system that will establish the unitary state. Keeping this in mind, I will open a discussion and arrive at consensus on how to move towards a divisional administration.

I will forward a proposal to implement an electoral system for the Provincial Councils that is an admixture of the Pradeshiya Sabha and District proportionate system.

I will re-establish the Northern Provincial Council under the 13th amendment with immediate effect.

I will seek the assistance of the Provincial Councilors of the Northern Province to expedite and strengthen the Uthuru Wasanthaya development programme that seeks to upgrade the





living standards of the Northern population and ensure sustainable development.

### ***The Senate***

A senate will be established to facilitate the participation of religious leaders and professionals who are not represented through the electoral process to ensure that the Legislation in parliament and the regulations in the Provincial Councils are subject to meaningful discussion and debate. This Senate will have no impact on the unitary state and the supremacy of parliament

### ***Parliament as a State Council***

Parliament is the supreme body that enacts law and the responsibility of state finance is vested in parliament.

I propose to change the proportionate electoral system, used in electing members to Parliament. This system leaves provision for a privileged few to enter Parliament creating a tendency for corruption and fraud and a disruption of local representation.

I propose to re-introduce constituencies that cover one or more Divisional Limits.

I propose to set up a District and National Proportionate System to provide representation for minority political trends and ethnic groups.

My objective is to establish a stable government; a strong opposition and representation of all minority trends through the above amendment.

As a result, there will be a member of the Parliament who is responsible for each area and those who do not have wealth or power will have an opportunity to be elected and represent the constituents.





The power of the President to dissolve Parliament, arbitrarily, after one year will be abolished except in a national exigency, as a mark of respect to the people's mandate to Parliament.

The President will participate in parliamentary sessions to establish co-existence between parliament and the president.

The powers of the Advisory Committees in all Ministries will be strengthened to ensure that Members of Parliament act transparently in all state financial matters.

### ***Presidency as a Trusteeship***

I was particularly careful when exercising the powers of the Executive Presidency. In the past, the Executive Presidency was used to postpone elections, to topple elected governments, to disrupt the judiciary, to ban political parties, to suppress demonstrations and lead the country towards a violent culture, to sell state institutions at under-valued prices, to defend criminals and to grant concessions to unscrupulous businessmen. Agreements that betrayed the country were entered into using the powers of the Executive Presidency.

I used such powers to unite the country. An open discussion on the Executive Presidency will be held with all parties. The Executive Presidency will be converted into a Trusteeship which honours the mandate given to Parliament by being accountable to parliament, establishes equality before the law, is accountable to the judiciary and enacts laws that are accountable to the judiciary, and is not in conflict with the judiciary.

### ***A Non- aligned foreign policy***

I will continue Sri Lanka's non-aligned foreign policy. During the last four years we witnessed the benefits of maintaining friendly relations with India, Japan, China, Pakistan and other Asian





countries. I am committed to continue these friendly relations in the political, economic, defence, trade and cultural arena.

I will ensure that Sri Lanka abides by the global treaties and agreements on environmental and climate change and will strengthen Sri Lanka's ties with the UN Agencies.

I will maintain the dignity of my country in foreign relations and will initiate a new programme to forge relations with countries.

## **Shared values, rapid development and lasting peace.**

### **A New Path for National Cohabitation**

I stated the following in presenting the Mahinda Chintana at the Presidential Elections in 2005.

'I am determined to think afresh and to find a new solution to the crisis in the North and the East. Having considered all the pros and cons of the steps taken in the past on this issue, I would like to consider 'an undivided state, honorable peace and a majority consensus.

Following the above policies, as soon as I was elected to the Presidency, I convened an all party conference of democratic parties to which I stated my expectation in terms of Mahinda Chintana. I even engaged in a discussion with the LTTE on the Ceasefire Agreement which was a threat to national security, the pride and sovereignty of the country.

The response of the LTTE was to use the non confrontational discussions to strengthen their war effort as done before. The terrorist attack that was launched from the Mavil Aru prompted us





to launch a humanitarian operation to achieve an honourable peace. Our forces gained victory after victory by launching attacks by air, sea and land and were able to unite this country with the determination of an undivided country and honourable peace.

While the humanitarian operations were in progress, I also introduced a new national political-military strategy. This was based on disarmament, democratization and development. Democracy was restored in all areas liberated from terrorism by holding Local government elections.

The Internally Displaced was resettled much faster than in any other country. In addition the 'Negenahira Navodaya' or the 'Eastern Revival' and the 'Uthuru Wasanthaya' or the 'Northern Spring', development programs launched an unprecedented development in the North and the East.

The All Party Conference continued simultaneously and through it's Representative Committee critical political issues were subject open discussion.

Rather than imposing a solution from above, I have sought to arrive at a solution through discussion and dialogue with political parties, civil society organizations and the people themselves.

It is extremely difficult to arrive at consensus in a conflict rife with disillusionment, divisions, individual views and blood shed. However we have already laid the foundation to achieve consensus. While I agree that everyone has the right to his or her opinion it is my contention that we need to arrive at consensus on the facts.

It is this wide national consensus that is required for national cohabitation.

Our soldiers did not unite only our country but they also united the expectations of all ethnic groups. I therefore firmly believe that we could engage in open discussion and reach consensus without





the fear of guns. Especially the people in the North and the East who are resettled and are no longer living in fear will have the opportunity to elect their own representatives.

### ***Eastern Revival (Negenahira Navodaya)***

The battle that changed the history of this country after independence began with the closure of the Mavil Aru Dam, regaining it and handing it over to the public. It is with much pleasure that I state that the Eastern revival program which commenced with the liberation of Thoppigala in July 2007, has resulted in the liberation of the entire Eastern Province and its unprecedented development since.

- All the main roads in the Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara Districts have been widened and developed. After liberating the East, the roads leading from Karaitivu and Potuvil to Siyabalanduwa through Moneragala have been developed ensuring a rapid economic and social connectivity to the Ampara District and the Southern, Sabaragamuwa and Uva Provinces.
- The Eastern coastal route from Panama to Pulmudai, and the Kantale Seruwila road is under construction at a rapid phase. The remaining roads in the Eastern Province will be completed during the next two years, connecting to other parts of the country linking the province economically, socially and politically to the rest of the country.
- To expedite the transport service to Colombo and the North Central Province from Batticaloa, the road from Maradankadawala - Pollonnaruwa, Thirukkondiyamadu has been already constructed. The Erakkandi Bridge in the Trincomalee District has been already commissioned and construction of all other bridges has been completed including the Yan Oya bridge.







- The “Arugambe bridge ” in the Ampara District has already been commissioned and the Oddimavadi and new Kalladi bridges have been already handed over to the public. In order to ensure safe drinking water supply, 59 water projects have been commissioned and the construction of twelve tanks is already underway.
- 164 New buildings have been constructed while 327 schools have been renovated. All schools will be equipped with modern facilities including Science and Computer laboratories.
- In order to develop the health sector, 55 new wards were built in the hospitals and 445 new doctors were recruited.
- To upgrade livelihoods, 80,000 acres of paddy fields were cultivated and 2500 home gardens and 19 fruit villages were established. In the future, I will enhance such efforts to upgrade livelihoods and will introduce a new market system for produce.
- In order to improve the dairy industry, 3 new modern farms have been built and 50 dairy villages were organized. Owners were found for about 85,000 stray cattle. I will give more facilities to these villagers and loan facilities to improve the future of such farmers. My objective is to develop these areas and ensure that the benefits of development accrue to the people.
- An Export Processing Zone will be set up.
- I will ensure that 100,000 acres of paddy land will be newly cultivated and 5,000 home gardens and 100 fruit villages are established.
- In order to develop the dairy industry, 3 model dairy farms are already built and 100 dairy farm villages, will be established in the near future.





## ***Northern Spring (Uthuru Wasanthaya)***

My government and I are fully aware that it is the Tamils and Muslims who lived in the Northern and Eastern Provinces were the most affected by the conflict that lasted for 30 years. However, now there is sustainable peace and this is what the people of the north and east expected and so did the rest of the country.

I am aware that there are wives who have lost their husbands; parents who have lost their children; children who have lost their parents. There are disabled people and displaced people who lost their property. Therefore even before ending the war, infrastructure facilities and livelihood opportunities were provided for those living in the eastern province under the Eastern Revival program.

It is my focused resolution to provide all these benefits to the people of the North, under the Northern Spring program. Therefore a large scale development programme that encompasses economic and infrastructure development is already underway under the Northern Spring program.

- All restrictions hindering the free movement of the people in the Northern Province will be removed.
- Given the security risks the high security zones will be gradually phased out.
- Facilities will be provided through “Sathosa” to transport all agricultural produce cultivated in the North, including onions and chilies, to various Economic Centers of the country
- The Maddavachchia- Mannar Road, the Jaffna – Point Pedro Road, the Jaffna – Karihinagar road through Minipe, Murukkan, the Shilawatura road, the Oddusuda Nadunkarni road and the Vavuniya Horowpathana road will be widened and developed.





- I will develop the Jaffna Kandy road (A9). The Jaffna-Puttalam road will be developed into a highway.
- I will build the “Sangupita bridge” and will connect the Jaffna Peninsula to Puttalam and Mannar. I will develop each island in Jaffna and will build a network of roads to connect them to the Jaffna peninsula.
- The Jaffna Teaching Hospital will be modernized completely. Simultaneously, all hospitals in Killinochchi, Mullative and Mankulam including hospitals in all towns will be developed.
- The “DoraiAppa” ground will be modernized.
- Mankulam will be developed as a symbol of “Independence” and will be handed over to the public in the month of March 2010.
- Hostel facilities at the Jaffna University and the Technical colleges will be expanded.
- Two paddy processing plants with modern technology will be established for value added production for the benefit of paddy farmers.
- An agriculture faculty will be established in Kilinochchi as an impetus for agriculture development in the Northern Province.
- A Water Supply Project for the Jaffna peninsular will commence in March 2010.
- In 2011 the Talaimannar, Madavachchia Rail track will be completed.
- By the year 2012, the Jaffna city will be made the one of the most outstanding cities in South Asia.





- Armed combatants will be rehabilitated in keeping with their own social and cultural identity and will be handed over to their parents.

### ***Resettlement of the displaced in the North and the East in their own villages***

Under the Uthuru Wasanthaya programme, the internally displaced living in welfare camps in Vavuniya are being resettled. All those from Vavuniya, Mannar and Jaffna and part of Mulativu and Killinochchi are already resettled. The remainder from Mulativu and Killinochchi Districts will be resettled systematically without delay, based on the speed at which the de-mining process takes place.

A comprehensive project will be implemented to resettle the Muslim persons forcibly evicted by the LTTE from the Northern Province during 1990, in their respective places of origin with due attention being paid to their housing, livelihood and infrastructure facilities.

### ***Housing***

- Each family that is resettled will be provided with Rs. 50,000 to construct temporary shelter and additional building materials worth Rs. 50,000.
- On a long term basis, Rs. 325,000 will be provided to each family to reconstruct houses destroyed in the war.
- Rs. 100,000 will be provided to families for the renovation of houses.
- Assistance will be provided to every household to construct latrines.





### ***Agricultural Incentives***

- All families engaged in agrarian activities will be provided with agriculture equipment.
- All families engaged in agrarian activities will be provided with seeds and fertilizer relevant to the crops cultivated by them.
- All Farmer Organizations will be provided with a Water Pump and a tractor free of charge.

### ***Fishing Industry***

- All fishermen will be provided with fishing equipment.
- Two fish processing centers will be established in Mannar and Jaffna.

### ***Animal Husbandry***

- Equipment and chicks will be provided for the poultry industry.
- Villages for dairy farmers will be established to promote the dairy industry.
- Those who wish to engage in self-employment will be provided with the necessary equipment free of charge.

## **Respect for fauna and flora**

### **A Green Country, a Clean Environment**

My administration will be based on policies aiming at conserving the environment, nationally and internationally. Due to the application of the principle that the 'abuser should pay for the abuse' the Environment Ministry is self-financing reducing the burden on the Treasury. We were in a position to increase the





income from the mineral sector by three fold during the last four years while the export of our natural resources as raw materials was curtailed. The State intervened in controlling the prices of mineral products through a Mining Company under the “Ran Derana Project.” ending the era of importing sleepers for the railways and lamp posts for electricity projects. The Timber Corporation doubled its income under its “Timber Power” (Deva Javaya) programme.

For the first time, a national waste management programme was launched with the objective of creating a country without rubbish by 2012 under the “Pilisaru” Project. The “Gaja Mithuru” project seeks to ensure the co-existence of man and elephant reducing the threat to the elephant population. To prevent ocean pollution, I have strengthened the Ocean Pollution Prevention Authority through a new Act. We were internationally acclaimed as the best country that protected the Ozone layer in 2008.

### ***Green Lanka for a sustainable future***

It is evident that Sri Lanka cannot sustain its development efforts due to the lack of resources and environmental pollution. Consequently the “Haritha Lanka” programme will be launched from 2010-2020, under my leadership, with the objective of creating a base for sustainable development. This intervention includes activities to protect our water resources and catchment areas, protection of the ocean and aquatic resources, prevention of air pollution, soil conservation, the introduction of innovative methods for agriculture, promotion of renewable energy sources, promote eco friendly industries, build healthy towns and housing schemes, develop an environmental friendly transport system, implement waste management systems, prepare the country for environmental change, and to promote cultural awareness and education necessary for the above. Several themes will be selected for the action plan. Measures also will be taken to initiate joint action in facing the environmental challenges in the South Asian context.





An Action Plan will be implemented from 2010 to seek solutions to the problems emerging out of environmental changes such as droughts, floods, cyclones, Tsunami, extinction of species, endemic diseases and threats to food cultivation.

### ***Garbage Free Sri Lanka***

The responsibility for waste management is vested upon the urban councils and Pradeshiya Sabhas. However, in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Urban Development and the Board of Land Reclamation, under the initiative of the Central Environment Authority, I launched the “Pilisaru Project” in July 2008. I have launched a national waste management policy and a national plan of action aimed at a garbage free Sri Lanka by 2012, utilizing our own financial resources amounting to Rupees 5,600 million. By doing so, I have taken steps to rehabilitate the huge garbage mountains and implement a methodical waste management system in the future. I wish to state that I have taken measures to utilize foreign technology and private sector investment to achieve this end.

### ***Beautiful Cities – “Green Villages”***

To ensure sustainable urban development I have planned to convert the suburbs, of the capital city, into “beautiful green towns”. I will launch ‘green’ walking lanes, conserve cultivable land and rehabilitate canals in our major cities. This will be done in collaboration with the Central Environmental Authority and the Urban Development Ministry, as they have already initiated, the concept of green cities.

I will launch green villages under the ‘Gama Naguma’ programme to make our villages environmentally friendly.

### ***From Forest conservation to Water Conservation – “Girithuru Sevana”***





Our hinterland is the base for water conservation and integrated water resource management. Due to the expansion of the plantation sector by the colonial powers and unplanned development, our catchment areas are destroyed. Therefore, I have launched a programme to re-forest the catchment areas titled the “Girithuru Sevana” programme. Furthermore, I will promote the planting of local trees instead of the imported species under the ‘Hela Thuru Sevana’ programme to promote indigenous reforestation.

### ***Gaja Mithuro – Elephant-Human Co-existence***

- Unplanned development and terrorism have destroyed our national parks and sanctuaries. Consequently, elephants have invaded villages and have created an elephant human conflict. As a solution to this problem, I have implemented the “Gaja Mithuro” programme in 2009. As a part of this programme, ‘elephant control’ units and electric fences were established over 600 kilometers during the last two years alone. I will complete these electric fences in all affected villages, including the North and the East, in the next three years.
- All sanctuaries such as Wilpaththu, Kumana, Yan Oya, and Mundikulam which were closed due to terrorist activities will be re-opened and modernized during the year.
- I will implement a new project, at a cost of 2,600 million rupees, to protect the threatened animal species and to promote environmental conservation from the year 2010.







## Priority for Youth

In recent history we have witnessed several incidents of the violent destruction of our energetic youth. This is the reason why I decided to allocate more space for young people in the *Mahinda Chintana*.

This century belongs to the youth. It is the century of knowledge.

- All young people between the ages of 18 – 22 will be given financial assistance up to a maximum of Rs. 200,000 to pursue tertiary education and/or training in a field of his/her choice.
- In developed countries there is a greater attraction for tertiary education programs among the youth. A conducive environment will be created to increase the attraction for tertiary education among youth and an attitudinal change will be brought about to give tertiary education greater acceptance.
- An Information Technology program known as **e-life** will be launched to link the Sri Lankan youth to the world. I will implement this program with the modernization of *vidatha* and *nena sala* and by combining them with the *gama neguma* program. Given the youth population a minimum of 10 **e-life** Centers will be established in each Divisional Secretariat.
- A program will be launched to direct skilled youth for foreign employment.
- I propose to establish an Employment and Entrepreneurship Management Centre to reduce youth unemployment and generate economic activities for youth.





- I will identify and provide opportunities for our youth to follow internationally reputed training programs and tertiary education programs that provide internationally recognized qualifications so that our young people are equipped to meet the demands of the global work force.
- To ensure that rural youth acquire the necessary training to secure highly paid jobs, I propose to create a manpower reserve of 150,000 within this year. This reserve will comprise of 25,000 with knowledge and skills in Accounting and Technology, 25,000 in Information Technology, 25,000 in the Tourism Sector, 25,000 in the Construction Sector, 15,000 in the Health Sector, 10,000 in the Beauty Culture Sector and 25,000 in other specialized areas.
- I propose to provide the necessary coordination and facilitation to ensure that at least one youth from every family in Sri Lanka would get an employment opportunity with a substantial wage, either in the public sector, private sector, or through foreign employment.
- To channel small scale foreign investment directly to the villages, I propose to introduce the concept of “Industrial Villages”. I will create a mechanism by which those who have diverse skills and are already engaged in handicrafts and traditional artwork are able to export their products to international markets with the facilitation of the BOI and *Gama Neguma* program. This would ensure that they get maximum benefits by avoiding the involvement of middlemen. It is my intention to transform these industrial villages into an important segment in our economy that will facilitate the flow of foreign exchange directly to villages.
- The skills of the rural youth in sports, arts and cultural activities will be enhanced by broadening and reorganizing





the functions of the Youth Services Council. I propose to enhance the knowledge and experience of youth by sending them on International Youth Exchange Programs.

## A healthy life through sports

Sports are not confined to the energetic youth but encompass the young and the old. Fitness, mental development and a team spirit are interconnected with sports and I believe that the development of sports is an essential investment for the future. Therefore I will strengthen sports to ensure the balanced development of all citizens.

- Measures will be taken to establish large scale sport complexes in each province.
- As there is a strong inter link between sports and tourism, I will promote sports to strengthen tourism.
- The standard of sports will be improved by organizing international sports festivals and events to develop sports in the country. I will also make use of the excellent climatic conditions in Sri Lanka to bring high international recognition to our country.
- To ensure that Sri Lanka gets Olympic medals in the future, I will promote sports such as athletics, archery, shooting, table tennis and badminton.
- I will build a National Centre for training of trainers (coaches) in all areas of sports.
- I will take steps to establish a “Sports Health Unit” in every Base Hospital.





## Focus on modern education and knowledge systems

### Students and Teachers to take up future challenges

We have witnessed many education reforms and restructuring processes in the education sector. However, when one reads a history book we do not feel a sense of pride, when one reads a book on the first language one detests the language, when one reads the English text book you detest the English language. These are the results of the many reforms that have been confined to the printing of textbooks, compiling of syllabi and changing names of schools. Consequently, I have not observed any results other than a generation without a sense of pride of the country and a brain drain.

Instead I propose to launch education reforms that are targeted, changes attitudes and is directed at producing a creative Sri Lankan.

### *Early childhood development*

A Pre School should not be a place that takes away love from the child but it should be a place that gives love. The main objective of Pre School Education is to instill feelings of national pride, develop interpersonal skills and team work and socialize the child.

- The Children's Secretariat will be reconstituted as an authority with wider powers similar to those vested in the National Child Protection Authority. All private and state owned Pre Schools, Crèches and Day Care Centers in the country will be brought under the proposed Authority for policy formulation, implementation and regulation.





- I will also ensure the allocation of government funds to all Pre School to comply with the above mentioned regulatory framework.

### **Formal Education**

It is observed in the recent past that over 300,000 unskilled youth enter the job market annually as they have either failed the GCE O/L examination or have failed to access university education. I will not shirk my responsibility for these young people.

The education system should not be focused on the next ten years but should be focused on the next century. I strongly believe that we need to assess how productive is the time spent by a student today for his or her future. I will introduce reforms that cover the number of classrooms and the examination system to ensure that students are not vulnerable within the system.

- The present age limit of compulsory education fixed at 14 years will be extended to the ordinary level examination or to 16 years of age.
- In order to broaden the avenues for higher education I will increase the number of class rooms in schools and introduce reforms in the prevailing examination system.
- As the mother tongue reflects ones national identity and aspirations for innovation and creativity, the language of education should be the mother tongue. I will ensure that every person has the right to pursue education from the primary level to a degree in his or her mother tongue.
- I will equally ensure that every child has a right to engage in sports as well as in education.
- If a child excels in languages or aesthetic subjects, I will provide all facilities to such children to enhance and develop such skills.





- I will create an environment for every child to be exposed to subjects such as Information Technology, Computer and Communications, Technological and productivity enhancement skills from the school level

### ***Language Laboratories***

Proficiency in the English language is an essential requirement if one is to successfully overcome the challenges of the modern world. Language skills should be accessible to all. In order to achieve this objective more attractive and effective Language Teaching Centers equipped with modern technology will be introduced.

- Language laboratories equipped with all modern state of the art facilities will be set up in all Universities and Higher Educational Institutions. I will ensure that all graduates acquire proficiency in the English language within three years.
- Every education division will be equipped with one such state of the art Language laboratory. Such laboratories will provide opportunities to learn not only the English language but also Sinhala, Tamil and other languages.
- To ensure equity in access to education I will deploy teachers to teach the three main subjects of English, Mathematics and Science within the next two years. I will ensure that all such teachers are trained and equipped with the modern methodologies in teaching.
- Steps will be taken to develop and introduce special teaching and supervision methodologies to assist students who fail all subjects, as a result of a lacuna in the education environment and in the environment at home.





- I will establish schools equipped with all facilities such as science laboratories, and libraries for students in threatened villages and in the plantation sector.
- Immediate action will be taken to provide teacher training for 1,000 young men and women in the plantation sector who have the required qualifications to teach subjects such as Science and Mathematics in the Tamil medium.
- I will not allow any child to dropout from school due to economic reasons. I will strengthen the Child Protection Fund under the Ministry of Child Development and Woman Empowerment and widen the scope for provision of scholarships for such children.
- In order to meet the aspirations of the parents seeking opportunities to get their children admitted to “Good Schools”, I will establish 1,000 highly developed schools throughout the country.
- An accelerated school development project to enhance the education in the areas that were under the threat of the war in the North and East will be implemented.
- I will establish a separate Department under the Ministry of Education to streamline the registration, management and to prevent malpractices in International Schools for the benefit of the children in such schools.
- State patronage will be provided to enhance *Pirivena* education.
- In keeping with the new Educational Policy, I will implement a special professional development program to improve professionalism, and upgrade the dignity of the teaching profession.





- Steps will be taken to improve the professionalism of the principals and education administrators. I will also provide facilities for them to pursue postgraduate studies.
- I will ensure efficiency, productivity and good governance in the education ministry, the education administration structure in the provinces and in the educational institutions at national level.

### ***University education for knowledge***

I firmly believe that a country's achievements are based on organizing its manpower efficiently and effectively. In this context the University is the center of generating and disseminating knowledge. I always believe that the aim of university education is to create someone who could see the world beyond its horizon. Universities should not be factories that create technicians for employment. Hence I provided the necessary infrastructure and human resources to establish new universities and to develop the existing local university system during the past four years.

- We have the opportunity to make this country a knowledge hub within the South Asian region. I will develop and implement an operational plan to make this country a local and international research and training centre for knowledge within this year.
- With a view to achieving this objective and to enable the structural necessities, I will restructure the University Grants Commission.
- I believe it is necessary to create a new educational framework that will provide liberal thinking, broad dialogue and opportunities for entertainment instead of the present system that confines the undergraduate to lectures, assignments and examinations.







- I will establish Information Technology faculties in all universities.
- A Higher Technological and Professional Training Institution for acquiring new knowledge will be introduced. I will also ensure that the courses in these Institutions will target the foreign employment market with high demand.
- I will introduce the new Digital Scholarship scheme to all students attending these institutions.
- A Commission to look into the management of professional higher education institutes, with the exception of the state universities in the country, will be established without delay.
- An opportunity will be provided to obtain a degree by Distance Education for 20,000 students in the priority list who have passed the Advanced Level Examination but have not been selected for University admission.
- I will introduce a methodology to prevent the delays in conducting examinations and release of results for the external degrees. As an alternative, I will popularize the Open University education system throughout the country.
- I will promote the establishment of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) through international institutions to create new employment opportunities for the youth.
- In order to improve the quality of University education I will provide opportunities to the lecturers to pursue postgraduate education in Sri Lanka and in leading foreign Universities and Research Institutions.
- I will enact necessary legislation to facilitate lecturers and executive staff in the Universities to work as consultants in Government Ministries, Departments or Corporations and Statutory Boards during their Sabbatical Leave.





- I will introduce a new housing scheme for university lecturers. Steps will also be taken by the Government to provide all University students with hostel facilities.
- Ceiling of income of parents of the undergraduates eligible to receive *Mahapola* Scholarships will be increased from Rs.250,000 to Rs. 400,000. This will benefit a large number of undergraduates who are otherwise denied the *Mahapola* scholarships at present.
- I accept the right of undergraduates to engage in politics. However, I will not allow a minority group to deprive the rights of the entire student community by attempting to promote their political agenda.
- Opportunities will be provided to award the degrees in Buddhist Philosophy, Pali and Sanskrit by the *Privinas* who are recognized to do so. *Rajakeeya Panditha* Examination will be given the equal status of a Degree.

## A Healthy Society

### A Healthy Tomorrow

The supreme gift I could give to my people is “Health”. As stated in the Buddha Dhamma, “Health is the supreme wealth”. Accordingly, I will pave the way for all Sri Lankans to attain such wealth by creating an environment conducive to a healthy life for all. I also have the highest esteem for all those who work tirelessly in the Health Sector from Doctors to Nurses to all other staff, in spite of being criticized severely for the smallest of mistakes.

- It is imperative that a healthy work-force is maintained, and that should be the prime responsibility of the Health sector during this second decade of the 21st century, when the





country is to move towards a modern state with a speedy economic development process. Towards that end, and I will make every endeavour to launch a successful and comprehensive community health development programme in our country.

- The free Health System in Sri Lanka has earned much praise internationally as being one of the best in the world. In this backdrop, I will further strengthen this service by enhancing the physical and technical infrastructure of the health service, upgrading its human resources, and bringing about positive attitudinal changes in order to provide a still a better service to the general public.
- I will make the necessary policy changes for the Central Environment Authority to work in collaboration with the Ministry of Health to tackle issues in the spread of diseases due to the increase in environmental pollution and global environmental changes.
- The biological data of each child born in this country will be maintained by the Jana Sabha Secretariats. This will enable the government to monitor the health of all children, and be able to provide the necessary assistance, if and when required.
- This programme will be extended to include a system whereby a patient's condition, even if he or she is out of the country, could be monitored and accessed through the world wide web.
- In addition, a health care programme has already been launched to reduce the infant and pregnant mothers' mortality rates in the country.
- In order to prevent malnutrition and undernourishment of our children, I will take the necessary steps to distribute





necessary items such as milk, medicines, vitamins etc. through the Jana Sabha Secretariats.

- I will also launch an island-wide programme to prevent our youth falling prey to drugs, smoking and alcohol. I will also mobilize special classes in schools and sports centres to conduct awareness programmes for our youth.
- I will set up a separate unit to deal with womens' diseases at the Ministry of Health.
- Deviating from the conventional style of hospitals, I will build special "outdoor" hospitals in every province in the country for patients with heart ailments and for others who require mental tranquility and solitude for recovery.
- A programme will be launched with a wider scope for the complete eradication of diseases spread by mosquitoes such as dengue, whilst at the same time, research and expertise will be enhanced in tackling diseases such as malaria, rabies and TB.
- A programme will also be launched to sensitize communities and to integrate services and human resources of all provincial health units, environmental ministry offices, and other health services units, in order to better coordinate and integrate the overall health services in the country.
- Every province will be set up with a specialist hospitals, which at present, is limited only to Colombo.
- We need to properly identify the required changes and action that needs to be taken to tackle the issue of how to care for and look after our aging population. Hence, I will establish special health centres across the country to cater to the needs of elders, for their mental well-being as well as to be able to provide them protection.





- I will identify the existing obstacles in taking modern technological advances made in medical science to rural hospitals, nursing homes and other health service outlets, and take immediate steps to remedy such obstacles and provide a viable and a practical solution for all to have access to modern medical science and technology.
- Immediate steps will also to be taken to address, tackle and combat diseases such as cancer and kidney related ailments. I will appoint a working committee, consisting of independent experts in the field, to study and make recommendations to tackle these issues, within six months.
- I will also provide financial assistance towards conducting medical research in the areas of cancer, genetical science and social science.
- I have already made allocations in the Budget of a sum of Rs 40 million to complete the construction of the “Hope Ward” at the Maharagama Cancer Hospital in 2010. I will also launch a special programme for those patients who seek treatment at the Maharagama Cancer Hospital from all parts of around the country, while also providing for accommodation facilities for visitors of such patients.
- I will further strengthen the already successful programme to prevent and control the spread of AIDS in Sri Lanka.
- Essential medicines and drugs will be produced locally in order to reduce the prices of drugs, and a standards system and a registration system will be put in place to halt the import of low quality drugs and medicine into the market. I will also reform and restructure the Drugs Control Board to cater to these needs.
- I will implement a national policy on nursing services through which all issues pertaining to this service will be remedied.





- The Government community health service officers who render a yeomen service to the nation will be made a separate and a distinct service sector. This will, in turn, uplift their integrity as a profession as well as contribute towards providing a better service to the community.

### ***Indigenous Medicine***

- The research being conducted in indigenous medicine methods, which will be utilized towards uplifting overall health services I will be enhanced.
- The growing of crops for the production of drugs locally will encourage. I will also take measures to popularize the use of indigenous medicinal methods throughout the country.
- The use of indigenous medicine will be promoted as a tourist attraction.
- A pension scheme for indigenous medical professionals will be introduce.

## **Entrepreneurs with strength to conquer the world**

### **“Api Wavamu Rata Nagamu”**

#### ***A New Leap in Agriculture***

The Tank and the Field; the Tank next to the Dagoba. This is our social foundation; our very special heritage. I am a person who grew up on that foundation. Hence, I revere Mother Earth. I love the creepers and trees that clothe her. My forefathers cultivated this fertile land of ours.





Our national agriculture and our the farming community were receiving step-motherly treatment at the time I took over the Presidency. Almost all the food needed by us was imported. Farmers of all crops, including the producers of milk, as well as the fishing community, were languishing in a state of total neglect. Essential fertilizer and seeds were exorbitantly priced, whereas the prices of farm products were incredibly low.

I am well aware of the sad history of our agriculture - from the days that the British conquerors rode on horseback over the fields of Wellassa, up to the dark days when farmers took their own lives, unable to pay off their mounting debts.

Through the “Api Wavamu Rata Nagamu” programme, we have fulfilled the aspirations of the Mahinda Chintana that I presented in the section titled “Ketata Arunella”. I sincerely believe that the progress we have thus gained in agriculture is as valuable as our victory in the war against terror.

### ***Land for the Farmer***

- Under the Mahinda Chintana project of giving agricultural land for 100,000 farmers, 20,195 allotments have already been given away and permits have been issued for a further 32,063 allotments, while offer documents have been issued to yet another 38277 farmers. I will take action to strengthen this process further in order to enable each and every farmer of this country to own a piece of land or claim legitimate right to the land that he or she is already cultivating.
- I will offer 5,000 hectares of new land under the Moragahhakanda and Kaluganga Development Projects. All arrangements are already in place to settle 2,700 farmer families under this scheme.
- I will also give free agricultural land for 100,000 farming families in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.





### ***Rights of the Ande Cultivator***

- It is my belief that a clear solution to the insecurity faced by the families of the Ande cultivators of Sri Lanka should be found. With this end in view, I will formulate legislation.

### ***Production of Agricultural Seeds***

- At the time I assumed office, the national production of agricultural seeds was in its death throes due to various foreign influences. I reversed this trend and revived the local seed production with the help of the farming community and the seed farms established by the government.
- Steps will be taken to completely modernize the main Agro-Research Centres with a view to produce locally, all varieties of seeds needed for agricultural purposes in Sri Lanka.
- All government farms will be directed to undertake seed production. Inducements will be given to the private sector, farmer organizations and individual farmers for the purpose of producing quality-certified seeds.
- Research institutions will be given all facilities for breeding varieties of agricultural crops that can withstand the harsh conditions of the Dry Zone and are suitable for short-term harvesting.
- Steps will be taken to double the production of seeds for the cultivation of vegetables. In particular, hybrid varieties of vegetables of high quality and rich yield will be introduced.

### ***Fertilizer for the Farmer***

It was with the aim of protecting the local farmer that we provide fertilizer for cultivators of paddy and vegetables at the rate of Rs 350 per 50 kg bag, at a time when its price in the world market was Rs 9,000.







- I will take step by step measures to re-organize the fertilizer subsidy, which is at present limited to paddy and vegetables only, to include all food varieties.
- The use of organic fertilizer and its production will be further encouraged.
- I will strengthen the legal framework necessary to ensure that fertilizers and liquid chemicals are used in an environment-friendly manner.
- Laws will be enacted to make the appointment of duly trained agro-chemical technicians compulsory in all agro-chemical and fertilizer sales depots. This will generate about 7000 new job opportunities for the educated youth of the country.

### ***Paddy Cultivation***

Paddy cultivation is not just a 'job' for our farmer; it is his very life. His entire culture, thoughts and aspirations, customs and manners, entertainment and leisure are all based on rice-farming.

I am extremely pleased that I was able to raise the level of profit that the farmer got for his efforts by ensuring a guaranteed price of Rs 28-30 for a kilogram of paddy (which he was not able to sell for even Rs 13-14 before) and by reducing his costs of production.

- Paddy fields that were earmarked to be filled during the period 2001-2004 have now been readied for cultivation under the scheme to *asweddumize* abandoned fields. While 150,000 acres have already been *asweddumized* under this scheme, I have set a target of another 150,000 acres for re-cultivation.
- The country's Food Reserve which was only sufficient for one week, has now been raised by 20%. I will take action to raise it by a further 20%.





- With a view to raise the quality of local rice, I will invite the private sector to set up rice milling plants capable of producing rice of internationally accepted standard.

### ***Farmer Co-operatives Scheme***

- A Farmer Cooperatives Scheme will be set up for the producer of paddy, the aim of which will be to prevent him from becoming a constant prey to the intermediary dealer. This will offer him solutions to problems of marketing, equipment and other inputs that he has to face at present.
- The Farmer Banking System will be strengthened further and action will be taken to provide all the loans required by the farmer through this system.
- A scheme will be introduced for farmers to set up small-scale home food storage units for the purpose of enabling them to enjoy the benefits of selling foodstuffs during off-season periods.

### ***Exchange of Agricultural Information***

- The other major problem facing the farmer is marketing. I intend to introduce the developments of Information Technology for the solution of this problem. I will empower all 550 Agrarian Service Centres spread throughout the island with IT for the purpose of broadening the exchange of information.
- I will set up a National Agricultural Information Exchange.

### ***New Technology***

- Sri Lankan agriculture will be diversified in conformity with the modern age by introducing new technology to agriculture and by providing encouragement to agriculture-related products.





- The Post-Harvest Institute and the Export Development Board will be re-organized and strengthened with a view to assisting the agriculturist to access the export market and enter the business of value addition to his products.
- As a first step in adopting new technology, I will extend the drip irrigation system to the Dry Zone. Already 5,000 drip irrigation units have been distributed, and in the next three years, I will give a further 15000 of these units to the educated youth of the country.
- I will introduce a system of Central Farms for the benefit of the small farmer for the purpose of cultivating, processing and exporting quality food crops of high value, making use of modern technologies.
- In order to encourage growers of export crops, “Agricultural Export Zones” which have been introduced by us, will be extended to cover all parts of the country. By this means I will turn the local farmer into an export entrepreneur dealing directly with the international market without the help of any intermediaries.

### ***Improving the cultivation of fruits and vegetables***

- We have been successful in bringing about a conspicuous development in this field.
- In 2006- 2008 alone, 200,000 fruit plants of high quality were distributed among farmers. In the future, I will take steps to distribute 100,000 plants every year.
- I am aware that a large quantity of vegetables perish in the process of harvesting. I will take action to raise the income of cultivators by means of further improving the application of post harvest technology in relation to fruits and vegetables.





- I am also aware that fruits and vegetables are thrown away by farmers in situations of poor sales. To remedy this, situation I will establish two factories at Welimada and Nuwara Eliya for the production of vegetable oils. I will also provide inducements to the private sector to enter into this industry.
- I will take action to establish cold rooms where fruits and vegetables can be stored securely for a number of months. A programme capable of attracting the private sector into this field will also be implemented.

### ***The Cultivation of subsidiary crops***

At the time that I was elected to office, many plant foods such as corn, *mung* beans, cow pea, *ulundu*, sesamum, maize, chillies, onions and potatoes- all of which could be cultivated locally - were imported in large quantities. As a result, local farmers who grew these crops were not able to sell their produce. Because we took steps to restrict their import, the farmers were able to obtain a good income for their produce. I will take further action to promote these kinds of crops.

- I will take steps to offer a guaranteed price for corn, just as we did for paddy, and to hold a buffer stock of this important cereal.
- Under the concept of “One village, One Crop”, cultivators will be trained in the technologies applicable to the relevant crop and Small Farmers’ Societies will be established to enable them to gain access to markets in foreign countries.
- I will take action to develop the cultivation of subsidiary crops including cashew, sesamum, ginger, betel, and sugar cane. Fertilizer also will be supplied to producers at subsidized rates.





## The Milk Revolution: Power to the cattle farmer

While 30% of the island's work force belongs to the field of agriculture and animal farming, foreign exchange to the tune of almost US dollars 300 million is spent to import milk and milk products to the country. One reason for this was the fact that in a particular era, state cattle farms were closed down and no incentives were offered to the local milk industry.

I will double the number of milch cows in the country from its present strength of 340,000 heads. With this end in view, steps will also be taken to increase the number of government cattle farms.

- Under the aegis of the National Livestock Development Board, I will take steps to set up a pool of 50,000 milch cows in plantations owned by state sector plantation companies.
- I will take steps to increase the production of animal feed. For this purpose, cultivation of corn and grass for fodder will be increased. Milk farmer societies will be further encouraged and more services will be provided to farmers.
- In order to import the necessary numbers of livestock, I will remove all taxes currently levied on the importation of pure bred and cross bred milk cows, goats and sheep and on equipment used for the production of milk.
- The infrastructure for development of this industry will be developed in the newly liberated North and East. While incentives will be provided for the acquisition of livestock and the production of animal feed, a market for these products will also be provided. Priority will be given for breeding goats in these regions.
- I will take steps to introduce the latest technologies to the National Livestock Board, Milco, Ministry of Animal Production & Health and Livestock Research Institute,





thereby completely modernizing these institutions and improving the services provided by them.

- It is my belief that the social attitudes towards locally produced milk and fresh milk should undergo a drastic change as well. For this purpose, I will initiate a programme at the school level.

## Wealth of the Seas for the country's prosperity

As the Minister of Fisheries at the time, I initiated the process, which had been delayed for nearly four decades, to demarcate the area of the Continental Shelf that is the legacy of our country. As the President of our country, I was able to hand over the completed work to the United Nations Organization. The sea area that has been rightfully claimed by us is twenty three times the land extent of our country. I am very glad that it will be our children who are to benefit from these resources in the future.

In 2005, only one third of the sea area due to us was under our control. With the defeat of terrorism, Sri Lankans are now able to reap the benefits of the total sea area that the country is entitled to.

I will take steps to further strengthen and activate the programme put forward under the Mahinda Chintana to make maximum use of these ocean resources.

- The latest technologies will be introduced to maximize the fish harvest of our fishermen. I will take steps to build ten large scale cold rooms to preserve our fish, vegetable and fruit harvests.
- Steps will be taken to build multi-day fishing trawlers locally. Advanced technology and the help of the Navy will also be obtained for this purpose.





- A low interest loan scheme of not exceeding Rupees 10 million for building these multi-day trawlers will be introduced.
- The mother ship method for those engaged in the deep sea fishing industry will be introduced. Thereby, the catch from the deep sea could be brought ashore with the least delay via the mother ship that will provide the necessary fuel and food for fishing vessels.
- During the next few months, when harvesting of resources in the northern and eastern seas will be more speedily carried out, the fisheries industry and other related industries will be given a new lease of life.
- Hence, in order not to let these additional fish harvests go waste, salted fish (jaadi) and dried fish industries will be developed and local and overseas markets for these products broadened.
- In order to reap the maximum benefits of the fish harvests of our fisher folk, in addition to direct consumption, the fish canning industry also needs to be developed. To encourage local investors, I will grant them tax concessions for the importation of production equipment. In particular, two fish canning factories will be set up in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.
- Going beyond the current practice of harvesting only, I will obtain the assistance of universities and other institutions to reap the maximum benefit of other ocean resources too. For the exploration of resources, advanced information technology and communication technologies will be used.
- I will continue to grant the fuel concession to small scale fishermen.





## New Awakening in the Plantation Sector

It was during last four years that a new awakening was seen in the tea, rubber and coconut and related industries.

The introduction of legislation to prevent fragmentation of coconut plantations also helped to revitalize the coconut industry which had been pushed to the brink of destruction.

Interest was generated in the country for cinnamon and related value added industries, pepper industry and minor export crops as well. As mentioned in the Mahinda Chintana, I was able to encourage local businessmen engaged in the cultivation of these crops to add value to their produce and export. By increasing the productivity of tea small holders, we were able to make them a vital force in the plantation sector. I propose to further continue along this path.

- By increasing blending and packaging of tea locally, I propose to make Sri Lanka a hub for the tea trade.
- I will provide incentives for popularizing instant tea.
- In order to increase productivity, I will take steps to introduce improved cultivation strains of tea, rubber, coconuts and other export crops.
- Incentives will be given for growing and processing coffee, pepper and other non-traditional cash crops.
- Support schemes will be introduced for all export crops.
- A programme will be set up for research and development activities in the cinnamon plantation sector. Steps will be taken to overcome the shortage of labour in this sector by providing necessary training. State patronage will be provided for this industry.







- I will take steps to provide at minimum cost locally produced state of the art technical implements for post-harvest processing.
- The fertiliser support scheme for all cash crops will be further extended.
- By increasing the productivity of plantation companies leased out to the private sector, continued employment and better remuneration for workers will be ensured. These companies will be directed to long term environmentally-friendly investments in order to conserve the bio diversity and water resources.

### ***Moving on, even more resolutely***

The methodology used for development of industries from the 60's onwards was based on state sector investments. Under this programme, large scale developments were initiated in the local industrial sector.

With the implementation of open economic policies from 1977 onwards, an effort was made to develop industries with private sector investments only. As a consequence, the resurgence of local industries was subdued and foreign investors started capturing the local economy.

When I assumed office in 2005, industrialization in our country was in a confused state. Hence, instead of unsolicited foreign industrialization, I took the necessary steps to uplift local industries.

It gives me immense pleasure that, as a result, there are already a few large scale industrialists who have emerged in the country as having reached the international level. I shall devote myself to further uplift and strengthen such industrialists, while also moving forward with a programme to uplift 200 more industrialists in the future.





### ***Incentives for the entrepreneurial forward march***

- With immediate effect, I will start an institutional and legal framework to coordinate the activities of the Board of Investment, Urban Development Authority, Tourism Authority, Export Development Board, Environmental Authority and the Mahaveli Authority. With this initiative, I will immediately launch a programme to minimize delays and time consuming procedures related to the starting of investments.
- As a result, we will give the final government decision on any investment proposal within three months. As the facilitator of projects, this institution will be vested with powers to resolve all legal and practical problems that arise relating to these projects.
- I will set up an export import bank with a capital of Rupees 25 billion. Through this Bank, I will provide facilities for local entrepreneurs who strive to capture international markets.
- Steps will be taken to identify the problems faced by tax payers of our country and immediately put in place, a formal process to resolve these problems and complexities. Consequently, with the next budget, I will take steps to simplify the existing tax system and reduce personal income tax rates, value added tax rates, and excise duty rates.
- A centre for technology strategies will also be set up to harness all streams of knowledge including information technology, nano technology and digital technology.
- By way of relief for certain local business sectors affected by the world economic recession, I will stay, for a period of two years, the auctioning of mortgaged immovable and movable assets. I will grant tax concessions for banks to set off losses incurred as a result of this proposal.





- I will set up an 'Industry Revival Fund' to develop and resurrect factories and rice mills that closed due to the effects of the world economic recession, by writing off loans and granting new loans. I will also issue the necessary re-financing facilities through the Central Bank to encourage banks and financial institutions to implement this programme.
- Further to the steps already taken to strengthen and broaden the 'Cooperative Sector' parallel to the 'State Sector' and the 'Private Sector', I will develop the cooperative sector by improving its financial viability, professionalism and management skills. In future development processes, these three sectors will act together as equals.
- I will introduce a new work ethic under the theme 'Mawbima Dinawamu'. I will thereby increase workplace efficiency and productivity by 50% during the next six years.
- A task force will be set up consisting of veteran intellectuals to facilitate growth of the industrial sector.

### ***Tourism Industry***

- I will introduce an accelerated development programme for the tourism industry. I will launch a programme to fulfill the infrastructure and other requirements in order to attract 2.5 million tourists annually, by the year 2016.
- A financial scheme for medium scale entrepreneurs to obtain loans up to Rs.100 million in relation to the tourist industry will be implemented.
- I will invite prestigious hoteliers to open two seven star hotels.
- Support will be extended to the private sector to develop 50,000 hotel rooms under the guidance of the BOI.





- I will provide the necessary facilities to local suppliers to manufacture equipment needed for the hotel trade. I will provide assistance and opportunities to residents of popular tourist destinations to start small comfortable houses for tourists at reasonable rates.
- Support will be provided to the local entrepreneurs of main tourist areas to construct Aurvedic Centres which could accommodate around 200 patients.
- I will give priority to eco-friendly tourism and agriculture based tourism and will promote the use of the government and private owned farms for this purpose.
- All Buddhist places of worship will be developed in order to increase religious tourism from countries such as Japan and Thailand. I will establish a tourism centre with special cultural importance to Asia.

### ***Apparel industry***

- New markets for the apparel industry will be promoted and through such effort, I will provide the needed support to double apparel exports by 2016.
- **I will extend my fullest support to designers of high quality ready made garments using their 30 years of specialization in this field.**
- **Two modern trade centres will be opened in Colombo and Katunayake for high end tourists.**

### ***Resurgence of the local construction industry***

The construction industry can be identified as an industry which has achieved a significant development during the recent past.





As we all know, the tourism industry is gaining a new life due to the end of the conflict. Accordingly, a new era will dawn on the local construction industry with the planned construction of nearly 44,000 hotel rooms, the re-construction of all inter-regional highways, and the construction of the planned 600,000 new houses.

- I will provide a 15 % protection for all local construction companies to support them against the adverse effects from foreign competition, in relation to government construction contracts.
- All indirect taxes which adversely affect this industry will be simplified and a low tax rate will be introduced.
- In order to assist the local construction companies, I will establish a specialized bank.

### ***Timber and furniture manufacturing industry***

- Steps will be taken to deal with the problems faced by timber and furniture manufacturers, including the transportation of timber and timber products, technology improvements, and challenges faced due to substitutes and market conditions, by formalizing relevant rules and regulations.

### ***Gems & jewellery industry***

- A complete assessment of the issues faced by those engaged in the gem and jewellery industry, including the problems arising in the purchase of gold bullion will be carried out, and action taken to solve those problems.

### ***Other industries***

- 25 new local food factories based on rice, fruits and vegetables to fulfil 75% of the local requirement will be





constructed, in order to earn an export income of around one hundred billion rupees by 2016.

- 25,000 acres of unused land will be provided for sugar cane cultivation in order to commence two new sugar factories, thereby taking the necessary steps to manufacture 75% of the country's sugar requirement.
- All necessary steps will be taken to develop the two cement factories in Kankasanthurai and Trincomalee in order to fulfil 75% of the local requirement.
- Several chemical factories will be established in various areas including Paranthan.
- The salt industry will be developed while every assistance will be provided to develop related chemical industries as well.

### ***Small and medium scale entrepreneurs***

It is only by safeguarding and encouraging our budding entrepreneurs to progress, that we can achieve satisfactory results. Therefore, I will take the necessary steps to provide all facilities to the local small and medium scale entrepreneurs.

- A process will be implemented from 2010 onwards, to upgrade 5,000 small scale entrepreneurs to medium scale level and to upgrade 200 medium scale entrepreneurs to large scale level every year.
- Loans under subsidized interest rates will be provided to small and medium scale entrepreneurs up to a sum of Rs.10 million.
- A program will be launched to establish entrepreneurial centres in every district to encourage small and medium scale entrepreneurs.





- 100 new trade centres will be constructed within two years on a provincial basis to conveniently market their manufactured goods.
- Handicraft villages will be established to safeguard the industries of handicraftsmen.
- A method will be created for skills exchange among handicraftsmen.
- The future of suppliers of self services will be secured by introducing an insurance scheme.

### ***A Helping hand for the self reliant***

- I am aware that a large number of people build their lives through hard work. These people should be supported in such a way that they will not have to always be thinking of the daily life with no assuring thought for the future. I will create the necessary environment to relieve these persons from that anxiety.
- **A 'Bureau for the Self employed' will be started in order to ensure the livelihood security and to provide the other necessary services to the small scale vendors, itinerant vendors, people engaged in other services and the self employed.**
- **A banking system will be introduced which will provide daily lending and recovery on a low monthly interest rate instead of the very high daily interest rate system as prevalent now.**
- **Special economic centres will be established for marketing the products of self employed in all highly populated cities.**





## Reawakening of the performing arts Art and Culture

A person with high sense of art and culture will see the world with a serene mind. The art and culture in a country should be able to reflect its past glory as well as focus on the future of the society. Many in our country may have feared that our country's culture and arts would have been damaged by the speedy amalgamation with global cultures and values. However, what happened was that our local culture was strengthened as a result of the challenge. As the leader of a country which could boast of an extensive culture, I will firmly commit myself for the protection and sustainability of our arts and culture.

To achieve the goal of a quality cultural life as per the Mahinda Chintana, I will establish a National Cultural Regulatory Board, and will appoint experts in the field, to such Board.

- A "National Cultural Policy" will be prepared to improve and maintain the standards of each field of art.
- A programme will be prepared to encourage the local and traditional art skills in order reach the international level
- A separate authority will be established for young creative persons.
- A life insurance scheme and a health insurance scheme will be established for all artists, together with a contributory pension scheme.
- Training institutions will be established at provincial level to provide training and knowledge in respect of performing arts, teledramas and cinema.







- A programme will be established to make presentations and monetary gifts for creations which win awards and rewards at recognized international award ceremonies
- In order to popularize reading amongst society, a special program Titled the National Books Publication Programme, will be recommenced whereby the government will assist in the publication of quality literature and subject related books, and print such books.
- A program will be started to provide the necessary assistance to the local institutions and religious places that promote the protection of our heritage and culture.

### ***Access to Modern Media***

The developments in modern communication has strongly influenced contemporary media. The collection of information and the dissemination of such information has been accelerated through technological systems, such as the internet and satellite technology. There were no impediments for any media institution or journalist to obtain the benefit of such developments in Sri Lanka, and this is evidenced by the fact that licenses have been issued to political parties, as well as religious or linguistic organizations who had applied for such licenses. Further, although some criticism has been levelled against the government, regulations controlling the media had never been issued, as has been the case with previous governments. My belief is that the media should act for the country's benefit, development, nationality and social ethics, rather than for purely political purposes. My policy therefore, will be to strengthen all journalists through education and experience in order to develop more ethical journalism practices in our country.

- I will operationalize a mechanism which gives priority to produce accurate information and portray a true picture of the country to the rest of the world and thereby uplift the reputation of the country, instead of the current practice of





certain media institutions which strive to tarnish the image of the country by portraying Sri Lanka as a state with an unsatisfactory track record.

- I will facilitate the formation of a mechanism to obtain the views and suggestions of journalists, and to obtain information and knowledge frequently on domestic and foreign developments to be used for national development.
- I will establish a Higher Education Centre on National Media in order to improve the knowledge and technological capabilities of journalists.
- A system will be formulated to provide scholarships under the President's Fund to improve the knowledge and experience of media personnel.
- Tariff concessions will be provided to acquire a camera, a computer and a motor cycle by professional journalists, who have professional training and experience of not less than 15 years. They will also be permitted to import a motor vehicle under concessionary tariff concessions.
- I will start a new housing scheme for journalists located in close proximity to Colombo.
- A pension scheme for journalists will be implemented, commencing this year.

## People return, rather than migrate

### *Sri Lankans living abroad support their Motherland*

The history of Sri Lankans migrating from the country dates back to the colonial era. Being conscious of the benefits that could be gained through the involvement in activities with the British, many Sri Lankans sent their children to England to receive higher





education and enter into the British administration. Thereafter, migration became a fad and a fashion for some members of our affluent societies.

With the commencement of large scale terrorist activities in the North and East, this rather fashionable migration gave way to greater numbers migrating, for other reasons too. Such migration was converted into a large exodus of people from Sri Lanka as a result of the “Black July” of 1983, which led to a large number of Tamil persons fleeing the country. This was followed by the terror filled period led by the JVP during 1987-89 which also resulted in a large number of people leaving our motherland. The number of people who did not return to the country out of those who left the country due to these protracted conflicts during the last 30 years, and the numbers of children of previous generations who left the country and did not return, is now estimated to be about 2 million.

Fortunately however, many Sri Lankan migrants now function as experts and intellectuals and serve in different fields, ranging from township development to space exploration. It is my view that the time is now ripe for them to return and serve their Motherland.

In a similar manner, many countries in the world, including China and India, have extensively benefited by the services of their native intellectuals who lived abroad but came back to provide support and advise to the nation at critical periods of their history.

Therefore, I invite all who have left our shores in search of greener pastures, to return to Sri Lanka and serve our Motherland at this point of time in our history.

- I will establish a dedicated bureau in order to identify and resolve problems faced by Sri Lankans living abroad and create a conducive environment in Sri Lanka for them to live, upon their return to Sri Lanka.





- A license will be provided to persons who have lived more than five years abroad and who have remitted money to local banks, to either import the car that was used by them or to import a vehicle under concessionary duty terms.
- The fee applicable for Sri Lankans who have already obtained citizenship in their respective countries when applying for citizenship in Sri Lanka again, will be reduced by 50 per cent.
- I will relax and expedite the complex processes that our people have to face when obtaining passports and other essential documents.
- The Central Bank will be requested to prepare a mechanism to create an attractive bonus scheme for Sri Lankans who send their foreign exchange to Sri Lanka.



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மஹிந்த ராஜபக்ஷ  
Mahinda Rajapaksa

