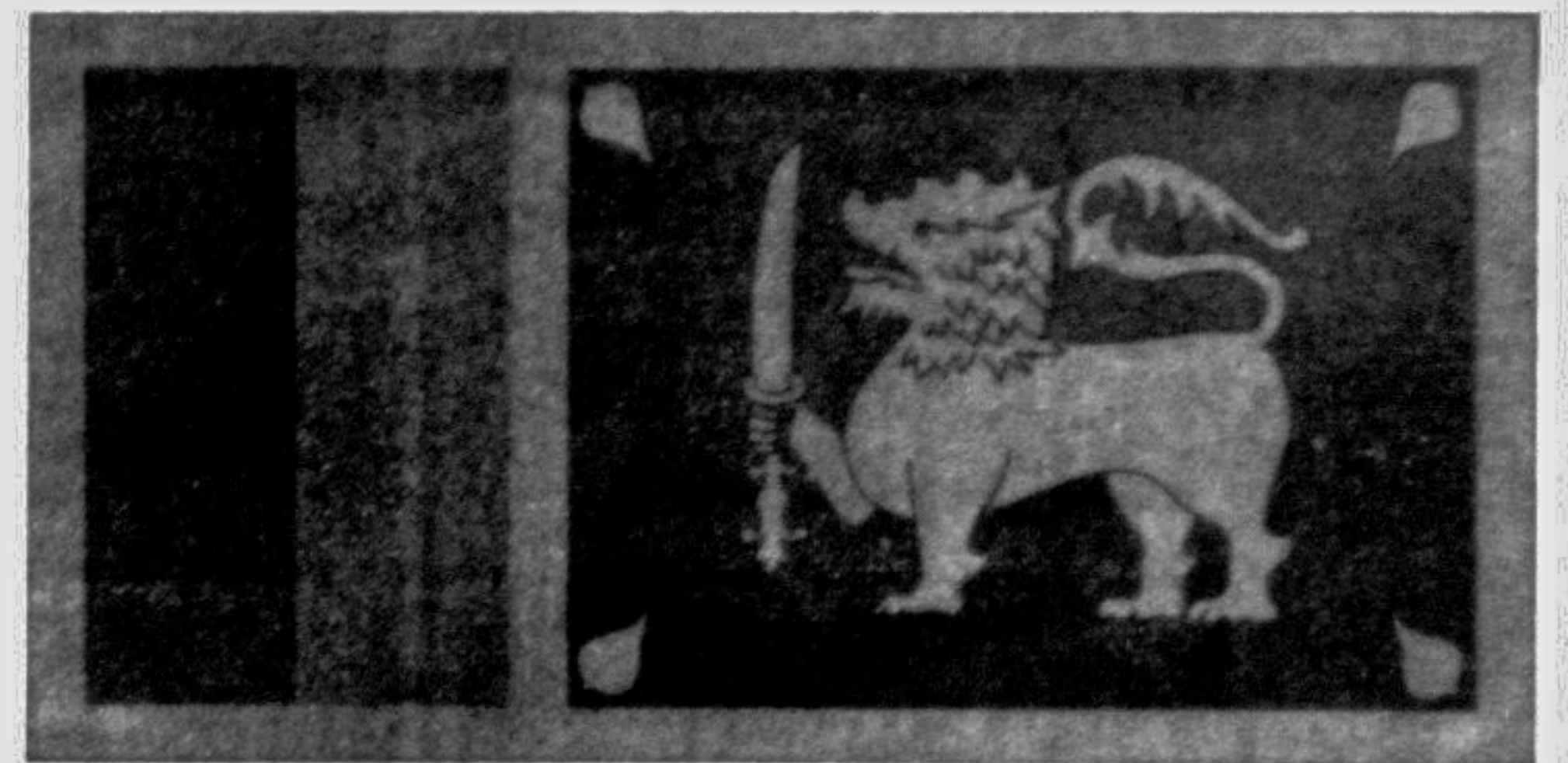


# SHRI LANKA

## National Day



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Special Supplement



### The President's Message

TODAY, we commemorate the 44th Anniversary of Sri Lanka's independence. It signifies the completion of one more year as a free and independent country. We have endured much. We have been subjected to rigorous tests. But our spirit is strong. Our people cherish liberty. This is the faith which brought the re-birth of Sri Lanka in 1948. This is the faith which gives us courage to face the future.

In the year which concludes today, Sri Lanka has accomplished much. We are in the process of fulfilling our commitment to our poor and underprivileged. We have been offering a new deal to our youth. We have strengthened our democracy. We have restored a sense of security. We have sustained a significant rate of economic growth. Sri Lanka has assumed the leadership of SAARC. Our youth have performed very creditably at the SAF Games.

The agenda for the year ahead is heavy. We must bring peace and unity to our beloved motherland. We must assure that all communities Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers — can live together in harmony. We must continue our economic development efforts. We must intensify our struggle to alleviate poverty. We must reinforce our democracy with discipline and commitment. We must provide opportunity for all. We must ensure security for everyone. These are inspiring challenges. They rise above party, community, creed and other differences. They are tasks to which every patriotic Sri Lankan should remain dedicated.

Our past inspires our future. The greatness of our ancient civilization, the serenity of our traditional faiths and the memory of our historic heroes are guides for us. They tell us that Sri Lanka is at its best when we are united. They remind us that the sacred values which our ancestors treasured must not be lost. They ask us not to yield to fear or threat. We must honour our history. We can do so by working hard to build a future worthy of it.

The 45th year of our independence lies ahead. It is a time when we must redouble our efforts. Then, future generations will be justifiably proud of the foundations of peace, discipline and prosperity which we have laid. It is with this expectation that I invoke the blessings of the noble triple gem on our beloved motherland and all Sri Lankans everywhere.

**Ranasinghe Premadasa**  
President  
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

### Foreign Minister's Message

## Friendship With All Peace Loving Countries

S HRI LANKA commemorates 44 years as an independent and sovereign state today. For Sri Lankans at home and abroad, it is an occasion for celebration. It should also be an occasion which evokes pride and satisfaction over our past achievements and an occasion which rekindles fresh hopes for a future of greater well-being and prosperity for our nation.

Our hopes for a future of peace and contentment at home and abroad are in great measure predicated on the fast changing international scene in this political and economic dimensions. The international scene today provides some striking contrasts to that of the not-too-distant past. Super power rivalry and the tensions of the cold war are yielding place to a new spirit of liberalisation. Nowhere is this more evident than in the dismantling of the monolithic communist power structure in Eastern Europe, symbolised so dramatically in the collapse of the Berlin Wall and, more recently, in the political demise of the Soviet Union.

As a result of this easing of cold war tension and the old bi-polar relationship, we are now witnessing the emergence of a new era in which fresh initiatives are being taken to achieve international peace and harmony, initiatives that are emphasised most prominently in the efforts of the nuclear powers to effect cuts in armaments and conventional forces. Another important feature of this emerging pattern are the regional movements at work in a number of areas, addressing their efforts to issues of international concern. Sri Lanka could be justly proud. In this context, to have hosted the Sixth SAARC Summit, a grouping of Third World South Asian Nations committed to find solutions to issues of regional and international importance. His Excellency President Ranasinghe Premadasa observed in his inaugural address at the Sixth SAARC Summit:

"The Sixth SAARC Summit assemblies at a rare moment in human destiny. Around our planet the tides of freedom flow with historic momentum. Liberating passions transform the political, economic and cultural worlds in which we live. Repressive doctrines and alien ideologies are on the retreat. All of us who prize free-

dom of the human spirit should applaud these historic advances.

The ways of the world reflect in our region. All the member states of SAARC are moving to a common realisation. Political and economic liberties are growing. Cultural isolation is eroding. Technology brings both bounty and burden to us. Our environments need nurturing. We see these developments in different ways and from different perspectives. Yet, it was with good reason that the ancient sages of Vedic days said: "The truth is one although it is called by many names."

For Sri Lanka, the changing international order, both diverse and complex, presents



new challenges and demands fresh responses in our foreign policy. It is a dimension that we can ignore only at grave risk to our national sovereignty. Isolation is no longer splendid. Our survival and progress as a nation will depend on how effectively we implement our foreign policy to serve the totality of our national interests.

His Excellency the President has defined the five cardinal principles that constitute the foundation of the foreign policy of Sri Lanka:

- (1) Friendship with all peace loving countries.
- (2) The observance of the international rule of law.
- (3) The inviolability of our national sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- (4) The acceptance of development aid without compromise of our national dignity.
- (5) Firm belief in the democratic process of policy making.

I am proud to be able to say that we are doing our utmost to adhere to these principles.

sustained, as we are, by our abiding commitment to non-alignment, the cornerstone of our foreign policy.

Our record is an impressive one that should inspire all Sri Lankans. As a founder member of the Non-Aligned Movement we were among the 15 Non-Aligned Nations invited to Belgrade last year to participate in the initiative for a solution to the Gulf crisis.

Our relations with the international community are conducted with dignity and self-respect.

We have continued to maintain the same spirit of goodwill and co-operation with our South Asian neighbours. The Sixth SAARC Summit at the end of last year was an ample demonstration of our dedication to a collective approach to ensure the common good of our peoples.

In the Middle-East our support for the Palestinian cause continues undiminished. This was generously acknowledged by an Arab League Resolution which called on all Arab States to support us in our development efforts.

We were among the first of the Asian countries to re-open its mission in Kuwait. We were able to evacuate over 90,000 Sri Lankans during the crisis and we are now actively engaged in the task of assisting those who wish to find employment there.

As an outstanding example of our international image, I refer to our successful contesting of elections to the Human Rights Commission and the United Nations Environmental Programme. Our election for a further four-year term to the UN Commission on Human Settlements is worthy international recognition of His Excellency the President's proposal to declare 1987 as the International Year For The Homeless.

In our relations with Europe we extended recognition to the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and supported their membership of the UN. We also participated in the Commonwealth Meeting in Harare this year.

The liberal policies of the Government have resulted in greater foreign investment and technological assistance which have contributed significantly to our economic advancement

and higher living standards. In this environment, the Janasaviya Programme of His Excellency the President has won acceptance and acclaim. This emphasis on economic development led to the establishment of a Bi-lateral Co-operation Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to stimulate trade, investment and tourism through our missions abroad.

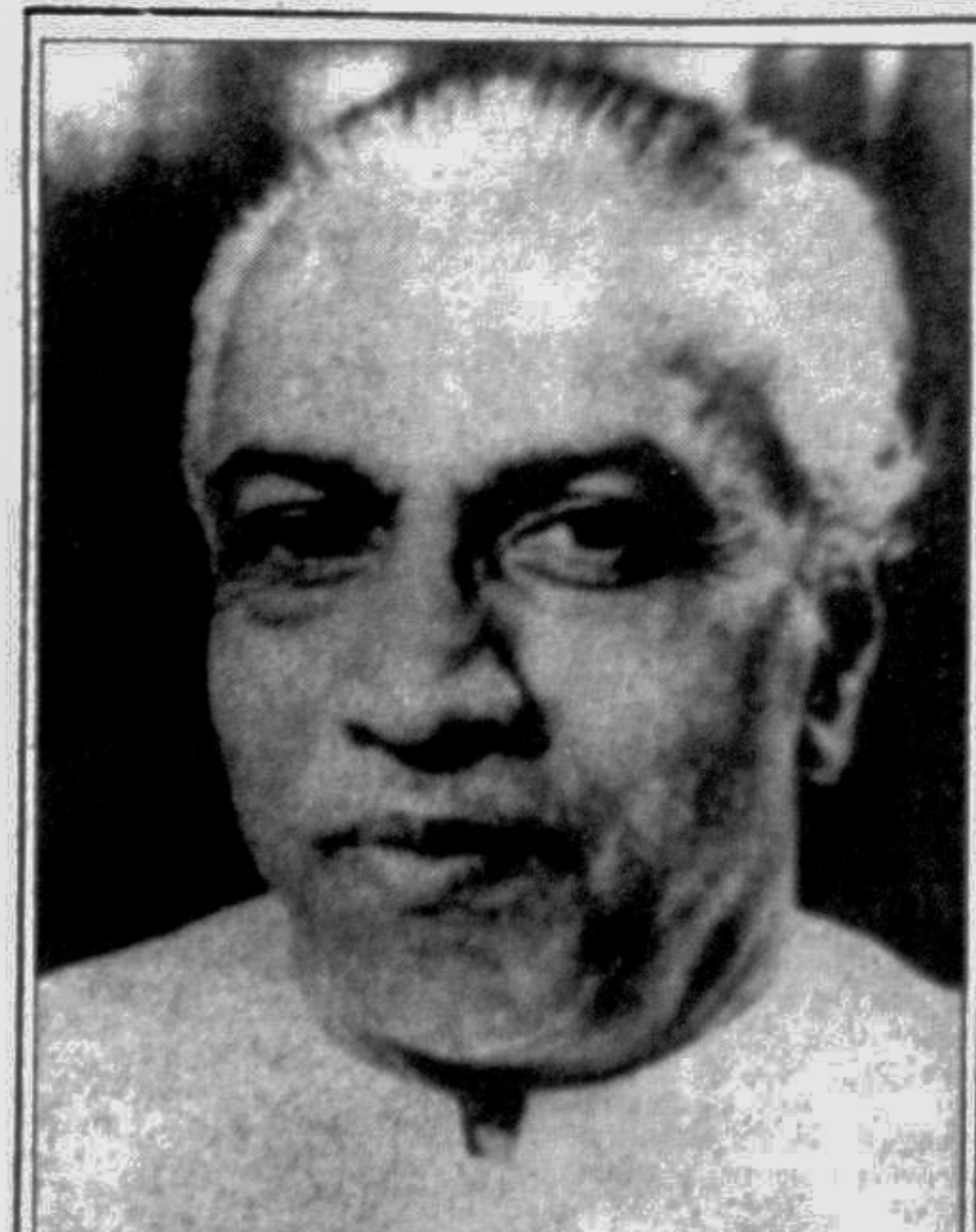
We are only too aware that the subject of human rights continues to be a matter of concern for the Western aid donor countries. We continue to maintain a constant dialogue with them as well as with the UN and its Human Rights Agencies to disprove adverse reports on human rights violations in Sri Lanka. As examples of this, we invited the UN Working Group On Disappearances to visit Sri Lanka last year and accepted many of the recommendations of Amnesty International. The International Committee of the Red Cross continues its useful work in Sri Lanka.

It is particularly in the field of human rights that Sri Lankans abroad could play a constructive role in helping to counter the allegations made against us of human rights violations.

You have a special responsibility to extend your support and co-operations to the several initiatives taken by His Excellency the President to present a balanced and positive picture of the situation in the land of your birth. You have kept alive your interest in developments in Sri Lanka and I am confident you will continue to do so. I extend my best wishes to you all.

As we begin a new chapter in our history as an independent nation, we need to dedicate ourselves afresh to those principles which have sustained and strengthened us in the task of nation building. We need to take account of the dramatic changes we have witnessed in the international scene, many of them with far-reaching consequences for us. While we welcome these changes, a special duty is cast on each one of us to fashion our responses to them with dignity and honour, and in this way earn the respect and admiration of all nations.

**Harold Herat**  
Foreign Minister



### The Prime Minister's Message

THE National Day of a country falls on the anniversary of an important historic event in the case of Sri Lanka we commemorate our National Day on 4th February of each year. This is because we saw the birth of freedom and the end of almost four and half centuries of servitude on this day. We are once again free and once again responsible to ourselves. We look forward to our future inspired by the able guidance and sagacious statesmanship of His Excellency Ranasinghe Premadasa, President of Sri Lanka.

A nation is represented by its national flag. Our national flag reminds us of Buddhist virtues of loving kindness, altruistic joy, compassion and equanimity. The national flag binds all communities in our motherland together into one large family of Sri Lanka. It is a symbol of our freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Therefore, I request all of you to make a special resolution to accord our national flag the respect it deserves.

The Government under the benign leadership of His Excellency the President has given priority to programmes that bring about the welfare and happiness of our people and specially that of the poorest of the poor. The Janasaviya Programme and the Foster Parents Scheme initiated by His Excellency the President have received acceptance and recognition the world over. I wish to appeal to all citizens of Sri Lanka to assist the needy and the disabled by providing them food, shelter and medicine. I also request you to contribute to the upgrading and maintenance of places of worship, schools, playgrounds, hospitals, roads, irrigation works etc.

Today is a memorable day for the people of Sri Lanka because 44 years ago we shed the fetters of bondage of foreign domination. It is most appropriate on this occasion to look back at the 44 years of independence. Although we can be complacent with the political freedom we enjoy we have a great deal to achieve in economic freedom. With the adoption of import substitution industrialisation strategies, the liberalisation of both imports and exports and declaration of the year 1992 as the Year of Exports, we will be able to improve the quality of life of our people in the near future.

I wish to draw attention to two events that took place during the course of last year which have brought pride and fame to Sri Lanka. The first was the successful completion of the sixth SAARC Summit in Colombo where His Excellency the President was elected the Chairman of the SAARC. The second was the exhilarating performance of our young sportsmen and women at the Fifth South Asian Federation Games. It was an occasion which made our hearts leap with pride and joy. Let us emulate our performance in the field of sports, in other fields as well.

The National Day is also a day for sober reflection. Nationhood imposes certain duties and obligations on the people that constitute that nation. It means that we as the citizens of Sri Lanka should strive to think and act unitedly, understand the rights and shortcomings of others and ensure that unity is preserved in diversity.

We have been able to circumvent most of the problems that emerged in the past. With unity among all communities and sincere determination we will be able to meet any future challenges. Therefore the task ahead of us is to work hard with dedication and devotion.

I take this opportunity to thank the many thousands of Sri Lankans now living abroad who have most eagerly contributed to the welfare and progress of our people. I acknowledge with grateful thanks the goodwill and cooperation extended to us by many friendly countries.

Let us resolve on this day to work for the future prosperity and well-being of our motherland Sri Lanka. To the tasks ahead let us dedicate ourselves in the year that has just dawned.

I wish all Sri Lankans both here and abroad happiness, good luck and prosperity.

**D B Wijetunga**  
Prime Minister  
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

### High Commissioner's Message

## Shri Lanka has close ties with Bangladesh

S HRI LANKAN nationals both at home and abroad celebrate today the 44th Anniversary of our independence. We look back with joy and satisfaction at what our nation has been able to achieve during the past year. The people of Sri Lanka have displayed great fortitude and resilience despite difficulties at home and the adverse developments that affected the region and the world at large. As we look forward to the future, we are confident that we can overcome all obstacles in building a united and prosperous nation.

On this anniversary of our independence, we people of Sri Lanka can look back with justifiable pride on over 2,500 years of recorded history of our motherland with an unbroken succession of monarchies for nearly 2,300 years. After a period of colonial rule, Sri Lanka became independent on 4th February 1948 through peaceful negotiation and constitutional evolution. The democratic form of Government in Sri Lanka has a long history and her people have enjoyed adult franchise for over six decades. Sri Lanka has also a long tradition of respect for the Rule of Law. The Judiciary is independent

of the Executive authority of the Government. The variety of welfare services provided by the Government including free education and free health services have resulted in a remarkable improvement in the material living conditions of the majority of the people since independence. The Government has assured for the generality of our people, a quality of life well above that of countries in a similar stage of economic development.

As we look back over the past year, we are conscious that a succession of rapid events around the world and particularly in Europe have brought about momentous changes. The changing international scene has a direct bearing on the lives of people of Sri Lanka as well as the rest of South Asia. There has been a global easing of tensions, movement away from command economies to liberalisation and a re-assertion of the values of democracy and individual freedom. However the improved political environment has also been responsible for certain negative trends. These include the marginalization of developing countries, with Western countries becoming pre-occupied with new priorities like assist-

ing the former states of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe with the revitalization of their economies. This situation makes it imperative for Sri Lanka and the other SAARC countries to make certain innovative approaches in the process of regional co-operation in South Asia. The recent SAARC Summit held in Colombo demonstrated that the SAARC leaders are alive to this challenge.

There has been progress in all aspects of our national life during the last year. Sri Lanka demonstrated that it has very strong democratic foundations by successfully conducting the local government elections in May 1991. The economy showed amazing resilience with the real growth of gross domestic product in 1990 being 6.2 per cent. This was a big jump from the dismal 2.1 per cent growth rate during 1987-89 due mainly to adverse weather conditions and terrorist problems in parts of Sri Lanka. The growth rate in 1991 was 5.5 per cent despite the adverse effects of the Gulf war, the battle against Tamil separatists and the slide in tea prices after the devaluation of the Indian rupee in mid 1991. The economic prospects for the period ahead look bright

with growth projections indicating an average growth rate of 5.8 per cent in the next five



**Alfred K David**  
High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in Bangladesh

years. In the implementation of the Government's development activities, priority has been given to programmes that cater to the welfare and happiness of the people and especially that of the poorest of the poor. The Janasaviya Programme has been launched as a national development scheme to uplift the econom-

ically backward and underprivileged to plant out an appropriate policy of their own. The third round of the Janasaviya Programme will begin in February this year. The World Bank and a number of other international organisations have provided necessary financial assistance for the programme. The Sevana Sarana Foster Parents Scheme affords much relief to poor children. The Government is providing a mid-day meal free to school children. Land is being given to landless families and many houses are being built to shelter the homeless. The Government which earlier successfully completed the One Million Houses Programme in 1989, has now embarked on the 1.5 million Houses Programme stretching over a period of 6 years commencing 1990. The Government is providing electricity to the remotest villages and irrigation facilities are being extended to facilitate agriculture. President Premadasa speaking on the third anniversary of his inauguration on 2nd January 1992 stated that "unmistakable signs of the dawn of a new era can be seen everywhere."

The Government in its policies is conscious that political

freedom must be accompanied by economic freedom. The Government's import substitution industrialisation strategies as well as the liberalisation of both imports and exports are geared to achieve this objective. In 1990 the Government launched the National Export Development Plan 1990-94. The annual growth rate of exports envisaged by this plan was 8 per cent but it reached an encouraging 20 per cent in the first year of the plan period. The Government has declared 1992 as the Year of Exports. Preparations are underway to hold a Colombo International Trade Fair. The World Export Processing Zone Authority (WEPZA) has selected Sri Lanka as the venue for its Annual Conference in 1992. A Third Export Processing Zone has been established in June 1991 at Koggala in addition to the earlier ones established at Katunayake and Biyagama. The Government is proceeding with its policy of peopulation of state enterprises. Seven enterprises have been peopled while over 40 others are presently in various stages of divestiture.

Despite the progress achieved in many fields, the ethnic conflict and the result-

ing subversive activities of a terrorist group has resulted in a great deal of destruction of national assets, heavy loss of national revenue and considerable government expenditure on defence and security. It is now becoming clear that terrorism in the north and east is facing defeat. It is significant that many militant groups that previously waged an armed struggle against the Government, are now helping the armed forces and the po-

lice to protect the people of the north and the east. The Government continues to strive for a political solution to the ethnic conflict within the framework of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unitary character of Sri Lanka. A Parliamentary Select Committee representing all parties in Parliament has been set up to find a solution to the ethnic problem and it is hoped that they will recommend a

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