

ARCHIVES THE MILVIORY OF A NATION

ARCHIVES THE MEMORY OF A NATION



Compiled and Edited by

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National Archives 7, Reid Avenue Colombo 7 Sri Lanka 025.1714

Published on the occasion of the opening of the New Building

on 15th August 1986

by
The President of Sri Lanka
His Excellency Junius Richard Jayewardene

Cover Page Illustration: Frontal view of the new Archives Building

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PREFACE

This publication is brought out on the occasion of the opening of the new building for the National Archives. It portrays briefly a period of five centuries, i.e., from the time of the arrival of the first Western power in the island to the present era.

Although the Island has a documented history of twenty-three centuries, its oldest Archives, extant in Sri Lanka, dates back only to the 17th century. It's 16th century Archives are in Portugal and Goa. Since the Archives of the period of the Sinhalese monarchy has been lost to posterity, the history of the island can be studied from Archival sources only from the 16th century onwards. Hence the limitation of this publication to commence from the 16th century. In the publication the first four centuries have been given four illustrations each, and the 20th century eight illustrations, one roughly for each decade. The brevity of the publication has been dictated only by the time factor that was available for its production than by anything else.

Thus the publication has been designed to focus the period for which Archival material is available for a study of the island's history, and also to make known thereby the nature of the heritage that is to be found at the National Archives. Within this design the narration has been made with reference to the relevant illustration of the period and around it, while maintaining the thread of continuity as the history unfolds itself.

Archives are not institutions that are readily understood by everyone. They are often confused with manuscript collections, Libraries and Museums. A National Archives is an institution that principally contains the historically valuable or otherwise important non-active records of a Government. They would be held primarily for the defence of the State, that of the rights of the individual, and then for scholarly research. Thus the Archives of a country is the responsibility of its State and is always held integral and inviolable.

An Archives receives its documents in terms of the Laws of the country or by the rules and regulations made by the State. Consequently, the holdings at an Archives are of legal validity and are accepted in Courts of Law, without having to prove the records. Thus Archives are neither purchased documents nor collected manuscripts. But any Archives, including the Sri Lanka Archives, also contains the latter category of records which are held separately and are produced only for purposes of reading and research. They would have no legal validity and therefore there veracity would not be certified to prove this or that fact.

All the archival records held at the National Archives, have been accessed by rules and regulations of the Governments that have been in force during the past four centuries. Today, they are accessed in terms of the National Archives Law No. 48 of 1973. Thus what is held at the Archives is the total documentation available of the past four governments of the island and would be the principal source material for a study of the Island's history from the 17th century downwards. The accessions of today would be the historical sources of the future.

In addition to the State records, the National Archives also holds the Newspapers printed in the country since 1832, deposited in terms of Ordinance No. 5 of 1839, i.e. the present Cap. 180 of the Legislative Enactments, and the printed publications of the country deposited in terms of Ordinance No. 1 of 1885—i.e. Cap. 179 of the Legislative Enactments.

It is the pride of the country for it to have had preserved its administrative Archives of the past four centuries. It is further fortunate, today, in having a properly constituted law for the regular accessioning of the present day records and of the future. Now a well appointed building has been provided for the conservation and restoration of its Archives and to facilitate study and research.

The staff at the Archives has been most helpful in the preparation of this publication at short notice; and herein, Mr. S. S. K. Wickramanayake, Assistant Director, deserves a special word of thanks. My grateful thanks are also due to the Government Printer, Mr. Neville Nanayakkara and his staff for the excellent job of printing done at so short notice.

G. P. S. H. DE SILVA, Director, National Archives.

MEMORABILIA

Archives: F	ormation and	Custody
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1640, March	The first recorded minutes of the Dutch kept on board ship in the Galle harbour. Archives under the Dutch administration.
1656	Some Portuguese Archives fall to the Dutch after their capitulation.
1700	The Portuguese records and some of the Dutch records are destroyed by a Dutch official named Van Toll.
1796, Feb. 15	The Dutch archives are taken over by Hugh Cleghorn, the Chief Secretary, in terms of Clause 4 of the Capitulation.
1899/1901	The post of Archivist is created.
1947	Department of the Govt. Archivist is created with the dawn of Independence and through it, the Sri Lanka Government takes over the records of the British period, from the Chief Secretary.
1973, Dec.	National Archives Law No. 48 is passed in the NSA.
1981, May	Presidential Archives is established as a part of the National Archives.
Housing	
1640-1656	Archives: at Galle
1656-1796	Archives at Colombo: located in the Dutch Secretariat, in the area of the present Republic Square.
1796-1931	The Chief Secretary's Office: same location, as the Dutch Secretariat; during this period, some records moved from place to place and were also subject to dispersal and destruction.
1931-1942	Old Secretariat Building, (OSB), Fort, Colombo.
1942-1962	Major part of the Archives at Nuwara Eliya
1962-1970	At Vidyodaya University Premises + OSB
1970-1986	At the Havelock Race Course site+OSB
1980-1986	Part, temporarily housed at Piliyandala and Kandy, and at the OSB
1986	Records at the OSB and at Piliyandala transferred to the new building.
The New Building	
4007	

1967	Cabinet decides to allocate 4 acres of land at the Havelock Race				
	Course site to construct a building for the Archives.				
1968 Aug.	Vacant possession of the site taken over by the department.				
1969	Government decides to proceed with the first stage of				

Government decides to proceed with the first stage of constructing the three, two-storyed wings of the building:

Rs. 2.5 million.

1970.05.02	First stage commenced by laying of the foundation stone by Hon. J. R. Jayewardene, Minister of State.			
1971.10.07	First stage commenced by cutting of first sod. Hon. S. S. Kulatilleke, Minister of Cultural Affairs			
	Hon. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction			
	Hon. J. R. Jayewardene, M.P. Colombo South Hon. Bernard Soysa, M.P. Colombo West.			
1975	First and Second wing: construction completed.			
1976	Third wing: construction completed.			
1976.12.29	Construction of the Central Repository Block inaugurated by: Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Prime Minister Mr. T. B. Tennakoon, Minister of Cultural Affairs Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and			
	Construction			
1977-1978	Work suspended.			
1979	Cabinet decides to re-commence work and hand it over to a private contractor			
1980 July	Contract awarded to S.P. Muttiah & Sons			
	Contractor Rs. 22,694,538 Total Estimated Cost Rs. 34,818,000			
1980 Aug.	Design Consortium Ltd., appointed Consultants.			
1984 Feb.	Total Estimated Cost revised to Rs. 44,000,000			
1986 April 30	Building taken over with provision of 6 months to attend to defects and outstanding items of work.			
1986 Aug. 15	Building declared open by the President of Sri Lanka H. E. J. R. Jayewardene.			
Floor Area:	111,662 square feet			

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

MAIN HOLDINGS

a. Records

1640	-	1796	Dutch records	
1796	- Table	1947	Records of the	Governor and the Chief Secretary
1796	-		do	Provincial administration
19th c	-	272	do	Government departments
1940	-	1.5	do	Statutory bodies
19th c	-		do	Court records
19th c	-		do	Special Commissions & Commissions
			•	of Inquiry
17th c	_	12.4		Maps and plans

b. Legal deposits

1832	-		Newspapers printed in Sri Lanka
1885		k (k	Publications printed in Sri Lanka

c. Deposited records

Private papers of individuals and Institutions

d. Collected records

Historical manuscripts from Temples and from various private individuals

e. Purchased records

Microfilms of some records of the period 1505–1656: Portuguese Microfilms of some records of the period 18th c: Dutch Microfilms of some records of the period 19th c: British

f. Government Publications

1812	1200	89	Gazettes
1821	-	1937	Blue Books
1862	-	57-52	Sessional papers
1867	-	(40.40)	Administration Reports
19th c	-	4.4	Hansards and similar publications

g. Library

Books on Sri Lanka and on Sri Lanka's History, etc.

^{· -} Continues to be accrued/deposited.

SERVICES

- Providing information—administrative, historical—to government departments and other institutions
- SEARCH ROOM facilities for the Public.
- Reprographic facilities for archival documents-photocopying and microfilming (35 mm)
- Technical and scientific advice on conservation and restoration of records and documents—paper, films, photographs, cassettes, tapes, etc.
- Advice on preparation of transfer and destruction schedules of records in government departments and other State Institutions.
- Advice on establishing and maintenance of Record-rooms.
- Advice on microfilming of records.
- Producing documents in Court-cases and giving evidence on them.
- Organizing research, lectures and publications.
- Providing exhibitions
- Training of binders and Record keepers/Record Managers in the public sector.
- Conducting lectures and seminars for senior public servants on Archival law and record management.
- Assisting the Private Sector in setting up of archival institutions.

THE ISLAND SRI LANKA

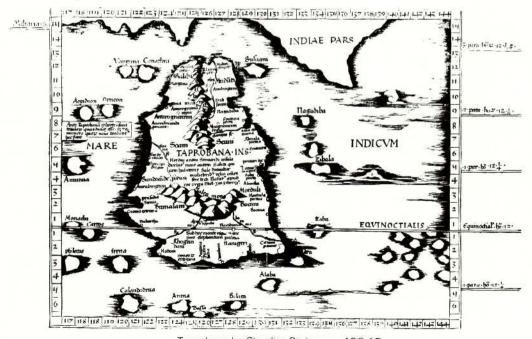
Sri Lanka's geographical position in the Indian Ocean, has been of significant importance during the course of her history. It brought in visitors and invaders as well as merchants and scholars. The coastal region of *Kelaniya* in the proximity of *Colombo* had been an Aryan settlement of importance, as reflected in the Pali chronicles. Some of the stories related in the *Rasavāhini* refer to merchants of old Sri Lanka, who went abroad for purposes of trade. An example is *Nandi* of *'Mahatittha'* a devout Buddhist, who bore a name common among the Sinhalese in ancient times.

The ports of Mantai (Mannar) Gökanna (Trincomalee) and Uruvela were the trading marts of ancient Sri Lanka. In the middle of the first century Roman mariners had regularly visited the ports of South India, with commodities purchased from Sri Lanka.

Specific reference to customs duties in the first century inscription at 'Godavāya' near *Ambalantota* shows that the king's officers were stationed at the principal sea-ports to collect the customs due to the king.

Pearls and elephants were the main commodities of ancient trade. Cinnamon became famous as a commercial item in the later periods. According to the *Chulavamsa*, when Parakramabau I was the ruler of Dakkhinadēsa he also exported gems and precious stones. To pay for commodities exported from Sri Lanka, the foreign merchants brought gold, silver, copper, glass, semi-precious stones of various types, earthenware of superior quality wines and horses.

Ptolemy's map, thus came to be drawn around 150 A.D. from reports on the island received by him through sea-farers, merchants and mariners.



Taprobana by Claudius Ptolemy c. 150 AD

"Ptolemy exaggerates the size of Ceylon to 14 times its actual area, but gives its general shape and outline with fair accuracy. His longitudes, reckoned eastward from the Fortunate Isles the most westerly point then known, are about 7° less than they should be and his Equator is about 400 miles north of its actual position.

Ptolemy undoubtedly got some Sinhalese place-names and their positions nearly right and he achieved a tolerable likeness to the actual shape of Ceylon. His Greek names include some transliterations of Sinhalese names. Some names are distorted and others, probably, imaginary. His orientation was faulty and his idea of the size of Ceylon seriously wrong. Nevertheless, the information which he gives shows that in the 2nd century Western mariners and traders had acquired a remarkably good knowledge of the topography of Ceylon".

COLOMBO AND THE COMING OF THE PORTUGUESE

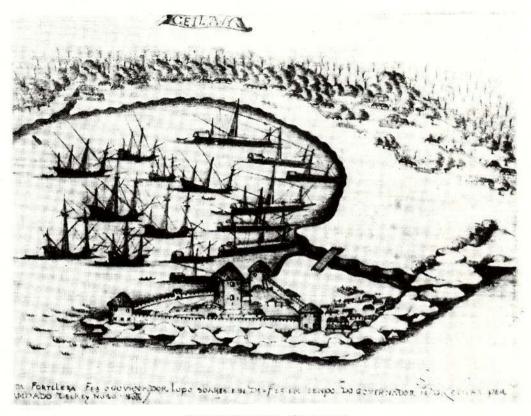
About 500 A.D., there was a shifting in the focus of trade from the malabar coast southwards to *Mantai* (Mannar). Around 700 A.D. 'Kolomba' or 'Kolontota' had become a Moor trading settlement; one of the first six settlements in the west coast of Sri Lanka. The Moors had built warehouses (bangasalas) and carried on trade in cinnamon, elephants and pearls from the North Western coast. Gradually the settlement at 'Kolomba' developed in its size and functions. Around 1330 A.D. according to *Ibn Batuta*, it was "one of the finest and largest cities of the 'Serandib' the residence of Wazir, lord of the sea". Kings of Kotte (Jayawardhanapura) had engaged in a limited external trade in a few valuable commodities, such as cinnamon, precious stones, arecanut, and elephants. Those were handled at the ports of Puttlam, Kalpitiya, Chilaw, Colombo, Negombo, Beruwala, Galle and Weligama.

The Portuguese arrived in Sri Lanka in the year 1505. There presence had become a threat to the Moors who upto then had monopolized the external trade of the Kotte Kingdom. And, for about a dozen years, after their arrival the Portuguese traded on equal terms with the Moors.

Practical experience gained during their short period of stay in the Island enabled them to recognize the significance of the Colombo harbour. This was a centre where many ships from Bengalle, Persia the south and the Red sea used to sail-in to take trade commodities. On the other hand Colombo was a place close enough for the Portuguese to come into contact with the kings of Kotte and maintain friendly relations for trade. Considering these factors, the Portuguese built their first Fort in Colombo in 1518 and they secured a more favourable position by means of a treaty of alliance with the king of Kotte. A couple of years later, they had realized the existing fort would not meet their requirement. Therefore early in 1520, Lopo de Brito arrived at Colombo with special orders from king Dom Manuel for the construction of a proper fort.

"In September, 1518, there arrived in Goa from the Kingdom the new Governor Diogo Lopez de Sequeyra with a new order of government for Columbo. There came as Captain Lopo de Brito, and as Alcayde-mor his Brother Antonio de Brito, Andre de Rodriguez de Beja as Factor, and as clerks Joao Rebelo and Gaspar de Araujo, who arrived at that port with 400 workmen, stonemasons and carpenters, with order to erect the fortalice of stone and mortar, as the King D. Manoel desired to raise such a

stronghold as would be sufficient to undeceive the Moors and be a dread to the natives and a security to the Portuguese according to the most recent reports of Lopo Soarez de Albergaria."



Colombo Fort in the 16th century

By this time, it had been proved that the frequent torrential showers that fell in Sri Lanka, was too much for the clay walls; for the first fort was already in a ruinous condition. Therefore, they used pearl shells to strengthen the walls and the moat which ran from sea to sea and converted the port into a tiny island.

THE PORTUGUESE: A TRAGEDY THAT BEFELL THE ISLAND

In 1521, three sons of King Vijayabahu revolted against their own father and it led to the partition of the kingdom of Kotte. Thereafter there were rivalries among the three brothers for the supremacy in the island. Amidst the power rivalry of the day the Portuguese assasinated Buvenekabāhu and proclaimed his grand-son Dharmapāla as the King of Kotte. But Māyādunne claimed to be the true heir of Buvanekabāhu, and was accepted as the champion of the Sinhalese, the protector of Buddhism and the foc of foreign and Christian influences.

During the period after 1551 rulers of Sitawaka confined the Portuguese power, exercised in the name of Dharmapala, to the environs of Colombo. However, attempts

of Mayadunne and Rajasinghe to capture Colombo in 1579 and 1587-88 did not succeed. Then after Rajasingha's failure to capture Colombo in 1588, he faced revolts in his own kingdom. Further, Rajasingha's ill-judged and ill-timed conquest of the Kandyan kingdom also contributed to his downfall and that of the kingdom of Sītawaka.

In the meantime the Portuguese, went on their rampage and in 1588 when they struck at the Temple at Devinuwara, they saw to it that it was totally destroyed.

"The inhabitants on seeing the Portuguese abandoned the city, and betook themselves inland. Our people proceeded to enter it without encountering any resistance, and reaching the pagode broke open the gates, and entered it without



A Portuguese Captain-General: Jeronimo de Azevedo, 1594-1612

meeting with anyone to resist them, and went all round it to see if they found any people; and seeing that all was deserted. Thome de Sousa delivered it over to the soldiers that they might do their duty: and the first thing in which they employed themselves was to destroy the idols, of which there were more than a thousand of divers forms, some of clay, others of wood, others of copper, and many of them gilt. Having done this, they demolished the whole of that infernal structure of pagodes destroying their vaults and cloisters, knocking them all to pieces, and then proceeded to sack the storehouses, in which they found much ivory, fine clothes, copper, pepper, sandalwood, jewels, precious stone, and ornaments of the pagodes, and of everything they took what they liked, and to the rest they set fire, by which the whole was consumed......"

THE DONATION OF DHARMAPĀLA

By the end of the 16th century the Portuguese had taken advantage of the situation and had captured some of the lands of Kotte. In the meantime, Dharmapāla, was persuaded to act on the advice of the Franciscans, and on 12th August, 1580, he bequeathed his kingdom by deed of gift to the king of Portugal. The gift was accepted by Manoel de Sousa on behalf of his king. Thereafter the Portuguese acted as the representatives of the crown of Portugal.

In May 1597, Don Juan Dharmapāla expired leaving his last will. The text contained the following:

"Made this twelfth day of August 1580, in the city and fortress of Colombo, in the dwelling of His Highness Prince Don Joam by the Grace of God King of Ceylon, Pereoa Pandar (emperor), the aforesaid King being present states to me Antonio Ribeiro, Notary Public of His Majesty the King (of Portugal), lord of this city, in the presence of witnesses, that he, the King succeeded to this Kingdom of Ceylon on the death of King Bonegabao (Bhuvaneka Bahu) his lord and grandfather, who had no children and had during his lifetime adopted him as his son and made him heir. with the sanction of the King of Portugal Don Joam III, and further states that he possessed these Kingdoms in the same manner as the aforesaid Bonegabao his grandfather, having his seat in the royal city of Kotta, the capital of the Kingdom, now dismantled, and that afterwards, through various causes, the Madunna Pandar (Mayadunna) King of Seita Avaca (Sitavaka) and the Raaja (Rajasinha), his son, had tyrannically occupied and taken possession of all the kingdoms, leaving him only the city and fortress of Colombo, which the King of Portugal, through his viceroys and captains defended for a long time, in order to restore the said Kingdoms to him, which restoration, they had however been unable to carry out, in consequence of the other wars the viceroys were engaged in and the impoverished state of India, and he, the King, is advanced in years and in failing health, without sons and heirs to rightfully succeed him at his death, and feeling deeply indebted to the Kings of Portugal for all their mercies, and help, and specially for the comforts of religion ministered to him by their priests, whereby he was converted to the Catholic Faith, he, the King, bequeaths to the King of Portugal, Dom Manuel, and his heirs, all the Kingdoms and lands with the hope that he will obtain possessions of those Kingdoms which are now in the hands of his enemies, giving him permission to fight his enemies by sea and land until he obtains possession of the territories which he had a right to, in the same manner as the Kings of Kotta, who reigned over the Kingdoms in the Island"; & etc.

The document was signed by the King the witnesses being Friar Sebastian de Chaves, Manuel Luis, Estevan Figueira, Pero Jorge, Franquo Antonio Laurenco, and Manuel de Sousa Coutinho.



Donation of Dharmapala: from the Portuguese copy, 1580

KANDYAN KINGS IN SEARCH OF FRIENDS

With the collapse of Sitawaka, Vimaladharmasūriya and the Kandyan Kingdom came to the fore as the champion of the Sinhalese. Especially, after the death of king Dharmapāla in 1597, the people regarded Vimaladharmasūriya as the lawful sovereign.

On 31st May 1602 Joris Van Spilbergen, the first Dutchman arrived in the waters of Batticaloa on the east coast of Sri Lanka. From there, he proceeded to Senkadagala (Kandy) to meet king Vimaladharmasūriya. There he was received with great warmth. The conversation was cordial. At the conference, Spilbergen assured that the object of his visit was not so much to procure cinnamon and pepper, but to offer the king the friendship of his master, the Prince of Orange and his assistance against their enemy, the Portuguese. Before leaving Sri Lanka, Spilbergen captured three Portuguese vessels off Batticaloa and showed their hostility towards the Portuguese. After four months, he sailed away for Achin, in the island of Sumatra, leaving with the king a Portrait of the Prince of Orange and two musicians who had accompanied him from Europe. A letter of Cornelis Jolyt and three others dated, Achin, 18th November, 1602 stated that "Joris Spilbergen arrived here on September 17th "the stones he brought with him from Ceylon were estimated high"



Vimaladharmasuriya I (1592-1604) meets Spilbergen

However, this cordial relationship did not bring any immediate result either to Vimaladharmasūriya or to his successor Senarat. Rājasinha's experience had shown, that without the support of a sea power to prevent relief being sent to the Portuguese from outside the island, they could not be driven out from Sri Lanka. Therefore, on the 9th of September, 1636 he made an appeal for aid to Carel Reijniersz, the Governor of Pulicat, and in response to that on 27th October, 1637, a Dutch ship arrived in Batticaloa. Thereafter, they negotiated with Rājasinha at Pangaragama from 19-26th November. As a result of these negotiations Rājasinha entered into a treaty with the Dutch, on the 23rd May, 1638. Two copies of the treaty written in Portuguese were signed by Rājasinha on the one hand, and Westerwolt and Coster on the other. This treaty was most advantageous to the Dutch. They obtained a monopoly of all the most important articles of trade except that of elephants. The king had to pay in cinnamon, pepper, wax and other merchandise for the services provided by the Dutch. The treaty also stated the king could not have political or commercial dealings with any other European power.

RĀJASINHA IN THE MIDST OF INTERNATIONAL DEALINGS

The 1638 Treaty proved impracticable even after the Dutch replaced the Portuguese in 1656 and the Kandyans had the right of free commerce with Asian traders and controlled some of the ports of the island at Kalpitiya and Puttalam on the west coast and Kottiyar and Batticaloa in the east coast. Further, articles three and four of the 1638 Treaty which dealt with captured ports, led to misunderstanding and unhealthy situations between the two parties. This could be seen clearly in the letters of Rājasinha II to the Dutch Commandeurs in Galle, and in a number of letters written by Governor Joan Maatsuycker. (1646-1652) and Jacob Van Kittenstijn (1650-1653) to Rājasinha II.

Twenty six letters written by Rajasinha II are available at the National Archives. They are written in Portuguese and in different hand writing, but bear the subscription of the royal sign-manual. In his letters he styled himself in many ways, viz:

- [I] Rāja Singa Raju, Most Potent Emperor of Ceilao, to the Governor Jacob van Kuitenstein, like my own vassal, in my fortress of Gale, send much greeting.
- [I] Rāja Singa Raju, Most Exalted Monarch, Greatest and Most Potent Emperor of this my far-famed Empire of Ceilao, etc., to the Admiral-General of the Naval Fleet, Captain-General of the Sea and Land, and Superintendent of the Dutch nation in this my Empire of Ceilao, send much greeting.

The tone of the letters, varied greatly, being at times extremely polite and at other times blazing out with fierce anger. This had been largely due to the double dealings of both parties. For example, on 16th November, 1644, a treaty was agreed to at Goa between the Viceroy and Joan Maatzuyker. Consequent to this on 10th January, 1645, the divisions of the limits of the territories, over which Portuguese and the Dutch exercised their control were agreed to a Colombo, without Rajasinha's



A letter of Rajasinha II (1635-1687)

consent. More, those partitioned territories formed a part of the king's dominion. As seen in his letters, Rājasinha was annoyed with the activities of this nature. But the Dutch tried to pacify his temperament. However, it is evident from the letters of the Dutch Governor's to Rājasinha of which Valentijn's summaries says "Great promises, but from which, however, not much was to be expected, so long as our heavy expenses were not settled, about which His Majesty seemed to think little". Thus, the Dutch considered themselves justified in keeping to themselves the conquests, on the basis that the war was waged by them on behalf of the king of Kandy. But Rājasinha had been reiterating his determination to abide by the treaty, he had made with Westerwolt, and insisted that, in terms thereof Negombo, should be given up to him. To settle the existing differences the king sent two ambassadors, on 15th July, 1649, along with the suggested articles of Peace. The Peace did not come through.

COLOMBO GETS A NEW MASTER: THE DUTCH

On 12th May 1656, Colombo surrendered to the Dutch and the intervening events were set out in the letter of 19th May 1656 of Van Meyden to Laurens Pit. "The Storming of the Point St. John took place on the 5th of this month, the result being an offer of capitulation, the town of Colombo surrendering on the 12th. Rajasinha is greately displeased, because we do not comply with his demand for the placing of Negumbo and Columbo, unreservedly in his hands, and we are prevented by this change in the friendly demeanour of the king, from putting our plans in regard to Tuticorin into effect".

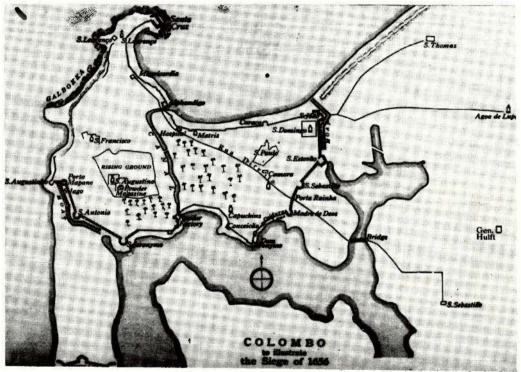
But according to the instructions carried out by the Commander, Francois Caron, the fortresses were not intended to be handed over to king Rajasinha. It stated "on the conquest of Colombo and Negombo—which God grant—Your honour will not demolish the same as will apparently be insisted on by king Rajasinha, but occupy them with a garrison till our losses are compensated for". Further on the twenty second May, 1656, Jan Croon at Galle writing to the Directors, stated "........... with the result that the town being bombarded from so near a spot, the Generals offered to capitulate on the 10th. On Friday the 12th the contract was signed and the Dutch flag raised instead of the Portuguese". The capitulation as presented by the three Portuguese delegates, Lourenco Ferreira de Britto, Hieronimo the Luzena and Diogo Leitao de Sousa.

On the capitulation Queyroz said:

"Too much ambition and misgovernment were the causes of the total loss of Ceylon, as those who had experience of that Island clearly foresaw, because though the manner in which the Chingalaz should have been conquered was ever understood, and though it was known that the Hollander had his eyes on the cinnamon, neither was the former carried out, as we have pointed out at length, nor was the latter provided against by fortifying the pracas in a manner sufficient to withstand European batteries and by keeping them well garrisoned, munitioned and provided"

After the capture of Colombo, strained relations between the king and Dutch grew worse and frequent hostile encounters took place. The king showed his displeasure by various acts of aggression. Amidst the repeated warnings of the Dutch Rajasinha continued his hostile actions. As a result of this, his forces were driven from the vicinity of Colombo and from his camp at Rayigamwatta.

In 1664, a rebellion broke out against Rajasinha and caused him to flee for safety to Hanguranketa. In the letters addressed to the Dutch from Hanguranketa his changed attitude is noticeable. He requested assistance against his enemies. During the next 23 years, until the king's death in December, 1687, letters continued to pass between him and the Dutch. But none of these letters are available today.

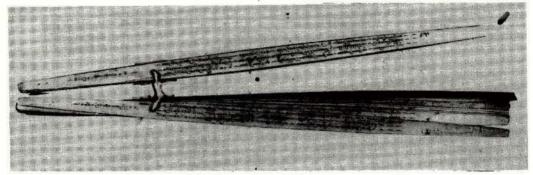


The Siege of Colombo, 1656

ASSESSING THE REVENUE

This temporary peace gave the Dutch a respite to settle down and to commence their work to make the possessions an economic viability. An initial step towards this goal was the compilation of a Thombu which now provides significant material for a study of Sri Lankan economic history. They are also invaluable to modern genealogists, sociologists and political historians.

The Portuguese were the first foreigners who compiled such type of land records. In January 1607, Antonio Vaz Fereira came to Colombo as Vedor da Fazenda for the preparation of a Thombu. He prepared a list of villages with details of the revenue due from each. But the bulk of records were destroyed by the Portuguese before the capitulation in 1656. According to Pieter de Bitter, one of the earliest Archivists of the Dutch, the Portuguese Thombus or land registers were the most important documents that were saved from the seige of Colombo. They contained details of each village, its area and yield, and the revenue the holder gave to the landlord. These cadastral surveys became the model for the Dutch system of land registration; however it should be noted that the Portuguese themselves had closely followed the still earlier registers or lekam Miti of the Sinhalese for the compilation of their own Thombus.



A leaf from a Sinhala lekam miti

It is unfortunate that the results of some of the early Dutch efforts at Thombu compilation in the Colombo dissavany were lost together with the Portuguese Thombus. The latter had been deliberately burnt down in 1700, during Governor de Heere's term of office. Referring to the disaster Valentijn stated, "one of the chief directions in which Governor de Heere showed negligence (so Private Secretary Van Tol said to Governor Simons) was that he gave oral orders to Van Tol in 1700 to burn the registers or Thombus of land dues which showed what the villager had to pay annually to the lord of the land a priceless reckoning and the reason of which was quite uncomprehensible".

Thus, Simons, made arrangements to keep the Thombus, under strict security so that no spurious passages or sentences could be interpolated among the entries. Thereafter no alterations could be made in the body of these volumes, without obtaining the special sanction of the Governor or an order from the land court.

There are three categories of Thombus: namely head, land and school Thombus extant today; the head and land thombus are complementary to each other. The head Thombu is a compilation preceeding the land thombu. It was only after the registration of the heads of the families were made that the appropriate persons were summoned for the land registration. The head thombu gives under each entry the full name. i.e. his "Vasagama" and "Patabendinama" and any aliases by which the declarant would have been known. His caste and occupation would also be noted. It would also give the names of the members of his family, that of his wife, children, grand children and of

ULCASPETIA, Ramachamdra Mutiar as his paravenia.

Sowing extent 7 amunams paddy - 8 fold. Held foro with

I garden: 8 coconut trees. Pays to the King 2 measures dry pepper = 6 farams, and the said Mutiar goes on His Majesty's service wherefore they freed him from the said 2 measures of pepper and he assists at Mateeguama by order of Mudaliyar Simon Correa.

ADJOHS Amgamulla.

VALUE 57 larins.

A N G A N U L L A, 1 lascoreen as comedia given by Simon Porrea, being paravenia of above said Eutian according to declaration of mayorals, gameas of the corla and atacorlliss.

Sowing extent 4 amunams paddy - 8 fold. Held free with

1 garden. ADJOINS Heneguedra VALUE 32 laring.

HENEGUEDRA, 1 lascoreen as comedia given by Simon Correa.

Sowing extent 5 ammnams paddy - 8 fold. Held foro with

1 garden. ADJOINS Commata VALUE 40 larins.

C O S U A T A, 1 arache. Dom Mancel, captain of the black felk, as comedia given by Simon Cobres.

Sowing extent 15 amunams paddy - 8 fold, sown for outo.
3 gardens, 3 natives:

1 garden, 1 potter. He pays to the lord 2 pinges of pots .6 fanams

The inhabitants pay to the lord 3 pinges = 1 larin 4 fanams

ADJOINS Panditaguedra VALUS 23 larins 14 fanams

PANDITAGUEDRA, 1 blacksmith as comedia.

Sowing extent 2 amness paddy - 8 fold, held free, with 1 garden: 7 coconut trees.

Pays to the King 1 couts w \(\frac{1}{2} \) larin.

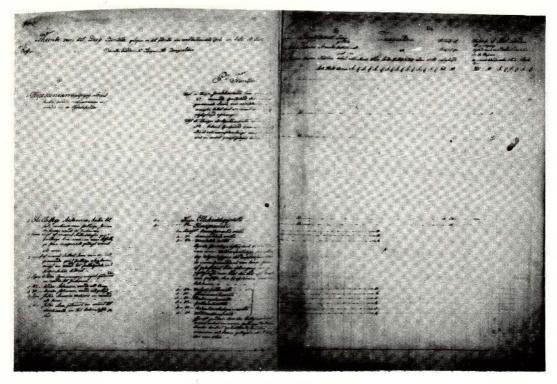
Pays to the vicans of the corls 1 couts \(\frac{1}{2} \) larin.

Pays to the cangene of the village 1 pacets for cutting amecanuts \(\frac{1}{2} \) famous.

ADJOIES Bedagane Value 17 laring.

A page from a Portuguese Tombo, 1615 (English Translation)

the lateral and co-lateral lines. The corresponding entry in the land thombu, would show the gardens and fields possessed by the family. There are extant today 128 Thombus for the Western Province and the Galle district.



An entry from a Dutch Tombo, 1784

THE PRINTING PRESS IS INTRODUCED

"It was Gabriel Schade the Dutch proponant who designed the first movable type printing in the Sinhala and the Tamil characters in the island, and the earliest printed books done by such process were catechisms and readers for the Dutch church and schools. Accordingly the first ever book to be printed in Sinhala on movable type was entitled the "Singaleesch Gebeede-Boek". It contains the Lord's Prayer, morning and night prayers grace before and after meals, 12 articles of the Creed and 10 Commandments of the God. It also has a short introductory note in Dutch and Sinhalese and runs into 41 pages, octavo.

පුදු,නවූ යාඥුවල් පහද අ = පෙ කියතියානි ඇදිගිමලල පංගු මිදුරුවානනියාමෙයාම අග= සතමන් මදවාවදාල අන = ඥුවල් අසයද මෙහි ඇත.



The first page of the first book printed in Sri Lanka, 1737

Although a full list of all what had been published during the Dutch period is not available, a list of about 40 odd books printed and published during this period has been noted by researchers. With the passage of time although more books and greater numbers of copies should have been produced in Ceylon, there is no evidence for such activity as the press had been more or less confined to the activities of the Dutch church during their entire period of stay in Ceylon. However, the administration must have had the first call on the press as evidenced by the great number of rules, regulations and orders, which had been printed and distributed to the various administrative divisions, posts and outposts, throughout the country under their sway".

AMICABLE RELATIONS AND REVIVING OLD FRIENDSHIPS

Amidst commerce, revenue and political rivalry the Sinhalese kings had also a certain amount of cordiality with the Dutch. The Dutch too, on the requests of the Kandyan kings, often supplied their needs. Thus on a request for vessels for the King's envoys to accompany monks from South Asian countries for the Upasampada or the higher ordination the Dutch readily complied and provided the vessels.

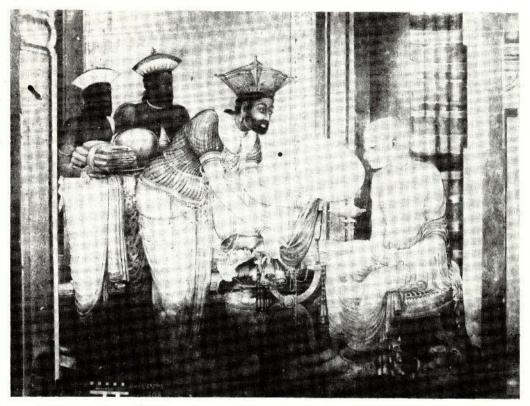
The higher ordination, which is conferred on a Novice, is called the Upasampadā. Normally a layman enters the Order as a Sāmanēra or Novice. Thereafter, when a period of intellectual and spiritual training is completed and also at the minimum age of 20, he could become a full-fledged monk or a bhikku. According to the rules of the vinaya five bhikkus are required for an Upasampadā act. But there were times when even five ordained bhikkus could not be had in the Island. This was due to the persecution of monks and other anti-Buddhist activities of Rajasinha I (1582-93) which led to the decline of Buddhist institutions in Sri Lanka. But it was customary for the Sinhalese kings from ancient times to assist in maintaining the continuity of the Sangha by not only helping the young men as Novices but also by assisting them in the holding of periodical Upasampadā ceremonies. Therefore, we see that in the 17th century Vimaladharmasuriya II (1687-1707), helped re-establish the Order by bringing down monks from Arakan. But once again during the reign of King Nārendrasinha the number of monks had dwindled and the last of them had died in 1729.

Thus in 1741 at the request of King Sri Vijaya Rajasinha, the Dutch agreed to supply vessels for the king to send some envoys to Pegu to fetch bhikkus and some religious texts. This delegation was headed by Doranagama Raja. But on the voyage the ship founded and the mission failed. Hence a second mission was set up on 6th February, 1747.

But, this mission too was doomed to failure due to the death of Sri Vijaya Rajasinha on 11th August, 1747. Not knowing the religious views of the new monarch, the Siamese king was reluctant to allow the monks to proceed to Sri Lanka.

However, the culmination of these attempts was the arrival of Upali Thera with a retinue of monks and five Siamese Ambassadors, sent by King Boromkot in May 1753. In July of the same year in the presence of King Kirthi Sri Rajasinha and at his request

six sāmanēras were admitted to Upsampadā with Upali Thera as their teacher. In 1756, the King of Siam sent to Kandy a further group of erudite monks who brought with them rare religious texts. Accordingly was founded the Siam Nikāya or Siamese chapter, patronised by the King of Siam and the King of Kandy. It claimed an unbroken spiritual succession from the ancient Sangha of the Maha Vihara, the first monastery established in Sri Lanka.



An illustration from the Kelaniya temple paintings depicting the revival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka

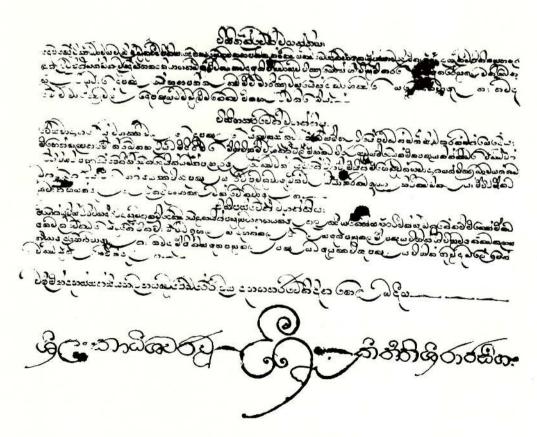
A TREATY TO CONTROL: THE TREATY OF 1766

Amidst amicable relations between the Dutch and the Sinhalese everything was not well. Dutch relations with Rajasinghe II were soured on the issue of captured Portuguese fortresses. The chief concern of the Dutch during this period was to see that Kandyan Kings did not come into contact with other foreign powers, from whom assistance could be had. The Dutch did it by manipulation of their trade policy and the closure of ports. Even during the period of Sri Vijaya Rajasinha (1739-47) all the trade was channelled through the Dutch ports. As a result of this, the King lost not only his customs revenue, but also his income from trading in goods from Gabadāgam (Royal villages). But the Dutch had a better understanding of the Nāyakkar kings. Therefore they were of the opinion that a policy of isolation could not be adopted indefinitely with them, especially as the district of Madura, from which the Nāyakkars

came from, became a province of the Nawab of the Carnatic, in 1743. As the Nawab was an ally of the English, they had access through them to friends outside Sri Lanka. Though the Dutch had a close awareness of this situation, they were not willing to give up their basic position with regard to the ports. What they intended to do was to maintain peace with the King while keeping the ports in their hands. But this was not feasible.

On the other hand the fears of the Dutch on the activities of the King were not unwarranted, because they materialised with the Pybus mission of 1762. At the meeting, the King pressed for definite assurances of aid in case of war but Pybus could not make any commitments other than the profession of friendship. On the other hand Britain was at peace with Holland, and this mission was a private enterprise of the Madras presidency. Its main purpose was to obtain information on Sri Lanka and to obtain if possible, commercial advantages by exploiting the conflict between the Dutch and the King. Due to these reasons nothing came out from the Pybus mission.

The consequence of this was that the Dutch in 1765 launched an expedition against Kandy. At this juncture both parties were exhausted and the result was the Treaty of 14th February 1766.



From the Treaty of 1766: the Sinhala copy

The Treaty confirmed the sovereignity of the Dutch over their existing possessions in the coastal territories of the Island. They were the disavanies of Matara, Galle, Colombo, Jaffna, the districts of Kalpitiya, Mannar, Trincomalee and Batticaloa. The Treaty in addition, to linking up the coastal territories round the Island gave the Dutch a coastal strip "the breadth of one Sinhalese mile inland more or less as a situation of the hills and rivers permit." In return the Company undertook to pay a sum equivalent to the revenue that these territories yeilded. Commissioners from the two parties were to delimit the new boundary; the Kandyan kingdom was to become an island within an island.

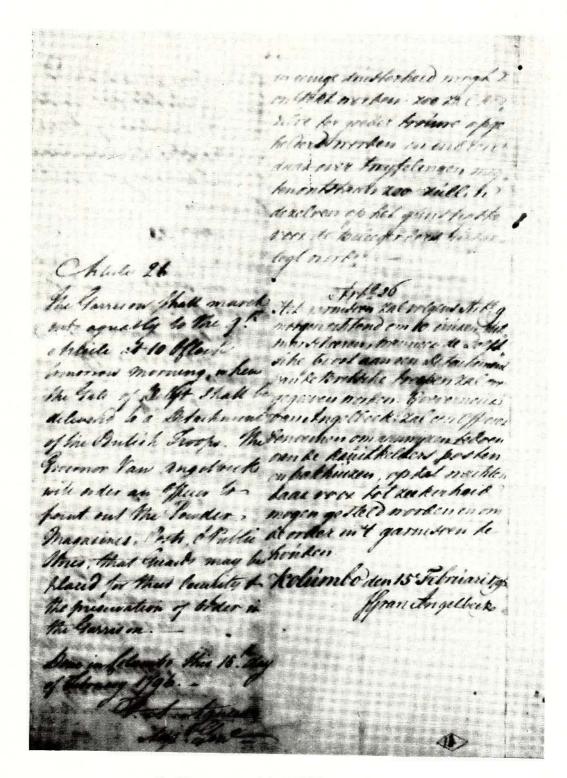
THE COMING OF THE BRITISH

The 1766 treaty made the Company the sole intermediary between the king and the outside world and isolated the king. The Kandyans were too resentful and humiliated on the rigorous terms imposed on them by this treaty. But the enforcement was not possible due to the non-compliance with its provisions by the king. Therefore the next three decades once again marked a period of diplomacy, where, the king was looking for new friends to expel the old allys. The king returned to his old game of trying to pitch European nations against each other in the hope of turning their rivalries to his own advantage. The British who captured Trincomalee on 11th January 1722 lost it to the French and the Madras Government sent Boyd on a mission to Kandy. Boyd proposed an alliance with the king Rājādhi Rajasinha to expel the Dutch but Boyd's mission too proved as fruitless as the Pybus mission. While refusing the British the Kandyans made an attempt for French aid, but that too became futile, and the king was compelled to abandon his hostile preparation and re-open his frontiers.

Now the British appeared in the coastal waters of Sri Lanka and between the period 1 August 1795 and 15 February 1796, the forts of Jaffna, Trincomalee and Negombo surrendered to them. These military operations were followed by diplomatic initiative with the king of Kandy. Robert Andrews an officer of the British East India Company, was appointed as an emissary, to negotiate a treaty of defence and friendship with the king, but it led to no results.

In the meantime the Dutch had neither the military and naval strength nor financial resources to continue resistance and on 15th February 1796, Angelbeek opened the gates of Colombo to the British.

The capitulation, which ensued was signed by Van Angelbeek for the Dutch and Agnew for the British on the 15th of February 1796 and on the following day the administration of the Governor in Council of Madras, commenced. Thereafter, on 23 February, the British troops occupied the remaining Dutch settlements, i.e. Kalutara, Galle and Matara. Thus the British occupied the maritime provinces of Sri Lanka.



The Signatory page of the 1796 Treaty of Surrender

SRI LANKAN COASTAL BELT BECOMES A CROWN COLONY

After the British occupation of the Dutch territory it was made a dependency of the Madras Presidency. The Madras Government exercised the civil and military control over the British possessions in Sri Lanka. Their main objective was the collection of revenue and the administration was to be carried out through Aumildars who came from Madras. The ill-conceived system led to a rebellion that broke out in 1797 in the Hewagam and Salpiti Korales of the maritime Sinhalese district.

Before the news of this revolt reached Whitehall, the Cabinet had come to the conclusion that they may not have to face the possibility of handing over the provinces back to the Dutch. A permanent form of government was hence a possibility and Frederick North, arrived as the new Governor on 19th October, 1798. According to the instructions given to North, the British Government was to have political control of the newly acquired territories and the East India Company in Madras was to have charge of commercial matters. The consequence was an unwieldy compromise which came to be known as "dual control". Under this system of administration, revenue and trade remained with the Company. North was the Commander in Chief of the troops and the responsible officer for the general administration. This system was doomed to failure from the start and when Governor North exposed the prevalent malpractices, the Madrasis tried to act against his authority. To overcome these problems, Dundas announced his decision to the Court of Directors on 30th



From the Act of Appointment of Governor Frederick North, 1802

December, 1800, to place Sri Lanka directly under the British Crown. Thereafter the coastal areas of the island became a Crown Colony on 1st January 1802 and Governor North received his fresh set of instructions.

The British who had already realized the strategic importance of the island, desired to consolidate their possession and the ultimate realization of that aim would be the annexation of the Kandyan kingdom.

FALL OF A MONARCHY

The first two British Governors, North and Maitland, worked hard to consolidate their position and vis-a-vis the Kandyan kingdom. But, they failed to come to any terms with Kandy. Yet the situation changed during the term of Brownrigg (1812-20). The Kandyan aristocracy and the Bhikkus owing to their differences with the Nayakkar kings extended their co-operation for a British intervention. Brownrigg taking advantage of this opportunity overthrew the Nayakkar dynasty and established British rule over the Kandyan territory. The change of the government was documented in the 'Kandyan Convention' which was signed by the Governor and the Chiefs in March 1815. The Convention itself was drafted by John D'Oyly in consultation with Governor Brownrigg and the Kandyan Chiefs. It contained 12 clauses, and clauses 4 and 5 dealt with Kandyan sovereignty and the protection of Buddhism. To the Sinhalese they were the most important clauses in the Convention.

In clause 4 of the Convention Browning assured all classes of people, the safety of their persons and property and their civil rights and immunities according to the laws, institutions and customs established and in force amongst them. Clause 5 assured that "the religion of Boodhoo professed by the Chiefs and inhabitants of this province is declared inviolable and its rites, Ministers and places of worship are to be maintained and protected."

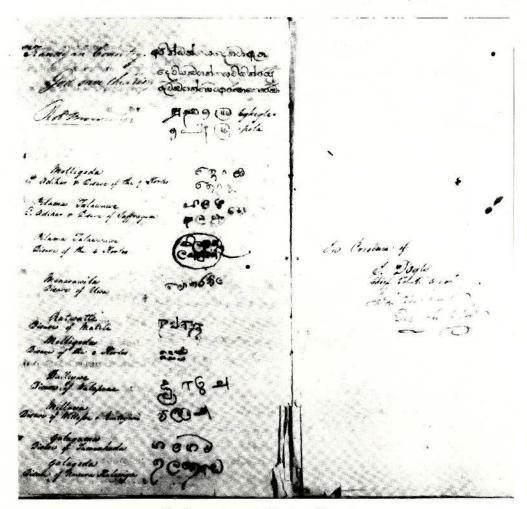
These two clauses subsequently led to much discussion and expression of opinion but they stood unaltered, as far as the 1815 Convention was concerned.

After the Convention the Kandyan Chiefs and the Sangha were the two most disappointed parties. They were not satisfied with the new system. Great expectations of the Kandyan Chiefs were lost with the introduction of a Resident in September 1816 as the Agent of the Governor and the Board of Commissioners to assist him in the administration of the Kandyan provinces. By this the powers exercised by the Kandyan Chiefs during the last regime declined and their authority was diminished. Even the Sangha came to receive only scant respect from the new rulers and the ascendency of the Christian religion in the Kandyan regions led to the increase of their dissatisfaction.

These factors contributed to a common discontent which ultimately led to the rebellion of 1818. The rebellion was suppressed with force, and the subsequent Proclamation of 21st November 1818 greatly reduced the privileges of the Chiefs. The British had consolidated their power, and Sri Lanka had finally lost its independence after 2300 years.

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From the first page of the Kandyan Convention: 1815



The Signatories to the Kandyan Convention

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA

After the British consolidated themselves, the necessity for a review of the legislature and the administrative system became apparent. And so arrived in 1829 the Colebrooke-Cameron Commission of Inquiry.

The Commission sat in Ceylon for 11 months and reported their findings and recommendations in 1830. The two most important were the recommendations to establish a Legislative Council and an Executive Council.

The Governor was requested to deal with administrative and financial matters in consultation with the Executive Council; though he could overrule its decisions, the justification for it had to be conveyed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Legislative Council was composed of 16 members of whom 10 were official, and six

unofficial. The latter were nominated by the Governor from the foreign residents and from local inhabitants. The three local members were to represent the Sinhalese, the Temils and the Burghers.

Nomination and communal representation were features of the Legislative Council. Although selection on territorial basis had been suggested by certain mercantile interests even at that period, they had hardly received any consideration.

During the first half of the 19th century demand for reforms had come mainly from the European planters, merchants and certain liberal minded Europeans, such as Christopher Elliot and William Digby. The Government of the day easily dismissed them on the grounds that they were requests non-representative of the mass of the people.

In the second half of the 19th century the English educated Sri Lankan land holders, merchants and professionals came into the forefront of constitutional agitation. A significant event of this period was the demand led by George Wall that the control of the expenditure should be a matter for the Legislative Council. A vote of censure was passed against the Government on this count and later the unofficial members resigned in a body when the vote was disregarded. This also led to the commencement of some forums and political associations. To placate the demands that ensued, in 1889, the British Government decided to increase the number of unofficial members of the Legislative Council to eight, by the addition of two members; apart from that there were no major changes in the Legislative Council until the end of the 19th century.



Letters Patent establishing the Legislative Council and the Executive Council

THE ROADS TO PROSPERITY

With peace in the island, transport was a key factor for economic prosperity. Barnes had already connected the coast to the hills through an efficient road. Now in the second half of the 19th century, came the cry for the railways. Governor Henry Ward, 1855-60 was the pioneer of this endeavour. While subduing strong opposition to this innovation he himself participated in the commencement of this work, cutting the first sod in April 1858. Construction of the Colombo-Kandy line became priority number one, due to the need of the European planters of the Central highlands. A tender for £873,039. 12 s was submitted for the construction of the rail road by Faviele who had opened the first section of the railways in India. This was formally accepted, and in January 1864 the first locomotive engine was landed in Sri Lanka and promptly utilised for ballasting purposes.



An illustration depicting the inauguration of the railways, 1867

By the end of 1864, the state of the line was so advanced to enable the Engineer to undertake the great responsibility of carrying a Royal visitor, the Duke of Brabant, heir to the Belgian throne, by a special train from Veyangoda to Ambepussa and back to Colombo.

The section upto Ambepussa was opened to the public on 2nd October, 1865 and by the end of June, 1867, the work at Kandy, Peradeniya and Kadugannawa were nearing completion to enable the contractor to complete the line—a distance of 74 1/2 miles for public use in July, 1867.

Thereafter the Railway was extended from Kandy towards Uva. By 1894 it had gone upto Bandarawela. Then the Railway linked up Matale and Kurunegala with Kandy. Thereafter except for Sabaragamuwa other areas of the Central plantation districts had been connected by the Railways.

The Southern line was opened in 1877 along the coastal belt up to Galle. Later the coastal line was extended up to Puttalam for the transportation of coconut products.

The need to connect Jaffna to the capital and to facilitate the transportation of Indian labour led to the opening of the Northern line in 1905 up to Talaimannar and Kankasanthurai. The last to be laid was the narrow gauge line upto Ratnapura in 1912 for the transportation of the produce from rubber plantations.

1910: THE COMING OF THE ELECTIVE PRINCIPLE

The improved system of transportation and communication helped the formation of a new class of local capitalists, planters and professionals. They were the English educated and had imbued ideas of Western liberalism. Thus in March 1909 a memorial was sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies with 760 signatures. It claimed to "voice the responsible public opinion" of the various communities, and sought constitutional reform.

On the problem of constitutional reforms Governor McCallum disagreed on almost every demand put forward by them. Arguing on the ground that the memorialists came from an alienated class, he contended that senior and experienced Civil Servants were the real representatives of the masses in the Legislative Council.

On the demand for territorial representation McCallum was totally opposed on the question of the introduction of the elective principle. McCallum argued for nomination by the Governor. He argued that the majority of the native population were so ignorant that they would not be able to exercise their vote with judgment and intelligence. The Colonial Office in London and especially Stubbs was in favour of McCallum's views.

He held the view that the majority of the population had no political sense, and a franchise based on education and property would only throw power into the hands of a small group of people.

However, in the final stage of the deliberations Lord Crew, as the Secretary of State for the Colonies, ignored expert advice and introduced the elective principle on an experimental basis. It was the success of the liberal idea of a politician against that of the establishment.

This resulted in the Legislative Council being expanded to 21 members. The official majority was still retained with 11 officials and 10 unofficials. But for the first time four unofficials were to be elected to the Legislative Council.

DESPATCHES

RELATING TO

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Presented to both Jouses of Parliament by Command of Bis Majesty.

March, 1910.



LONDON:
PRINTED FOR HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
By DARLING & SON, Lyd., 34-40, Bacon Street, E.

And to be purchased, either directly or through any Bookseller, from WYMAN AND SONS, LTD., FETTER LANE, E.C., and 32, ABINGDON STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W.; or OLIVER & BOYD, TWEEDDALE COURT, EDINBURGH; or E. PONSONBY, 116, GRAPTON STREET, DUBLIN.

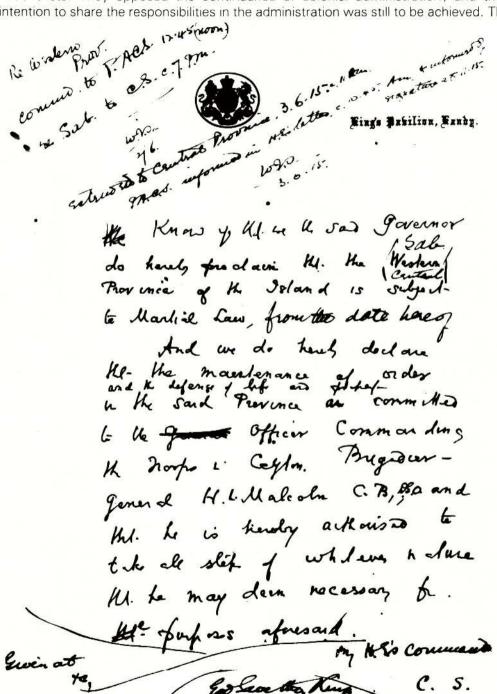
1910.

[Cd. 5098.] Price 3d.

From the Constitution of the Ceylon Legislative Council: 1910

THE SPARK THAT PRODDED A CONSCIENCE: THE RIOTS OF 1915

The reforms of 1912 brought only limited satisfaction to the reformists and nationalists. They opposed the continuance of colonial administration; and their intention to share the responsibilities in the administration was still to be achieved. The



Copy of the draft notification prepared on 03.06.1915, for the declaration of Martial Law

Buddhist Temperance movement, which was started in 1912, was an ideal vehicle for this struggle. Temperance Societies were set up at village level in 1913 and 1914 and they received wide support from the rural and urban masses. The rapid expansion of this movement and its close connection with the nationalists aroused suspicions of the government.

The unity between the two was further amplified with the use of the temperance platform by the nationalist leaders for condemnation of the government policies in the constitutional sphere. They were highly critical of British policies adopted on various issues involving Buddhist interests since the second half of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, an upsurge of some form of Sinhalese nationalism was to be seen and it was closely connected with the religio-cultural revivalist stream. The "Lion race and the Sinhalese nation" was at the hub of Anagarika Dharmapala's thinking. They were intended to evoke a positive response from the people for the preservation of the cultural patterns of the country. The celebration of the national day and the centenary of the Kandyan Convention were some of the selected events which invited the public attention on the national heritage. The expected objective of this national resurgence was the creation of an atmosphere against the British. But it exploded otherwise.

The Sinhala-Muslim conflict arose out of a difference of opinion on the movement of a Buddhist procession with music. A local affair, soon grew out of proportion, and the government was in too great a hurry to crush it with violence—out of proportion to the situation. Martial-law was declared, the disturbances were crushed, many lives were lost and among them were that of innocent but prominent Sinhala buddhists.

The severities of the British hand in this instance, proved to the people that a permanent solution to safeguard their life and liberty was necessary. Thus the incident helped to galvanize the society to a new-wave of thought: to 'fight' for independence

THE 'FIGHT' FOR RESPONSIBILITY

The 1915 disturbances were; in a sense, the birth pangs of a new movement. The new movement almost abandoned temperance and the traditional socio-cultural values. They searched new dimensions and focused their attention on constitutional agitation. Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam's address on "our Political needs" on 2nd April 1917 was the first positive step in the direction of a Ceylon National Congress."...(To) achieve success we must be prepared to work strenuously and systematically, it is not enough to hold sporadic meetings, make long speeches and go to sleep. Let us have a minimum of talk and a maximum of action, action well weighed and persisted in. Let us have an earnest body of men to form a "Ceylon Reform League" with a good working Secretary and Committee, a competent staff, a central office, a reading room and library and a place for us to meet daily and exchange thoughts and help us to maintain each others enthusiasm. The Central Office should be the brains of an organisation extending over the Island and by means of branches and affiliated Societies in every town and district by means of lectures and publications, carrying on a propaganda for educating the people in their rights and duties as citizens. We shall need competent Agents in England to keep the claims and needs of Ceylon before the British government and public. All this requires money as well as zeal."

Further he declared that "we ask to be in our own country what other self respecting people are in theirs—self governing, strong, respected at home and abroad; and we ask for the grant, at once, of a definite measure of progressive advance towards that goal".

Thus with the constitution of the Ceylon National Congress in 1919 it led to the polarisation of all forces towards the achievement of a responsible Government in Sri Lanka. Their objective then, was the demand for an enlarged Legislative Council with a territorially elected unofficial majority. They opposed communal representation and asked for the control of the Budget. Their aim was a for a full representative government.

The modus operandi was to be "the public meeting, the memorial and the deputation" and as Arunachalam said in an earlier occasion "Ceylon is no pauper begging for alms. She is claiming her heritage".

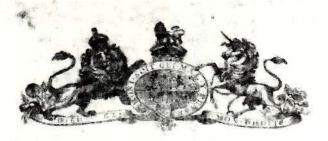


A group picture of the 1927 Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress

ON THE MARCH TOWARDS SELF-GOVERNMENT: 1924 REFORMS

The first fruits of the movement for constitutional reforms was almost achieved when the Secretary of State in 1920 granted a Legislative Council with 14 officials and 23 unofficial members, out of which 11 unofficials were elected on a territorial basis.

Although it appeared to be a liberal measure embodying the principle of representative government, in fact it preserved the dominance of the government and gave no real power to the Sri Lankans. Hence the Congress was dissatisfied and to get it accepted the Governor had to give an undertaking to obtain further instalments of reforms of the Legislative Council. This undertaking was honoured when more powers were given to the Legislative Council by the Order-in-Council of 1923. Accordingly the Governor dissolved the old Council in August 1924, and reconstituted the new council on 15th October of the same year; it came to be known as the "Manning Constitution". It consisted of 49 members—12 officials and 37 unofficials. Of the 37 unofficials 23 represented constituencies. For the first time the constitution made provision to create an elected majority in the Legislative Council.



Cenlon Gobernment Gazette

EXTRAORDINARY.

Published by Ruthsvitz.

No. 7,876 - SATURDAY, PEBRUARY 18, 1924.

Part I. General.

Supercite proping is place to much Part in order that if many he had repartment.

PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR.

is the Name of His Majesty GEORGE THE STETM. of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Iof the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith.

PROCLAMATION.

His Excellency Sir William Hanny Manning, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Governor and Commander in Chief m and over the Island of Ceylon, with the Dependencies thereof.

H. MARRING.

WEERAS by Order dated the Ninetcenth day of December, 1923, His Makety by and with the adviPrivy Council, has been pleased to make provision for the constitution of a Legislative Coursell in
the Island of Coylen, with the territories and dependencies thereof
And whereas by clause I of the said Order it is provided that such Order shall be published in the
Cortes, and shall commence and come into operation on the date of such publication :
And whereas it is expedient that such Order shall be published forthwith:

Now knot Ye that We, the said Governor, do hereby direct that the said Order shall be

Given at Nuwars Eliya, in the said Island of Ceylon, this Sixteenth day of Pebruary, in One thousand Nine hundred and Twenty four.

GOD SAVE THE KING

From the Gazette notifying the new Legislative Council of 1924

Thus the Ceylon National Congress which was a confederate of notables, interest groups and associations gave a positive leadership for the constitutional agitation movement. The CNC itself was not an unqualified success. It had its problems. In 1928, W. A. de Silva said in his Presidential address:

"There are some in our midst who have had no time or occasion to study the progress of the Government of this country or the history and progress of Governments in other countries. They express their alarm at any change calculated to alter the present state of affairs.....

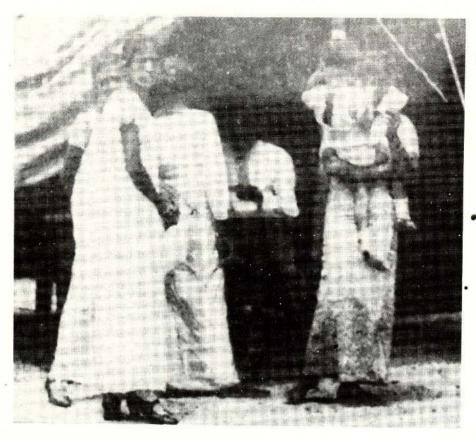
-The fears of destruction of the foundation of Society or a change in a form of Government is a familiar cry all the world over. Pamphlets and books and newspaper articles written in England during the last hundred years are full of such forebodings; however Great Britain and the Empire still continue to flourish.....
-There are times when the least of us believe that all the rest of the world are incompetent and that we monopolise all efficiency and superiority. This superman complexity comes in the wake of a desire to retain one's advantages and privileges and the reluctance to enter into a healthy competition with the rest of the world.
-We have now to consider our future form of Government...." and it went along to achieve its aims.

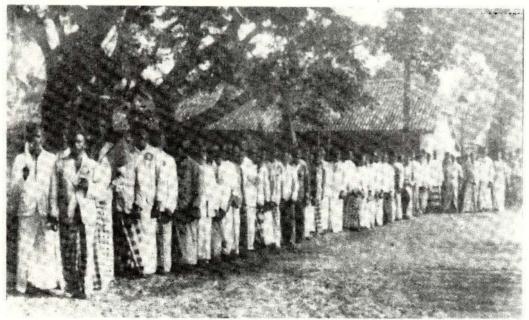
THE PEOPLE GETS A SAY

The 1920's saw the beginning and growth of the Labour and Trade Union Movement; and the Women's franchise movement. A. E. Goonasinghe was its leader. From 1923 onwards Goonasinghe took up the cry for representative government based on manhood suffrage and he repeatedly urged the Congress to accept the principle of manhood suffrage. These conflicts were brought into limelight with the arrival of the Donoughmore Commission. While giving evidence before the Commission, Goonasinghe stressed the need for universal suffrage. On this issue he was almost alone among the political leadership.

The Ceylon Women's Franchise Union also appeared before the Commission and asked for a limited franchise and modestly left it to the Commission to grant "more, if we are worthy of more". They further mentioned that the right to sit in the Legislative Council was granted to women by the Governor of India, and further mentioned that the percentage of female literacy in Sri Lanka was higher than that of India. Some of the leading organs of public opinion both English and vernacular supported them and extended their co-operation to the movement.

The recommendations of the Donoughmore Commission were embodied in the 1931 Order-in-Council. It abolished communal representation, introduced universal suffrage and established the State Council. Sri Lanka thus became the first country in Asia to enjoy the benefits of universal suffrage.





The people exercising the vote: 1931

34

The establishment of the State Council was more an administrative outlet rather than a major political concession. The Commission was of the opinion that Sri Lanka was not yet ripe for full responsible government. Hence their suggestion to give partial responsibility to the elected representatives.

The State Council acted through seven Executive Committees and "exercised general supervision over the departments placed under its management". But, the reins of power were still with the Governor and his three key-secretaries. It was said of the members that "after the commencement of the war, they have acted as Ministers ignoring their Executive Committees".

.....AND TO INDEPENDENCE: 1947/1948

The movement which started with the first protest in the Legislative Council in 1864 and later with the forming of the Ceylon National Congress, culminated in the obtaining of Independence in 1948.

Over the years the Ceylon National Congress had become moribund as a political organization. Therefore a group of younger members led by J. R. Jayewardene and Dudley Senanayake made attempts to reorganise and to build up interest in the Congress throughout the country. Accordingly they held annual sessions of the Congress at Mirigama, Dummaladeniya and Kelaniya, in the years 1940, 1941 and 1942 respectively. Upto the Kelaniya sessions the Congress policy towards constitutional agitation was "the attainment of Dominion Status within the meaning of the statutes of Westminster". But at the Kelaniya sessions in December, 1942, J. R. Jayewardene proposed a resolution changing the object of the Congress to "the attainment of freedom of Ceylon". He urged that Dominion Status was "inadequate" and "meaningless" for countries like India and Sri Lanka.

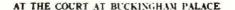
In May 1943 the Imperial Government outlined its reform proposals for Sri Lanka and in the same year D. S. Senanayake assumed leadership of the State Council. The new proposals did not meet the needs of the new leadership and the Board of Ministers forwarded their own proposals to the Imperial Government. This resulted in the appointment of the Soulbury Commission.

By 1946, the Labour Government had accepted the recommendations of the Soulbury Commission. Full internal self Government was to be given with Whitehall in control of defence and external affairs. But, now, D. S. Senanayake and others sought full responsible self-Government with control of defence and external affairs as well.

Hence, Senanayake pressed the British officials for a more precise statement in this regard, and the British Government made the official announcement on 10th June, 1947 that Ceylon would receive "fully responsible status within the British Commonwealth of Nations".

The 1947 Constitution made arrangements for a Unitary State and formed a Parliamentary executive, which was dependent on and accountable to a House of Parliament, to an Upper House and to the Governor-General, who was the local

representative of the Queen. Protection of minorities was afforded under Section 29 of the Constitution, and it made arrangements to remove the judiciary from the executive to provide it with greater independence. This Constitution lasted 25 years, until the introduction of the Republican Constitution in 1972.



The 19th day of December, 1947

Present

THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY IN COUNCIL

WHEREAS by the Ceylon (Constitution) Order in Council, 1946 (hereinafter called "the Principal Order") as amended by the Ceylon (Constitution) (Amendment) Order in Council, 1947, the Ceylon (Constitution) (Amendment No. 2) Order in Council, 1947, and the Ceylon (Constitution) (Amendment No. 3) Order in Council, 1947 (hereinafter logother called "the Amending Orders") provision is made for the Government of Ceylon and for the establishment of a Parliament in and for Ceylon:

AND WHEREAS by the Ceylon Independence Act, 1947, provision is made for the attainment by Ceylon of fully responsible status within the British Commonwealth of Nations:

AND WHEREAS it is expedient for the same purpose that the Principal Order and the Amending Orders should be amended in the manner hereinafter appearing:

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby ordered by His Majesty, by and with the advice of His Privy Council, as follows:

1,—(1) This Order may be cited as the Ceylon Independence Order Short title in Council, 1947.

(2) The Principal Order, the Amending Orders and this Order may be cited together as the Ceylon (Constitution and Independence) Orders in Council, 1946 and 1947.

(3) This Order shall be construed as one with the Principal Order.
(4) This Order shall come into operation on the day appointed by His Majesty by Order in Council as the appointed day for the purposes of the Ceylon Independence Act, 1947.

2.—(1) For Section 4 of the Principal Order there shall be substituted The following section: —

* Appointment and Functions of Governor-General. "4.—(1) The Governor-General shall be appointed by His Majesty, and shall have and may exercise in the Island during His Majesty's pleasure, but subject to the provisions of this Order, such powers, authorities and functions of His Majesty as His Majesty may be pleased to maign to him.

(2) All powers, authorities and functions vested in His Majesty, or the Commence Conserval shall subject to the

(a) All powers, authorities and functions vested in His Majesty or the Governor-General shall, subject to the provisions of this Order and of any other law for the time being in force, be exercised as far as may be in accordance with the constitutional conventions applicable to the exercise of similar powers, authorities and functions in the United Kingdom by His Majesty:

Provided that no act or omission on the part of the Governor-General shall be called in question in any court of law or otherwise on the ground that the foregoing provisions of this sub-section have not been complied with ".

(D.C #7) 4 4 5

The Governor-General.

From the Constitution of 1947

ON THE WORLD FORUMS

After Ceylon received Independence in 1947/48 it was her desire to join the World bodies for rightful and equal participation in international affairs as befits an Independent nation.

Almost at the outset of her career as an Independent nation she had spoken on behalf of the then fallen Japan at the San Francisco Peace Conference in 1951. The speech was well received and greatly contributed for creating a better atmosphere for the signing of the Peace Treaty. Here the spokesman was Hon. J. R. Jayewardene. He had struck a vibrant note when he had repeated the words of the Buddha that: "hatred ceases not by hatred but by love": that was to be one of the guiding principles in the activities both internal and external of the new nation.

Now Ceylon had to join the United Nations. The "United Nations" was a name devised by the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was first used in the Declaration by United Nations on 1st January 1942, where representatives of 26 nations pledged their governments to continue fighting together against the Axis powers

The UN Charter was drawn up by the representatives of 50 countries at the Conference on International Organisation, in San Francisco from 25th April to 26th June 1945. The representatives worked on the basis of proposals worked out by representatives of China, USSR, UK and USA at Dambarton Oaks, Washington D.C. in August-October 1944. The Charter was signed on 26th June 1945.



Group photograph taken at the United Nations on 15th Dec. 1955

The UN officially came into existence on 24th October 1945, when the Charter had been ratified by China, France, USSR, and USA and by a majority of other signatories."

To join this body Sri Lanka had a hard struggle. The reason being it getting sandwiched in international politics. Thus it was only in 1955 with the proposal of the Soviet Union that Ceylon, Albania, Jordan, Ireland, Portugal, Hungary, Italy, Austria, Romania, Bulgaria, Finland, Nepal, Libya, Cambodia, Laos and Spain should be given UN membership, that Sri Lanka was admitted as a member: it had taken eight years to gain entry. In 1955 Sri Lanka's admission was approved unanimously by fifty-seven countries voting for and none against.

On that occasion acting among Sri Lanka's supporters was India's Ambassader Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon, and on that day, Sri Lanka was represented at the UN by Sir R. S. S. Gunawardena.

TOWARDS A BETTER EXPRESSION OF THE PEOPLE'S FREE-WILL

After quarter of a century of administering the country with a Westminster model constitution, the country took a further step towards embodying the free-will of the people in a newly promulgated constitution. With this constitution Sri Lanka became a Republic.

Thus the introduction to the first Republican Constitution of Sri Lanka stated:

"We the people of Sri Lanka being resolved in the excercise of our freedom and independence as a nation to give to ourselves a constitution which will declare Sri Lanka a free sovereign and independent Republic pledged to realize the objectives of a social democracy including the fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens and which will become the fundamental law of Sri Lanka deriving its power and authority solely from the people do on this the Tenth Day of the waxing moon in the month of Vesak the year Two Thousand Five Hundred and Fifteen of the Buddhist era that is Monday the Twenty-second day of May One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-two acting through the Constituent Assembly established by us hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this constitution."

The constitution made provision to establish a uni-cameral republican structure, with a political executive, selected from the National State Assembly. It established a National State Assembly instead of a Parliament, and a President appointed by the Prime Minister was made the nominal Head of State. Perhaps one of the most significant constitutional innovations of 1972 was the introduction of the Constitutional Court. It functioned as an Advisory Body to the National State Assembly on constitutional matters.

This constitution was replaced by the constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.



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From the Constitution of 1972



do solemnly declare and affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the Republic of Iri Lanka, that I will uphold the Constitution of Iri Lanka and shall faithfully perform the duties and functions of the office of President of the Republic of Iri Lanka in accordance with the Constitution and with the law.

Jos Jugunds

Affirmed before me at Colombo this Fourth day of Tebruary, One thousand Nine hundred and Seventy eight

> NOM Jaw (UAK 666 Chap Justice of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Su Lanka

The Oath taken by the President of the Republic of Sri Lanka on assumption of office on 4th February, 1978.

.....AND TOWARDS A "JUST AND FREE SOCIETY"

The new Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka was promulgated on September 7, 1978.

Of the People, the State and Sovereignty, it said:

- (1) Sri Lanka (Ceylon) is a Free, Sovereign, Independent and Democratic Socialist Republic and shall be known as the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.
- (2) The Republic of Sri Lanka is a Unitary State.
- (3) In the Republic of Sri Lanka sovereignty is in the People and is inalienable.

 Sovereignty includes the powers of government, fundamental rights and the franchise.
- (4) The Sovereignty of the People shall be excercised and enjoyed in the following manner:-
 - (a) the legislative power of the People shall be exercised by Parliament, consisting of elected representatives of the People and by the People at a Referendum;
 - (b) the executive power of the People, including the defence of Sri Lanka, shall be exercised by the President of the Republic elected by the People;
 - (c) the judicial power of the People shall be exercised by Parliament through courts, tribunals and institutions created and established, or recognized, by the constitution, or created and established by law, except in regard to matters relating to the privileges, immunities and powers of Parliament and of its Members, wherein the judicial power of the People may be exercised directly by Parliament according to law;
 - (d) the fundamental rights which are by the Constitution declared and recognized shall be respected, secured and advanced by all the organs of government, and shall not be abridged, restricted or denied, save in the manner and to the extent hereinafter provided; and
 - (e) the franchise shall be exercisable at the election of the President of the Republic and of the Members of Parliament, and at every Referendum by every citizen who has attained the age of eighteen years, and who, being qualified to be an elector as hereinatter provided, has his name entered in the register of electors.
- (5) The territory of the Republic of Sri Lanka shall consist of the twenty-four administrative districts, the names of which are set out in the First Schedule, and its territorial waters.
- (6) The National Flag of the Republic of Sri Lanka shall be the Lion Flag depicted in the Second Schedule.

- (7) The National Anthem of the Republic of Sri Lanka shall be "Sri Lanka Matha," the words and music of which are set out in the Third Schedule.
- (8) The National Day of the Republic of Sri Lanka shall be the fourth day of February.

Article 160 of the Constitution said "...... the person holding the office of President immediately before the commencement of the Constitution shall be the first President under the Constitution...." Thus His Excellency J. R. Jayewardene who held the office of President at the time of the commencement of the Constitution became the first President under the new Constitution.



CAVIN DAA MOITAM A TO YAON IM BHT

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