



# Independence Day of Sri Lanka



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## Message

Today when we celebrate the 52nd anniversary of the attainment of independence by our country I consider as a day of profound significance for all Sri Lankans. The reason for this is that this is the first independence day of the millennium as well as the first to be celebrated following the People's Alliance's second victory at the presidential election.

We consider as the greatest victory of the last five years our success in restoring democracy and human rights and in bringing within the reach of our people every kind of freedom based on a planned and orderly development. The special features of this process were the large-scale development of the social infrastructure and significant progress in key social areas such as education and poverty alleviation.

The greatest challenge facing the people of Sri Lanka in consolidating these gains and in advancing with the new millennium is to put and end to the wasteful war we are embroiled in and bring about peace. We are entrusted with the task of creating the social and legal climate in which it is possible to forge trust, unity, brotherhood and coexistence among the communities. It is only in such a climate that we will be able to taste to the full the fruits of our independence. We have now entered upon a most appropriate and auspicious time to evolve a fresh resolve towards that end.

With the People's Alliance emerging victorious for a second term at the Presidential election we have taken several new and firm steps in that direction. We are now launched upon the onerous task of enacting most expeditiously a new constitution which will ensure that all the communities of Sri Lanka will be able to live in peace and unity with one another and which will guarantee them equal rights and a sense of national identity. It is our hope to enact this new constitution with the optimum consensus on the basis of the renewed mandate given to us by our people.

I wish to recall the appeal I made after taking oaths for a second term as President with a view to achieving for all of us those goals that we desire. I appeal to you all to first join together abandoning all narrow attitudes, differences and all such divisions so that we can achieve that most necessary and urgent goal of peace before we attain our other objectives.

It is our noblest belief that on the basis of that peace achieved in unity the country will be permitted to partake of freedom and development for all her people.

**Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga**  
President of Sri Lanka

Our heartiest felicitations and best  
wishes on the auspicious  
occasion of  
**THE 52nd ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
INDEPENDENCE DAY**

OF

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## Message

Today the Sri Lankans celebrate the 52nd anniversary of Independence both at home and abroad. On 04 February 1948 Sri Lanka gained its independence from the British and re-emerged as a sovereign nation, as a country with freedom to decide for itself its destiny.

During the past 52 years, Sri Lanka maintained close and cordial relations with its neighbours, particularly with the countries in South Asia. With the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent sovereign nation in the year 1972, Sri Lanka had taken significant steps to maintain excellent bilateral relations. These cordial relations have been cemented by the traditional cultural links and the common history and heritage.

On this auspicious occasion of the 52nd anniversary of Independence, I extend my cordial good wishes to the people of Bangladesh as well as the Sri Lankans resident here. I am confident that the Sri Lankans in Bangladesh will make their own contribution to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries.

**E G Dayananda**  
High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Bangladesh

In more recent years, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have taken meaningful and positive steps to enhance regional cooperation with a view to achieving development collectively. Being active members of the SAARC, the two countries have worked together in close cooperation activated by a common desire to improve the quality of life of the people. Sri Lanka and Bangladesh also have worked together in international fora adopting a common stand in order to achieve their common objectives.

Exchange of high level visits also have made its contribution to strengthen and consolidate the friendly relations between the two countries. The bedrock of firm friendship between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh provides an ideal environment to build a mutually beneficial economic and commercial relationship. Both countries are committed to this goal. My own endeavour is to do my utmost to enhance the good relations during my tenure of office.

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## Message

Every Independence Day we concentrate on targets and expectations to be achieved at the time we celebrate the next Independence Day. When assessments are made at the next Independence Day as to how much we have been able to achieve during the preceding year it is evident that we are unable to be happy as our expectations have not been fulfilled. Therefore, we have to take cognisance of this fact at this year's Independence Day. We have to work with dedication and commitment with this in mind so that our expectations could be fulfilled.

We have to develop a new vision in keeping with the rest of the world who are in the march towards progress. Our main task here would be to achieve economic development and it is vital that correct national plans are formulated and implemented. Concurrently, social and cultural development too should be ensured whilst steps have to be taken to sustain progress in development achieved in different spheres. In general, it is also important that we become a law abiding and disciplined people. When in disciplined, people tend to err and resort to malpractices. In fulfilling the responsibilities bestowed upon us if we are able to be satisfied true to our conscience that we have shouldered the responsibilities as entrusted, it becomes a decisive factor for overall development.

It is also relevant that we show remarkable development in conduct as well as our habits. We have to be devoid of destructive thoughts in order to achieve this. It is my belief that we would be able to overcome most of our problems by practising equality and non violence. Unity among all communities is the most important factor in resolving our national conflicts. It is clear that efforts to be divided and to achieve narrow gains will not last long.

Therefore, when Sri Lanka is celebrating its independence in the new year of the new millennium, let us resolve to build a prosperous and united Sri Lanka whilst ensuring that independence is meaningful and ever lasting. This, then, would be our strongest resolution in commemorating our independence.

On this momentous occasion let us commit ourselves to resolve all conflicts and to view life in a more meaningful manner so that future generations will be able to live in this world in a better environment.

**Sirimavo R D Bandaranaike**  
Prime Minister of Sri Lanka