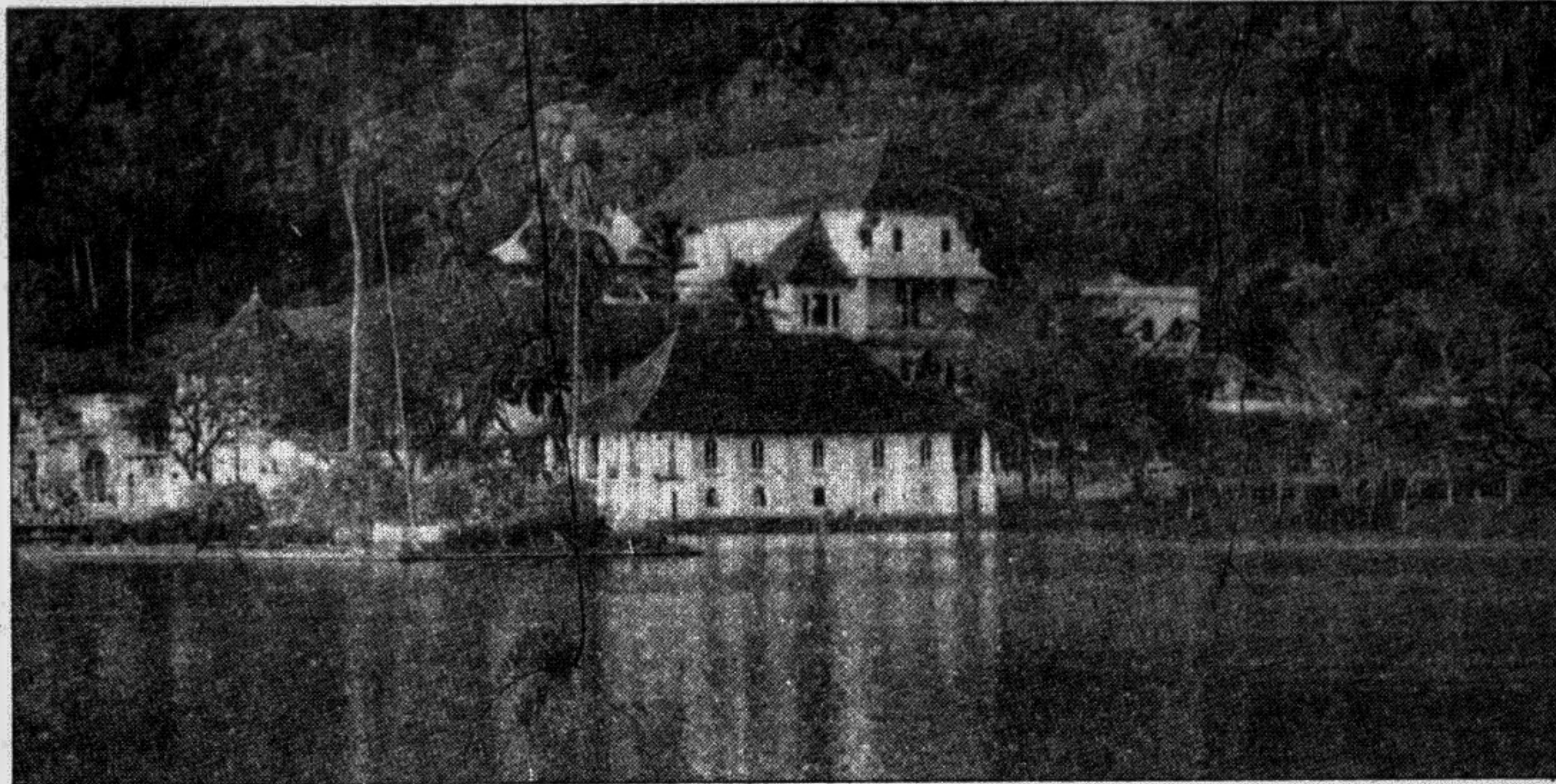


# Tourism in Shri Lanka



Kandy and its artificial lake attract many tourists

A 60% increase in tourist arrivals in 1990 over the previous year marked the end of a long period of decline in tourist arrivals in Shri Lanka which retarded the growth of the tourist industry. Since 1990 the arrivals have been increasing steadily opening new vistas in tourism development in the country. Much enthusiasm has been generated both with the tour operator and the investor, as a result of this change in the trend of tourist arrivals.

The beginning of organised tourism in Shri Lanka dates back to the 1960's with the realisation of the need for new avenues of foreign exchange earnings to bolster the national income. Much attention was not paid to tourism in the 1950's although a rapid expansion of international tourism was experienced during that period. The Ceylon Tourist Board was set up in 1966 with the idea of promoting the country as a tourist destination and developing the tourist facilities within the country. The strategy followed by the Government of Shri Lanka for tourism development was widely acknowledged as a unique and exemplary one with the Government playing a leadership and catalytic role. Planned and controlled de-

velopment of tourism' was the policy of the Government with the idea of maximising economic benefits whilst minimising the possible adverse effects on the society and the environment. The Government adopted a cautious approach to tourism development perhaps taking into account the experiences in other countries. The introduction of Tourist Development Act of 1968 gave the Ceylon Tourist Board, the necessary statutory authority to develop tourism in a planned and controlled manner. The private sector was encouraged to invest in tourism enterprises, by giving a wide range of fiscal, monetary and other incentives. At the same time the Government undertook investment in resort development and in large hotel projects in the City of Colombo where the private sector did not have the necessary resources for investment. Meanwhile the Ceylon Tourist Board undertook promotion of Shri Lanka as a tourist destination in foreign countries. The result was a remarkable growth in tourist arrivals in the 70's.

Shri Lanka's tourism reached an all time high in 1982, registering a total arrival of 407,230 tourists. The country enjoyed a 20-22% growth rate in tourist arrivals in the 70's, a

remarkable growth rate admired by experts in many parts of the world. The drop in arrivals since 1982 which af-

fects the entire tourist industry has now been arrested and the industry is looking forward once again to a sustained

growth of the industry both qualitative and quantitative to meet the needs of the future. In 1991, there were

317,703 tourists which was an increase of 6.7% over the previous year. In 1992, the arrivals have reached 392,000

registering an increase of 23%. These indicate that a steady growth of tourist arrivals can be expected in the next few years and future of tourism in Sri Lanka looks bright. Although Western Europe has remained the largest generator of tourist traffic to Shri Lanka, Asia is fast emerging as a major contender enjoying a market share of 33.6%.

Shri Lanka with its vast array of tourist attractions caters to a wide range of tourist tastes. From the fun loving holiday maker to the sedate pilgrim traveller, the facilities are available for an unforgettable visit.

Accommodation facilities range from 5 Star to supplementary accommodation. In the graded sector there are about 9679 rooms shared by 122 hotels. There are seven hotels in the 5 Star category of which six are in the City of Colombo with the seventh in the South Coast. This is supported with another 1100 rooms in the supplementary sector. However, with the increasing trends in tourist arrivals new hotels will be opened up and have already attracted investors. To encourage investment in this field, the Government of Shri Lanka has introduced an attractive

package of incentives for hotel development and also for the development of recreational and tourism related infrastructure facilities.

The development of tourism in Shri Lanka during the next decade will be based on a Tourism Master Plan that has been prepared by a team of experts from UK, supported by local counterparts and sponsored by World Tourism Organisation and the United Nations Development Programme.

While pleasure remains the main purpose of visit to the Island, business, visiting friends and relations (VFR) and religion & culture are the other reasons for visiting Shri Lanka.

Among the many attractions in Shri Lanka are its golden beaches, the hill country and the wild life. Sri Lanka's ancient cities, some as old as 2,100 years are living monuments to a culture and civilization nurtured by the Buddhist way of life. There are also other attractions like gems, handicrafts, music & dance, Sri Lankan cuisine and above all its friendly people.

Shri Lanka, the 'Isle of Serendipity' welcomes visitors from all over the world to savour Shri Lanka's hospitality and splendour.

## 'Bangladesh and Shri Lanka enjoy excellent relations'

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country. Shri Lanka's growth rate in 1990 was 6.7 per cent, in 1991 it was 4.8 per cent and the estimated growth rate for 1992 was 4.5 per cent. The inflation rate has come down since 1988. The budget deficit has been reduced and certain government enterprises have been "peopled". These have now become profit making ventures with active private sector participation. Due to the improvement in the economy, the government was able to give a 30 per cent salary increase to public servants this year. Shri Lanka's export last year increased to 84.3 billion as compared to 56 billion in 1988 in SDR terms. The year 1992 was "the Year of Exports" and also the first year of "the Decade of Exports" in Shri Lanka. An International Exhibition "Expo 1992" held in November last year attracted

over 3,500 buyers from over 55 countries.

I have so far painted a very rosy picture of life in Shri Lanka. This is so in many parts of the island. However, the vexatious problem of the North and East continues to bleed the country and has to be resolved somehow. His Excellency President Premadasa in his address to the nation on 2nd January 1993 stated that the urgent need of the hour is a peaceful solution to the North-East crisis. The Government of Shri Lanka and people of Shri Lanka as well as our friends around the world are eagerly awaiting the final recommendations of the Parliamentary Select Committee who have been considering a solution to the ethnic problem. Recently the Bishop of Colombo Rt Rev Kenneth Fernando went on a special mission to Jaffna and met the

LTTE leaders. It can possibly be a breakthrough and the proverbial "little light at the end of the tunnel" to end the sufferings of the people in Shri Lanka.

### Bangladesh-Shri Lanka Relations

Bangladesh and Shri Lanka enjoy excellent relations, which was clearly evident during the two visits last year by President Premadasa to Bangladesh and when Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia paid two visits to Shri Lanka in 1991. Bangladesh and Shri Lanka who were primarily responsible for the creation of SAARC must work closely to achieve its objectives during the course of this decade. Apart from contacts at the Summit level, there were other events last year which brought our two countries together. One was the signing of

an Air Services Agreement between the two Governments and later the signing of a Commercial Agreement between Biman Airlines and Air Lanka. This will pave the way for direct flights between our two capitals sometime shortly. This will be a boon not only to Shri Lankans and Bangladeshis but also to expatriates living in our countries and in the neighbourhood.

The next meeting of the Bangladesh-Shri Lanka Joint Economic Committee is scheduled to take place in Colombo on 15th and 16th March at ministerial level and it is expected to strengthen existing areas of cooperation and identify new ones. A large number of Shri Lankan nationals work in Bangladesh, particularly in the garment trade and development projects. Shri Lankans are conspicuous on the sports field and cricketers from Shri Lanka are playing a very prominent role in the local Navana league.

On this special day, I take this opportunity of inviting our brothers and sisters in Bangladesh to celebrate along with us. In the rapidly changing global scene, we South Asian neighbours must work closely together to promote the welfare of our people as well as that of our neighbours in SAARC. My dear fellow Shri Lankans, let us today dedicate ourselves afresh to serve our motherland.

I wish to close on a personal note. After a stay of nearly five years in Bangladesh, my family and I will be leaving Dhaka in about a week's time, to return to Shri Lanka on the completion of my assignment. My wife, children and I carry away many pleasant and precious memories of our stay in Bangladesh. I can truly say with your great poet Kaviguru Rabindranath Tagore—

"I came to your shore as a stranger,  
I stayed in your houses as a guest,  
I left your door as a friend."  
May all beings be happy.

## Taking the Administration to the People

Continued from page 8

office staff are accountable to their sales manager for their individual sales efforts. But managers are accountable, not only for their personal job performance, but also for performance of others in the organization. These managers who are key personnel in the governance of this country, will not only be responsible for their performance, but the performance of the others who are working under them as well. Fifthly, the question of accountability is becoming important. Accountability refers to a person's responsibility for the way his or her job duties are discharged. All employees in an organisation are accountable for their own personal job performance. Clerks and other

the same time affording opportunities to survive those very threats. People who read the opportunities wisely and plan strategically will survive and forge ahead whilst others will perish.

The world is changing fast and so are the people and their needs and wants. This is the rationale for the administrative system to keep pace with these changes. All administrative systems should not merely keep pace with such impending changes in the environment, but also be ahead of them. To achieve this, people need to be master strategists, as shown to all by President Premadasa.

We extend heartiest felicitations to the Government and People of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Shri Lanka on the 45th anniversary of their independence

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## The Plantation Industry

Continued from page 8

manage of the plantations has been most disappointing. Therefore in a major move for restructuring of the management of the State owned plantations, the Government has regrouped 502 large estates managed by State enterprises and formed 22 independent regional management enterprises given on long-term lease to 22 private sector companies. The State would continue to own the estates.

### Minor Export Crops

Right down the ages Shri Lanka was famous for cinnamon and other spices. In fact, the Portuguese and the Dutch first came to the island in search of these spices. However, the demand for cinnamon, cloves and other spices declined the world over leading to neglect of these crops.

It has now been realised that spices have a good market specially in Mexico, Latin

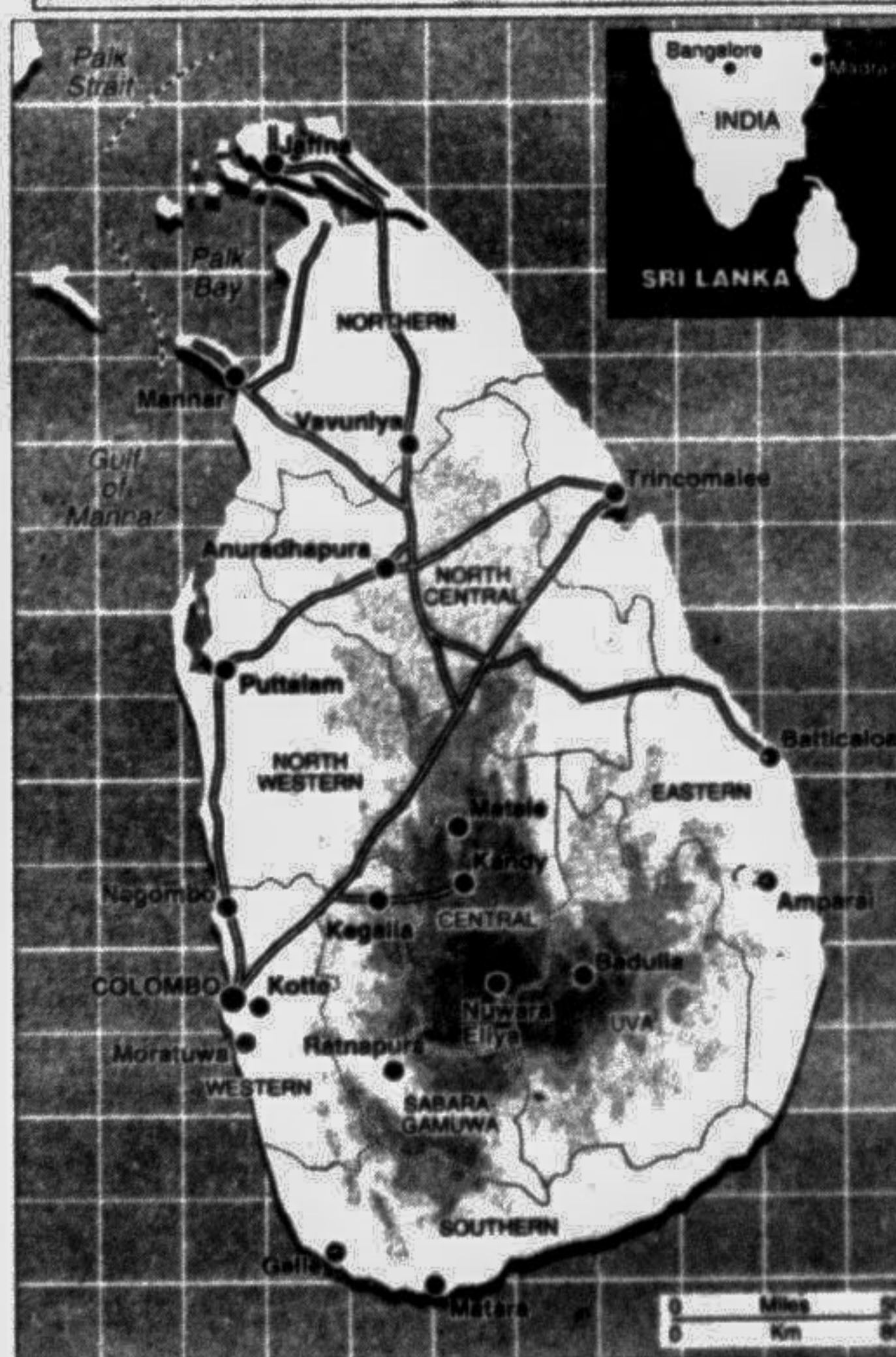
America and Western Europe. Pepper, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom and nutmeg are primarily grown in mixed home gardens and smallholdings.

Cultivation of Cocoa and Coffee have proved to be remunerative in the recent past. These crops are promoted under the Minor Export Crops Assistance Scheme.

In addition to the above crops the cultivation of a variety of export crops such as vegetables, fruits and chillies together with foliage plants, orchids and cut flowers is being promoted actively. The export of betel to the Middle Eastern countries and Pakistan has also been on the increase.

These cash crops provide both direct employment and supplementary income to hundreds of farmers. The Export Development Board helps the promotion of such exports whilst the Shri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation insures these exports.

## The Land and its People



The population of Shri Lanka in 1992 is estimated at 17.4 million. Language constitutes an important social and cultural factor in the life of the community. Sinhala and Tamil are the official languages of Shri Lanka. English is the link language. Shri Lanka has a recorded history of over 2,500 years.

## Warm Felicitations to H. E. President R. Premadasa &

The friendly people of Shri Lanka on the occasion of National Day

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