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THE SOUTHERN EXPRESSWAY CONNECTING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

The end of the civil war heralded the dawn of a new era in Sri Lanka: an era of peace, prosperity and rapid development. Extensive reconstruction and development efforts have since begun in all sectors of the country. Among a number of development policies proposed was the development of the roads and infrastructure sector of the country. The ultimate objective of the Government is to transform Sri Lanka into a country that can speak of modern roadways and infrastructure. Hence, a number of projects to construct new roads and expressways have been initiated. The Southern Expressway is one of many such initiatives.



President inspects the National Performance Theatre

President Mahinda Rajapaksa inspected the newly constructed National Performance Theatre. The five-storey modern theatre, built on a model similar to the Lotus Pond of Polonnaruwa.

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Minister Basil Rajapaksa lighting the oil lamp. Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprises is also present in the picture.



Minister Basil Rajapaksa, Minister Susil Premajayantha and Minister Maithreepala Sirisena



Minister Basil Rajapaksa with Namal Rajapaksa, MP

DEVELOPING JAFFNA

Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development participated in a special workshop held for the candidates who contested the Local Government elections in the northern Jaffna and Kilinochchi districts. Speaking at the event the Minister said that when the Government's highly prioritised policy programme of transforming the country as the hub of knowledge becomes a reality Jaffna would be a main city for dissemination of knowledge in the country. He added that Sri Lanka has become a middle income earning country with per capita income doubling during the last few years. The Government aims at doubling it further by the year 2016. The Minister went on to say we have now made a paradigm shift in our economic policy that would create high income generating employment opportunities among our educated youth in the future. "Northern Jaffna city which produced a large number of educated youth in the past will have a major role to play in achieving this goal", said the minister. Speaking about the steps already taken to make Jaffna regain its past glory the minister mentioned the following.

The Government has already provided the best technology, which is not available even at Katubedda Technical College to the Jaffna Technical college with Korean aid. Further, the fast track development process launched in the north will restore the Yal Devi railway line up to KKS once again as an express train. The train service to Talai Mannar via Madu from Medawachchiya is being reconstructed as well.

In order to carry forward these development programmes the Government needs leaders at the grass root level. In order to do that the best option for the people of north is to elect members for their respective local Government institutions that can work with the Government at a national level.

The minister elaborated the details of development projects that are being carried out in the north under the supervision of the Presidential Task Force on Northern development of which he is the chairperson.

The Jaffna A-9 highway is being developed as a four line way. The A-32 high way via Sanguppiddy new bridge is being renovated as another highway to connect Jaffna with the south. Yet another highway is being planned through Mullaitivu from Trincomalee connecting

Jaffna to the east. Several inner roads in and around Jaffna have been earmarked for development. The heap of metal and other material stocked along the sides of roads bear testimony to these development works.

Jaffna is now being connected to the national grid to ensure 24 hour uninterrupted power supply to the peninsula.

KKS and Point Pedro harbours have been declared as Ports of Entry and these two ports are being developed with the possibility to cater for modern vessels as well. Palaly Air port is being modernised to serve international air services.

Steps were taken to increase the capacity of Iranamadu Tank to supply drinking water to the north and the Thondamanaru reservoir is being reconstructed to save water for irrigation facilities. In order to improve the facilities for fishermen, issuing of multi day boats and other equipment is underway.

Steps have also been taken to revive the coconut and Palmyra cultivation in the north again.

The minister reminding the northern people of the Government's ongoing contribution to make Jaffna the main city for knowledge said that Jaffna is the only privileged district in the entire country where the pre-school teachers are being paid a monthly allowance of

Rs 5000.00 by the Provincial Council even though there is no provincial council in Jaffna at the moment. The minister said that Major General G A Chandrasiri, Governor of the Northern Province who manages the resources of the province has made provisions to pay this allowance.

Actions to promote technical studies were taken even before the end of the humanitarian operation. The Jaffna Technical College was already upgraded with Korean assistance with new technologies, while the Jaffna University will open an Engineering faculty shortly. Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development, Major Gen G A Chandrasiri, Governor of the Northern Province, Maithreepala Sirisena, Minister of Health, Susil Premajayantha, Minister of Petroleum Industries, Dullas Alahapperuma, Minister of Youth Affairs and Skills Development, Pavithra Wanniarachchi, Minister of Technology and Research, Tissa Karaliyadde, Minister of Child Development and Women's Affairs, Reginold Cooray, Minister of Small Export Crops Promotion, Jagath Pushpakumara, Minister of Coconut Development and State Plantations Development and several others were present at the occasion.



Inaugurating a bus service for the people of Jaffna



Handing over a gift



Presenting a Personal Computer to a School Principal



Work in progress



Inspection tour



THE SOUTHERN EXPRESSWAY CONNECTING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

The end of the civil war heralded the dawn of a new era in Sri Lanka: an era of peace, prosperity and rapid development. Extensive reconstruction and development efforts have since begun in all sectors of the country. Among a number of development policies proposed was the development of the roads and infrastructure sector of the country. The ultimate objective of the Government is to transform Sri Lanka into a country that can speak of modern roadways and infrastructure. Hence, a number of projects to construct new roads and expressways have been initiated. The Southern Expressway is one of many such initiatives.

Words: Shehara de Mel and Kamalika Jayathilake

Commencing construction in 2003, the primary reason behind the project was to develop the Southern Province and increase mobility thereby saving cost and time. Although the current network in Sri Lanka is extensive and provides sufficient access, the average speed is only 20 km per hour and this hinders development. The initial plan was to construct the expressway away from Galle Road, moving into the inland areas of the Southern Province. However, due to an increase in finances and investment, the plan moved construction closer to the coastal belt. Today, the

project is near completion. The impact of this project is immense, as it will not only increase mobility, but also contribute positively towards the GDP of the country.

The original design of the expressway was drafted by Wilbers Smith, an American based firm, in collaboration with local firms. The two-lane design, previously stretching from Kurundugahahetekma to Matara, was later expanded to four lanes. Although initially encountering a few problems in relation to structural design and environmental compatibility, the project subsequently

progressed and is today, a fully developed, access-controlled expressway. The project was funded by a number of agencies including JICA, Asian Development Bank, Export-Import Bank of China and the Government of Sri Lanka.

Beginning at Makumbura in Kottawa, the expressway stretches to Godagama, five kilometres away from Matara.

The roadway spans a total length of 126 km, while plans to develop a connecting road leading to the Galle Port Access Road have already begun. An access-controlled expressway ensures that vehicles

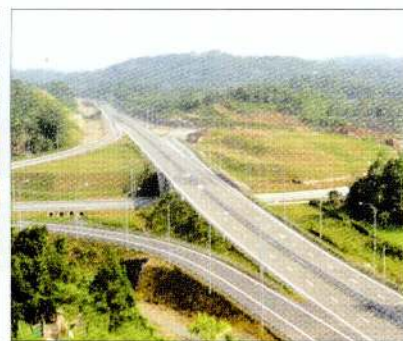
enter and exit from designated places, known as interchanges.

The Southern Expressway comprises of two main interchanges located at Kottawa and Godagama. In addition, there are several intermediate interchanges along the expressway thus facilitating access from different points. These intermediate interchanges are located at Kahatuduwa, Gelanigama, Dodangoda, Kurundugahahetkma, Nayapamula, Pinnaduwa, Imadhuwa and Kokmaduwa.

Minimum speed on the expressway is set at approximately 50 km per hour while the maximum speed is 100 km per hour. Entry for vehicles such as motorcycles, three wheelers, scooters, tractors and towing vehicles will not be allowed. It will be a tolled expressway; hence, those entering the highway will have to pay a certain fee for usage. The toll will be charged based on the number of kilometers intended for travel and the category of vehicle.

A special feature of the expressway is a fence that runs on both sides, over 250 km in length.

One of the main challenges faced in the construction of the expressway was the improvement of soft ground in the area to hold an average four to five metre embankment. The expressway was designed to ensure that commuters experienced a smooth, comfortable ride.



Hence, measures were taken to replace the soft ground with good ground. It was only on completion of such measures that the main construction could take place. Another challenge faced was the use of a metal structure also known as a generic solid steel structure. This was the first time such solid steel structures were introduced in the area. Therefore it was imperative that engineers had a good understanding of the theory and thorough knowledge on the construction and maintenance of such structures. Many techniques, employed for the first time in Sri Lanka, were utilised to stabilise slopes in the area that hindered construction. This highlights the expertise of engineers and the extensive technological knowledge gained from this project.

Connecting the Nation's capital to the South, the expressway will reduce travel time to approximately one and a half hours. This is beneficial not only

to Sri Lankans but to tourists visiting the country as it permits more time to relax, tour or visit places of interest. With a view to expand the network and further develop the expressway, the Government plans to extend the roadway from Matara to Hambantota. On the northern end, construction of the outer circular highway connecting Kottawa to Kerawalapitiya has already commenced. This project will be implemented in three stages beginning from Kottawa to Kaduwela, Kaduwela to Kadawatha and finally, Kadawatha to Kerawalapitiya, with plans to link the Colombo-Katunayake Expressway.

The Southern Expressway will prove to be a valuable asset not only to the public but also to the economic development of the nation. With this marvel, Sri Lanka, has emerged to demonstrate its strength and capability to overcome challenges, and construct modern, hi-tech infrastructure.

ANNUAL PRIZE GIVING OF S. THOMAS' COLLEGE, MOUNT LAVINIA



President Mahinda Rajapaksa and First Lady Shiranthi Rajapaksa at the prize giving of St Thomas' College, along with other distinguished invitees

The annual prize giving of S Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia was held under the patronage of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. At this event President Rajapaksa distributed awards to high achieving students of the school and addressed some words of advice to the students. Speaking at the occasion President Rajapaksa pointed out that although the world is rapidly becoming a global village, the natural instinct in everyone is to search for their cultural roots. This was, in essence a hunt for security in the midst of uncertainty and instability, the President noted. The President also focused on the need to impart an education that is holistic in nature, and encompasses not only academic achievement but sports, extra curricular activities and cultural activities as well.

Your Grace Diloraj Canagasabey, Bishop of Colombo, Members of the Board of Governors, Warden Reverend John Puddefoot, Members of the Staff, Students, Parents, Old Boys, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am very pleased to be present at the annual prize giving and to participate in this way in one of the most significant events of the calendar of S. Thomas' College and I must thank the Board of Governors and the Warden for inviting my wife and me to this occasion.

This gives me particular pleasure because of my own close connection with your school through the lives and careers of my three sons, all of whom received their education in this institution. St Thomas' equipped them not only in terms of their own academic training, but in a far deeper sense, preparing them in every way for the challenges that lie ahead in life.

Through its 150 year history, several basic values it has stood for and sought to instill in the thousands of students who have had the good fortune to learn here, stand out clearly and distinctly. Many of these values have a direct bearing on the priorities of our

country, as we embark on a new and exciting chapter in our history.

I am particularly happy to note that St Thomas' has throughout its history produced many men of eminence, including Prime Ministers, Cabinet Ministers, and a large number of professionals who have served our nation well. Our Government is also served by many of your old boys, including a few Ministers in my Cabinet. A very eminent educationist and an erudite legal academic, Professor G L Peiris is one of them.

Your school represents the ideal of a happy family, without any differences as to language, culture or ethnic background. You have consistently provided an exemplary environment for students of all communities and faiths to live, study and play together in total amity and friendship. The education imparted here, and the setting in which it is offered, emphasise the reservoir of shared values and traditions which are certainly strong enough to hold our nation together. The friendships that are forged here cut across narrow divisions and stay throughout life. Healthy attitudes of sharing, of partnership and solidarity, which unify the school

community, must be inculcated in the formative period of childhood and early youth.

This represents our major national challenge as well, today. With the eradication of terrorism and the dawn of a stable peace, we have the opportunity, after almost a quarter of a century, to put our country on the path of rapid economic and social development. The need of the hour is inclusivity, in every sense of the word. We have today the capability to exploit without any hindrance the natural advantages of our country and the unique calibre of our human resources, and we must ensure that the benefits are enjoyed in the fullest measure by all our citizens. There can be no better preparation for this than the training which is provided within the walls of a school.

Education, whatever its range and depth, can offer a wholesome foundation for life only if it is under-pinned by a scale of values and a sense of proportion. Our faith and spiritual commitment, whatever it may be, is the sheet anchor of our behaviour and the decisions we make in life. A mere body of knowledge, imparted in a vacuum, without the strength of deep-rooted convictions, and devoid of focus on right and wrong,

can never provide a basis for the formation of character. It can only lead to a cynical outlook on life. This is why religious instruction, and an atmosphere suitable for it, form an essential part of a complete education.

Shiranthi and I have involved ourselves actively in the academic and sports activities of our sons, and followed with enthusiasm their progress through the College. Even at the busiest of times I have considered it important to attend the College prize giving and many sports activities to applaud and encourage not only our own children but all their peers who justly celebrate their success. I believe, all parents, whatever the demands on their time, should share fully the joys, the sorrows and the aspirations of their children as they move forward through the different stages of their education.

I believe that it is the duty of every school to impart to its students education which is of a holistic nature. Education is a total process directed towards the development of mind, body and character. Not only academic achievement but sports, extra curricular activities and cultural activities must consistently receive in-depth attention in the curriculum of every educational institution. In the field of sports, a school must foster an attitude which encourages team spirit, sustained by the give and take of companionship, in confronting challenges.

One of the significant weaknesses of our education system today, which our Government is in earnest about rectifying, is the current emphasis on rote learning. Education is not about absorbing, retaining and reproducing extensive volumes of factual material. That destroys the spirit of independent inquiry which is the central purpose or the core of education.

This school has had the good fortune to be served over the decades by dedicated teachers who sought no other reward than the success and fulfilment of the students who passed through their hands. In a world dominated by mercenary values, theirs is a shining example and a source of inspiration to us all.

Just two months ago, we mourned the demise of Deshamanya Kalasuri Arisen Ahubudu. His life and work embody the qualities I have in mind. Together with several of his peers who shared his passion, he devoted himself, with neither promise nor expectation of material reward, to enriching the lives of his students and preparing them for the journey of life.

This is a voyage of discovery in which, on every day in school, the student would learn something new to deepen his understanding, sharpen his instincts and broaden his horizons. It is a journey in the course of



President Mahinda Rajapaksa and First Lady Shiranthi Rajapaksa distributing prizes to the students



which he would acquire the courage to conquer himself and the world. It is also, Your Grace, an enterprise in which he would be trained to abandon selfishness in pursuit of the goal of collective achievement.

The House system, which many schools adopt, and which is a characteristic of life at S. Thomas', and team games provide a strong impetus to this focus on community, as opposed to self. I note with satisfaction that your school offers a number of prizes which are awarded not for individual accomplishment but for the collective excellence of a group.

A school must not be a place to safeguard privilege. The extreme pressure for admission to all grades at S. Thomas' is a clear indication of the ability you have shown to maintain the highest educational standards over the years. Many of our leading government schools are under extreme pressure to admit children beyond their capacity.

Your school, I am glad, has also taken care to ensure, by means of an extensive scheme of bursaries, scholarships and other arrangements, that talented children from less affluent backgrounds are not denied access to the quality education you offer. I would particularly like to pay tribute to this refreshing concern for equity and social justice.

I strongly believe that quality education, to be complete, must be founded on the bedrock of cultural identity. A mind, however cultivated, but without cultural moorings, is pushed around by wind and wave. A man without awareness of the well-springs of his culture is little more than a robot. Although the world is rapidly becoming a global village, there is a natural instinct in all

of us to search for our cultural roots. I think this is, in essence, a hunt for security, within our minds and hearts, in the midst of great uncertainty and instability.

Cultural identity is an oasis, fertile and self-renewing, without which we would have to build our lives and our careers in the arid sand of the desert. It is a matter of deep satisfaction to me that, as my motherland was saved from the grip of terror, the humblest home in the land expressed their feelings of dignity and pride by hoisting the national flag. I have noticed, whenever I attended functions, whether in cities or towns or in the rural heartland, Sri Lankans without any difference, sing the national anthem with a new spirit in their voice.

I was greatly heartened to observe, at the recent ordination of His Grace Diloraj Canagasabay as the new Bishop of Colombo, which I had the honour to attend, that cultural rites and practices, indigenous to our country formed a feature of the service. This establishes, I have no doubt, an immediate link with members of the congregation and enhances the relevance and value of the experience as an integral part of their lives and their faith. Indeed, I am convinced that the learning experience, our religious faith and the cultural traditions which represent our legacy, are all woven into a seamless web.

I felicitate today not only those among you who have brought joy to your parents and families by carrying away prizes and awards which recognize excellence, but also the wider student community and, even more so, your dedicated teachers who have created the enabling environment which makes these achievements possible.

I wish you all a prosperous future.

President inspects the National Performance Theatre



President Mahinda Rajapaksa inspected the newly constructed National Performance Theatre. The five-storey modern theatre, built on a model similar to the Lotus Pond of Polonnaruwa. Prof G L Peiris, Minister of External Affairs, P B Ekanayake, Minister of Cultural Affairs, Yang Xiuping, Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Lalith Weeratura, Secretary to the President, Gamini Senerath, President's Chief of Staff and Palitha Kohona, Permanent representative of Sri Lanka to UN were present at the occasion.

Fiftieth anniversary of the Afro – Asian legal forum



The fiftieth anniversary of the Afro – Asian legal forum was held under the patronage of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Justice Ministers and Lawyers representing fifty countries participated at the event. Rahuman Mohamed, Secretary of the Afro Asian legal forum presented a complimentary gift to President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Justice Hisashi Owada, President, International Court of Justice, Prof G L Peiris, Minister of External Affairs, Rauff Hakeem, Minister of Justice, Suhada Gamalath, Secretary to the Ministry of Justice and Chief Justice Shirani Bandaranayake were present at the event.

Justice Nalin Perera takes oaths as a Judge in the Appeal Court

Former High Court Judge Nalin Perera took oaths as a new Appeal Court Judge before President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Lalith Weeratura, Secretary to the President was also present at the occasion.



Judge S Sri Skandaraja takes oaths as Chairman of the Appeal Court



Appeal Court Judge S Sri Skandaraja took oaths before President Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Chairman of the Appeal Court. Lalith Weeratura, Secretary to the President, was present at the occasion.

'Mother Sri Lanka' coffee table book launched



Janaki Kuruppu, Chairperson of the Mother Sri Lanka Trust, presented the first copy of the coffee table book, detailing the journey of Mother Sri Lanka from its inception in 2008 to the present, to President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

'Mother Sri Lanka' programme is involved in a number of projects to build a healthy relationship between the children of the South and the North. The projects, conducted during the last three years with the objective of nurturing a generation that loves the motherland, was launched in 2,600 schools involving three million children.

Liam Fox in Sri Lanka for Official visit



Liam Fox, MP and Secretary of State for Defence, UK who was in Sri Lanka for a two day official visit, met President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Prof G L Peris, Minister of External Affairs, was also present at the occasion. During his visit to Sri Lanka Liam Fox delivered the Lakshman Kadirgamar memorial lecture at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute Auditorium. Liam Fox was met on his arrival in Sri Lanka by Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic development and the two parties held discussions. Neomal Perera, Deputy Minister of External Affairs, and the wife of the late Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar also accompanied Minister Basil Rajapaksa to the Air Port. John Rankin, British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka also participated at this discussion.

Inaugurating the 27th session of the Parliamentary group on Population and Development



Representatives of the session with the President

President Mahinda Rajapaksa inaugurated the 27th session of the Parliamentary group on Population and Development. A large number of officers representing the session including Speaker Chamal Rajapaksa, Prof G L Peiris, Minister of External Affairs, Maithripala Sirisena, Minister of Health and Nutrition, Lalith Weeraratunga, Secretary to the President, Yasuo Fukuda, former Prime Minister of Japan and Member of Parliament, and Nobuko Horibe, Head of United Nation's World Population Fund were present at the occasion.

Bahrain Finance Minister meets the President



Saikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance of the Kingdom of Bahrain, called on President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Prof G L Pieris, Minister of External Affairs, Lalith Weeraratunga, Secretary to the President and T H M Wijerathne, Sri Lankan Ambassador to Kuwait were present at the occasion.

Chairperson of the International Court of Law meets the President



Judge Hisashi Owada, Chairperson of the International Court of Law and his wife met President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

President visits North



President Rajapaksa unveiling the memorial plaque at the Kilinochchi sports complex



President Rajapaksa visiting the Navalar Tamil Maha Vidyalaya in Kopai to declare open "Uva - Uthuru Friendship Hall"



President Rajapaksa at the public rally at Chavakachcheri



President Rajapaksa participating at the public rally at Kopai

President Mahinda Rajapaksa conducted a three day visit to the North. During his stay the President visited Kayts, Kopai, Poonaryn, Chavakachcheri, Jaffna and Kilinochchi.

During his visit the President declared open "Uva - Uthuru Friendship Hall", built by the contributions of Uva Province, at Navalar Tamil Maha Vidyalaya in Kopai. Shashindra Rajapaksa, Uva Provincial Chief Minister, Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development, S M Chandrasena, Minister of Agrarian Services and Wild Life, and Rohitha Abeygunawardena, Deputy Minister of Ports and Highways, were also present at the occasion. President Mahinda Rajapaksa also participated in a public rally held at Navalar Tamil Maha Vidyalaya grounds in Kopai. Prime Minister D M Jayaratne, Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprises, Pavithra Wanniarachchi, Minister of Technology and Research, Tissa Karaliyadda, Minister of Child Development and Women's Affairs were present at this occasion.

As part of his visit, President Rajapaksa also visited Kayts island. In Keeramalai, President handed over 100 new houses built by

the Army to the returned IDPs. Officials of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service participating in a field training programme, met the President in Vasavilan, Jaffna.

A foundation stone was laid by the President for the construction of a hospital complex in Poonaryn. Prime Minister D M Jayaratne, Namal Rajapaksa, MP, Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development and Major General G A Chandrasiri, Governor of the Northern Province also participated at this occasion.

In Kilinochchi, President Rajapaksa inaugurated the construction of Kilinochchi International Sports Complex. President Rajapaksa also participated at public rallies held in Kilinochchi and Chavakachcheri. During the rally at Kilinochchi, the President met members of the public. Namal Rajapaksa, MP, Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development, Mahindananda Aluthgamage, Minister of Sports, Major General G A Chandrasiri, Governor of the Northern Province, officials and members of the public participated at this rally.



President Mahinda Rajapaksa and the other distinguished invitees at the ceremony to lay the foundation stone

A better future for the fishing industry in Kilinochchi



Namal Rajapaksa, MP participated in an inspection tour of the fresh water fishing industry at the Iranamadu reservoir in the Kilinochchi District. Speaking at the occasion the Parliamentarian said that fishermen in the Kilinochchi District who could not carry out their tasks well during a period of thirty years due to threats from terrorists will be provided with a better future by solving their problems and creating an atmosphere for them to carry out their work smoothly.

Namal Rajapaksa who appreciated the valuable contribution made by the fishing community in the economic development of the country, emphasized the need for them to consolidate themselves as a strong force and work competitively to achieve successful results.

Meeting handicapped children



Parliamentarian Namal Rajapaksa was the guest of honour at a cultural show staged at Kilinochchi Kanagapuram Maha Vidyalaya by handicapped children in Jaffna. Speaking at the occasion Namal Rajapaksa said that the Government will take steps to provide a secure and a prosperous future to handicapped children in the North. He added that special equipment and school equipment will be provided early in order to elevate educational standards of the disabled children in the area.

Parliamentarian Namal Rajapaksa in Kilinochchi



Namal Rajapaksa, MP found time to play cricket and football with a group of youngsters in Kilinochchi during his visit to the area.

Developing Kilinochchi District



During an observation tour to Kilinochchi District, Namal Rajapaksa, MP, said, "Kilinochchi District which was submerged in darkness during a period of 30 long years due to terrorism will be developed and prosperity will be brought back to the people living there". Namal Rajapaksa pointed out that the Government has already taken action to develop the area. He added that priority will be given to provide basic needs to the area such as electricity, drinking water and highways.

The Parliamentarian visited Kilinochchi Paranthan Vidyalaya to inquire into the educational facilities of students of Kilinochchi District. He also visited Karthanpuram village.

Rehabilitation of Tank and distribution of water pumps in Batticaloa District



Minister Basil Rajapaksa handing over a water pump to a farmer while Sivaneshathurai Chandrakanthan, Chief Minister of the Eastern Province and Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, Deputy Minister of Resettlement look on.

Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development was the Chief Guest at the inauguration ceremony of the rehabilitation of the Meyangamkulam Tank in the Koralaipattu South, Kiran Divisional Secretariat in the Batticaloa District. Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, Deputy Minister of Resettlement and Sivaneshathurai Chandrakanthan, Chief Minister of Eastern Province were also present at the occasion.

Under the Mahinda Chinthana development concept the Ministry of Economic Development has initiated the rehabilitation of 2000 village tanks and several major irrigation schemes during this year. This work has been undertaken by the Ministry of Economic Development under the guidance of Minister Basil Rajapaksa. The development and sustainability of rural agriculture is largely dependent on the provision of stable and

adequate water sources that can provide sufficient irrigation facilities for crops throughout the year. The Government has identified that the efficient operation of Irrigation schemes including rehabilitation of a large number of abandoned or damaged village tanks can effectively provide this water needs for rural farmers and their high land and low land cultivation.

Meyangamkulam Tank is a major tank situated in Koralaipattu South District Secretariat Division. The tank bund was breached in 1979. The total cost of the rehabilitating the Meyangamkulam tank is Rs. 75 million. After the completion of this project 4500 acres of land will be irrigatable, and the tank will also be used to develop inland fisheries activities and cattle farming.

The total fund required for the "Rehabilitation of 2000 village tanks programme is administrated by the Ministry of Economic Development. Rs 900 Million has been allocated under this programme and a further US \$ 19 million has been allocated under the funds available for flood damage rehabilitation schemes. Currently the rehabilitation of 233 village tanks has also commenced and is progressing with the hope of completing 2000 tanks within the year.

Minister Basil Rajapaksa also participated as the Chief Guest at a Water Pump Distribution programme held at the Batticaloa Town Hall. According to the instructions given by Minister Rajapaksa at the District Level meeting on Flood Response Measures, it was decided to distribute 3000 water pumps to farmers who cultivate above 1 acre land of Other Field Crops (OFC) through farmers organisations. As an initial step, 500 water pumps were distributed to selected farmers in the Batticaloa District. Sivaneshathurai Chandrakanthan, Chief Minister of the Eastern Province and Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, Deputy Minister of Resettlement also participated this occasion.

Minister Basil Rajapaksa visits Nallur Kandasami Kovil



Minister Basil Rajapaksa at Nallur Kandasami Kovil with Minister Douglas Devananda and G A Chandrasiri, Northern Province Governor.

During his visit to Jaffna, Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development visited the Nallur Kandasami Kovil and offered pooja. After the pooja Minister Rajapaksa had an audience with Nallaiyadeenam Kurukkal, the Hindu High Priest. Minister Rajapaksa was accompanied by Minister Douglas Devananda and G A Chandrasiri, Northern Province Governor.

Construction of a market at Muruthankerny in Point Pedro



Minister Rajapaksa overseeing the start of the construction work

Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development commenced the work of construction of a market at Muruthankerny in Point Pedro. The estimated cost of the project is Rs 4,636,882,60.

Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprises Development and G A Chandrasiri, Northern Province Governor also participated at the occasion.

Distribution of micro credit and essential items



Minister Basil Rajapaksa at the ceremony along with Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprises Development and G A Chandrasiri, Northern Province Governor.

Minister Rajapaksa also presided over a ceremony to distribute micro credit and essential items for the vulnerable people in the Jaffna district. Over 800 persons received micro loans between Rs 30,000 and Rs 50,000 each under the livelihood development project launched by the Northern ministry of Co-operatives and Local Government under the supervision of G A Chandrasiri, Northern Province Governor. Speaking at the occasion Minister Rajapaksa said that once the major development works being carried out in the north under the initiatives of President Mahinda Rajapaksa are completed Jaffna will regain its lost glory once again since the large scale development activities being implemented in the north will restore the lost facilities to a better position than they way in the past. Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprises Development and G A Chandrasiri, Northern Province Governor were also present and spoke at the occasion.

Inaugurating development projects in Jaffna



Minister Rajapaksa inaugurating the new roadwork projects

During his visit to Jaffna, Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development inaugurated 33 development projects within the Jaffna Municipal Council limits. As the first project the Minister inaugurated the carpeting of Kovil street in the Nallur District Secretariat division. All projects implemented in the resettled areas are combined three in one projects that include road development, water supply and rural electrification schemes.

The minister inaugurated two other such projects, namely the carpeting of Navalur and Temple road at Kailasapillayar.

Kovilady and the inauguration of the rural small township development project to provide water, electricity and roadways for more than 485 families who have been resettled in Ariyalai South West. This project is to be completed within a year at a cost of Rs 446 million.

Minister Rajapaksa also inaugurated several community services projects in Jaffna. These included four water supply schemes in Ariyalai, Urani, Karaveddy and Irupalai in the Valikamam sector in the peninsula. These projects, costing Rs 200 million, once completed will provide ground water facilities to over 25,000 people.

Kodikaman – Point Pedro road reopening



Minister Basil Rajapaksa declaring open the road

Minister Basil Rajapaksa presided over a ceremony at the Varani junction to mark the opening of Kodikaman – Point Pedro road after 11 years. A part of this road was closed for the past 11 years due to security reasons.

Speaking at the occasion, Minister Basil Rajapaksa stated that President Rajapaksa wished to bring the dividends of development to every nook and corner of the country. "The Government received a clear mandate from the people to make it a reality", he added.

The Minister added that the Government has launched housing, irrigation, livelihood, water supply and sanitation projects covering all districts in the Northern province. "We provided livelihood assistance to the people in the province. The farmers received fertilizer, seed paddy water and many things from the Government to resume their livelihood activities, he added. Major General G A Chandrasiri, Northern Province Governor and Ministers Douglas Devananda and Rishad Badiudeen were also present.

Delft gets new mode of transport



Minister Basil Rajapaksa visiting Delft island, overseeing development activities and interacting with members of the public

Delft, an island situated 46 km away from the Jaffna mainland was visited by a government minister for the first time after 21 years when Minister

Basil Rajapaksa visited the island. The immediate need of the people in Delft island was to have a fast boat service between the Delft Island and the nearest

land point at Kurikattuwan. Minister Rajapaksa arranged for a new boat with seating capacity for 100, to be delivered through the Colombo Dockyard.

However the Delft jetty was not deep enough to accommodate the new mode of transport. Therefore the Minister visited Delft Island and inaugurated the deepening of the jetty further. This is the first time the jetty, erected during the Dutch period is undergoing major progress. The new mode of transport will cater for over 5000 families living in the Delft Island.

The minister also plans for the Delft island to be converted in to a tourist resort with setting up of new tourist hotels in the coming years. The minister observed that this was the first time since independence that the Jaffna peninsula has been allocated a vast amount of money for a series of development activities in the main land and the islands. A water supply scheme and the rehabilitation of Salt Water Exclusion bund was also inaugurated by the minister.

Valvettithurai given water supply and anchoring facilities



Minister Basil Rajapaksa inaugurating development projects during his visit to Valvettithurai

The people of Valvettithurai in the Valikamam west in northern Jaffna were empowered with several facilities.

Minister Basil Rajapaksa who visited Valvettithurai accompanied by Minister Douglas Devananda and the Northern Province Governor inaugurated a water supply project costing Rs 300 million

that covers several adjoining villages as well.

A project to deepen the Valvettithurai Anchoring Point was inaugurated by the minister as the main life line of the people of the area, the fishing industry, had been hampered due to the facility not being properly maintained during the war. The minister also sanctioned allocation of Rs 3.5 million to renovate the Atthi Kovil.

The minister also inaugurated a series of development activities in Meesalai, Sarasalai in Chavakachcheri and Karainagar areas where he distributed water pumps, sprayers and bicycles to school children who had no access to public transport.

The minister also declared open a new building to start a fruit juice factory in Meesalai as an inducement to farmers to grow more fruits in the area. Fruit growers were at a disadvantage so far without proper market or transport opportunities.

The minister speaking to the people of Valvettithurai said that harping on past tragedies would not bring any benefits to the country. Therefore, the minister said that the Government has fast tracked the rebuilding of entire north with the aim of ensuring the dividends of peace, freedom and developments to the younger

generations. The past two generations of the country were deprived of all these facilities in the thirty year war.

"Two generations of our nation were deprived of peace, freedom and development facilities. So despite us being unable to enjoy these, it is the paramount duty of the Government to make all these facilities available to our future generation. That is why the Government has been spending large amounts of money for development activities in the north" the minister said.

The northern province had the best industries of the country in the past. This was possible as the visionary Tamil political leaders of the past worked with the ruling parties.

The minister said that Minister Douglas Devananda like the foresighted Northern political leaders of the old days dare to work with the ruling party. As a result he has been able to deliver to his community.

The Government has taken the decision to allow the largest BOI approved Industry to be located in Achchuveli. Another five major industries would also be set up in the north. The minister noted that this would generate more employment opportunities to the educated youths in the north.

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Mawadipuram Naguleshwaran Kovil in Jaffna to be developed



Minister Basil Rajapaksa said that the Government while spending billions of rupees from its coffers to rehabilitate the facilities in the war ravaged north and east also borrow billions in dollars from friendly countries and lending agencies as loans for the same cause.

The aim of the Government is to develop all the areas in the country without any discrimination. The availability of land, road and

other infrastructures are the first priority for investment in the country. Thus the Government with the aim of bringing investment to north has engaged in developing those facilities.

The Minister invited the private sector investors to come forward to start industrial and commercial activities in the Jaffna peninsula as it would help generate more employment opportunities for the educated youths of the area.

"Now the Government of President Mahinda Rajapaksa has brought back all the displaced people of Jaffna to their own homes. This past incident is a bitter experience to the entire nation. As we have now completely ended the conflict that brought destructions especially to the north in the last thirty years, terrorism would not be allowed to raise its ugly head once again" the Minister assured the people of Jaffna after inaugurating several development projects in the north.

Development work at Valikamam north and the South at Thellipalai in Jaffna, commenced under a fast track programme with jungle clearing being carried out at a cost of Rs 34 million. This has paved the way for returnees to start their life immediately by engaging in cultivation and other activities. Minister Rajapaksa visited the area. The Valikamam north and south that includes the Thellipalai, Chunnakam and surroundings had a population of 15,000 families and half of them have returned to their homes with the lifting of HSZ last month.

Minister Basil Rajapaksa also visited the historical Mawadipuram Kovil and directed officials to undertake necessary renovations immediately.

The Minister distributed a large number of water pumps, spray guns, sewing machines, school uniforms, educational materials, and several other agricultural equipment to the resettled people.

Several development projects were inaugurated to uplift the area. A new building for Thellipalai Divisional secretariat, a library, a bus stand and a super market will come up near the Union College junction within the next 12 months at a cost of Rs 181 million.

Allocations have also been made under the Emergency Northern Recovery Project (ENREP) and Emergency Local Service project (NELSHIP) of the Economic Development Ministry to develop six schools inclusive of Union College and the Mahajana College and several roads in the area.

Accordingly, the rehabilitation and widening of 84 km Jaffna – Point Pedro AB 020 road, Puttur - Meesalai AB 32 road, Jaffna- KKS AB 16 road, Jaffna- Palaly AB 18 road were also inaugurated by the minister. These road projects will cost Rs 1,185 million and will be completed by 2013.

Rehabilitation of several other by roads were also initiated by the minister.

The minister speaking among the newly resettled people said that the Government will ensure provide all required needs for them to lead a normal life.

Douglas Devananda, Minister of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprises Development and G A Chandrasiri, Northern Province Governor accompanied the minister during this visit.

New bus service inaugurated from Melinsimunai



Minister Basil Rajapaksa at the inauguration of the new bus service



The people of the Kayts Island in the Jaffna peninsula received a new bus service which operates within the island from one end to the other. Minister Basil Rajapaksa inaugurated a new bus service from Melinsimunai, the southern end of the island to the other end.

Fiftieth Anniversary celebrations of the People's Bank



People's Bank organised several activities to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. The main celebrations were carried out under the patronage of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. The bank issued a special commemorative stamp and first day cover, a commemorative coin and a special anniversary commemorative volume at the occasion. Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Jeevan Kumaranatunga, Minister of Postal Services, Geethanjana Gunawardena, Deputy Minister of Financial Affairs, P B Jayasundara, Secretary to the Ministry of Finance and Planning, Ajith Nivard Cabraal, Governor of the Central Bank and W Karunajeewa, Chairman, People's Bank were present at the occasion.

"Uthurukaraye Gaveshanaya" presented to the President



Book titled "Uthurukaraye Gaveshanaya" (Exploration in the North) compiled by journalist Sugathapala Mendis was presented to President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

This book, which is an exploration of the experiences undergone by war-affected people in the North, is a publication of S Godage Brothers. Jagath Pushpa Kumara, Minister of Coconut Development and Janatha Estate Development, Anura Siriwardena, Secretary to the Ministry of Coconut Development and Janatha Estate Development and Desha Bandu Siri Sumana Godage were present at the occasion.



Dharmaraja School Prize Giving



President Rajapaksa presenting the gold medal for best all round student 2010 to Laksara Gunawardhana

The annual prize giving of Dharmaraja College, Kandy, was held under the patronage of President Mahinda Rajapaksa who was the chief guest at this occasion.

Former Premier of Japan meets the President



Yasuo Fukuda, former Prime Minister of Japan and presently a Member of Parliament in Japan, met President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Road development project inaugurated

President Rajapaksa unveiling a plaque at this occasion. Mahinda Samarasinghe, Minister of Plantation Industries, Nirmala Kothalawala, Deputy Minister of Ports and Highways and Yang Xiuping, Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka look on.

Road development activities in the Pelawatta-Morawaka and Horawala-Pitigala areas commenced under the patronage of President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Fourth phase of the 'Api Wenuwen Api' project



Completing the fourth phase of the "Api Wenuwen Api" housing project launched by the Ministry of Defence, 31 houses were handed over to war heroes and their families in Badulla and Hambantota districts. President Mahinda Rajapaksa officially inaugurated the official event.

Ministry of Defence launched the "Api Wenuwen Api" housing project to construct 700 housing units island-wide for war heroes and it is notable that, many Sri Lankans living here and abroad have contributed to the "Api Wenuwen Api" housing fund at the request of President Mahinda Rajapaksa and Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Nimal Siripala de Silva, Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources Management, Sumeda G Jayasena, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Jagath Pushpakumara, Minister of Coconut Development and State Development, Lakshman Seneviratne, Minister of Productivity Promotion, Vijayamuni de Zoysa, Deputy Minister of Education, Lalith Weeraratunga, Secretary to the President, Nanda Mithi, Governor of Uva Province, Shasheendra Rajapaksa, Chief Minister of Uva Province and a host of other invitees were present at the occasion.

Provincial Road Development Project in Galle District



Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development inaugurated the Provincial Road Development Project in Galle district. Southern Provincial Council launched the project with funding from the Ministry of Economic Development. A stretch of 310 km will be developed and carpeted in Galle district under this programme at a total cost of Rs 3100 million.

Acting on the instruction of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Minister Basil Rajapaksa initiated the Provincial Road Development Project in order to create a good road network islandwide. The proposed development initiatives include carpeting roads, refurbishing pavements, bridges, drainage facilities and replacing culverts of the proposed roads. Shan Wijayalal de Silva, Chief Minister of the Southern Provincial Council, Chandima Weerakkody, Deputy Speaker, Ramesh Pathirana, MP, Nishantha Mutuhettige, MP and Chandima Rasaputhra, Minister of Southern Provincial Council also participated at this occasion.

Provincial road development project in Polonnaruwa District



Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development inaugurated the provincial road development project of Polonnaruwa District. The North Central provincial council launched the project with funding from the Ministry of Economic Development.

A stretch of 127 Km of the provincial roads will be developed and carpeted in Polonnaruwa district under this programme. The proposed development includes carpeting roads, improvement of road pavements, bridges, drainage, and replacement of culverts of the proposed roads. Minister Basil Rajapaksa inaugurated the carpeting of Diyasenpura -

Kirimetiya Road in Madirigiriya electorate division, road from old police station to Swarna Jayanthi Mawatha in Polonnaruwa Electorate

division and Jayanthipura - Nikapitiya road in Minneriya Electorate division. Mitrheepala Sirisena, Minister of Health, Siripala Gamlath, Deputy Minister of Land and Land Development and Chandrasiri Suriyarachchi, Minister of Social Services were present at the occasion.

SLFP Graduates' Union meets with the President



President Rajapaksa meeting with SLFP graduates' union office bearers

Office bearers of the SLFP Graduates' Union met with President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Ranjith Siyambalapitiya, Minister of Telecommunication and Information Technology and Lalith Weerunga, Secretary to the President were also present at the occasion.

Representatives of the Up Country People's Front meet the President



Some senior members of the Up Country Peoples Front including the recently appointed party leader S Chandrasekaran met President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Anura Priyadarshana Yapa, Minister of Environment, was also present at the occasion.

Bus donated to Nena Guna Thilina book project by Dimo



Dimo company donated a bus to the Nena Guna Thilina book project. The company officially presented the bus to President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Lalith Weerunga, Secretary to the President, Ranjith Pandithage, Chairman of Dimo and Gahana Pandithage, Executive officer of Dimo participated in the occasion.

Inspector General Police calls on the President



N K Illangakoon, Sri Lanka's 33rd Inspector General of Police, called on President Mahinda Rajapaksa. The IGP presented a special memento to President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the occasion.

Ceremonial Opening of Saubhagye Maha Saya at Rajagiriya



Saubhagye Maha Saya (Pagoda of Prosperity), the recently built Chethiya at Rajagiriya, Kalapaluwawa, Sri Daharama Viharaya was ceremonially opened with the participation of President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Ayurvedic Expo 2011 International Exhibition inaugurated



President Mahinda Rajapaksa ceremonially inaugurated the Ayurvedic Expo 2011 International Exhibition, trade fair and conference for the preservation of indigenous medicine. Prime Minister D M Jayaratne, Salinda Dissanayake, Minister of Indigenous Medicine, Pandu Bandaranayake, Deputy Minister of Indigenous Medicine, Ashoka Hettigoda, Chairman, National Chamber of Commerce, Janaka Rathnayake, Chairman, Sri Lanka Export Development Board were present at the occasion.

Houses constructed by Sri Lanka Army presented to new owners



President Mahinda Rajapaksa was the chief guest at a ceremony to hand over the ownership of houses built by Sri Lanka Army to the owners. Army Commander Lt Gen Jagath Jayasuriya, Major Gen Mahinda Hathurusinghe, Jaffna Commander and Gamini Senarath, President's Chief of Staff were present at the occasion.

Presidential Awards for best performances in the Export Sector



Exporters who contributed most for the country's Economic Development during the years 2007, 2008 and 2009 received awards from President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Ceylon Biscuits Company won the Presidential Export awards for best performances during the years 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Rishad Bathiyutheen, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Jayaratne Herath, Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce, Thilak Kollure, Secretary to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and Janaka Rathnayake, Chairman of the Export Development Board were present at the ceremony.

Felicitating Ven Nugathanne Pagnnana Naya Thero



President Rajapaksa making the presentation to Ven Nugathanne Pagnnana Naya Thero

A felicitation ceremony was held for Ven Nugathanne Pagnnana Naya Thero, Chief Incumbent of the Anuradhapura Sri Sambuddhathva Jayanthi Maha Viharaya under the patronage of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa, S M Chandrasena, Minister of Agrarian Services and Wildlife, Karunarathna Divulgane, North Central Province Governor, Berty Premalal Dissanayake, Chief Minister of the North Central Provincial Council, Sarath Ekanayake, Central Province Chief Minister and Lalith Weeraratunga, Secretary to the President were also present at the occasion.

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Offerings made to three thousand monks



Devotees including the President observing Panchaseela. Sarath Ekanayake, Central Provincial Council Chief Minister, Gamini Senarath, President's Chief of Staff are also in the picture.



Pirikara being offered to Asgiri Chapter Maha Nayaka Thero Venerable Udugama Sri Buddharakkitha Thero by President Rajapaksa

On the occasion of the Sri Sambuddhatva Jayanthi 2600 offerings were made to three thousand members of the Maha Sangha at the Kandy Sri Dalada Maligawa Maha Maluwa by the Thraishika Meditation Centre with the participation of President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Felicitating Ven Vitigala Seevali Thero



President Mahinda Rajapaksa felicitated Ven Rajakeeya Panditha Vitigala Seevali thero who was recently appointed as the Upa Pradhana Sangha Nayaka in North America by the Malwatta chapter of Saimopali Maha Nikaya.

Maha Sanga Nayaka of North America Ven (Dr) Walpola Piyananda Thero attended the occasion.

Opening Netolpitiya Canadapura Children's Village



President opening Canadapura Children's Village. Mahinda Amaraweera, Minister of Disaster Management and Fred Jaques, Canadian Deputy Representative in Sri Lanka are also in the picture.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa ceremonially opened the Canadapura Children's Village. The children's village was built with donations from Ven Wijayasiripura Pannasara Thero, Chief Sanganayake of Canada as well as Sri Lankan expatriates in Canada and Canadians.

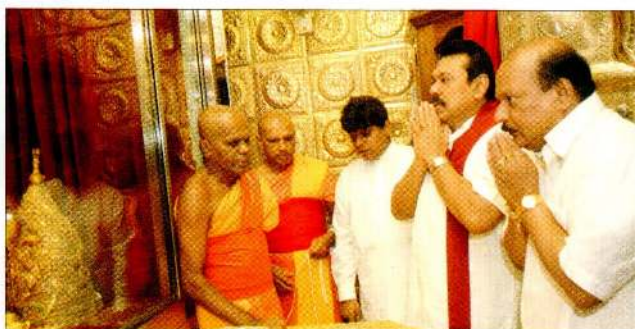
Shrine Room declared open at Rathmalana Samadhi Buddhist Centre



The commemoration plaque of the shrine room being unveiled by the President. Galukorale Hinidumpaththuwe Pradhana Sangha Nayaka Ven Mapalagama Budhdhasiri Thero, incumbent of the Rathmalana Samadhi Buddhist Centre, is also in the picture.

A shrine Room at the Rathmalana Kothalawalapura Samadhi Buddhist Centre, constructed to mark the Sri Sambuddhathva Jayanthi 2600 was ceremonially declared open by President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

President worships the Sacred Tooth Relic



The President worshipping the Sacred Tooth Relic after offering a tray of jasmine flowers.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa visited the Sri Dalada Maligawa and received blessings after worshipping the Sacred Tooth Relic. The President also paid homage to the Mahanayaka Theros of the Malwatta and Asgiriya chapters.

National Farmers' Conference



In an attempt to spread awareness about the fertilizer subsidy mentioned in 'Mahinda Chinthanaya' future vision, a meeting of the National Farmers' conference was held. President Mahinda Rajapaksa presented a fertilizer bag to a farmer as a token to mark the occasion. Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development, Athauda Seneviratne, Senior Minister of Rural Affairs, S M Chandrasena, Minister of Agrarian Services and Wildlife, Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena, Minister of Agriculture, Reginald Cooray, Minister of Small Export Crops Promotion, Jagath Pushpakumara, Minister of Coconut Development and State Plantations Development and Lalith Weeraratunga, Secretary to the President, were present at the occasion.

Gampaha District Development Committee meeting



Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development, chaired the Gampaha District Development Committee meeting. The Minister reviewed the progress of the decisions taken by the previous meeting with parliamentarians, local government representatives and government officials. Minister instructed the officials to finish the renovation work of the Child and Maternity clinics in the district and construction work of the international football ground.



Minister Basil Rajapaksa in discussion with members of the media

Minister Basil Rajapaksa meets with Rita O'Sullivan



Minister Basil Rajapaksa with the ADB Country Director

Minister Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development met and held discussions with Rita O'Sullivan, the new Country Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Recognising the best young farmer



Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development was the chief guest at the ceremony to award the best young farmer. The Competition was organised by the CIC Agri Business Company. CIC organised this event in order to establish farming as an acceptable profession of high caliber and responsibility to expose young farmers to immerging technologies and entrepreneurial management practices.

Meeting members of media

Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development, met with members of media to brief them about the programmes implemented by the Economic Development Ministry and their progress to date. W B Ganegala, Secretary to the Ministry of Media and Information, Ariyaratna Athugala, Director General of Information, and officials from the Economic Development Ministry were also present.

Presenting the first house built under 'Liya Abhiman, Hisata Sevanak' project



Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development opened the first house built under the Liya Abhiman, Hisata Sevanak' project. Pushpa Rajapaksa, Chairperson of the Liya Abhiman programme initiated the 'Hisata Sevana' project following guidance from Minister Basil Rajapaksa. Upali Gunarathne, SLFP Chief Organizer for Dompe was present at the occasion.

Opening of Galle Bus Stand



President Mahinda Rajapaksa declared open the newly constructed bus stand in Galle. Rs 405 million was spent on the construction of the bus stand. Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development and Minister Johnston Fernando accompanied the President.



Inside the new bus stand



President Mahinda Rajapaksa with other guests during the opening ceremony



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