

# **01. A FULFILLING LIFE A COMFORTABLE COUNTRY**

## **1.1 A civilized citizen- an advanced human resource**

### **Introduction**

Education is a cultural process that generates new knowledge by acquiring and disseminating existing knowledge. The existence and development of a civilized and responsible society hinge on the quality of its education. In Sri Lanka, the education system faces several crises. A major issue is the high dropout rate, with many students leaving school before completing at least 13 years of education. For example, in 2008, 11.3% of children who entered the first year left school before sitting for the GCE O/L examination in 2018. By 2020, only 64.7% of students who sat for the GCE O/L examination proceeded to the GCE A/L level, meaning that 35.3% of those who entered the first year did not reach the GCE A/L examination. Only 35.4% of these students passed the GCE A/L examination and merely 12.7% secured university entrance.

Another significant problem is the disparity in the distribution of human and physical resources within the school system, which has led to a breakdown in parental trust in the system. According to the 2022 school census report, out of 10,126 schools, 1,473 (14.5%) have fewer than 50 students, and 5,204 schools (51.4%) have fewer than 200 students. This means that over half of the schools are underutilized and lack basic facilities. Only 396 schools are classified as national schools, and just 2,959 schools (29%) offer GCE A/L subject streams. The high cost of education that has to be borne by parents, despite the policy of free education from the first year to the first degree, is another major concern.

Furthermore, serious social criticism exists on the education system's failure to produce quality citizens. While education is not solely about preparing individuals for the job market, it should equip citizens to fulfil social responsibilities and contribute positively to the national economy. The current mismatch between the education system and the needs of the main economic sectors, agriculture, industry, and service, is evident.

The NPP's education policy aims to provide quality education that fosters a developed, humanistic, and responsible society. To achieve these goals, we will increase public investment in the education sector, gradually raising the allocation to education as a percentage of the gross domestic product up to 6%.

## Principles

- Free education and equal access
  - Relevance to human development and employment
  - Acceptability for all
  - Responsible citizens accountable to society
  - Sustainability and innovation
  - Lifelong learning
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## ACTIVITIES

### Early Childhood Development Education

- Formal early childhood development education for all children aged 03 to 05 years
  - An Early Childhood Development Education Centre for every child within 2 km from their home or parent's workplace
  - Programs that foster the development of good habits, attitudes, and ethics, tailored to suit the physical and mental conditions of children, are essential for their successful integration into social life
  - National language programs that include English and other national languages as languages of spoken communication in addition to the mother tongue.
  - Adaptation programs to deal with multicultural diversity
  - Activities that improve children's health and nutritional status
  - An Early Childhood Development Regulatory Agency to regulate Early Childhood Development Centres
  - Mandatory professional training with minimum educational qualifications and a minimum salary for Early Childhood Development Centre Wardens and teachers.
  - A formal national institute and branch system for training Early Childhood Development professionals.
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### Primary and secondary education

Primary education aims to develop literacy, numeracy, creativity and communication skills.

## **School education**

- Primary education from year 1 to year 5
  - Junior Secondary Education from 6th to 9th year
  - Senior Secondary (Lower) Education from Year 10 to Year 11
  - Senior Secondary (Higher) Education from Years 12 to 13
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## **Primary education**

- A government school system for primary education within 3 km of one's home or parents' place of work.
  - A student-centred education that stimulates intellectual curiosity and knowledge development without disrupting childhood.
  - It is the responsibility of the government to provide physical and human resources to schools to maintain minimum facilities.
  - A school transport system following requirements and accepted standards.
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## **Junior Secondary Education**

- A junior secondary school system and a senior secondary school system covering 2 or 3 primary schools, considering population and geographical location.
  - Major subjects to enable children to choose higher education or vocational education according to their abilities and special skills.
  - A student-centred education that develops students' intellectual skills related to their age groups.
  - Additional subjects and activities to foster social values and civic responsibility.
  - Educational programs about major religions in Sri Lanka, as well as education about the student's own religion.
  - Age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education.
  - Development of attitudes towards culture, environmentalism, and nature conservation.
  - Programs that provide experience in innovation.
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## **Senior secondary education**

- The opportunity for students to select between general streams such as science, arts, commerce, and technology or vocational education (directly applicable to a career) based on the results of the national level examination conducted in the ninth year and school-based continuous assessment reports.

- Flexible curriculum allowing students to switch from one stream to another during their senior secondary (lower) education.
- Subjects specific to education streams and common subjects that will foster general skills such as technological literacy, languages, life skills, literature, and basic law.
- A learning environment that trains children to work while accommodating and respecting cultural diversity
- Development of knowledge and practical skills required for innovation, life skills, and social contribution.
- Programs to maintain the physical and emotional balance of children.
- Sexual and reproductive health education tailored for youth
- Understanding of access to legal counselling services and other social support systems when necessary.

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## **National level assessments**

- A National Examination Evaluation Center with all technological and physical facilities.
- An annual school calendar to ensure national examination evaluation activities are completed within one month and results are provided within two months.
- A payment system that reflects the intellectual contribution of examiners involved in the examination evaluation process.
- Regularize and broaden the scope of the National Institute of Education for curriculum development, professional development of teachers and educational research & policy formulations.
- A fully equipped Curriculum Development Unit for curriculum development within the National Institute of Education.

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## **Development and maintenance of human resources**

- Eliminate teacher and principal pay disparity promptly.
- Establish a teacher service constitution and a teacher council.
- Position the teaching profession among the 10 highest-paying professions.
- One year of professional training in the teaching-learning process before entering the teaching profession.
- Establish a National University of Education by merging all Colleges of Education and Teacher Training Colleges.
- Conduct training programs every three years.

- Create a coordination structure between institutions to ensure that curriculum development, textbook development, and assessment processes are linked and maintained.
- Establish a strong structure within the school system to address sexual or other forms of violence faced by all communities.

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## **Vocational Education**

- A vocational education process that directs students toward specific fields of employment by acquiring practical knowledge in general professional areas.
- Parallel to the general education stream, a vocational education stream from year 10 to year 13, preparing students to work in fields such as construction and infrastructure, creative industries, primary industries, service industries, social and community services, and manufacturing and technology.
- A Vocational Education Regulatory Department consisting of professionals to advise on the qualitative and quantitative changes needed in the vocational education sector, considering job market demands and global trends.

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## **Government - assisted schools**

- Necessary actions will be taken to strengthen the education of the government-assisted schools, including Pirivens, by providing adequate funds and other facilities.

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## **Higher Education**

The national university system will be transformed into centers providing advanced theoretical and experimental education. Efforts will also be made to establish a parallel university system that provides international-level advanced professional education.

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## **State University System**

- While respecting the freedom of universities, University Grants Commission (UGC) guides the preparations of academic courses in line with national policies.
- Appointing the Chairman and other members of the UGC ensuring representation of social diversity.
- Instead of appointing vice-chancellors based on political connections, a new method will be implemented to uphold the honour of universities

- Appoint independent individuals as external governing council members of universities by the University Grants Commission.
  - Members of governing councils of universities to ensure diverse professional fields and gender representation.
  - A pool of commonly recommended names from recognized professional bodies for appointing Council members.
  - Appointing a retired person from a university to the governing body of that university, with only those retired at least five years ago being considered.
  - A student representative elected by students of the respective university to the Governing Body limiting space only for welfare and other student affairs.
  - Limiting the tenure of a Council member to a maximum of two consecutive terms.
  - Faculty members who are qualified as Head of Department or Senior Lecturer with at least three years' experience have the opportunity to be appointed as Dean.
  - Limiting the term of a dean to a maximum of two consecutive terms.
  - Abolition of non-academic staff recruitment on the recommendations of the minister in charge.
  - Mechanisms at faculty and university levels to address academic, non-academic, and student community grievances and make appropriate recommendations.
  - Eliminating delays in enrolling students to universities.
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- Gradually expanding the tertiary education system so that minimum qualifications for each course are identified and those who meet these qualifications are given opportunities
  - Provide necessary provisions to prepare internet facilities in tertiary education institutes, lecture halls, laboratories, libraries, and cafeterias according to proper standards.
  - Establish special units in every tertiary education institution to provide basic qualifications, including English language skills, required for obtaining post-graduate education in international universities and fostering relationships that will allow students to secure post-graduate opportunities through these units
  - Offer 200 scholarships per year for high school graduates to pursue degrees at internationally ranked universities.
  - Implement an integrated mechanism to prevent sexual or other forms of harassment of youth in tertiary education institutions.
  - Provide facilities for students with disabilities to receive education by recognized international standards.
  - Increasing Mahapola and other bursaries in line with cost of living.

## **Research and Post-graduate Education**

- A university for postgraduate research and development.
  - Provision of necessary financial and physical resources to strengthen postgraduate education and research.
  - Encourage private sector contributions to strengthen research related to industries and service sectors.
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## **Vocational Education Universities**

- A vocational education university system for those who pass the tertiary education entrance examination after completing senior secondary education.
  - Merge nursing schools into a national nursing university.
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## **Private Education**

Due to the limited capacity of the public education system to accommodate students meeting the basic qualifications for higher education, there is significant demand for private educational institutions, including universities and other private tertiary education institutions. However, there is no regulation of the quality or fees of programs these private institutions offer.

An independent regulatory unit will be established under the Ministry of Education to regulate the programs of existing private educational institutions.

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## **Adult Education**

- Community educational centres in each divisional secretariat area, integrated with local educational institutions, libraries, and cultural centres.
  - Educational programs for citizens on fundamental laws in Sinhala, Tamil, and English, as well as on information technology and the use of technological tools.
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## **Distance Education**

While recognizing that open and distance education is a crucial part of tertiary education, providing opportunities for those unable to complete tertiary education due to different circumstances and those engaged in various professions to complete their tertiary education is essential. Open and distance education will be expanded to ensure access to higher education without barriers based on employment status or geographical factors. To achieve this, the facilities of the Open University of Sri Lanka will be expanded.

## 1.2 A vigorous life - Healthy people

# Introduction

According to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, health is a human right. The right to health is intrinsically linked to all other human rights. Patient empowerment is one of the key elements of patient-centred healthcare. Gender inequality remains a critical challenge in the health sector. Achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is one of the world's nations' targets when adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). All Sri Lankans have access to the full range of quality health services they need, when and where they need them, without financial hardship. It covers the full continuum of essential health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care. Therefore, it is the duty of the responsible government to provide the most efficient evidence-based medical care to all citizens without delay. Quality healthcare systems include patient safety, timeliness, effectiveness, efficiency, equity and patient-centeredness. Safety and quality systems are integrated with governance processes to enable the Ministry of Health to actively manage and improve the safety and quality of health care for patients.

The WHO's ranking of the world's health systems indicated that the Sri Lankan health system was 76 in the year 2000. According to the 2024 edition of the CEOWORLD magazine's Health Care Index, Sri Lanka has been ranked as 105 globally. The WHO recommends that government expenditure on health as a % of GDP should be, at least 5%. Further, a Sri Lankan family spends more than 50% of their expenditure on health care out of pocket now. WHO further recommends that out-of-pocket expenditure on health should be less than 20%. But a Sri Lankan family spends more than 50% of their expenditure on health care out of pocket now. The reforms will require strengthening all aspects of the health system – financing, human resources, pharmaceuticals, and information systems – to meet the needs of a complex service delivery system.

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## Principles

- The right of individuals to receive the benefits of the health care system with respect and dignity.
  - The state's responsibility to provide disease prevention and treatment health services to citizens without discrimination.
  - Promotion of health, disease prevention, and preventive health care.
  - Health services that meet global standards.
  - Protection of patients' rights and safety.
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## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Effective Health Service Management**

- Gradually increase government expenditure on health to at least 3% of the GDP within a short period.
- Utilize funds efficiently and transparently while actively combating corruption in the health sector.

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### **Digital Health**

- Digitize patient records and information to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the health services information system.
- Implement online registration for medical appointments to minimize waiting times at health services institutions.

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### **Health Promotion and Disease prevention**

- Implement community-based mechanisms to identify, manage, and treat chronic non-communicable diseases.
- Conduct annual health screenings for all individuals over the age of 40.
- Promote healthy lifestyles, including exercise, walking, and cycling.
- Develop programs to identify and address behaviors of school children who may lead to anti-social activities and are vulnerable to risks.
- Establish health promotion programs to control severe and chronic malnutrition and obesity.

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### **Food Safety**

- Establish an organization to regulate food-related advertisements and implement a code of ethics to ensure advertisements provide accurate information to consumers.
- Control substandard food and beverage production, import, distribution, and sale.
- Mandate proper labelling of food products, including disclosure of all ingredients.

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### **Occupational Health, safety and wellbeing**

- Conduct assessments of occupational health and safety based on their nature of work for identified workplaces and issue certifications accordingly.
- Provide medical expenses coverage and appropriate allowance to employees who meet with accidents during work, until they return to their duties.

## **Elderly Care**

- Implement a comprehensive package of activities to promote physical and mental well-being, ensuring a healthy life for the elderly population.
- Provide guidance and conduct counselling programs before retirement to maintain physical and mental health.
- Introduce specialized geriatric clinics in disease prevention institutions for elderly care.

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## **Primary Care:**

- Appointing a family physician and health staff for 5,000 to 10,000 population.
- Cluster health institutions into primary care institutions (base hospitals), secondary care institutions (general hospitals), and tertiary care institutions (teaching hospitals) to ensure effective and continuous care.
- Implement satellite clinics to provide specialized health services (including visits by specialist consultants) in family physician unit areas.
- Establish facilities for mental, speech, auditory, occupational, and community physical therapy.

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## **Hospital care**

- Ensure every hospital-admitted patient has a bed and necessary facilities.
- Enhance ward management and nursing care plans regularly and improve nursing care for all patients in each ward.
- Establish daily treatment centers in every hospital.
- Certify all laboratory tests and procedures in government health institutions according to ISO standards and provide 24/7 phone access to medical professionals and nurses.
- Reorganize hospital development committees involving professionals and all community groups.

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## **Specialized care**

- An extended cardiology unit, oncology unit, ophthalmic unit and nephrology unit with facilities in each district/province.

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## **Patients Safety**

- Introduce a patient charter to ensure accountability of health workers and protect patients' rights.

- Ensure quality health services to achieve “zero preventable deaths.”
- Establish a service feedback unit to investigate complaints from patients and caregivers independently.

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## **Emergency care**

- Deploy trained emergency medical response teams for ambulance services, including Suwasariya.

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## **Provision of essential Drugs**

- Establish an efficient pharmaceutical testing laboratory to ensure drug safety.
- Expand local pharmaceutical production.
- Eliminate corruption and fraud during the import and distribution of medicines.
- Ensure the continuous supply of all essential medicines to public health institutions.
- Ensure the quality and fair pricing of medicines.
- Prevent drug shortages by maintaining adequate stock levels.
- Establish government-owned pharmacies in every town.

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## **Mental Health Care**

- Establish a mechanism for early detection of mental health disorders and referral for specialized care.
- Set up Primary Mental Health Care Centres in every Medical Officer of Health (MOH) area.
- Implement programs to promote mental health among children and adolescents, focusing on preventing substance abuse and violence.
- Promote community-based programs for treatment, follow-up, and family therapy for patients with mental disorders.

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## **Rehabilitation Care**

- Rehabilitation centers in every district.
- Provide community-based rehabilitation services, either within the patients’ own environment or in specialized centers.

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## **Palliative care (Sahana Sathkara seva)**

- Provide home-based and institution-based palliative care services for patients with incurable diseases, including cancer and stroke.

## **Oral Health Services**

- Implement special oral health promotion programs aimed at reducing Early Childhood Caries (ECC) among preschool children.
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## **Estate sector Health services**

- Develop special programs targeting nutrition, oral health, tuberculosis control, and the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other substance abuse, along with health promotion for youth in plantation communities.
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## **Indigenous Health care services**

- Strengthen the administration and management of Ayurvedic hospitals to expand medical treatments in Ayurveda, Siddha Ayurveda, and Unani.
  - Enhance Ayurvedic/Unani/Siddha laboratories to ensure uninterrupted production of medicines.
  - Increase the treatment capacity of Ayurvedic hospitals, including the number of available beds.
  - Expand the training system affiliated with Ayurvedic hospitals.
  - Promote cultivation and research to support the production of indigenous medicines.
  - Provide state support for new research on traditional treatment methods and medicines.
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## **Medical tourism in Sri Lanka**

- Offering exceptional healthcare services with state-of-the-art facilities and well-trained medical specialists in selected hospitals (both Western and Ayurveda). Providing a whole range of medical care and treatments including Ayurvedic therapy.
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## **Private medical service**

- Regulate all health services, including private medical services, to ensure the delivery of high-quality healthcare to patients.

## 1.3 A comfortable home - A healthy living

# Introduction

The housing issue in Sri Lanka, particularly in urban areas, has become increasingly severe, especially for low-income families. In Colombo alone, approximately 65,000 homes in low-income settlements are spread across 1,000 acres. Residents in these areas have been largely neglected by previous governments and suffer from a lack of basic amenities such as water, electricity, sanitation, and clean air. While other urban residents can build, buy, or rent homes, varying income levels make these options challenging for many. Government employees, in particular, struggle with the high cost of rent, as their incomes are often insufficient to cover these expenses.

Rural housing issues also persist, although they have received less attention from the government. Even when families own land, they face problems such as unclear land ownership, poor locations, lack of access roads, high costs of building materials, and unstable income levels, making it difficult to construct or maintain homes. Approximately 2% of Sri Lanka's rural population lives in estate housing, primarily in the Central, Uva, Sabaragamuwa, and Southern Provinces. Most of these estate worker communities reside in overcrowded line houses with minimal facilities. Significant social issues arise as the number of households within these communities increases. Despite having land, the low incomes of these families prevent them from building adequate homes, forcing them to live under extremely poor conditions.

Our goal is to construct multi-story housing complexes wherever possible, efficiently managing the limited land available and addressing the needs of the people.

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## Principles

- A healthy home for every individual
- Effective land management
- Comprehensive housing projects

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## ACTIVITIES

- Offering financial support to newly married couples for purchasing or constructing their homes.

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## Urban Housing

- Encouraging the private sector to develop affordable housing projects in urban areas and providing appropriate land for these initiatives.
- Promoting investments from Sri Lankans living abroad in affordable housing projects in urban areas.
- Implementing programs to provide official residences for government employees close to their workplaces.

- Facilitating the provision of affordable housing for residents of low-income settlements in Colombo through government intervention.
- Developing comprehensive housing projects in urban and semi-urban areas, including essential facilities such as healthcare, education, sports, transportation, and parks.

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## **Rural Housing**

- Revising the relevant laws to address issues related to land ownership for housing development.
- Enhancing access roads to residential areas.
- Establishing housing loan schemes to support home constructions.

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## **Estate Housing**

- Providing financial and infrastructural support to enhance housing, water and sanitation facilities for Malayagam communities.
- Allocating lands for Malayagam communities to construct permanent homes.
- Developing affordable housing schemes in areas surrounding estates.

## **1.4 An Energetic Citizen - Triumphant People**

# **Introduction**

Sports play a crucial role not only in fostering participation and achieving victory but also in shaping a healthy, disciplined, and intelligent society. Success in sports brings honor and pride to the country, while participation promotes a healthier nation, creating individuals with discipline, strong personality, and sound mental health.

However, inefficient management and political interference have become significant barriers to the growth of the sports sector. The current disorganized system has allowed certain sports and athletes to fall under the control of private entities. Additionally, a substantial portion of resources and services are concentrated in urban areas, leaving athletes in rural and estate sectors neglected.

Despite the immense potential that sports offer to a country like Sri Lanka—one that has faced numerous challenges—the nation's position in the international sports arena remains low. Although Sri Lankan cricket once enjoyed a prominent status, it has recently seen a decline. The NPP is committed to implementing a sports and physical well-being policy that will restore national pride and cultivate a healthy and disciplined populace.

# Principles

- **Participation, discipline, confidence, and competitiveness**
  - **Professionalism and excellence at the international level**
  - **Sufficient infrastructure**
  - **Equitable access**
  - **International cooperation**
  - **Collaboration among the government, private sector, and non-governmental organizations**
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## ACTIVITIES

- Amending sports legislation.
- Establishing a National Sports Commission mandated to develop a national policy ensuring standards and equity in sports.
- Accelerating the implementation of the draft Constitution for Sri Lanka Cricket.
- Investigating corruption and malpractice allegations within Sri Lanka Cricket and other sports administrative bodies.
- Integrating sports and physical activities into public health policy.
- Ensuring every school-aged child can participate in at least one sport.
- Providing all government schools with sports teachers and coaches.
- Identifying talented children at the school level and creating pathways for their advancement to the national level.
- Equitably distributing necessary sports equipment and facilities to all schools through government intervention.
- Developing specialized programs at the school and district levels to provide economic support, nutrition, and training for athletes with exceptional skills.
- Establishing a network of modern sports schools across all provinces, centered around a National Sports Training School.
- Expanding university degree programs to produce professionals for physical education with international-level expertise.
- Establishing an International Center of Excellence for Sports Research.
- Implementing a national certification and licensing program for coaches and management personnel, ensuring fair salaries and benefits
- Providing training and resources for athletes with disabilities through experienced trainers, enabling them to compete internationally.
- Offering special tax incentives for investors in sports and local sports equipment manufacturers.
- Promoting sports-tourism industry.
- Developing structured educational programs for sports media professionals.

- Establishing mechanisms to eliminate all forms of fraud and corruption, including illegal drug use, match-fixing, and other malpractices.
- Developing a strategic investment plan to support and upgrade sports and recreational facilities nationwide, ensuring proper regulation.
- Developing and maintaining a national database of sports facilities.
- Transforming politically controlled sports institutions into independent, well-developed bodies focused on clear sports-related goals.
- Developing a unified sports training program from the grassroots to the national level.
- Establishing modern sports complexes with residential facilities and access for people with disabilities in every province.
- Constructing comprehensive sports grounds in each divisional secretariat.
- Setting up 1,000 Community Physical Wellness Centers.
- Establishing a National Sports Regulatory Authority.
- Updating existing codes of conduct and sports laws.
- Implementing a pension and insurance scheme for athletes, coaches, and technical officials registered in the National Sports Pool.
- Developing sports as an industry through a coordinated approach between the state and private sector.

## **1.5 A rich cultural life - A compassionate society**

### **Introduction**

The cultural and artistic space is a highly sensitive area within a society. Though culture and art seem to take time to have an impact on the human community, the decline in these areas has caused a significant erosion in contemporary Sri Lankan society. The intentional destruction of the foundation of culture and arts has weakened civil society. Several past governments have neglected the cultural sector. The educational framework, which should have been effectively developed and maintained from early childhood, has often fallen victim to shifts in political power. As a result, society's failure to cultivate a developed cultural life has led individuals to fall short of becoming complete and empowered citizens, even after progressing through stages such as preschool, school, technical college, and university. This failure has led to a loss of faith in the belief that culture is the root of human life.

This field of culture is shaped by the interplay of interconnected domains, including education, art, media, and religious beliefs. The long-term decline of these areas has given rise to numerous social issues, such as excessive competition, restlessness, stress, suicides, dissatisfaction, violence, environmental neglect, and a diminished sense of dignity. Society is now calling for a new vision that can swiftly address these wounds and bring about essential changes. Such a transformation can only be realized through a robust revitalization of the cultural sector, aimed at fostering a national revival. The National People's Power movement aspires to create a new cultural individual or cultured person—one that is free, critical, respectful of human dignity, and embraces diverse cultures.



## Principles

- The right to preserve and develop the cultural identity of every community
  - The right of every community and individual to intervene in the development of culture
  - Intercultural enrichment and evolution.
  - The development of a compassionate individual with intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic capacities with both local and global cultural knowledge.
  - Acceptance of cultural diversity and cultural critique.
  - Cultural products free from political interference.
  - Government support in fostering a culturally enriched society
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## ACTIVITIES

General actions that can be taken for the advancement of the arts and culture sector:

- Implementing an educational policy that highlights culture as a broad and dynamic domain.
- Updating school curricula to modern standards, encompassing national and world literature, audiovisual media, drama, dance, visual arts, sculpture, photography, and lyrical literature.
- Recognizing the educational sector as the foundation for building a culturally aware society, and integrating arts and cultural subjects into the formal education system and providing systematic training for teachers to make these subjects more attractive and intellectually stimulating for students
- Establishing a 'National Fund' for literature, cinema, drama, and other arts, supported continuously by both the government and the private sector.
- Using media and social networks to promote appreciation of the arts, and encouraging public discourse to create a culturally enriched society in the 21st century.
- Designing and implementing creative activities that engage youth with culture, thus fostering the development of a new cultural citizen.
- Providing scholarships to eligible individuals and sending them to international institutions to acquire new knowledge and training in all fields of art.
- Establishing cultural zones in every major city with institutions for arts and culture and launching programs to attract citizens to these zones continuously.
- Enforcing a strong intellectual property law in line with World Intellectual Property Organization to protect intellectual rights, including artists' creative rights.
- Encouraging the translation of world literature and drama scripts into national languages and systematically securing international translation rights.
- Reviewing the weaknesses of current state award ceremonies for arts and organizing a comprehensive national awards ceremony that covers all fields of art.

- Providing tax exemptions to various art sectors on selected materials and equipment, such as paper
- Establishing a social security system for the well-being of retired art practitioners.
- Creating a database and comprehensive plan to make available physical resources such as conference halls, theaters, open-air stages, and other infrastructure to the arts and culture sectors.
- Transforming cultural centres at the divisional secretariat level into multifunctional cultural hubs equipped with stages, training, lighting, and sound facilities and organizing cultural experiences like book readings, workshops, discussions, and exhibitions centred around these hubs.

## Literature

- Distributing critically acclaimed publications that are appreciated and recognized at a national level to school and public libraries.
- Establishing well-developed libraries in every city and suburb to cultivate an active reading community.
- Reviving a literary magazine culture dedicated to literary criticism and appreciation.
- Encouraging authors and publishers to organize national and regional book fairs and participate in prominent international book fairs.
- Fostering a new generation of readers by organizing literary appreciation workshops for schoolteachers and students.
- Promoting the translation of outstanding world literature into Sinhala and Tamil and supporting those involved in such translations.
- Modernizing and reorganizing the National Archives by providing latest technological advancements.
- Supporting the management of digital knowledge repositories for e-publications and digital libraries affiliated with educational and research centers.
- Establishing a research fund for the literary arts sector, systematically providing resources for research, and organizing annual international research sessions.

## Film and Tele Drama

- Reforming the National Film Corporation and establishing a National Film Institute.
- Modernizing cinema halls with an organized plan and ensuring that each district has three cinemas.
- Standardizing loans and other assistance for film and tele drama production.
- Ensuring fair and organized distribution of every cinematic work by following a systematic categorization .
- Establishing a classification board for film and television works to standardize content.

- Hosting an annual international film festival and supporting submissions to international festivals.
- Utilizing multi-purpose cultural centers to screen outstanding films and organizing discussions based on these screenings.
- Establishing a National Film and Television Study Institute for emerging filmmakers and creating a National Film Archive.
- Facilitating the reformation and integration of existing private film archives into a national archive network.
- Initiating film and television societies at the school level.
- Updating intellectual property laws related to film and television in line with international standards.
- Organizing an annual short film and mobile cinema festival and creating programs to gain knowledge and experience from international festivals.

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## **Theatre**

- Establishing a National Institute for Research and Training in contemporary theatre arts.
- Maintaining a National Theatre Archive to systematically collect and preserve scripts, props, memorabilia, and recordings related to old and new theatre productions.
- Organizing grants and tax relief for theatre production and exhibition.
- Creating a structured plan to promote theatre from the grassroots level to the national level through a network of multi-purpose cultural centers.
- Constructing modern theatres with full facilities in every major city and upgrading existing ones to be part of this network.
- Promoting international scholarships related to theatre arts and organizing their distribution at regional and national levels.
- Develop programs to enhance appreciation of theatre and promote the concept of open-air theatre spaces.
- Providing facilities for alternative theatre spaces.

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## **Dance**

- Involving dance institutions, traditional dance schools and teachers, and veterans in the reform process of dance education.
- Establishing a National Institute dedicated to the preservation and promotion of dance and integrating it with multi-purpose cultural centres.
- Promote research on Sri Lankan folk dances and direct research towards international studies.
- Encouraging traditional dance forms

- Building a network of registered dance institutions.
- Facilitating international study opportunities related to dance and organizing scholarships.
- Identifying and promoting talented dancers from the rural level to the international stage.
- Printing trilingual academic texts on dance and encouraging international knowledge translation into Sinhala and Tamil.
- Providing facilities for the study, research, and preservation of both contemporary and traditional dance forms.

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## **Visual Arts, Sculpture, and Photography**

- Establishing a National Institute to oversee the preservation, study, and national and international research of past and present visual arts and photography.
- Facilitating participation in international conferences and exhibitions for artists.
- Setting up regional training centers and guiding these spaces towards professional opportunities.
- Promoting national and international markets for the visual arts and integrating them with the tourism industry. Establishing art societies from the school level and organizing competitions.

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## **Music and Song**

- Establishing a National Institute for the preservation and promotion of musical traditions.
- Promoting and preserving research on Sri Lankan folk music.
- Providing opportunities for the systematic study and research of preserved knowledge.
- Building a network of registered music institutions.
- Revising and updating intellectual property laws related to music and song creation.
- Facilitating international study and research opportunities in music and organizing scholarships.
- Maintaining a digital unit for preserving the original copies of every recorded song and musical creation.
- Securing the intellectual property rights of authors and composers by obtaining membership in collective management organizations in the music sector.

## **Intangible Cultural Heritage and Traditional Arts**

- Establishing a National Research Institute for intangible heritage and traditional arts, identifying and preserving existing heritage.
- Reforming and promoting regional knowledge, tools, gurukula, traditions, and human resources continuously from the regional level to the national and international levels.
- Developing programs to integrate tourism with this sector, to ensure that cultural heritage becomes a significant part of the tourism industry.
- Promoting sub-sectors related to intangible heritage, such as traditional medicine, production of eco-friendly products, entertainment industries, and mental wellness promotion.
- Fostering relationships with international universities and research institutions related to this field and facilitating postgraduate studies.
- Identifying, networking, and updating traditional artists, gurukuls, and craft institutions to ensure their continued relevance and vitality.

## **1.6 A conserved history - Innovating across Heritage**

### **Introduction**

In Sri Lanka, the current understanding of history, culture, and heritage is often based on post-colonial perspectives, which have limited the effective use of these elements for national development. Therefore, creating a new policy framework with an innovative vision is essential to effectively utilize these fields. Establishing new policy foundations based on research and development is a high priority for integrating history, culture, and heritage into the country's national development strategies. This process aims to utilize Sri Lanka's rich heritage in a sustainable and comprehensive manner for development.

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### **Principles**

- **Protection of Cultural Resources**
- **Value of Cultural Heritage and History**
- **Social Innovation**

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### **ACTIVITIES**

#### **Research and Analysis**

- Research on the impact of history, culture, and heritage on social and economic sectors

- Analysis of successful international practices that have integrated history, culture, and heritage into national development plans
- Assessment of the value of investing in national heritage values for social innovation, entrepreneurship, job creation, education, and international relations

## Stakeholder Engagement

- Organizing workshops and conferences to promote collaboration among government institutions, private sector, academic community, and local populations in the field of history, culture, and heritage
- Enhancing the understanding of cultural heritage and historical values among stakeholders beyond their current roles in protecting and managing cultural resources

## Education and Awareness

- Organizing educational programs and distributing instructional materials to raise awareness of the value of history, culture, and heritage
- Incorporating topics related to history, culture, and heritage into school curricula and community-based education programs

### 1.7 A sustainable biotic world - An evergreen life

## Introduction

The total land area of Sri Lanka is 65,610 square kilometers. In addition to this, it encompasses a marine zone of 18,060 square kilometres, a neighbouring marine zone of 19,620 square kilometres, and an extended economic zone of 437,400 square kilometres.

According to the topography, the area up to 300 feet is classified as the coastal zone, while areas between 300 feet to 1,000 feet and above are categorized as mountainous regions. The annual rainfall varies from 900 millimetres to over 5,000 millimetres. The primary river systems are fed by 103 major rivers and 94 smaller rivers and streams. Due to the interconnections among environmental systems, the entire land area of Sri Lanka can be considered a single ecosystem. The fertile soil layer and plant-animal species of which, about 25% to 30% is identified endemic are unique features.

Despite this, Sri Lanka has been unsuccessful in creating an environment-friendly and economically developed society. For over 20 years, it has been unsuccessful in defining the marine zone in the environmentally important continental pool under the exclusive economic zone, which is more than 20 times larger than Sri Lanka. Despite being a signatory Country to many of the international Conventions and Treaties and also having more than 100 environmental laws in the country, it has failed to build up an environmentally

friendly nation. Due to the lack of proper land-use planning, the land is turning into barren land with soil erosion and landslides. The absence of proper water management has caused severe water shortages and disasters from excess water as well. Doubling evaporation rates over a short period of 30 years, the destruction of water resources, and other environmental factors directly affecting these resources are considered major issues.

The environmental policy of the NPP with the vision of “a sustainable environment that ensures the healthy existence of biodiversity” gives priority to the use of natural resources ensuring the balance between socio-economic development and the environment, a participatory approach in sustainable management, minimizing climate change impacts, and a healthy society with a balanced environment built upon knowledge, skills, attitudes and mindset.

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## **Principles**

- **Environmental justice and fairness**
- **Balance between environment and development**
- **Sustainable use of resources and precautionary approach**
- **Ecosystem approach**
- **Institutional coordination and public participation**
- **Polluter pays principle**
- **Environmental good governance**
- **Community empowerment**
- **Environmental protection**
- **Cleaner production**

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## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Proper Land Use**

- Designation and protection of ecologically sensitive areas
- Identification, management, and risk reduction of natural disaster-prone areas
- Development and implementation of scientifically developed sustainable land-use plans in agricultural, industrial and residential uses
- Conservation of areas with mineral resources for sustainable economic operations
- Implementation of existing guidelines for soil conservation and development of new recommendations as needed

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### **Safe Water Consumption**

- Studying the all kinds of water sources in Sri Lanka, conduct sensitivity assessments and conservation of sensitive water sources via Gazettes.

- Identification of causes of water pollution and adopting actions to minimize it
- Preparation of a basic water map based on data gathered by a chemical and physical parameters analysis of all water sources
- Activation of river systems for restoration and conservation of traditional water management practices.
- Calculation of minimum requirements for water storage and introducing methods for replenishing surface and underground water resources.
- Maintaining minimum environmental flow in rivers during domestic, agricultural, and industrial water usage.
- Introduction and regulation of scientific methods for treating wastewater from domestic and industrial activities.

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## **Sustainability of Marine and Coastal Zone**

- Complete termination of direct or indirect disposal of pollutants into the coastal and marine environment.
- Identification and protection of sensitive environmental systems in coastal zones.
- Scientifically determining and preserving the conservation zones of beaches and lagoons.
- Emergency preparedness plans with institutional leadership and community involvement to minimize the accidental marine environmental damages.
- Development of legal frameworks and procedures for assessing and compensating environmental damage caused by marine pollution.
- Implementation of laws as per the international Conventions and Treaties to ensure sustainable use of marine resources including fish and prevention of marine waters.
- Development of coastal areas and tourist attractions that are culturally significant, into well-developed beautiful ecological belts.
- Identification and protection of areas where marine life is naturally abundant and ensure maintaining the water quality parameters.

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## **Existence of Clean Air**

- Introduction of suitable and fast-growing timber species for maintaining the atmospheric balance.
- Planting, consumption, and replanting of trees to contribute to carbon sequestration.
- Promotion and regulation of alternative energy sources in industry and transportation sectors to minimize air pollution from stationery and mobile sources.
- Diplomatic intervention to avoid or mitigate trans boundary air pollution.
- Introduce programs to increase public awareness and perceptions to minimize air pollution



## **Legal and Ethical framework for Environmental Conventions**

- Reviewing and update addressing weaknesses, deficiencies, and gaps in existing environmental regulations also aligning with international agreements and local environmental laws.
  - Public Consultation will be made mandatory in conducting feasibility studies for development projects.
  - Updating the criteria for environmental assessments ensuring the transparency of process.
  - Implementing Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs).
  - Raising public awareness about environmental policies and laws through printed, electronic, and social media.
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## **Various Ecosystems**

### **Hilly areas**

- Management of forests on mountain ridges/ steep slopes with strict control on use of such for economic and social purposes.
  - Reviewing ecosystems and developing a unified data system to highlight their environmental and economic importance.
  - Conducting cost-benefit analysis and environmental assessment to determine whether to maintain, replace, or restore plantations in hilly areas.
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### **Lowlands**

- Management and conservation of all lands according to land-use policies and principles.
  - Introduction of early warning systems for natural disasters, management of human activities, and implementation of compensation and insurance mechanisms,
  - Promotion of community-based agroforestry, and agricultural plantation practices.
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### **Wetlands**

- Identification and documentation of wetlands in Sri Lanka and taking necessary steps for their conservation.
- Ensure conservation of existing and future Ramsar wetlands and enhance tourist attractions of them. Restoration of degraded wetlands through multi-stakeholder engagement and community participation.
- Strengthen inter-agency coordination for integrated wetland management activities.

## **Mangroves**

- Reviewing and implementing national policies on mangrove ecosystems.
- Taking legal measures for the protection of mangrove ecosystems due to their ecological importance.

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## **Forests and Wildlife**

- Identification of integrated forest and wildlife conservation zones and establishing new protected areas.
- Providing public awareness to eliminate myths and unnecessary financial values given to elephant tusks, pearls, fibers and other animal parts.
- Improve natural habitats of wild animals to provide food and water for all wildlife to minimize their intrusion into villages.
- Introduce electric fences to prevent elephant movement to villages and maintain them with the help of community participation.
- Studying and managing human-wildlife conflicts, such as elephant-human interactions, with appropriate techniques and public involvement.
- Conducting studies on harmful wildlife such as monkeys and wild boar, and implementing necessary biological control methods.
- Improving facilities for ex-situ conservation and promoting public engagement and educational research
- Enhancing in-situ conservation facilities for plant and animal species
- Managing and conserving natural forest cover to maintain environmental services
- Controlling and preventing the spread of invasive species

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## **Sustainable Solid Waste Management**

- Updating legal frameworks and improving infrastructure for waste management in residential, agricultural, industrial and service sectors, based on zero waste 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) principles and circular economic concept
- Preparation and Implementation of a National Solid Waste Management Action plan, reviewing the current solid waste management plans and related policies
- Make it mandatory to adopt a waste management programs for residential, high-rise, service, and industrial buildings/ sector developments
- Reducing plastic and polythene use through extended producer responsibility schemes
- Proper management and safe disposal of hazardous and electronic waste
- Developing infrastructure for adopting modern final waste disposal methods like sanitary landfills, waste-to-energy and resource recovery facilities
- Promote industries to adopt the zero-waste method and locate every industry within the industrial zones whenever possible.

## Management of home garden-related resources

- Granting permits for non-commercial activities such as clearing extra land, obtaining soil to build foundations for home construction
- Allowing the removal and transportation of a tree planted in a home garden to obtain timber subject to conservation measures
- Introducing eco-friendly criteria for domestic animal husbandry.

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## Relationships and values between ecosystems

- Conducting research and studies to reveal the inverse and reverse relationships between ecosystems, and its relations with humans
- Implementing formal and informal methods of environmental education
- Conducting research on ecosystems, publishing research results and obtaining patent rights and maintaining a genetic database of ecosystems and working to stop gene theft.
- Securing the attractive ecosystems for the tourism industry.

## 1.8 Free media industry - An objectively informed society

### Introduction

Human communication is inherently linked and has evolved over time into a dominant social process, closely intertwined with modern technology. Mass media represents the modern state of this long-standing evolution. The term 'media' encompasses the technical methods, tools, institutions, technical procedures, organizational structures, and other elements used to disseminate various messages to the public. It is the means through which broad objectives such as information providing, education, persuasion, entertainment, social adaptation, cultural promotion, and mutual co-existence are achieved. The effectiveness of journalism relies on the integrity and quality of all these components.

The media process should be tailored to the specific needs of a country, society, or community. Therefore, policies and initiatives that establish its foundation are crucial. Since gaining independence in 1948, successive governments in Sri Lanka have used print and electronic media as the mechanism to maintain their power. Consequently, instead of delivering accurate, truthful, and clear news, the media in the country has increasingly focused on promoting pro-government narratives, eulogies and personal biases. The challenge is that news and feature programs filled with deception, misrepresentation, and biased attitudes have fueled mistrust, suspicion, and conflict among ethnic groups. As journalists increasingly became political partisans more focused on profit and attention than integrity, public trust in the media began to erode.

The NPP is committed to preventing the deliberate and strategic misuse of mass media.

By positioning mass media, journalists, and the audience as catalysts for social, political, economic, and cultural renewal, the NPP is dedicated to ensuring technical support and safeguarding the professional integrity of journalists.

## **Principles**

- **The right of people to access truthful and accurate information**
- **A media industry that is responsible and humanistic**
- **Freedom and independence of the media**
- **The media as a public asset**

## **ACTIVITIES**

- Facilitating university journalism units and other rating institutions in streamlining the mass media rating system based on the quality and popularity of news and programs.
- Amending the 2024 No. 09 Online Safety Act by removing restrictions on freedom of expression.
- Introducing new rating criteria, including language use, promotion of intercultural and interethnic harmony, education, and science promotion, and making these ratings publicly available.
- Reviewing existing media laws, regulations, agreements, and ethics with a focus on media freedom to develop an optimal media policy.
- Introducing a code of ethics for media institutions and journalists that aligns with international standards and local social contexts.
- Introducing programs to foster free and healthy competition in media by evaluating newspapers, radio and TV channels, media personnel, programs, articles, and photographs.
- Organizing an awards ceremony to recognize media professionals across all sectors.
- Providing low-interest loans to journalists for purchasing essential equipment, such as cameras.
- Guiding state media institutions in upholding high standards of media ethics and excellence.
- Promoting media development, communication, and education programs to the public.
- Supporting artists and producers in achieving international recognition in fields such as cinema, television, and music.
- Encouraging local companies and producers to create high-quality advertisements and promotional programs and enter international markets.
- Implementing a systematic archival process for media creators and their works.
- Promoting media literacy programs to foster an informed audience.
- Establishing an independent media commission to oversee the optimal functioning of journalism process.

## **02. An honourable life A safe country**

### **2.1 A safe society - An enriched nation**

## **Introduction**

Approximately 5.7 million people in Sri Lanka live below the national poverty line (set at Rs. 16,326 per month as of May 2024 as confirmed by the Department of Census and Statistics). A report published by the United Nations Development Programme indicates that more than half of the population (55.7%), which is about 12.34 million people, are exposed to multidimensional poverty. This reflects a significant challenge: since gaining independence, the political parties in power have left a social legacy where a substantial portion of the population remains poor and suffers from multidimensional vulnerabilities.

Since independence, every government elected to power has implemented various social protection and welfare programs aimed at alleviating poverty. While these programs provide financial and/or livelihood support to the needy, these programmes suffer from several inherent weaknesses, such as inefficiency, high administrative costs, lack of transparency in the selection of beneficiaries, failure to reach the intended recipients, political interference, and delays in payments etc. As a result, successive governments have failed to provide adequate and strong social protection and welfare to those in need.

The NPP views social protection and welfare as a core responsibility of the state. Given the current economic conditions where a significant portion of the population lacks employment, business opportunities, and viable economic prospects, there is a pressing need for a comprehensive social protection program to rebuild the economy and society. The objective of the NPP's social protection and welfare programs is to improve the living standards of those entitled to welfare benefits and to enable them to become active participants in the economy quickly. We aspire to provide “a universal social protection system based on the life cycle approach for all Sri Lankans.”

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## **Principles**

- **Social solidarity**
- **Social empowerment**
- **Financial grants to those in need**
- **Inter-ministerial coordination**
- **Life cycle based social protection for all**
- **Ensuring social justice and leaving no one behind**
- **Efficient and meaningful participation of beneficiaries and all relevant stakeholders in the selection of beneficiaries**

## ACTIVITIES

### Social protection and Welfare Programmes

#### Prajashakthi: Poverty alleviation programme for low-income earners

- Providing a minimum monthly financial grant from Rs. 10,000 upwards to low-income families
- Introduction of a participatory, transparent and efficient beneficiary selection process
- Introducing a digital platform for identifying eligible beneficiaries using new criteria within a year and providing financial assistance to all qualifying individuals.

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### Empowerment

Under the key poverty alleviation programme, the NPP government will undertake the following essential tasks.

- A comprehensive participatory study on the causes of poverty and family dynamics in low-income households.
- Identification, analysis and developing remedies for poverty and vulnerabilities at the household level through community-based projects.
- Facilitating the implementation of these projects through public-private partnerships and the involvement of the cooperative sector.
- Establishment of training, technical assistance and financial assistance for low-income families to initiate income generation and livelihood projects
- Efficient use of the Samurdhi Banking system and staff to empower poor families.
- Assigning a field officer for every 100 families for monitoring and to provide continuous support

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### A healthy and happy retirement for senior citizens

- Providing a monthly allowance of Rs. 5,000 to senior citizens needing assistance.
- Establishment of new elderly care centers at the divisional secretariat level.
- Government support and regulation of private care centers.
- Professional training for care workers and incentives for small and medium institutions involved in elderly care.
- Investment of retirement Funds, such as the Employee Provident Fund, in safe and high-return investments.
- Provision of incentives for financial and insurance services to ensure the safety of pension funds and continuous benefits.
- An interest rate that is 5% higher than the normal bank rate(s) for senior citizens' fixed deposits.

## **A Meaningful and Satisfactory Life for Persons with Disabilities**

- Establishment of a comprehensive data-base, developed by experts, on persons with disabilities
  - Provision of a monthly financial aid of Rs. 10,000 to persons with disabilities in low-income families.
  - Facilitating education, training, employment, and livelihoods opportunities for persons with disabilities.
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## **Social protection for women-headed families, single parent families and women affected by Gender-based/intimate partner violence.**

- Financial assistance for affected individuals (of the above categories) based on needs and income levels.
  - Legal aid and counseling services are offered based on needs and requests.
  - Provision of alternative housing and job support when needed.
  - Establishment of mechanisms for social and psychological support for women affected by violence and abuse.
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## **Health: Social Protection for Persons with Chronic Illnesses**

- Creating a digital data repository of individuals with chronic illnesses such as cancer and kidney disease.
  - A minimum monthly financial grant of Rs. 10,000 to persons with chronic illnesses on a needs basis.
  - Professional support and social empowerment.
- 

## **Nourishing Future Generations: Reducing Malnutrition**

- Identifying low-income families with malnourished children.
  - Educating parents about measures to combat malnutrition.
  - Provision of financial assistance through field officers for obtaining nutritious food for families with urgent needs.
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## **Nutritional Program for Pregnant Women**

- Identifying pregnant women needing additional nutrition through community health services.
- Provision of financial support for nutritious food packages during pregnancy and the first year of childbirth for low-income families.
- Continuous awareness and monitoring by family health officers.

## **Safety: Adequate Care for Children**

- Establishment of Childcare Centers at the Gramaniladari level with public and private partnerships based on needs and requests.
- Registration of existing institutions with adequate qualifications for childcare.
- Training of staff for the effective management of Childcare Centers and monitoring their performance.
- Appointment of social service/development officers to provide professional services and provision of incentives for small and medium scale entrepreneurs to provide such services.

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## **Pension Scheme for all citizens**

- Development and implementation of a broad pension policy applicable to all workers in the country.
- Establishing a government-certified pension fund under the supervision of the Department of Pensions and the Central Bank.
- Motivating all citizens, who are currently not employed in the Government or Corporate sector such as farmers and fishermen and others to join the pension scheme.
- Using the pension fund as an insurance scheme during emergencies/disability.

## **2.2 An efficient workforce - A respectable professional life**

### **Introduction**

Human labor is both a key factor of production and a driving force in social development. However, in modern society, the status and importance that should be accorded to the worker have been devalued. Despite the critical role that both trained and untrained workers play in the production process, many workers find themselves in situations where they do not receive even a minimum living wage. As a result, most of the labor force faces harsh experiences in their economic, social, and cultural lives. The goal of this initiative is to establish a system where labor is respected and valued appropriately, by fostering humane employer-employee relationships that ensure equality and recognition for workers of all levels.

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### **Principles**

- Protection of the dignity and the value of labor
- Equal treatment and diversity in labor
- Equal opportunities that are not subject to discrimination



## ACTIVITIES

- Formulation and implementation of a labor policy.
- Resolving issues within service contracts and amending them accordingly.
- Updating and introducing new laws and regulations for an efficient labor force.
- Incorporation of vocational education extending up to the degree level in the school curriculum.
- Establishment of a national salary structure that minimizes wage disparities and motivates employees.
- Ensuring non-discriminatory selection and equal opportunities for all in job opportunities.
- A health/life insurance scheme covering all levels of workers in the private sector.
- Eliminating disparities in the current pension schemes.
- Creation of a social security fund that covers all workers.
- Removal of obstacles preventing women from effectively engaging in executive and managerial roles.
- Providing opportunities for women and people with disabilities, who face difficulties or lack interest in entering the job market, to work according to their preferences.
- Gradual reduction of working hours with the help of modern technology and creating more opportunities to work from home.
- Recruitment, promotions, and transfers in the public sector based on qualifications and skills without political interference.
- Necessary measures to send skilled and trained workers abroad instead of untrained workers.
- Interim allowances for those unable to enter the labor force due to special reasons.
- A maximum of one year of leave with 25% of the basic salary for those taking care of children under the age of 5 or those taking care of sick parents over the age of 80.
- Two weeks of leave in the event of a spouse's death.
- Strengthening of gratuity insurance benefits (AGRAHARA).
- Amendment of the PAYE tax
- Ensure fair salaries and job security of Manpower workers

## Unemployed graduates:

Graduates who have been unemployed for a long period will be employed as follows. Thereafter, a mechanism will be developed to create new job opportunities for graduates as the economy expands.

- 20,000 to the teaching profession.
- 3,000 STEM graduates and 9,000 non-STEM graduates to the information technology sector.
- Another 3,000 to the Inland Revenue Department, Customs Department, Foreign Service, and tourism industry.

## 2.3 Impartial Human Identity

### Gender Equality in social-life

## Introduction

Although women are an integral part of society, they consistently occupy an unequal position due to marginalization within major socio-economic, cultural, and political systems. This inequality occurs across all sectors, including the home, community, workplace, and politics. In recent decades, the situation has worsened due to neoliberal economic policies. Despite women being the primary earners of foreign remittances, the necessary structural and ideological changes for equality and justice have not yet taken place. Instead, the commodification of women's identities and their marginalization in the labor market have intensified.

Overall, factors such as the marginalization of both women and men as vulnerable workers, the direct impact on women due to the weakening of public services like education and healthcare, and the enactment of laws controlling women's bodies amidst militarization and ethno-religious extremism highlight women's issues as a broader social crisis. Therefore, the current issues faced by women in Sri Lanka must be understood through an intersectional perspective. The NPP proposes a political practice that represents all marginalized groups in society, aiming to realize the aspirations of a just society, a free country, and free women by securing all rights. Hence, its policies on women are intrinsically linked to its other policies.

Gender identities and sexual orientations are diverse. However, in Sri Lanka, these groups often face violence, marginalization, and stigmatization. Additionally, outdated colonial laws, institutional frameworks, and regressive cultural beliefs contribute to the denial of justice to these communities. In a just society that treats everyone equally, no group should be marginalized because of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

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## Principles

- Economic justice as a cornerstone for achieving gender equality.
- State policies acknowledging the value of unpaid care work within the national economy.

- Legislation that ensures fair and equal treatment for all marginalized groups.
- Enhanced women's political representation, participation, and roles in society.
- Condemning all forms of violence, including systemic violence, across all settings.
- Prioritized public services in policy development to alleviate the pressures on women.
- Women's involvement in creating sustainable environmental conservation strategies.
- A society free from regressive stereotypes perpetuated by social institutions and practices.
- Equal access to state services, rights, and justice for all identity groups, including women.
- Domestic laws with the standards set by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

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## ACTIVITIES

- Identifying and addressing gender pay gap in the workforce.
- Tackling legal and practical obstacles that adversely affect women's land rights.
- Revising existing labor laws and introduce new regulations to address specific challenges faced by working women and ensure job security.
- Taking measures to alleviate the burden of predatory microfinance loans with high interest rates on women.
- Enhancing the access to banking and financial services to support women's entrepreneurship.
- Institutionalizing national labor force surveys to recognize and account for unpaid care work, including childcare, elderly care, and support for the people with disabilities.
- Reducing the burden of unpaid care work on women
- Increasing women's political participation through political education and organizing.
- Enacting laws and policies to ensure at least 50% representation of women gradually, in political institutions.
- Improving education, healthcare, transportation, and other public services to ease the challenges faced by women.
- Implementing the Law Commission's 2012 recommendations to ensure safe termination of pregnancy.
- Offering comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education and services tailored to all age groups.
- Combating period poverty by providing women and girls tax relief, financial support, and other essential resources.

- Revising laws and procedures to guarantee protection from gender-based violence and harassment in workplaces, public transport, and other places.
- Revising discriminatory laws, including panel code 365 and 365 (a) that oppress women, children and other marginalized groups.
- Expanding constitutional protections to ensure no discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Increasing access to state services, including healthcare, legal assistance, social protection, and justice for the LGBTIQ+ communities.
- Implementing legal and institutional reforms in relevant bodies, such as the Human Rights Commission and Legal Aid Commission, to safeguard the rights of marginalized groups.
- Developing a code of conduct and establish standards for state officials, including law enforcement, on interacting with gender identity groups.
- Creating a dedicated secretariat to protect the rights of marginalized groups.

## **2.4 A safe world for children A creative future generation**

### **Introduction**

By 2023, Sri Lanka's population was 22,037,000 and 6,642,331, which is 30.14% of the total population, were children under 18 years of age, according to the definition of the United Nations. Today, children face significant issues such as weak justice systems, inadequate protection services, educational challenges, and malnutrition. The judicial process for children who fall victim to crimes often drags on for excessively long periods, sometimes extending even 6 to 10 years.

Currently, the Department of Prisons transports children to and from court alongside adult offenders, endangering their safety and privacy. Decades-old laws like the Vagrants Ordinance, which has been in force since colonization, continue to infringe on individuals' freedom of movement, violating the rights of children and their families. A comprehensive review of the Children and Young Persons Ordinance, which has undergone only minor amendments over the decades, is also necessary.

Education is crucial in developing the skills and mindset needed for children's success in a rapidly changing world, but Sri Lanka's current education system is failing to meet this need. The frustrations and lack of trust in the future caused by corruption and bribery in the country have driven many young people to seek opportunities abroad.

The absence of a well-organized and adequate human and physically resourceful social service system in Sri Lanka has made child welfare a significant challenge. Although field officers are assigned to social protection and related duties, gaps in identifying and assisting at-risk children and families have weakened the services. The NPP's policy on child protection and welfare presents a comprehensive approach to ensure the safety of children in Sri Lanka through increased budget allocations, improved health and safety measures, legal reforms, and advancement of education.

## Principles

- A legal system aligned with international conventions like the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) that ensures freedom and safety for children.
  - Proper care and nutrition for children.
  - The well-being and development of all children.
  - Protection of children from abuse and all forms of violence.
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## ACTIVITIES

- Reviewing, amending, or repealing outdated laws such as the Children and Young Persons Ordinance, Adoption of Children Ordinance, Vagrants Ordinance, and Orphanages Ordinance.
- Establishing specialized high courts dedicated solely to handling cases involving children
- Setting up a more efficient mechanism for collecting child victims' testimonies and improving the current investigative process to minimize their re-victimization.
- Direct children accused of minor offenses to intervention and community-based rehabilitation programs instead of the court system.
- Providing family-based care and support to identify at-risk children and prevent unnecessary separation from their families.
- Implementing a child-friendly transportation system to ensure safe and dignified transportation of children for legal purposes.
- Streamlining coordination between the National Child Protection Authority and agencies such as Probation and Child Protection Services and capacity building of those agencies.
- Establishing an efficient and responsive service for reporting child abuse incidents and ensuring proper follow-up.
- Increasing budgetary allocation to critical areas, including education, health, social services and other essential child welfare sectors with a special focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups.
- Implementing community, family, and school-based cooperative programs with the support of international and local organizations to improve overall child health, including providing nutritious food.
- Train field officers related to child affairs in Divisional Secretariats and direct them to provide direct services to families whose children are at risk.
- Establish a robust mechanism for early identification and intervention of at-risk children, including children with disabilities, street children and out-of-school children.
- Educational reforms in line with international standards aimed at fostering life skills and knowledge in a child-friendly educational environment.

- Broad reforms to the foster care system to ensure that every child in need of alternative care receives care and stability in family-based environments.
- School and community-based programs for early detection and prevention of psychosocial and mental health issues in children.

## **2.5 A contented Youth – Cultured, Independent Thinkers**

### **Introduction**

In Sri Lanka, 38% of the total population, that is approximately 8.5 million individuals belong to young generation. Since the independence, youth in Sri Lanka have experienced unsatisfactory lives. Particularly over the last seven decades, the prevailing political system and culture have prevented them from effective political participation. The three major uprisings in the North and South in recent decades, during which hundreds of thousands of young people lost their lives, were driven by the unfulfilled dreams of a youth that the political establishment failed to satisfy.

Contributing factors to this discontent include limited educational opportunities, restricted access to economic participation, insufficient opportunities for youth to engage in technological and communication advancements, the inability to live as equal members of society without being subjected to external pressures, and the lack of means to live with dignity and respect. The massive youth-led people's struggle of 2022, which arose against economic hardship is one that extended beyond mere economic demands to call for a systemic change within the country. However, the core objectives of this movement were not achieved. All this highlight that the youth has represented and still represent a marginalized and overlooked group, despite being the most capable and powerful force that could contribute to the future development of the country.

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### **Principles**

- **Youth who are actively involved in the economic process**
  - **Freedom from oppression, exploitation, and discriminatory practices**
  - **Contribution to social development**
  - **Advancement of science and modern technology, with a desire to overcome societal challenges**
  - **Youth capable of providing leadership in political, social, and economic processes**
  - **A vibrant cultural life and independent thinking**
  - **A skilled youth capable of assuming national and international leadership**
  - **Youth who stands against social injustice**
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## **ACTIONS**

### **A Flourishing Youth**

- Protecting the right of young people to secure suitable employment by the State.
- Establishing a database to collect information on unemployed youth, setting up a job bank for placements, and managing the process through an online platform, to reduce unemployment systematically.
- Review the current competitive examination system for government employments and update the selection process.
- Providing vocational and technical education for youth who have passed A/L examinations but could not gain admission to state universities.
- Facilitating financial support for entrepreneurial development through proposed Development Banks.
- Facilitating unemployed youth with special skills by providing initial capital to develop entrepreneurship and find suitable markets.
- Using We for the Renaissance (V4R) digital platform to facilitate the transformation of new ideas and concepts into marketable products, encouraging young innovators.
- Enabling young people to acquire the necessary technical skills and resources to participate in the global online job market
- Removing barriers for young freelancers who are already earning foreign exchange through online platforms.
- Providing guidance and support for young people coming from overseas to engage in various investment projects of their interest

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### **Prospects for Future (Education, Science, and Technology, and Innovation)**

- Revising and upgrading outdated industrial, technical, and advanced technological courses, progressing them to degree and postgraduate levels.
- Allowing young people to present proposals for new educational and developmental projects through the “We for the Renaissance - V4R Digital platform” directly to the government.
- Conducting ITES program, the theme of IT English and Soft Skills for Youth in the afternoons throughout the island, with the aim of developing technical and language literacy.
- Establishing Multi-Model Centers (MMC) at the local level to provide specialized programs and advisory services for youth and adults.
- Creating youth exchange programs to foster understanding among different ethnicities and religions.

## **Empathetic Youth (Art, Culture and Leisure):**

- Developing a streamlined system to evaluate artistic and cultural skills of youth from school to national levels.
- Providing financial support for the production and promotion of creative work by young creators.
- Organizing an annual awards ceremony to recognize and encourage young creators.

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## **A Healthy Youth (Physical and Mental Wellbeing, Substance Abuse, Sex Education)**

- Educating young people from school age on addiction, and how substance abuse negatively impacts the body
- Revising and improving existing rehabilitation programs to offer medical-based rehabilitation approach for substance abuse.
- Establishing a 24-hour confidential counseling service and a Youth App and hotline number to prevent suicide and mental health issues.

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## **A Youth Connected to the World (Cyber Space, Information Technology)**

- Ensuring data freedom and data privacy.
- Providing free internet access to all State universities, technical colleges, schools, and libraries.
- Introducing e-library systems in all local libraries and connect them to global e-library networks.
- Encouraging and supporting young people to develop software and mobile applications that are important for education, economy, and daily life.

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## **Future of the Leadership**

- Increasing youth representation in political institutions through suitable quotas.
- Restructuring National Youth Services Council and related institutions such as National Youth Corpse, Youth Clubs to develop knowledgeable, skilled young leaders.
- Establishing Youth Circles at local levels.
- Ensuring youth representation in ministerial advisory councils.
- Establishing a National Political Education Academy to improve political leadership skills
- Addressing unresolved and unprosecuted cases related to the 2022 protests and expedite legal proceedings with proper protocols.



## Together with Nature

- Creating a National Environmental Action Center by together with all environmental organizations and activists
- A skilled group of volunteers to help with the restoration damaged ecosystems.
- Establishing youth environmental committees at local government levels.
- Collaborating with international environmental organizations for knowledge and experience exchange.
- Engaging young environmental activists in managing human-wildlife conflicts, especially elephant-human interactions.

Different, but Equal (Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation)

- Working towards eliminating harmful and stereotypical perceptions related to gender identities and sexual orientations.

## 2.6 A respectable senior citizen- A meaningful retirement

### Introduction

Taking care of the elderly is a responsibility of the children and relatives within a family and is a cultural value. The elderly, who have contributed to the socio-economic development of their families and communities for most of their lives, deserve care and attention during their later years. In 2023, the population of senior citizens in Sri Lanka (those aged 60 and above) was 3.7 million, representing 17.2% of the total population. By 2045, this percentage is projected to rise to 21%. While some policymakers view the increasing elderly population as a challenge, the NPP believes that it is a national responsibility to understand and address this situation with special attention to the well-being of the elderly.

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### ACTIVITIES

- Providing basic facilities needed for the care of the elderly within homes.
- Healthcare teams conduct health check-ups for the elderly.
- Establishing a system of elderly care centres that meet international standards.
- Developing a program to involve the elderly in creative economic activities to maintain their mental health
- Implement a social protection scheme for those employed in the private and informal sectors, including farmers and fishermen.
- Establishing a fund to implement an insurance coverage system that ensures protection for all senior citizens
- Encouraging the building of walkways and rest homes near religious sites, and government intervention to ensure that the senior citizens can enjoy their daily lives in a peaceful and happy environment

- Implementing priority programs for senior citizens at public service locations.
- Providing financial assistance to elderly individuals facing financial difficulties.

## **2.7 An unimpaired social life - A fair and equitable approach**

### **Introduction**

At some point in their lives, everyone is likely to experience difficulties functioning normally, especially as they age. When a family member is born with a disability or acquires one during childhood, adolescence, or old age, it can be a painful experience. Therefore, it is essential to take steps to empower people with disabilities and ensure an environment where they can fully participate in society. There is a higher prevalence of people with disabilities among the lower socio-economic strata and in rural areas, where adequate facilities are often lacking. In Sri Lanka, approximately 8.7% of the total population consists of people with disabilities.

The NPP recognizes and upholds the rights of persons with disabilities to live with equal rights, such as access to education and vocational training, employment, transportation, and public services. This policy presents practical measures to guarantee those rights. Therefore, this policy focuses on creating an economically and socially fulfilling society for people with disabilities, where they are treated equally.

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### **Principles**

- **Provision of optimal services.**
- **Inclusive Education.**
- **Economic Independence.**
- **Safety and Rights.**
- **Health and Well-being.**
- **Integrated Public Services and Equal Accessibility.**

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### **ACTIVITIES**

#### **Optimal Service Management and Administration**

- Amend existing laws related to persons with disabilities, introduce new legislation, and enforce international conventions such as the UNCRDP (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).
- Develop a national plan for persons with disabilities.
- Establish an evaluation framework to measure the effectiveness of services provided to persons with disabilities.

- Create an online information center to provide families of people with disabilities access to resources and information about government policies.
- Increase awareness, training, and support for persons with disabilities to use modern technology effectively.

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## **Education**

- Provide high-quality, affordable, inclusive, and accessible early childhood education.
- Ensure inclusive education for school students with disabilities.
- Expand the knowledge and awareness of inclusive education among schoolteachers, NGO representatives, and university lecturers.
- Facilitate the inclusion of sign language-trained teachers in schools.
- Provide facilities for sign language interpreters in public and private institutions.
- Establish special education and child development resource centers in every educational zone.
- Ensure communication and IT facilities in primary and secondary schools for students with disabilities.
- Promote sports and extracurricular activities at provincial and national levels for students with disabilities.
- Offer tax incentives to non-profit care institutions for persons with disabilities.
- Provide vocational guidance and counseling services for persons with disabilities.

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## **Economic Independence**

- Enforce the allocation of 3% of jobs in public and private sectors for the disabled community, and gradually increase this quota to 5%.
- Encourage employment opportunities, business ownership and development, self-employment, and entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities.
- Strengthen networks of persons with disabilities in workplaces to promote integration so that they can communicate their challenges with each other.
- Expand financial assistance for low-income families with persons with disabilities to engage in self-employment

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## **Health and Well-being**

- Providing professional skills and attitudes of healthcare providers to meet the healthcare needs of persons with disabilities.
- Improve accessibility to public spaces and services.
- Introduce health facilities for the early identification of autism and other developmental disabilities and intervene to minimize their development.

- Provide priority pass cards to facilitate the identification and access to services for persons with disabilities.
  - Promotion of community-based rehabilitation services through rehabilitation hospitals at the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) level and district level
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## **Security, Rights and Justice**

- Assist persons with disabilities when applying for government positions.
  - Promote positive attitudes among transport staff and the public towards persons with disabilities in public transportation.
  - Providing legal support and ensuring access to courts.
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## **Public Services and Community Support**

- Ensure the safety and accessibility of persons with disabilities when designing buildings.
- Expand opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in social, religious, cultural activities, and recreational sports.
- Enforce standards and provide specialized transport services to facilitate the use of public and private transportation for persons with disabilities.
- Improve accessibility to online services for persons with disabilities.
- Encourage innovations that will benefit persons with disabilities.
- Offer tax exemptions to import assistive devices used by persons with disabilities.
- Recognize sign language as the language of communication for persons with hearing impairments.
- Create inclusive theaters and sports facilities to enhance the artistic and cultural participation of persons with disabilities.

## 03. A modern life A wealthy nation

### 3.1 A Democratic Economy - An affluent country

## Introduction

The quality of life and socio-cultural development of citizens of a country depends on correct economic policies adopted and actions taken. The destructive economic policies and corrupt political culture followed by the leaders of the country have left us today with a battered and crippled economy and society where human lives have been shattered in every aspect.

The total government debt, Rs. 310,779 million in 1990, increased to Rs. 28,695,950 million by 2023, pushing the entire nation into a debt trap. Between 2015 and 2019 alone, the total debt increased by Rs. 13,031,543 million, reflecting a 74% increase. Additionally, there was a staggering debt growth of 51.43% in 2022 compared to 2021. As of March 31, 2024, the total public debt has reached Rs. 28,013,560 million, which exceeded USD 100,000 million.

However, due to the misappropriation of borrowed funds and the failure to invest them in economically productive projects, the economy did not grow in corresponding to the increase in debt. The annual economic growth decreased from 5% to -0.2% between 2015 and 2019 and it was -2.3% in 2023.

Weak tax administration, inefficiency, corruption, granting tax benefits to cronies, tax avoidance, and tax evasion have led to a significant decline in government tax revenue as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). By December 2023, the total tax defaults alone exceeded Rs. 1,100,000 million. The government's stance has been to impose more taxes on people, cut essential public expenditure, and sell off public assets without considering the negative consequences of the decline in the demand for goods and services and the disposable income of people.

Despite continued rhetoric about controlling inflation, the reality is that the prices of goods and services have risen to unaffordable levels. The ultimate result is that people's real income has gone down so low that basic human needs cannot be fulfilled. As a result of destructive politics, about 26% of the population has been dragged below the poverty line.

The external sector of the economy also continues to weaken due to the arbitrary use of foreign reserves, weak foreign exchange management, the inability to refinance foreign debt caused by the continuous downgrading of the credit rating of the country, the inability to attract foreign investment, rising import expenditure, and stagnant export earnings. Even foreign reserves at the end of May 2024 stood at USD 5.4 billion (including USD 1.5 billion SWAP loan facilities provided by the People's Bank of China), it was mainly an outcome of unpaid interest, debt instalments in arrears, import restrictions, remittances from overseas Sri Lankans, and receipt of IMF extended fund facility, rather than a result of proactive and sustainable measures of the government.

Inequality in income distribution has also been widening. The bottom 20% of households receive only 4.6% of the national income, while the top 20% get 51.4% of the income.

The NPP's economic policy framework focuses on economic democracy and is integrated with a human resource development plan and a technological development roadmap to ensure equitable opportunities in economic activities, participation in the economic decision making process with an equal say, and a fair share of economic benefits, has been developed based on ten key principles to achieve sustainable economic growth and development, aiming a Real GDP target of USD 120 billion by 2030 through a resilient production economy.

In formulating these policies, factors such as resource availability and accessibility, outcomes of research and development activities, socially embedded knowledge, civilization process, biodiversity, technology, strategic location of the country and the nature of diplomatic relations have been considered.

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## **Principles**

- **Priority for humanity**
- **Economic democracy**
- **People's participation, equitable and inclusive society**
- **Food security**
- **Fair share of economic benefits**
- **Sustainable resource utilization**
- **Non-commodified public services and social security**
- **International cooperation and solidarity**
- **Recognition of unpaid labour contribution as a care economy**
- **Progressive and fair taxation**

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## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Macroeconomic Stabilization**

#### **Fiscal Policy:**

- Establish a new dedicated unit for designing and implementing tax policies with a special section on international transactions.
- Make required legal reforms to enhance efficiency in tax administration.
- Provide training and capacity development for the officials of the Inland Revenue Department.
- Implement measures to expedite the collection of taxes in arrears.
- Integrate the operations of the Excise Department, Sri Lanka Customs, Department of Motor Traffic, and Land Registry Office with the Inland Revenue Department to ensure tax efficiency and fairness.

- Introduce a unique digital identification code (UDI) to every citizen to liaise with the government to access public services.
- Increase the annual tax threshold for individual income tax from Rs. 1.2 million to Rs. 2.4 million and revise the tax rates and tax brackets on a fair basis.
- Broaden the tax base in line with tax principles.
- Increase the tax depreciation allowance for deductible expenses on the purchase of machinery and equipment up to 120% of capital expenditure for companies to stimulate production.
- Introduce Point of Sales (POS) systems and digital invoicing to streamline VAT collection.
- Introduce a 0% VAT rate for essential food items including locally produced milk & eggs, infant milk, drugs, schoolbooks, stationeries & equipment, magazines & journals, library services, agricultural equipment, fertilizer, solar panels & accessories, machinery for renewable energy generation, motor vehicle and equipment used by a disabled person, locally manufactured software and IT related services, and computers, research and development services, computers
- Categorize goods applicable for VAT and introduce a different tax rate for each category.
- Expedite providing Export Development Tax rebate on Input VAT for exporters.
- Switch to risk-based audits from the present discretionary tax audits.
- Introduce an online system for tax assessment, filing, paying, and refunding of excess tax incorporated with a mobile application.
- Establish a single window service by integrating other state institutions with Sri Lanka Customs to streamline import/export operations.
- Simplify the complex tariff structure to increase customs revenue on a fair basis.
- Amend the Foreign Exchange Act to reconcile remittance inflows and improve operational efficiency.
- Decentralize Sri Lanka Customs operations to provide more efficient and cost-effective services.
- Facilitate temporary import facilities for raw materials and machinery under the TIEP scheme to assist Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in export preparation.
- Implement measures to prevent leakages and tax evasion on international transactions and transfer pricing and Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) among countries.
- Develop a mechanism to impose a global minimum tax on multinational companies based on international treaties and guidelines.
- Improve public finance efficiency, transparency, governance and accountability, and eliminate unnecessary public expenditure through digital-based governance including e-procurement and a strong public oversight mechanism.

## **Monetary Policy:**

- Establish a new ‘relief bank’ to restore the economic activities of MSMEs and provide relief for outstanding loans.
  - Establish a new national development bank to provide long-term financing, start new businesses, and expand existing businesses for entrepreneurs.
  - Direct cooperative banks, Samurddhi banks and regional development banks efficiently to provide financial facilities for small-scale farmers, entrepreneurs, and investors.
  - Provide relief to deprived parties after reviewing microfinance loans provided in violation of legal provisions and guidelines given.
  - Encourage microfinance providers to register with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and standardize the monitoring of such institutions.
  - Stabilize the policy interest rates to ensure stability of the financial markets, including the foreign exchange market.
  - Introduce new financing schemes to formally invest bank money and savings in production economic activities.
  - Strengthen the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka through formalization of the coordination among state institutions.
  - Recapitalize state banks to enhance the stability and efficiency.
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## **External Sector Stabilization:**

- Introduce new savings and investment plans, including expatriate Bonds for Sri Lankans living abroad.
- Issue new development bonds to finance regional development projects which with sustainable development goals.
- Issue bonds to access funds for sustainable development projects by the global green and blue agendas.
- Expedite proposed and currently stalled Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) that are aligned with national priorities and development strategies.
- Review existing trade agreements and enter into new ones to increase the share of foreign trade through export diversification.
- Execute an expedited program to increase foreign exchange earnings from tourism and IT industries.



## **The Programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF):**

- Renegotiate with the IMF on the content of a more palatable and strengthened programme and how it is implemented for salvaging the poor and deprived people from that painful condition.
- Prepare and present new proposals on efficient tax administration and government expenditure management to renegotiate the revenue-based fiscal consolidation proposals of the IMF.
- Prepare an alternative Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA) aiming to maintain debt sustainability and to keep the interest at a bearable level for the purpose of using it as and when necessary, in pursuit of debt restructuring engagements.
- Conduct a detailed debt audit on foreign loans obtained by the governments to ensure transparency and accountability in public financial management and to take legal actions against those who have misappropriated such loans.
- Enhance public financial management and financial discipline to upgrade the credit rating of the country and the banking system.

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## **Investment Promotion**

- Establish a single empowered institution by integrating existing state institutions including the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka that coordinate and promote investments.
- Introduce a legal framework to ensure transparency and fairness in line with internationally accepted principles and practices for accepting and retaining investment.
- Create a conducive environment with economic democracy that ensures ease of entering into new businesses and finding locations on a level playing field, the ability to access utilities conveniently, the availability of required competent labour, efficient financial services, ability to enter into international trade, fair and transparent taxation, efficient conflict resolution & arbitration mechanism, and market competition.
- Establish a single window to facilitate business registration, issuance of licenses, certifications, granting of permission for land use, and provision of electricity, water, communication services and other facilities through an integrated system.
- Take measures to raise Sri Lanka's ranking in the Global Competitive Index (GCI) to attract investors.
- Promote venture capital funds for new investment opportunities.
- Restructure the state institutional system to maintain the capital market efficient & productive, build investor confidence and prevent inside trading and corruption.
- Promote long-term foreign investments in public-private-people partnerships (PPPP) by prioritizing strategically important sectors.
- Introduce investment schemes with special benefits for Sri Lankan expatriates to invest their earnings.

- Provide appropriate tax concessions for initial public offerings (IPOs) for capital formation.
- Enhance and expand the capital market as an efficient and developed security exchange that facilitates SME listing conveniently, and ensures responsible reporting & compliance, transparency and governance.
- Protect employee rights including fair treatment, fair wages, and secured working conditions in compliance with the principles International Labour Organization (ILO).
- Enhance labour and production relations through collective efforts that empower employees via collaboration and cooperation, increase productivity, and assign responsibilities democratically to each party.
- Set up a mechanism to resolve conflicts and issues in production relations through stakeholder engagement.

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## **State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs):**

- Take appropriate strategic decisions on each institution based on its strategic importance, potential for economic growth, capability to stimulate the production economy, impact on financial stability, and relevance to national security.
- Provide the public with access to comprehensive information on the operations of SOEs to ensure transparency.
- Promote research and development activities to explore new opportunities in economic trends, potentials, and developments prevailing at the national and international levels.

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## **Domestic Trade**

- Ensure continuous supply of high-quality goods and services to the public at fair prices through promoting market competitiveness, directing monitoring institutions efficiently, organizing market activities and representing government stake in operations.
- Establish large-scale economic and exchange centres at the district level.
- Establish a monitoring mechanism and an online information management system to ensure the continuation of trade of goods and services in a fair and high-quality manner, protection of consumer rights and transparency in trade-related information.
- Implement a coordinated service management mechanism to provide auxiliary services such as finance, banking, transportation, insurance, communications, packaging, and warehousing for the smooth functioning of trade and distribution.
- Eliminate unnecessary intermediations who do not add value in trade between production and consumption and facilitate them to transform as active value creators.
- Introduce necessary legal reforms and new laws to remove information asymmetry prevailing in the market.

- Establish, enhance and modernize marketplaces for potential products including gems, jewelry, precious stones, textiles, and handicrafts targeting foreign buyers.
- Implement a mechanism to resolve, by investigating, trade-related issues faced by micro, small and medium-scale business communities
- Eliminate price gouging, prevent the creation of shortages of goods, and the formation of monopolies, oligopolies and cartels in the market.
- Establish an integrated control system to monitor and administer the quality of public services delivered through a centralized information system.

## Foreign Trade

- Promote the diversification of export of goods and services and provide required infrastructure facilities.
- Provide necessary facilities to producers and exporters, by providing export credit facilities, certification services, insurance, new market and demand trends, new market innovations, and information on global value chains.
- Promote trade of goods and services by focusing on India, China, sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Europe and especially focusing on global supply and value chains.
- Transform Sri Lanka into a maritime service hub that provides naval services including maritime security, fuel, and food.
- Develop port facilities to serve as an efficient regional logistic management hub with all facilities to provide services of transshipment, transloading, ship-to-ship cargo transfer, and cross-docking.
- Establish an international trading hub that facilitates to reduce transaction costs and to increase operational efficiency for merchants to trade goods including crude oil, fuel, gas, mineral products, and spices.
- Establish a crew member-changing centre for ships navigating across Sri Lanka.
- Improve technology and infrastructure for ship & vessel building and repairs.
- Promote production and exports of non-traditional and value-added products.
- Amend the import policy by considering the importance of the protection of local production, assurance of food security, ease of accessing raw materials for production, priority for essential goods and investment goods and competitive access to imports.
- Strengthen anti-dumping laws, introduce new fair-trading laws, and update existing regulations.
- Promote and provide necessary facilities for value-added re-exports and entrepot trading activities without damaging the brand identity and the good image of Sri Lanka.
- Provide the necessary infrastructure facilities to ensure the quality of imported goods through certification and quality inspection.

## 3.2 High productivity - Nation with food security

### Introduction

Currently, the agricultural sector contributes 8.4% to GDP, while employment in this sector accounts for approximately 27%. Additionally, 15.3% of export revenue is generated from agricultural crops. This highlights the significant role agriculture plays in Sri Lankan society.

With rapid population growth, traditional technologies alone became insufficient to produce the required amount of food for the population, prompting Sri Lanka to adopt modern technological methods. These efforts enabled the country to meet the target of producing 2.4 million metric tons of rice necessary for the population. However, some shortsighted policies implemented during past administrations have challenged domestic rice production. Farmers struggle to receive a fair price for their harvests, while consumers find purchasing preferred rice varieties at affordable prices difficult.

Increasing the production of high-quality vegetables and fruits has become a challenge, with approximately 30% of the total vegetable and fruit production being lost post-harvest. Looking at the other field crop sector, the country spent about USD 400 million on imports in 2022 alone. Additionally, the production of foreign exchange-earning crops such as tea, coconut, rubber, export-oriented crops, and specialty crops has declined. The wrong agricultural policies and actions of past governments, along with the failure to adopt appropriate technologies, have contributed to these issues.

As a result, the current agriculture sector in Sri Lanka faces several major challenges, including subsistence farming, minimal mechanization, high production costs, insufficient prices for production, high prices and price volatility of agricultural products, weak extension services, inadequate value addition, and low youth participation. This agricultural policy has been formulated after carefully considering the prevailing conditions, and it is expected that its implementation will yield an income of approximately LKR 3 million per acre annually. The policy aims to exceed 400 million metric tons in national tea production, increase the yield per coconut tree to 80 coconuts per annum, raise the rubber yield to 1,300 kilograms per hectare per year, and achieve a paddy yield of 6 metric tons per hectare.

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### Principles

- National food and nutrition security
- High productivity and efficiency in agricultural systems
- Strong agricultural entrepreneurship and sustainable markets
- Correct land management
- Proper management of agricultural practices
- Environmentally friendly operations
- Empowering the agricultural producers
- Mitigation of climate and other risks
- Agricultural research, extension, and knowledge management
- Effective management and control of agricultural operations

## ACTIVITIES

### National food security

- State support for the local production of all possible food items within the country.
- Maintaining a sufficient stock of essential food items for at least three months.
- Maintaining a real time database for existing food stocks in the country.
- A transport system that can use cold chain management technology as per the requirement for distribution of agricultural products and food.
- Encouraging cultivation of suitable substitute crops for imported crops.
- Establishing storage, cold storage, and processing units for agricultural products as public-private-people partnership projects.

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### High Productivity and Efficiency in Agricultural Systems

- An updated real time national agricultural database.
- Encouraging the transformation of small-scale farming organizations into medium and large-scale farming units while maintaining land ownership
- A systematic agricultural insurance system for farmers.
- Solutions to minimize crop damage from wildlife (e.g., modern technological methods, electric fence rehabilitation and maintenance, provision of food and water for animals within reserves, elephant traps, and maintaining tree density).
- Timely renovation of major irrigation systems like tanks, canals, and river diversions.
- Promotion of technologies like rainwater conservation and micro-irrigation through technical and financial facilities.
- Technical, financial, and other facilities to double the production of tea within three years.
- Restarting the Kantale sugar factory and improving sugarcane cultivation.
- Directing farmers to systematically cultivate commercial crops like coconut, rubber, and cinnamon in unconventional areas

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### Strong Agricultural Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Markets:

- Ensuring fair prices for agricultural products through regulating market forces.
- Financial support to establish 50,000 agricultural entrepreneurs within five years.
- Development of agro-industrial zones through organized farmer organizations and private sector contributions.
- Expanding opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises based on agriculture.

- Providing technical and financial facilities and market opportunities for small and medium-sized agricultural exporters.
- Facilitating the development of agriculture-based tourism.
- Government intervention to enhance the Sri Lankan tea brand (Ceylon Tea) and find high-value markets for it.
- Establishing 1,000 export villages.
- A comprehensive farmers' pension scheme with more benefits.

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## **Optimal Land Management:**

- Digital land mapping with an agricultural data system using modern technology for proper land use.
- Promoting integrated farming systems as crop-animal farming systems to increase land productivity.
- Utilization of underutilized and marginal lands for agricultural production using new technology.
- Restricting the use of fertile lands for nonagricultural purposes.

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## **Proper Management of Agricultural Practices**

- Establishing agricultural machinery supply centers at the local level to provide agricultural machinery at concessional rates.
- Providing agricultural inputs, including fertilizers, at fair prices.
- Promotion of the use of chemical and organic fertilizers and other agricultural inputs based on good agricultural practices.
- Produce chemical fertilizers, organic fertilizers, and other agrochemicals in an environmentally friendly manner using local natural raw materials and manufactured wastes.
- Promoting the production, processing, and marketing of seeds and planting materials through state and private sector support.
- Providing technical and financial facilities for processing and transportation of agricultural produce.

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## **Environmentally Friendly Operations:**

- Encouraging farmers to apply fertilizers and other inputs based on site-specific recommendations.
- Increasing the area of certified organic farming.
- Transitioning farms to follow "Good Agricultural Practices" progressively.

## **Empowering Farmers**

- Promoting farmer-administered cooperatives and farm companies.
- Providing technical, financial, and other facilities for intercropping and diversification in perennial crops like tea, rubber, and coconut.
- Initiation of value-added manufacturing industries related to the export of agricultural crops to branded export products.
- Financial facilities to encourage the use of rain guards for rubber plantations and to identify rubber lands not currently used for tapping and redirect them for rubber tapping.
- Providing loan schemes up to Rs. 1 million per hectare for cultivating high-yielding varieties of semi perennial or perennial crops with micro-irrigation.

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## **Management of Climate Risks:**

- Developing climate-resilient crop varieties, and using farming, and irrigation techniques for climate variability.
- Establishment of an improved weather forecasting system to guide cultivation and water management.

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## **Agricultural Research, and Knowledge Management:**

- Equipping extension agents with knowledge and necessary resources to deliver effective extension services.
- Providing efficient agricultural extension services with one extension officer for approximately 350 farm families.
- Provision of professional training and direct them for employment to alleviate poverty of the rural communities and economically vulnerable groups.
- Providing performance-based incentives for agricultural extension officers.
- Enhancing funding for agricultural research and development.
- Offering structured vocational education opportunities for agricultural professionals to make agriculture a more dignified and attractive profession.

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## **Effective Management and Control of Agricultural Operations**

- Establishing a national agricultural development council with representatives from all relevant state institutions, private sectors, and universities
- Regulation and monitoring of all agricultural projects by the Ministry of Agriculture.

### **3.3 High-quality livestock production - An entrepreneurial approach**

## **Introduction**

The livestock sector plays a vital role in providing essential proteins and other nutrients to the people of Sri Lanka. Additionally, it significantly strengthens the national economy and improves livelihoods through import substitution. The sustainability of the livestock industry depends on factors such as production capacity, the number of livestock farms, infrastructure, the labour force, and the availability of policymakers, administrators, researchers, and other stakeholders.

However, livestock production in Sri Lanka has not yet reached the desired levels, and the sector faces numerous challenges. These include severe shortages of quality animal food and breeding materials, high prevalence of animal diseases, weak supply chains and services related to production, unethical and imbalanced markets, lack of organized value chain developments and proper livestock extension programs, inadequate health services, poor management of breeding activities, minimal research interventions, limited access to credit and insurance facilities, and insufficient incentives and guidance for stakeholders. These challenges contribute to the inefficiency within Sri Lanka's livestock sector.

The NPP aspired to achieve sustainable development in the livestock sector through the implementation of strategic approaches and activities by efficiently managing it under favorable climate conditions.

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## **Principles**

- High-quality, hygienic animal production
- Fair pricing and sustainable market
- Investment incentives
- Youth and female participation in livestock entrepreneurship
- Public, private, and community partnerships for livestock development
- Improved living standards for stakeholders

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## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Common Activities**

- Maximizing production capacity through modernization of farms
- Livestock Development Societies where the farm owners are directly involved in the planning and development of the sector
- Special operational units for animal nutrition, breeding, and health sectors.
- National program for the control and prevention of widespread animal diseases.
- A Public Animal Health Division to control diseases transmitted from animals to humans as well as to ensure food security of animal products.



- Expanding research and development activities in the livestock sector.
- Innovating livestock research institutions and district veterinary research institutes

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## **Dairy Sector**

- Transforming small-scale farms into economically viable medium-scale commercial units through mechanization.
- Developing a large-scale dairy farm system to promote milk production.
- Establishing 7,500 dairy farms to empower low-income women.
- Establishing 7,500 dairy farms to strengthen youth entrepreneurship.
- Doubling the current artificial insemination rates and increasing the number of dairy cattle through advanced technologies
- Improving efficiency of farm systems through regional veterinary divisions.
- Implementing successful vaccination programs to eradicate major epidemics.
- Providing health insurance coverage for registered dairy cattle.

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## **Marketing of Milk and Dairy Products**

- Expanding the network of regional distribution centers for pasteurized and fresh milk.
- Implementing a payment system for dairy farmers based on proper standards
- Promoting liquid milk consumption through targeted dairy promotion programs.

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## **Poultry Meat and Egg Production**

- Providing tax relief for livestock and other raw materials to ensure fair prices for eggs and poultry meat.
- Strengthening the export processes for eggs and poultry meat production.
- Establishing 5,000 small-scale poultry farms to empower low-income women

## **3.4 A sustainable management - A quality marine resource**

### **Introduction**

The need for protein has been identified as a major component in human nutrition, with fish and related products recognized as a high-quality, safe source of protein. Therefore, it is a national priority to strengthen fisheries and aquaculture to meet the country's demand for fish. Fisheries, aquaculture, and related industries can also contribute to sectors such as gross domestic production, food security, job creation, uplifting the socio-economic status of people, and earning foreign exchange.

The fisheries in Sri Lanka can be divided into main categories: seawater fisheries and freshwater fisheries and the aquaculture industry. The ocean region of Sri Lanka encompasses a unique economic zone of 517,000 square kilometers. It also consists of a local waterbody of 21,500 square kilometers, lagoons and estuaries covering 1,580 square kilometers, and reservoirs spanning 5,200 square kilometers. Currently, around 225,000 individuals in Sri Lanka engage in seawater fisheries, while approximately 90,650 are involved in freshwater fisheries. In the year 2000 the fisheries and related industries contributed 2.7% to the country's GDP. But this has now decreased to 1.2%. Our annual per capita fish consumption, which was 17.2 kilograms in 2017, has now declined to 11.07 kilograms. This trend has adversely affected the health of people, especially children and pregnant mothers.

The fisheries and aquaculture sectors are currently facing many issues. Among them, the high expenditure on fuel and other resources, the government's lack of interventions to introduce better technology and techniques, illegal fishing activities by foreign vessels, an outdated legal framework and processes, and insufficient incentives for sustainable and eco-friendly techniques are the primary concerns. The main aims of this policy framework include the development and management of the fisheries in a sustainable and eco-friendly manner through proper scientific techniques and practical methods, thereby increasing fish products and making them available to consumers at a reasonable price, as well as uplifting the living standards of those engaged in fisheries.

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### **Principles**

- Fish food Security
  - Participatory approach and sustainable management
  - Strong legal framework in line with standards and international agreements
  - Safe and sustainable practices through standardization and incentives
  - Prevention of environmental pollution, and protection of oceans
  - Fair market accessibility for fish and related products
  - Higher living standards and social protection for the fishing community
  - A Professional fishing community
-

## ACTIVITIES

### Sustainable development and management

- A real-time information system to capture, store, analyse, and distribute all data and information related to the fisheries sector.
- An effective online mechanism to obtain permits & licenses, and do registrations related to the fisheries field.
- A consultation council to manage fisheries and aquaculture activities.
- Amend the laws & regulations, and processes that hinder the industry, in accordance with international conventions, agreements, and standards.
- Assess the oceanic fish resources, and the maximum capacities of seawater & freshwater aquatic systems, and develop the industry based on such assessments.
- Identify fish breeding regions, take measures to grow their spread, and identify and conserve breeding areas of endangered aquatic species.
- Encourage the fishing community to produce high-quality, eco-friendly, and safe products.
- Provide financial and technical support for the use of renewable and hybrid energy and sale of such products.
- Discourage illegal fishing activities, minimize ocean pollution, and establish a mechanism for emergency responses and minimization of ocean disasters.
- A fund to promote the development of research on fishing and market activities.

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### Seawater fisheries

- Provide technical support for fisher folk to harvest fish resources in different temperatures and depths.
- Expand artificial habitats and methods such as FAD to facilitate fishing and breeding.
- Ensure ownership and access to traditional fishing grounds, including fishing harbors and mesh ports, and develop their infrastructure.
- Provide financial and technical support to revitalize ocean fisheries which has currently faced a huge decline.
- Provide a fuel subsidy to the fishing community in order to uplift the collapsed fisheries by reducing the production cost.
- Introduce novel, eco-friendly, and effective fishing technologies such as vessel monitoring and identification systems, electronic notebooks, and identification of fish grounds through drones and satellites, mother vessels & hybrid vessels, and smart selling.
- Introduce a GPS-based warning system to prevent local fishing vessels from entering the territorial waters of other countries.
- Ensure efficient and systematic diplomatic interventions in cases of emergencies where fishing boat crews and vessels encounter issues in foreign waters.

## **Development of marine and brackish water fish products**

- Provide modern technology for harvesting and breeding species with high market values such as sea cucumber, crabs, barramundi, oyster, prawns, lobsters, and aquatic plants.
  - Promote eco-friendly aquaculture by identifying new fish grounds and species suitable for marine and brackish water aquaculture.
  - Introduce measures to obtain higher values and share in foreign markets by standardizing processes for prawn farms.
  - Increase the annual production of prawns above 25,000 tons by providing required facilities including technology.
  - Establish a formal system to prevent and control diseases in the prawn industry.
  - Provide technical assistance to diversify the production of sea plants with high demand and under consumption and mediate to find markets for these products.
  - Increase women's participation by promoting homebased production that uses sea plants and aquatic resources.
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## **Freshwater fisheries and aquaculture**

- Increase freshwater fisheries by connecting aquaculture around freshwater lakes, breeding fingerlings, and establishing breeding centers on a developed management system.
  - Implement a suitable program to stock fingerlings in regular reservoirs, seasonal reservoirs, estate reservoirs, and ponds through various aquaculture methods.
  - Introduce local or new specialized breeding methods, and develop human resources, technology, and infrastructure in breeding centers.
  - Stock fish in regular reservoirs, seasonal reservoirs, and estate reservoirs as needed to maintain proper capacity.
  - Breed fish in cages associated with regular reservoirs for consumption.
  - Provide financial support to promote entrepreneurs to establish large scale farms with modern technology for harvesting commercial freshwater fish.
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## **Ornamental fish and ornamental aquatic plants industry**

- Build a Sri Lankan brand name by aiming to increase income from ornamental fish and aquatic plant exports by 25% by 2028.
- Provide financial and technical support to encourage ornamental fish harvesting.
- Establish a transparent mechanism to determine the minimum selling price for exporting ornamental fish products.
- Implement a program that combines institutes such as regional veterinary centers and labs to identify, prevent, and conduct site-specific testing for fish diseases and pandemics.

- Set up regional collection centers to promote exports.
- Offer technical and financial assistance for ornamental aquatic plant production methods such as tissue culture, greenhouses, vertical planting, and soilless planting.
- Organize annual international exhibitions for ornamental fish and plants.
- Provide facilities for producing non-living ornamental aquatic material such as dead plants, roots, and pieces of stones and for breeding local ornamental fish using modern techniques for the protection of the environment.
- Establish facilities to educate those who collect ornamental fish using diving techniques on the use of diving equipment, sustainable harvesting methods, minimizing post-harvesting damage, and first aid, and introduce alternative livelihoods such as setting up fish breeding centres and becoming diving guides.

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## **Social Welfare for the Fishing Community**

- Introduce an insurance scheme for the fishing community, covering their families, equipment and tools used in the industry.
- Establish treatment centers for decompression sickness faced by divers.
- Re-activate the Fisherfolk pension scheme.
- Provide training and technical guidance for the younger fishing community, by focusing on professional fishing and nautical fields.
- Leverage a broad contribution of the Ocean University, faculties and technical colleges to produce professionals in the field.
- Offer comprehensive facilities to meet the needs of the fishing community, including health services, housing, day-care centers for their children and the elderly, and cultural events.
- Facilitate building cooperatives and banks as community-based organizations located around fishing villages and ports.
- Implement programs to enhance the financial literacy of fisherfolk and aquaculture producers, for elevating them to a professional level.
- Create a formal process for providing technical counselling services, foreign tours, and training programmes for field officers.
- Develop programs aimed at livelihood enhancement and technical skill development for fisherwomen and other vulnerable family members.

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## **Promoting the production of tools and equipment**

- Facilitate producing material used in the fishing industry, including living and non-living food, vessels and nets, cage equipment and machinery required for harvesting aquatic species.
- Provide tax relief for imported tools until sufficient domestic production is developed.

## **Post harvesting management and value-added products**

- Provide the necessary technical support to develop the infrastructure, and raise awareness to harvest, handle, store, and sell fish with minimal post-harvest damages.
- Promote production of fish cages, fish feed, liquid fertilizer, and other products using fish waste.
- Establish a mechanism for people to buy quality fish products at a reasonable price by systematic distribution systems.
- Reduce post-harvest damage through initiatives such as repairing fishing vessels, produce high-quality ice, use enclosed containers, and establish an online mechanism.

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## **Uplifting export potential and earning foreign exchange**

- Take steps to export products by identifying the new foreign market that may emerge in the future.
- Promote exports and promoting the market by collaborating with relevant institutes, including Sri Lanka Export Development Board and Embassies.
- Promote high quality local products and conserving foreign exchange by limiting imports.
- Promote foreign investors to invest in production sectors with high export potential.
- Establish an efficient and streamlined process to remove barriers in exporting fish products.

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## **Uplifting financial income surrounding fisheries harbours and developing fisheries harbours**

- Allocate service-based regions around fisheries harbours for docking vessels.
- Solve issues related to fuel storage and distribution around fisheries harbours.
- Upgrade all major fisheries harbours to meet international standards based on a prioritization plan.
- Expand ports and enhancing facilities in the Northern and Eastern provinces to promote trawler fisheries targeting residents.
- Develop fisheries harbours and management methods, based on the green port concept.

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## **Blue economy**

- Promote the sustainable use of living and non-living ocean resources and the establishment of modern oceanic industries through a blue economy approach.
- Introduce measure to effectively utilize fisheries aquaculture, and aquatic resources well to enter the blue carbon finance field.

## 3.5 A Digital State - An International Partnership

# Introduction

Sri Lanka has a skilled workforce comprising educated and trainable professionals. The country's strategic location makes it a hub for offering services to Asian, European, Middle Eastern, and African nations. However, subject fields in Sri Lanka's education system are evolving too slowly to meet the global IT industry's demands, leading to a skill gap. Additionally, investment opportunities to launch modern Research and Development (R&D) and Technology sectors are limited. High energy costs, uncertainty in supply, weak internet infrastructure, insufficient public transportation, and unstable state policies and economic conditions further hinder industry growth.

The global ICT market, valued at USD 9,039 billion in 2024, is rapidly expanding, with a projected growth rate of 11.0% by 2028, presenting significant opportunities for Sri Lanka's ICT industry. Emerging technologies like AI, IoT, and cybersecurity pave the way for innovation. Freelancing and remote work allow Sri Lankan ICT professionals to collaborate with global clients.

Currently, Sri Lanka's ICT sector employs 85,000 professionals and generates USD 1.2 billion in annual foreign exchange earnings. Our goal is to position Sri Lanka as a global leader in high-quality ICT products and solutions and to establish the country as a hub for international partnerships. We aim to increase the ICT industry's annual export revenue to USD 5 billion, achieving sustainable economic growth through innovation and high-quality digital technology while improving citizens' living standards through efficient digital public services.

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## Principles

- **Sustained growth fueled by innovation**
- **Digital transformation of government services**
- **Rebranding Sri Lanka's market identity**
- **Harnessing the benefits of the digital economy**
- **International collaborations for advanced technology, best practices, and market access**
- **Developing infrastructure that aligns with international standards**

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## ACTIVITIES

- Launch a global marketing campaign to position Sri Lanka as a hub for high-value ICT products and solutions.
- Implement a zero VAT rate on IT equipment, including computers and locally developed software.
- Leverage Sri Lankan foreign missions to actively promote the ICT industry to international clients, with specific targets for each mission.

- Establish a fund for new ventures, research, and development to encourage local innovation and entrepreneurship in the ICT sector.
- Digitalise state institutions to create a responsive government sector that delivers transparent and efficient services to citizens.
- Introduce and strengthen legal frameworks to attract foreign direct investment and address key areas within the ICT field, including intellectual property rights, data privacy, labor laws, and bankruptcy.
- Develop and implement an AI policy to ensure ethical AI use, data privacy, and the integration of AI technologies across state sectors, with access to state services in all languages.
- Implement training and educational programs to expand the ICT workforce to 200,000 by 2030.
- Provide specialized training for engineers in collaboration with foreign experts.
- Offer tax reliefs, grants, and other incentives to make Sri Lanka an attractive destination for ICT investments and professional opportunities.
- Foster the development of ICT unicorns through innovation and sustainable investment, creating globally recognized companies.
- Build partnerships with global ICT companies and research institutions to bring advanced technologies and best practices to Sri Lanka.
- Establish Research and Development centers and ICT parks in the Western, Northern, Eastern, and Southern provinces to promote regional development and innovation.
- Set up ICT R&D centers in four major universities located in the Western, Northern, Southern, and Eastern provinces, equipped with modern technologies and skilled staff.
- Continuously enhance ICT infrastructure to support industry growth and competitiveness, including high-speed internet, data centers, reliable and affordable energy supply, public transport, and smart villages.
- Formalize the adoption of ICT to advance the industry to Industry 4.0/5.0, incorporating cutting-edge digital technology and automation.

### **3.6 A research and development approach- scientific solutions for the society**

## **Introduction**

Research and development (R&D) combined with science and technology produces value-added products and services, uplifting the country's economy, and supporting human and social development. Sri Lanka allocates only the limited amount of 0.12% of its annual GDP for research and development, while countries with similar geo-political characteristics such as Malaysia allocates 1%, with Thailand 1.2% and Vietnam 0.42%. Meanwhile South Korea allocates 4.6%, Japan 3.6%, USA 3.5%, and China 3%, becoming



developed countries. Even the limited research conducted in Sri Lanka have not been used properly for economic and social development.

Sri Lanka possesses many resources, including endemic flora and fauna species with high biodiversity and herbal value, geological resources, the sea surrounding the island, freshwater resources within the country, balanced soil, tropical climate, year-round solar power, wind power, and rivers and lakes with much potential. All these elements can be used to produce value-added products and services with lower costs, giving higher profits, and they carry a huge potential in the international market.

Sri Lanka is rich with intelligent human resources, and many innovators are emerging even at the village level, but a mechanism to extract their ideas and innovations or to provide the necessary infrastructure occurred at a minimum level. In the future, Sri Lanka can be turned into an innovation centre by providing resources and the correct environment to harness this human potential. The state and private sector should support with a correct vision, and efficient mechanisms to bring out their new ideas through experiments and research.

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## **Principles**

- **Direct support from research and development towards the production economy.**
- **Distribution of research and development benefits fairly amongst the public.**
- **Ensure research independence, and implement proper monitoring, and regulation of research sectors.**
- **Transparency, efficiency, equity, diversity, and inclusion.**
- **Unbiased selection and fair opportunities for grant funds.**
- **Research according to locally and internationally recognized ethics, practices, and agreements.**
- **Protection of new products and services via patents, and due recognition for innovators.**
- **State, private, and public engagement for research and development.**

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## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Agriculture, fisheries, livestock, and food security**

- Conducting socio-economic research to identify resources and optimum utilization, develop agricultural infrastructure, and find solutions to sustainable marketing strategies.
- Enhancing crop resilience to climate change, improving the sustainability and economic potential of main crops, optimizing food preservation for greater economic benefits, and creating value-added products.
- Researching on finding solutions to generate sustainable income and ensure competitiveness and maintain sustainability in the international markets through ornamental aquatic resources, ornamental horticultural crops, and organic agriculture as a niche market.

- Conducting new research on domestic and export crops and the livestock sectors to boost productivity.
- Researching on crop diversification, improved management practices, integrated local-modern technology (genetic engineering and biosafety certification), efficient agricultural inputs (such as water, organic and inorganic fertilizer, and other agro-chemicals), and greenhouse and vertical planting in suitable places/regions.
- Conducting research to develop high-yielding animal breeds, produce high-quality feed, investigating low-cost alternative housing and their management, and select/use suitable lands for small and medium scale livestock farms (milk, chicken, and pork).
- Researching on identifying high-yielding and stress-tolerant crop and forage varieties (climate smart agriculture), developing local agricultural management practices, producing easily available and low-cost seeds and planting materials, and increasing production efficiency and productivity by selecting and integrating crop and forage varieties suitable for different agro-ecological regions.
- Performing research regarding sales, modern markets and their predictions, social welfare, and extension services and needs.
- Increasing the accuracy of the methods used to identify fish-rich areas, use solar and LNG-powered vessels, provide larger vessels with storage facilities and modernize vessels and fishing equipment.
- Researching to estimate the stocks of marine fish resources, continue prediction model development and usage, and accurate estimation of the carrying capacity of freshwater and brackish water systems.

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## **Research on health, education and science**

- Applying modern scientific methods such as genetics, metabolomics, proteomics, biochemistry, nanotechnology, and AI etc., to find solutions for dengue, chronic kidney disease, infectious diseases, and other special health issues related to Sri Lanka.
- Producing medicines needed for the country through research and development.
- Developing alternative local food products to increase the nutrition levels of children.
- Modern scientific research for early diagnosis of diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and heart attack to reduce healthcare cost of long-term treatments.
- Conducting island-wide research and surveys to identify quality and resource disparities among schools and recommend research and development-based solutions.
- Implementing research and development-based solutions to promote inquiry-based learning in school education.
- Developing AI tools and virtual training programmes for teacher training and vocational development.
- Broadening of research and development units in higher educational institutes with the participation of state and private sectors.

- Establishing a national commission to manage and conduct proper research and development in indigenous medicine.
- Developing high quality marketable products such as herbal medicines, nutraceuticals, food supplements, cosmeceuticals etc., by encouraging medicinal plant cultivation, establishing tissue culture and genetic engineering centres, and laboratories to target local and international markets.
- Applying nanotechnology-based research and development to produce solar cells, electronics, medicine, energy efficient new inventions, environmental remediation components, futuristic vehicles, and spare parts etc.

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## **ICT, communication, engineering, energy, maritime, transportation, tourism, and other industries**

- Researching on establishing multilingual communication systems powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI) in government institutions, and public places to minimize language barriers among different ethnic groups in Sri Lanka.
- Developing proactive and real-time alert systems to warn against natural disasters (For example Floods, wildfires, and landslides).
- Researching on establishing efficient public transportation management system (Buses & Trains) using IoT & GPS technology to minimize delays and improve passenger safety and comfort.
- Conducting research on establishing air pollution monitoring systems in main cities to reduce air pollution and control vehicle emissions and industrial emissions.
- Performing research on implementing Smart Meter Systems in residential houses, buildings, and public places to maximize resource utilization and minimize wastage. Example: research and development to establish electricity meters, vehicle parking meters, and water meters
- Leveraging the latest satellite technology and equipment to accurately forecast the weather and calculate energy demand for the country and maximize the utilization of hydroelectricity, wind, and solar-generated electricity.
- Deploying proper waste disposal bins & facilities to reduce environmental pollution by e-waste and promote recycling them.
- Conducting research and development to promote locally produced roof-top solar systems, equipment, and connectivity devices to the national grid.
- Providing research and development facilities and required skills for local manufacturers to build modern low-cost machinery and tools as are necessary for our country.
- Conducting research and development to improve/update local standards for building materials such as soil, sand, stone, bricks, tar, and others aiming to reduce construction cost, and resource wastage and promote sustainable engineering practices.
- Expediting research activities on efficient cleansing and usage of sea sand for the construction industry.

- Expanding research on renewable energy (hydropower, solar, and wind) and prioritization of the Akweralala wind power project to reduce the dependency on fossil fuels consumption and reach renewable energy goals.
- Establishing “Technology Development Centers” in selected districts to promote local innovators to build technical solutions for local and national needs.
- Leveraging local talent, manufacturers, and innovators to build consumer materials, office supplies, hospital supplies, and equipment (beds, chairs, syringes, etc).
- Researching on promoting locally adopted technological solutions to increase the productivity of agricultural products such as tea, rubber, coconut, and paddy, and to ensure the workers’ safety.
- Establishing necessary systems, mechanisms, and tools to integrate the elderly community and people with disabilities into the national workforce.
- Establishing a technical task force with specialist knowledge of Information Technology (IT), Big Data, Machine Learning, AI, Communication & Networking, and social media to analyze and approach local entrepreneurs and innovators and encourage them to start business ventures locally.
- Conducting research to identify capacity gaps in the maritime area including emergency disaster responses and prioritizing the future vision.
- Researching to identify value-added opportunities and leveraging local resources for sustainable growth in the tourism industry.

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## **Environment, land, water, air, and mineral resources**

- Implementing the most suitable methods to minimise human-animal conflicts, identified by research and development-based pilot projects.
- Strengthening research and development to characterise Sri Lanka’s biodiversity ‘hot spots’ that need protection. This includes catchment and vegetation mapping and categorizing habitats based on Land use threats.
- Managing agricultural, maritime, and freshwater resources efficiently and introduce necessary technologies to minimize post-harvest damage and increase diversification of products.
- Developing value added products such as medicine, cosmetics, and nutritional supplements using maritime and aquatic resources.
- Conducting research and explore the potentials of mineral resources in Sri Lanka, such as rare minerals (e.g. monazite in Beruwala), development of titanium dioxide using ilmenite, and the production of copper and gold using the iron ore deposit in Seruvila, etc.
- Taking necessary steps to use modern engineering technology to save the mangroves and coastal environmental systems, reducing coastal erosion.

## **Human development, arts, history, culture and ancient heritage studies**

- Updating higher education degree programmes including leadership, collaborative, and communication skill development plans, that are designed based on research and development data.
- Initiating community educational programmes to share research and development-based innovations and new knowledge, as well as artistic and philosophical ideology promotions that benefit society.
- Conducting R&D on home-grown robotic programs or customizing already available humanoid robotic platforms to assist people with special needs and elderly community.
- Assisting the retired or elderly generation by developing modern electronic assistive devices, medication reminder systems, efficient pill dispensers, and telehealth systems and enhancing their independence and comfort by developing visual and communication aids, as well as memory aids, etc.
- Research and development to produce musical instruments and dancing costumes that withstand different climatic conditions, aiming the international market.
- Integrating modern technological advances into performing arts such as music, singing, dancing, theatre, opera, and cinema to produce research and development-based novel artistic creations.
- Increasing the capacity and accessibility of the National Archive by use of modern technologies such as Block Chain, Cloud and AI to establish an efficient archival system and public record management.
- Conducting scientific studies on palm leaf books that describe ancient heritages, beliefs, rituals, cultures and lifestyles, and initiate national-level research to identify ancient technological advances and practices that may benefit modern-day needs as well.
- Conducting appropriate content analysis, surveys, focus group experiments, and participant observation for mass media communication sources, including standard electronic and print media, and improve their communication standards and overall effectiveness.

## **3.7 A modernized tourist industry - An attractive final destination**

### **Introduction**

The tourism industry is one of the leading industries globally, bringing economic, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits to host countries. The main resources of the tourism industry can be identified in four key areas: natural, cultural, human, and capital. A well-planned tourism industry can be developed by effectively combining these resources.

Sri Lanka's tourism industry displayed its best performance in 2018, with 2.3 million tourist arrivals, generating USD 4.3 billion in revenue and contributing 4.9% to the GDP. Therefore, the National People's Power (NPP) has set its goals using 2018 as a benchmark for the tourism industry. Consequently, measures will be taken to promote tourism as a priority sector, given its potential to significantly contribute to the Sri Lankan economy and its role as a major source of foreign exchange for the country.

Our vision is to position Sri Lanka as a prominent and unique destination, attracting tourists from around the world by offering unforgettable and authentic experiences while leveraging the industry for economic growth. The National People's Power (NPP) aims to ensure sustainability and improve the standard of living for all stakeholders.

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#### **Principles:**

- Visionary leadership, strategic approach, and holistic economic development
  - Sustainable usage of natural and cultural resources
  - Developing human resources for the tourist industry
  - Development and standardizing of new tourist products
  - Strategic destination marketing
- 

#### **ACTIVITIES**

##### **Visionary leadership, strategic management, and holistic economic development**

- Establishing the National Tourism Council (NTC) as the main institution responsible for coordinating and managing tourism-related activities.
- Establishing the Tourism Policy Formulation Council (TPFC) for developing policies for the industry.
- Establishing the Sri Lanka Tourism Authority as the central institution for tourism development and promotion.
- Implementing a new tourism act to enhance the productivity and efficiency of the tourism sector as a leading industry in the Sri Lankan economy.

- Identifying new tourism destinations and products based on research and studies and providing facilities for stakeholders to develop them.
- Adopting an ICT-based approach to prevent crimes and illegal activities in the tourism industry.
- Attracting airlines and establishing connectivity from major tourism-origin countries to Sri Lanka.
- Introducing domestic airline services to key tourist destinations within Sri Lanka.
- Providing necessary encouragement and facilities to micro, small, and medium-scale entrepreneurs who make a significant contribution to the tourism industry, to improve the quality of their services.
- Implementing an international-level standardization program to enhance the quality of all sectors in the tourism services.
- Providing necessary facilities to convert informal sector tourism operators into the formal sector.
- Developing infrastructure facilities needed to advance the local tourism industry as a leading and alternative tourism mechanism and encouraging private sector participation in this task.
- Establishing international partnerships with non-governmental organizations, donor organizations, and institutions, and obtaining technical, financial support, and know-how as a key approach in developing the tourism sector.
- Organizing an annual national tourism award ceremony to encourage and recognize entrepreneurs and stakeholders in the tourism industry.

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## **Sustainable usage of natural and cultural resources**

- A resource utilization plan to develop the tourism industry and protect natural resources.
- A land bank, including a mechanism for land use in the tourism sector, with the involvement of relevant stakeholders and the state, aimed at future tourism investments. Digital technology should be utilized for this purpose.
- Formulating a program to safeguard tourist attractions that are under significant threat due to over-visitation, by identifying their carrying capacity using scientific methods.

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## **Developing human resources for the tourist industry**

- A national human resource development plan for the tourism and hospitality sectors.
- An analysis of tourism training needs for training and educational institutions in both the public and private sectors of the tourism industry.
- Training programs for Sri Lankans to meet both local and international demand for a skilled workforce in the tourism industry.

- Providing facilities to universities that offer degrees related to the tourism industry.
- Practical training and work-integrated learning opportunities for postgraduate students in the tourism industry.
- Updating the syllabi of educational and training programs in the tourism industry to align with global trends and demand.
- A special tourism training structure to provide training for micro-entrepreneurs.
- A special social protection program for individuals in the private, public, and semi-public sectors, including tourist service providers and related workers, to secure their futures in the tourism industry.
- Establishing a national tourism research institute as a public-private partnership, allowing students and scholars from academic institutions, professional bodies, and universities to engage in practical research on the tourism industry.

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## **Development and standardizing of new tourist products**

- Identify and improve the critical infrastructure of all tourism destinations across the country.
- Establish a special department/team to develop innovative tourism products for Sri Lanka's tourism industry.
- Conduct special promotional programs for selected markets to address the gap during the low tourist season.
- Promote Sri Lanka as a destination for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) and sports tourism.
- Engage with the private sector to facilitate and provide the necessary infrastructure development to attract cruise tourism.
- Develop the infrastructure and human resources needed to cater to elderly tourists and tourists with disabilities.

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## **Strategic destination marketing**

- Existing destination marketing activities will be revisited to align with the tourism objectives.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the national airline, and state tourism institutions, a long-term global marketing campaign to promote Sri Lanka's tourism industry will be established.
- Attractive promotional material will be created for display at entry points to the country and in major tourist markets abroad.
- Digital approaches will be adopted to provide important tourist information about the destination.
- A program will be developed to position Sri Lanka as an authentic, eco-friendly, and tourist-friendly destination.



- A marketing campaign will be launched to attract Free Independent Travelers (FITs) and transit travellers passing through Colombo airport.
- Based on scientific research, a special marketing campaign focusing on emerging and modern markets will be implemented.
- Foreign missions and embassies will be used productively and efficiently for Sri Lanka's destination marketing programs.

### **3.8 An entrepreneurship explosion - An organic approach**

## **Introduction**

In comparison to other developing nations, Sri Lanka has not been able to reach its potential in industrial development when compared to countries like Bangladesh, Vietnam, and South Korea who have significantly expanded their share of the global product and service market by consistently growing their gross domestic products (GDP). In 2023, the GDPs of Bangladesh, Vietnam, and South Korea reached USD 460 billion, USD 409 billion, and USD 1,700 billion, respectively, while Sri Lanka's GDP was only USD 84 billion. Moreover, these countries generated export revenues of USD 59 billion, USD 384 billion, and USD 808 billion, respectively, whereas Sri Lanka's merchandise export revenue was just USD 17.3 billion. This disparity highlights Sri Lanka's critical challenge in goods and services production, which stems from the lack of a comprehensive plan to enhance production capabilities and the failure to leverage advanced global technologies for productive growth.

Therefore, we consider Sri Lanka must enhance local production and transition to an export-driven economy to navigate the current economic crisis successfully. This requires a comprehensive short and long-term industrial development plan that leverages the country's strategic location, inclusive human capital, and natural resources, supported by committed political leadership. The primary objectives of this policy framework include revitalizing collapsed local industries, boosting the competitiveness of export industry sectors, promoting service industries, tapping into new global market opportunities, attracting foreign direct investment aligned with a national strategy, fostering an investment-friendly environment, and ensuring the provision of low-cost infrastructure and inputs.

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## **Principles**

- Implementation of a national policy framework to deliver essential institutional, capital, technical, and market support for industrial development.
- Encouragement of new investments, both domestic and foreign, as well as fostering entrepreneurship.
- Provision of affordable infrastructure, including energy, transportation, telecommunications, finance, and other essential services.
- Enhancement of market efficiency and transparency within supply chains.

- Promotion of export-oriented service industries alongside the reinforcement of domestic industries.
- Diversification of products and services driven by research and development outcomes.
- Adoption of sustainable and environmentally responsible practices.

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## **ACTIVITIES**

### **National planning and state intervention**

- Create national industrial think tanks for all industrial sectors dedicated to strategic planning and foresight analysis.
- Enable targeted interventions in key industries, with a strong emphasis on sustainability and the distinct significance of each sector to the national economy and overall stability.

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### **Taxes, law, and productive development**

- Introduce tailored taxation frameworks for various industrial sectors, based on specific risks, strategic goals, and state priorities associated with each industry.
- Enhance investment protection legislation to mitigate potential losses arising from actions taken in the national needs.
- Establish legal safeguards to shield producers from undue market power influences.
- Reinforce the conflict resolution framework to accelerate the resolution of commercial disputes through courts and arbitration.
- Introduce a robust technical support system to ensure alignment with productivity, quality, and cost targets.
- Foster a level playing field environment by ensuring the consistent and equitable enforcement of existing laws.

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### **Expansion of international and local market and efficiency**

- Implement necessary legislative reforms to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the local market.
- Strategically direct operations to acquire markets based on specific criteria and broaden market opportunities through diplomatic initiatives.
- Revise existing trade agreements and actively pursue the formation of new ones.
- Support industries in accessing international markets by developing harbors and airports into key supply chain hubs.
- Streamline the business registration process and expand certification facilities for emerging export industries.

- Strengthen support for MSMEs by offering EXIM bank services, essential financial services, and export consolidation assistance.
- Enhance international business opportunities by leveraging digital technology and e-commerce platforms.

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## **Industrial zones and infrastructure facilities**

- Enhance and optimize existing industrial zones by leveraging previously underutilized resources.
- Establish new industrial zones aligned with identified growth potentials, fostering innovation and promoting industrial diversification.
- Develop essential infrastructure to support the fisheries, agriculture, and tourism sectors in targeted regions.

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## **Micro, small, and medium-scale industries**

- Create a specialized division to support micro, small, and medium-sized entrepreneurs at both national and regional levels, offering streamlined, single-window services to meet their business needs effectively.
- Implement a collateral-free loan scheme of up to Rs. 10 million, contingent on feasibility and credit score, through the financial sector to provide crucial financial support to micro, small, and medium-scale entrepreneurs.
- Enhance the financial support for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises by reinforcing the cooperative banking system, including Samurdhi Banks and regional development banks.
- Encourage cooperative business models to harness and strengthen the collective power of collaboration.
- Offer tax incentives for business startup incubator programs to facilitate the market entry of selected startups.
- Focus on promoting industries such as agro-based value-added, mineral-based, packaging, power and energy, export-led sectors, marine services, aircraft maintenance and service delivery, telecommunications, IT and related services, construction, and transportation.
- Develop a coordinated approach to advance the fisheries sector, particularly in fish farming, by integrating technology-driven fishing methods, production of fishing equipment and vessels, product preservation, packaging, and exploring local and international markets, while addressing the socio-economic concerns of the fishing community.
- Design and execute a comprehensive program to achieve self-sufficiency in milk and milk-related products, engaging all relevant stakeholders in the field.
- Support the promotion of indigenous products within districts or regions as part of the district development plan, considering the availability of resources, market opportunities, and growth potential.

- Stimulate the production of agriculture, industry, service outputs, and the manufacture of tools, equipment, and machinery necessary for domestic consumption.
- Construct an international oil transmission and cargo storage terminal in Trincomalee following the refurbishment of existing oil terminals.
- Modernize the Sapugaskanda Refinery to meet domestic demand and capture a significant share of the foreign market for refined oil and related products.
- Establish an aircraft service and maintenance hub to cater to the aviation requirements of the Asian region.

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## **Traditional arts and crafts industry**

- Lead and align the network of institutions dedicated to advancing this industry towards a unified objective.
- Develop a program to ensure the availability of raw materials for traditional industries, such as carpentry, and initiate the planting of selected tree species.
- Establish a specialized task force by integrating state institutions and non-governmental organizations to address the challenges faced by the carpentry industry.
- Offer tax incentives for the acquisition of essential technical equipment for registered craftsmen.
- Enhance and support producers by cooperative frameworks.
- Launch a program to streamline the export process, reducing costs through an integrated system.
- Establish a national program, including a safety net, to safeguard craftsmen and preserve traditional crafts.

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## **Interventions needed for sustainable development**

- Establish a comprehensive program that empowers industries to meet the standards of fair trade, labor quality, and transparency required by the global market, while driving significant progress toward sustainability.
- Develop a strategic initiative aimed at ensuring environmental sustainability, addressing climate change challenges, and achieving the essential milestones for long-term resilience and skill development in the industrial sector.

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## **Digitalisation and technical usage**

- Facilitate industries for Industry 4.0/5.0 Maturity Index to expedite the realization of benefits from the Fourth Industrial Revolution and strategically position our industries for the forthcoming Fifth Industrial Revolution.

- Advocate for both public and private sector investments to establish robust digital infrastructure, encompassing high-speed internet connectivity, state-of-the-art data centers, and comprehensive cybersecurity systems.
- Lay the foundation for advanced technologies such as IoT, AI, cloud computing, and data analytics to drive industrial innovation and competitiveness.
- Foster the adoption and integration of Industry 4.0 technologies among Sri Lankan industrial entrepreneurs, enhancing their capacity for digital transformation.
- Offer technical support and financial incentives to facilitate companies in embedding digital technologies into their operational frameworks.
- Committed to investing in skills development and retraining programs aimed at enhancing the technological expertise and digital literacy of the workforce.
- Create a dynamic digital start-up ecosystem to promote collaboration among industry stakeholders, academia, research institutions, and emerging entrepreneurs.
- Establish innovation centers, technology parks, and incubators to provide platforms for knowledge sharing, technical collaboration, and entrepreneurial growth.
- Implement a comprehensive legal framework that promotes innovation, safeguards intellectual property rights, and ensures data privacy and protection and cyber security.
- Develop a robust mechanism to monitor and evaluate the progress of digital transformation initiatives, ensuring alignment with established quality standards and objectives.
- Deploy a state-of-the-art single window platform to streamline industry operations and enhance service efficiency and transparency through the e-government initiative.

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## **Promoting the ease of doing business and entrepreneurship**

- Facilitate access to funding by encouraging investments through venture capital, business capital funds, and development banks.
- Enhance entrepreneurship by integrating education and training into professional programs and the school curriculum, while formally recognizing digital freelancing as a profession and offering essential resources.
- Invest in digital infrastructure to support business activities and foster technological adoption.
- Enable market access at both local and international levels through strategic trade agreements, export promotion initiatives, and networking opportunities.
- Create a nurturing ecosystem for entrepreneurship by establishing incubators, accelerator programs, co-working spaces, and networking platforms.

### **3.9 A sustainable resource utilization - Generation of the highest benefits**

## **Introduction**

Sri Lanka has an abundance of mineral resources, accumulated throughout the land space of 65,610 square kilometers. The peninsular basin, which is about twenty times the land area and including the ocean region which will be nominally granted according to the UN ocean laws, is also rich in ocean minerals. Varieties of ores of minerals such as graphite, mica, apatite, lime and dolomite, mineral sand, quartz and silica sand, feldspar, serpentine, laterite, different clay types, and gems which had been created because of different geological factors are abundantly found in Sri Lanka. Many industries such as mineral sand, cement, phosphate, ceramic, glass, and roof tiles were originated from mineral resources discovered through the mineral resource expeditions in the 1980s. Since then, minerals have been sold as raw material without any value additions, and many of these industries have either been sold out or closed by now.

Sri Lanka has been famous since ancient times as a country abundant with variety of gems. There is an immense potential to make Sri Lanka a main centre in the global gem market by capturing a considerable portion of the global gem market using the presence of individuals who possess both traditional and modern technologies about the gem industry, the availability of university-level programmes, and the unique location of Sri Lanka. However, Sri Lanka has been able to earn only USD 250 million a year from the gem and jewelry industry. Issues such as the lack of state sponsorship to the industry, laws and regulations not being updated, corruption and bribery due to political interventions, officials not possessing enough knowledge on the field, and the absence of proper lab facilities and a systematic evaluation mechanism are main reasonings for this situation.

There is an ability to start industries that can provide a considerable support to the national economy using lime, calcite and dolomite, mineral sand and quartz, and silica which possess graphite, apatite, calcium carbonate. There are possibilities to develop industries based on value added products from ores that contain iron and copper, as well as other small mineral ores discovered so far. Moreover, mineral resources on land and seabed can be discovered and their mineral ores and rare earth elements (REE) can be used to earn foreign exchange.

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## **Principles**

- **Scientific exploration**
  - **Sustainable excavations and usage**
  - **Optimum utilization**
  - **Maximum benefits from local and foreign markets**
-

## ACTIVITIES

Actions will be taken to gradually establish the following industries after conducting feasibility studies about the mineral related resources.

- Exploring mineral ores and REEs within the country and in the seabed using developed technology.
- A special unit to give recommendations on studies about mineral related industries, and to make market predictions.
- Expanding the production of quality salt aiming at the local market needs and international market.
- Technical and infrastructure facilities needed to start production industries from salt excavation.
- Nickel sulphate and magnesium related products using serpentine ores in Sri Lanka.
- Industries to produce single super phosphate that is most appropriate for short-term crops in agriculture, and to produce phosphate fertilizer for medium-term crops.
- Producing high quality dolomite fertilizer for agriculture.
- A cement factory based on areas with sedimentary lime, aiming at the local market.
- Producing quality precipitated calcium carbonate needed for industries such as medicine, paper, and cloth.
- Introducing the new technology needed for extracting ilmenite, rutile, zircon etc. during refining of mineral sand.
- A titanium oxide production factory instead of importing ilmenite and rutile as raw material.
- A factory to clean zircon that is obtained during mineral sand extraction, to be used for shining porcelain goods.
- Factories to separate thorium, lanthanum, and cerium from monazite sand, according to international laws and with the help of relevant institutes.
- Value adding factories around garnet sand.
- New factories around quartz and silica sand, reducing its low utilization.
- Conducting research to increase the carbon percentage in graphite to 99.9%, and new factories around that.
- Encouraging the production of ready-made goods using graphite.
- Industries which use graphene to increase the quality of products such as highly efficient batteries, iron, cement, and tyres.
- Encouraging the production of ceramic and porcelain parts needed for high tech equipment, using local raw material.
- Promoting small and medium scale industries around mica and feldspar ores.
- A method to determine the government portion for small, medium, and large-scale excavations using the price of minerals in the global market, the amount of excavation done, and the cost for it, instead of the linear method followed currently.
- Starting the production of sulfuric acid used for other industries.



## Gems and jewellery

- Modern technologies to identify gem ores.
- Modern technological support to add values to gems.
- An international gem and jewellery market.
- An international gem centre around the Rathnapura city.
- Amendments needed for the Gem and Jewelry Authority Act, aiming for the sustainable development of the mining industry and gem industry.
- International level gem research labs.
- Formal registration of all stakeholders in the gem industry, and an updated data system.
- Standards for the safety of gem mine workers.
- A process to give information in international gem prices and standards to all mine owners.
- Establishing a 'Gem Industry Workers Protection Authority' to uplift the living standards of labourers engaged in the gem industry.
- Legally and digitally coordinating all state institutes connected to the gem and jewelry industry.
- A process to provide a fair compensation in instances of full body paralysis or death that occur due to accidents that labourers face in the gem industry.
- A social protection programme along with a pension for labourers engaged in the gem and jewelry industry, by formalizing the existing fund through state intervention.
- Introducing educational and professional programmes related to the gem and jewelry industry and related fields, providing facilities to pursue them.
- Mechanization of the gem industry by securing the traditional gem mining industry.
- Introducing a taxation system that is favourable to the development of industry.

### 3.10 A secured energy centre - A sustainable revenue source

## Introduction

The global energy sector is in the midst of a transformative era, driven by sustainability and innovation. With evolving consumption patterns and regulatory frameworks, the shift toward cleaner energy sources is accelerating. Electricity generation from solar and wind energy, along with advanced energy storage solutions, is growing rapidly, accelerated by global commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the falling costs of these technologies. Additionally, low emission technologies such as green hydrogen and small modular reactor technologies are gaining significant traction. Decreasing costs of battery production are catalysing the electrification of the global transportation sector. Electrification of all forms of energy consumption is seen as a vital strategy to achieve



net-zero emission targets. In response to these trends, there is an urgent need to rapidly transform the electricity grid into a smart grid.

Fossil fuels continue to play a significant role in meeting global energy demands. There is an ongoing, profound discussion about minimising the environmental impact of fossil fuel usage. Maintaining a strategic energy mix is crucial to navigating disruptions owing to geopolitical constraints. Natural gas, viewed as a cleaner and transitional energy source, plays a key role in the shift toward renewable energy. International investments in Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and the exploration of new natural gas reserves are expanding, in response to its importance in the global energy landscape.

Amidst these global trends, Sri Lanka remains burdened with some of the highest electricity prices in the region. To emerge from the economic abyss caused by decades of mismanagement, the country must transition to a manufacturing economy. However, high electricity prices pose a significant obstacle. The primary reason for the elevated electricity prices is the heavy reliance on oil-based generation. Previous regimes, rather than making timely investments in low-cost energy sources, repeatedly opted for short-term fixes by contracting oil-based power stations.

We present the policy and action plan of the National People's Power, which prioritises transitioning to an energy mix that is the least dependent on oil-based electricity generation, with a significant increase in renewable energy to foster a green economy. This policy includes strategies to revive and enhance the ailing refinery, national storage and distribution infrastructure for oil, ensuring an undisrupted energy supply. While addressing these challenges, Sri Lanka's energy sector will be transformed into a competitive and transparent industry, equipped with modern technology and focused on customer empowerment. This comprehensive policy and action plan aim to drive Sri Lanka towards socio-economic progress and expand its share in the global economy, while safeguarding the environment for future generations.

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## Principles

- Energy as an essential national service
- Sustainable and secure energy supply and consumption
- Energy economy as a source of foreign income

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## ACTIVITIES

- Electricity prices will be gradually lowered toward the lowest in the region within five years by implementing competitive procurement practices, prioritising solar and wind energy projects with the goal of reducing dependence on oil-based generation.
- Existing electricity tariff methodology and the pricing formulae for LPG and oil will be revised, establishing a fairer and fully transparent price revision mechanism.
- The tax structure will be simplified to avoid tax pyramiding to ensure clarity for consumers.
- A rapid national program will be launched to add 2,000 MW of solar PV capacity within the next five (5) years, as a strategic measure to avert the impending energy crisis in the near future.

- Rooftop solar PV and behind-the-meter battery energy storage systems will be promoted by introducing new business models and tariff structures, aiming to reduce the overall cost of electricity generation.
- It will be ensured that the benefits of solar power will reach all customers by promoting connected microgrids based on smart grid concepts run by community energy cooperatives and aggregators. This smart grid infrastructure will be utilised to enable greater absorption of renewable energy to the grid.
- The smart grid will be leveraged to enable customers to provide demand response and flexibility services to the grid, ensuring they receive fair compensation for their contributions to manage the grid.
- Wind energy is a natural resource Sri Lanka is blessed with owing to its location. It will be ensured that the benefits of wind energy will be fairly distributed to the people of Sri Lanka by implementing competitive procurement practices for wind energy projects.
- A state agency on green hydrogen will be established, bringing together experts from academia and industry to facilitate and attract global leaders in the sector. This agency will focus on setting up pilot projects and preparing for the technology, enabling green hydrogen to become a significant part of the economy as soon as it achieves price parity.
- Feasibility studies on pumped hydro storage, battery energy storage systems and hybrid systems will be expeditiously completed, to enhance the absorption of renewable energy. New business models will be developed and implemented to attract investments in these projects and technologies.
- LNG is recognized as a clean energy source that can aid the transition to a renewable energy future. The importation of LNG will be facilitated through a competitively procured terminal and fuel sources to supply 1,500 MW of existing thermal power plants that are capable of being switched to LNG.
- Many of the early power purchase agreements of mini hydropower and other renewable energy plants are reaching their end of term over the coming years. A mechanism will be established to renew these agreements, striking a balance between ensuring the benefits flow to public to whom the natural resources belong and protecting the capital invested by the project developer by ensuring a fair operating fee.
- Steps will be taken to increase the forest cover across all hydropower catchment areas after conducting scientific and economic studies to identify the potential, impacts and feasibility.
- As the technology of Small Modular Reactors (SMR) is rapidly advancing, it is important to prepare to adopt the technology, immediately after becoming feasible for Sri Lanka. With that aim, agreements will be signed with countries and organisations leading in the technology to develop required human resources, physical facilities, standards and regulatory frameworks.
- Review of feasibility studies for modernising the existing refinery or building a new refinery, will be expedited.
- These studies will adopt a holistic, integrated approach, focusing on using refinery by-products to fuel the manufacturing economy and training a competent workforce for the international market.
- All existing agreements regarding the Trincomalee oil tank farm will be revisited. The 24 tanks owned by CPC and the 61 tanks owned by the joint venture company

will be promptly integrated into the economy through new business models to maximise their utility.

- By modernising the storage network and utilising rail transport, a continuous supply of fuel will be guaranteed, even during crises or periods caused by weather or geopolitical turbulence.
- The dilapidated pipeline between Colombo Port and the Kolonnawa terminal will be upgraded to a system capable of loading and unloading various petroleum products. This upgrade will be funded by an investment from CPSTL.
- To fully capitalise on the commercial value of natural gas resources in Mannar and Kaveri basins, the commercialization and new exploration agreements with international partners will be expedited, ensuring transparency.
- Modern technology to forecast reservoir and fuel storage levels and risk management tools will be leveraged to ensure a continuous supply of electricity and petroleum fuels to sustain a resilient economy, with government intervention.
- Sri Lanka's commitment to achieving the 2050 Net Zero Emission Targets will be further strengthened. The nation's honour on the international stage will be reinstated by updating the inadequate short-term commitments made by previous regimes, with the support of both local and expatriate Sri Lankan scientific communities.
- The necessary restructuring of the electricity and petroleum sectors will be conducted methodically, following comprehensive stakeholder consultations and evidence-based reform strategies.
- A special bureau will be established to attract and facilitate public, private, and international investments in the electricity and petroleum sector, in alignment with a methodically developed Long Term Energy Supply Plan. This bureau will also be responsible for reviewing progress and managing risks associated with these investments.
- Actions to minimise technical losses and inefficiencies in institutional management of power systems will be enforced via the PUCSL. A mechanism to compensate customers for loss of service will be instituted using industry accepted indices in the long run.
- Customers, including low-income households and small and medium enterprises, whose electricity supply remains disconnected due to non-payment of exorbitant bills unjustly imposed over 2022-2024 will be reconnected, with remaining dues charged on a fair instalment plan. Additionally, fees for new connections to small households will also have the option of an instalment plan to expand access to electricity.
- With the support of relevant ministries, a national programme will be launched to provide electricity supply schemes incorporating self-generation and energy conservation programs for government hospitals, schools and religious premises to minimise their dependence on subsidies provided through public taxes.
- The transport sector, currently reliant on fossil fuels, will be systematically transitioned to electric mobility, based on clean and green energy.
- To achieve this, the national transportation plan, national electric mobility plan, and the renewable energy development plan will be integrated. A national e-mobility secretariat will be established to develop a national EV charging network, hub-and-spoke smart city transportation networks, and other infrastructure, along with tax incentive schemes.

- A statutory body will be established to advise the state on investment, trading, and future directions in global energy markets based on international data. This body will also facilitate energy trading businesses.
- A national strategy to establish Sri Lanka as an Energy Trading Hub will be prepared and implemented.
- A secure digital platform will be established to implement a transparent, efficient and competitive tendering and procurement system for the electricity and petroleum sector.
- A digital platform integrated with the local banking system will be established to capture all energy transactions, from fuel importation and power generation to end-user bill payments. This platform will be used to implement targeted incentive programs for the industrial and commercial sectors, ensure timely payments to suppliers, and provide social safeguards for vulnerable customers.
- An incentive mechanism will be introduced to conduct energy audits to enhance the energy conversion efficiency in power generation and industrial processes.
- Energy audits of large-scale industrial and commercial consumers will be mandated to enhance the energy efficiency and conservation, while upgrading and enforcing minimum energy performance standards of industrial equipment, buildings and all appliances.
- It is becoming essential to disclose and minimise emissions related to products and services when competing in sophisticated international markets. Therefore, an agency will be established to monitor and certify Green Energy usage in the energy portfolio to support local industries that export products to international markets.
- In the global effort to achieve climate targets, a skilled and competent human resource is crucial. Sri Lanka's workforce, equipped with energy-related skills, will be seen as an opportunity to contribute to these global efforts and as a means to earn foreign income. The training divisions of the Ceylon Electricity Board and Ceylon Petroleum Corporation will be integrated with the local university system and other vocational training institutions to provide skills required for the global energy sector.
- Productive R&D collaborations will be promoted among national higher educational institutes and other stakeholders, such as energy utilities, regulators, and the industry, when implementing development projects in the energy sector.
- Barriers to local companies in the electricity and petroleum sector will be removed, and their participation and investments for non-conventional renewable energy projects will be promoted.
- Local companies will be encouraged to form partnerships with international companies to facilitate technology transfer and attract investments.
- These companies will be able to leverage the experience and qualifications gained through participation in national energy projects to compete in the international markets. They will be further supported through internal and diplomatic mechanisms.

### **3.11 A good public transportation service**

#### **Speedy final destination**

## **Introduction**

Unsystematic and inefficient transport has wasted a considerable amount of time of most of the public. Heavy traffic, wasting a lot of time on the road, transport services not working at night, too many road accidents, and sexual and other harassment faced by women and children in public services characterises our passenger transport service. The reporting of around 30,000 road accidents a year is an indication of the lack of safety and its intensity in the transport sector. The contribution of the railway service has dropped to 5% in the transport sector. The portion of the SLTB in bus passenger service has dropped to 14%. Around 55% of the citizens opt to use private vehicles to fulfil their transport needs due to the decline in public transport, and they have to spend a large amount of their income on transport as a result. It has also resulted in high road traffic.

88,200 km of the entire 119,382 km road network of Sri Lanka belongs to local government institutes, and many roads at the rural and semi-urban areas are in a dilapidated state due to lack of maintenance. A large amount of money flows out annually to import fuel, and around 65% of the fuel burned in the country are spent in the transport sector. It thereby contributed to half of the air pollution. Further, around 35% of fruits and vegetables go into waste due to unsatisfactory transportation.

National People's Power wishes to establish an efficient, trustworthy, safe, and dignified people-oriented transport service with the long-term vision to gradually transform it into an eco-friendly system. Hence the goal is to provide 70% of the public's transport needs through public transportation within 5 years.

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## **Principles**

- **Transport is considered a public service**
  - **An eco-friendly and sustainable transport service**
  - **Safe and efficient transport service**
  - **Coping with the diversity in the passenger composition**
  - **Coordination among different transport modes**
- 

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Railway service**

- **Repairing railway tracks which are in a delapidated state, introducing a formal maintenance programme, and establishing an automatic signal system with new technology**
- **Based on practical requirements developing main railway lines into two-tracks, and lines around main cities as three-track lines**

- Gradually expanding railway lines on a priority basis to cover the regions which are not covered by the railway network at present, and thereby giving railway access to all main cities
- An efficient 24/7 railway service by including more train compartments and increasing running frequency
- Gradually developing the railway system to have trains run on electricity
- Efficiently using the railway service to safely transport production raw material, consumer goods, and agricultural and fisheries produce
- Development of parking facilities near train stations to park private vehicles owned by passengers
- Gradually introducing monorail and light railway transport to strengthen public transport in populated areas, whilst prioritising the programs to develop railway and bus services

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## **Bus passenger service**

- Introducing buses manufactured specifically for passenger transport, and providing an easy financial scheme to procure such buses
- A strong passenger bus service development by improving transport at night as well as on the main roads and the roads where passenger bus transport is at an unsatisfactory state
- Formation of cluster bus companies using new digital technology, established by integrating state and private bus services for regions selected in a manner that income from buses is equitably distributed among the buses
- POS ticket machines in all buses which allows payments by pre-paid cards through a digital platform
- Allocation of bus lanes in populated areas giving priority for public transport and gradually introduce Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system
- Gradual introduction of electrically operated buses to the public transport service
- Awareness creation and training among passengers and workers to instil a mindset change needed to create an environment where passengers can travel in buses with dignity without any harassment
- Development of parking facilities near bus stands to park private vehicles used by passengers

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## **A formal and essential timetable system**

- An essential timetable method for both the railway service and passenger bus service
- Essential public transport service that runs according to a timetable from morning until midnight
- Digitalised timetables will be published online, and buses and trains will be run strictly according to the timetables displayed at the stations
- Opportunities for passengers to reserve seats for long distance journeys

## **Transit cities**

- Identify and develop facilities to establish Transit Cities where the bus and train station is located at the same place, for passengers coming from long distances to suburban cities
  - Efficient public transport services from transit cities to main cities
  - Safe parking spaces and other required public facilities in transit cities
- 

## **Rural transport**

- Introducing public bus services for rural areas without public transport at present
  - Special encouragements when needed to continue the bus service in rural roads
  - Transport services with the appropriate technologies to transport the produce of rural public in a safe manner
- 

## **Roads**

- Identification of rural and estate roads in need of immediate repair, preparation of a priority list, and the repairing and sustainable maintenance of the roads according to a prioritised program .
  - Effective periodic maintenance of express roads (E), highways (A, B), and provincial roads (C,D).
  - Resolving the issues and the completion of construction of the presently stalled central expressway from Kadawatha to Meerigama.
- 

## **Encouraging cycling**

- Construction of safe cycling lanes within main cities and from nearby areas to the main cities which have traffic congestion
  - Including required cycling infrastructure for the newly constructed roads wherever possible
  - Provision of cycle parking facilities at main train and bus stations, institutions, and other public places
- 

## **Pedestrian lanes**

- Constructing pedestrian lanes on the sides of roads in main cities
- Planting trees on the roadsides to provide shade for the pedestrians

## **Using water ways for goods and passenger transport**

- A technical unit to research and advise on promotion of waterway transportation
  - Passenger and goods transportation services implementation in waterways identified through feasibility studies
- 

## **Protection for women, elderly, and disabled passengers and improvements to required infrastructure**

- Development of the mentality within the community about the special transport needs of women, elderly, and disabled people
  - An app to immediately inform of harassment and issues faced by women in transport services, and a unit dedicated to act on it
  - Special accessibility facilities for disabled and elderly in trains and buses
  - Modifying train stations and bus stops for easy accessibility and use by disabled and elderly
  - Making it compulsory to reserve seats for elderly and disabled in public transport vehicles
- 

## **Minimising road accidents**

- Introducing improvements to identified problem creating points in road infrastructure to avoid possible accidents, directing all drivers and riders to more disciplined driving, and making it compulsory to abide by road rules
  - Systematising the process of issuing and renewing of driving licenses
- 

## **Para-transit operations**

- Formalising taxi services including three-wheel service, staff transport, and school transport services to improve their quality and efficiency
  - A digital mobile phone app for para-transit transport services
- 

## **Organising passengers and beneficiaries**

- The government will recognise passenger organisations as stakeholders in the field, and make them part of the decision making process
- Residents of the areas will be taken in as active participants in assessing and auditing the construction and repairing activities for transport infrastructure such as roads and bridges in their respective areas



### **3.12 A sustainable marine resource - Acquiring a portion of global maritime business**

## **Introduction**

Sri Lanka plays a big role in the global nautical field based on its strategic location at a centre where Eastern and Western sea routes meet. Yearly, thousands of tons of goods are transported by ships that sail past our country. The Colombo Harbour is located at an ideal spot to conduct this sea transportation, while the Hambantota Harbour, located in the South, operates much lower than its capacity. There is potential to develop the Colombo and Hambantota ports as two of the biggest naval centres in the world by attracting a considerable portion of the global maritime industry, providing competitive services and investing in infrastructure. The main ports of Colombo, Galle, Hambantota, and Trincomalee greatly contribute to the country's business and economic development and affect a large portion of the country's market.

Sri Lanka's sailors hold world fame for their excellence, skill, and performance, and they are a main resource in our nautical field. There is a considerable potential to earn foreign exchange and create job opportunities with high benefit for the country's youth, through the development of the number of professional sailors in Sri Lanka. This proposed policy framework brings balanced access to the development of the industry and the contribution of different stakeholders, including the harbour, nautical companies, and specialists, to bring Sri Lanka to the forefront of the global nautical field. We hope to make Sri Lanka a main nautical centre in the world through the country's location in the Indian Ocean, development of supply efficiency, and building a world-class maritime labour force.

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## **Principles**

- **An integrated maritime control for sustainable usage of maritime resources**
  - **Being responsible and accountable for the protection of the maritime environment and resources**
  - **Access to common maritime resources and their personnel use are on consumption fee**
  - **Precautionary approach in decision-making on maritime control and administration**
  - **Community participation in the planning, usage, and conservation of maritime and coastal areas and their resources**
  - **Benefits of maritime resources being**
  - **Fair distribution of the benefits of maritime resources among the public**
-

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Training of sailors**

- Expansion of the state intervention to develop primary and professional nautical education
  - Developing professional skills and making it easier to obtain relevant certificates
  - A structured process to analyse and amend the curricula to fulfil the requirements of the International Maritime Organisation
  - Appointing a third-party evaluation committee to certify that the ministry's examination unit is working according to the Quality Management System
  - Developing industrial training facilities
  - Broadening access to new job opportunities in the international market
  - Protecting and developing nautical welfare and ethics
- 

### **Harbour infrastructure and other services**

- Expansion of the harbour, maintenance, data storage, production processes, national vessels, infrastructure, terminals, and implementations
  - Improving the nautical industrial services and maintenance, operations, representatives, supply networks, special technical services, banks, ship recycling, services for the ships and other activities
  - Integrating the nautical field with the tourist industry
- 

### **Nautical laws, environmental protection, and administration**

- Analysing and amending laws related to vessel registration
- A productive and cautious Port State Control (PSC) system
- A transparent PSC service based on goals
- Enacting the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) and other environmental protection laws
- Enacting laws on nautical protection in Sri Lanka

### **3.13 A secured data system- an ICT revolution**

## **Introduction**

The global telecommunications sector is rapidly evolving with the integration of new technologies and innovative business models. Technologies like 5G wireless communication, cloud computing, decentralized telecom networks, mobile network services, and AI are driving the delivery of cutting-edge services to consumers. However, Sri Lanka has lagged behind in adopting these advancements at the same pace as global trends. Additionally, the high costs of telecommunication services negatively impact both local consumers and the industries that rely on these services.

The National People's Power's telecommunication policy framework addresses all areas of the communication sector, including wired and wireless communication industries, broadcasting, cinema, and entertainment. The framework advocates for a sustainable telecommunications sector that quickly adapts to new technologies while ensuring safety, consumer-friendliness, and affordability.

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## **Principles**

- **Ensuring communication access for every citizen**
- **Easy access to information and data**
- **Fair pricing**
- **Protection of national and personal data**
- **Cyber security and data privacy**
- **Green infrastructure**

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## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Wired communication**

- Developing and unifying the national communication network under a national strategy that facilitates infrastructure sharing and allows the seamless transfer of subscriber numbers (telephone number) between service providers.
- The Urban council to hold responsibility and carry out operations in the access network from the service provider to receiver.
- Increasing the public internet access points.
- Building a centralized backbone network with the transmission network of the electricity board, to expand the communication facilities for rural areas.
- Integrating the civic registration and the receiver data system of telephone companies.
- Establishing the infrastructure for an e-government system and centralizing all services into a unified platform.

## **Wireless communication**

- Priority for technology with high efficiency in the frequency range such as 5G and LTE+
- Gradually removing the use of old technology such as 3G and CDMA, and using 2G for emergency services

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## **Guard bands**

- Amending the frequency ranges given to service providers, providing a continuous frequency range, and limiting guard bands

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## **Promoting public Wi-Fi and wired connections**

- Establishing wi-fi in public places, including schools, universities, libraries, educational institutes, gardens, and government offices, providing internet access at a reasonable rate with free access for IOT with all essential services

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## **Public procedures for the electronic communication industry**

- Providing goals for electronic communication service providers to make their networks accessible to all public
- Free access to essential services such as emergency services, governmental services, public security services, health services, and education
- Developing the infrastructure in rural areas, areas with limited coverage, and public places
- Free access for all citizens for IOT tools with educational programs, online educational programs, and other educational tools such as documents and e-libraries
- Infrastructure to promote IOT applications in all fields
- A regulatory mechanism to regulate the exchange of infrastructure among companies, communication qualities and prices

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## **Broadcasting industry**

- Turning broadcasting networks into digital, absorbing the latest technology and providing services related to the public
- A regulatory body for the transmission industry under the CRC-SL
- Integrating state-owned radio and television institutes into a consolidated single institute/company in a way that their identities are protected
- Operating the National Channel (CH-01) and Nethra Channel (CH-02) within the Public Services Broadcast (PSB) domains, while transitioning Channel EYE (CH-03) to the commercial domain.
- Implementing SLBC local service and Tamil service as PSB Domains, and maintaining other channels as commercial channels

- Allocating annual budget for mass communication in each ministry to the institutions maintained as PSB.
- Improving and promoting the necessary technical infrastructure to broadcast programs that include entertainment and education.
- Identifying the terrestrial TV network as the efficient medium for educational services and developing the required technical infrastructure.
- Acting competitively in the international outside broadcasting industry as an external broadcasting engineering institute which covers and transmits external broadcastings of international ceremonies and competitions which are connected to sports, entertainment, and tourist industry in this region.

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## **Cinema and entertainment industry**

- Mandating 2K as the minimum quality standard for digital cinema projection.
- Establishing a regulatory body for the cinema, entertainment, digital, and new media industries.
- Creating state-of-the-art studios and post-production facilities, promoting private sector investment in advanced technology and imported equipment through tax incentives and other forms of support.
- Introducing new regulations for the facility service for foreign film companies and industries related to foreign film production, with a centralized office to oversee and coordinate all activities, including registration.
- Promoting investments in IoT applications such as OTT and VOD services, as well as in the entertainment, digital, and new media industries.

### **3.14 A productive land management system Integrated control plan**

## **Introduction**

According to the Land Commissioner Department, 82% of Sri Lanka's total land area, which stands at 6.6 million hectares, belongs to the government, while the remaining 18%, amounting to 1.2 million hectares, is private land. 32% of the 5.4 million hectares that belong to the state, which is 1.7 million hectares, are forests. In general, lands have been categorized as agricultural, commercial, or residential according to their usage for ease of administration and management.

The ordinances and regulations imposed during the colonial period to control land resources have made a significant impact on land management in Sri Lanka. The governments after the independence did not make any special effort to scientifically amend these laws for the well-being of the country and its people. Instead, some land reforms and policies aimed at land distribution, driven by narrow intentions, have contributed to socio-economic inequality. Issues related to land ownership have remained unresolved for a long time, leading to various social disparities.

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## Principles

- Optimum land utilization
- Protecting the sensitive areas
- Efficient and productive land administration and management

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## ACTIVITIES

### Land utilization

- A new legal framework and land act that makes effective land administration and management
- National land use plan
- A National Land Council to coordinate and oversee land management
- Up-to-date state land inventory
- An electronic system for land registration and digitalizing land reports
- Making the land valuation process formal and efficient
- A network of quasi-judicial institutes to resolve land-related issues quickly and fairly
- Land usage and development permits will be made simple and efficient through scientific and technological methods

Protecting land in sensitive areas

- Action to preserve and protect environmentally and historically sensitive areas

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### Land registration

- Deeds to the people who have been living in state lands for a long period
- An Integrated Land Information Infrastructure (ILII) connecting all local government authorities and land management institution
- An efficient, transparent, and accountable land-related public service.

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### Land use management

- An integrated land use map
- Disaster mitigation, climatic resilience and adaptation mechanisms through land use plans.
- Local development plans that align with the National land use Planning policy
- A land suitability map based on spatial data analysis

## Surveying and Mapping

- Expand the control network for surveying and mapping and increase the productivity of land surveys through enhanced technology.
- LiDAR surveys or appropriate technologies to cover the entire country and extract accurate elevation data.
- Connecting all surveys to the national Grid for seamless integration
- A mechanism to obtain the optimum service of new survey graduates
- Collection and storage of accurate and timely spatial data needed for development projects on a priority basis
- Providing reliable and accurate data sources and introduce new technology to update the spatial data needed for geo-information production.
- A National Spatial Data Integration treaty to facilitate comprehensive data management

### **3.15 A scientifically managed construction industry - Excellent quality workforce**

## Introduction

The development and sustenance of the construction industry, which reflects the country's economic development, depend on state and private investment in infrastructure and projects. Before the 2022 downfall, the construction industry contributed 7% to the country's GDP and provided direct and indirect employment to over 1 million individuals. Despite the recent crisis, the industry has the potential for significant growth with the right investments and strategies.

Currently, most of the constructors and advisors in the field are from the private sector, and the construction companies owned by the government show less performance due to interventions and inefficient control.

Shortcomings in the procurement process, inefficiency, weak project management practices, political interventions, corruption, and the implementation of projects without proper financial support pose considerable challenges to the industry's stability. These issues hinder the performance of the construction projects, resulting in delays, excessive costs, and low-quality products. Further, outdated planning methods and standards, the inability to use new project management methods, and the lack of trained professionals negatively affect the industry. Job security and worker welfare in this field are not favourable.

Due to a lack of low-cost raw materials, new technological innovations, and limited investments in research and development, the industry has achieved only a tiny portion in the international arena. Further, brain drain has affected the industry's lack of trained labour, daily operations, and development.

Past governments invested loans from local banks and two-party and multi-party loans in construction projects, and the lack of benefits from these projects contributed greatly to the country's loan crisis.

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## Principles

- A creative construction industry
- Transparent and fair procurement
- Monitoring, supporting, and regulating the construction sector
- Fair competition and equal access among entrepreneurs
- Quality employment with job security, fair wages, and opportunities for skill development based on new architectural knowledge

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## ACTIVITIES

- Analysing and proposing amendments to the Construction Industry Development Act
- A broad ethics system for all stakeholders in the construction industry
- Coordination of all construction training institutes in the country and the regulation of construction technology education
- Financial guarantees through the Construction Guarantee Fund to companies recognized by the CIDA
- An arbitration centre and a pool of arbitrators to resolve construction conflicts quickly
- Recommending the priority of main construction projects according to the national development plans
- Certifying the transparency of the procurement process to increase the participation of local bidders
- Methodically implementing the electronic bidding system in the construction sector
- Protecting local industrialists by involving international companies in the construction sector under specific conditions
- Certifying that state institutes follow similar procurement rules
- Training the state and private sector technical staff on estimation and procurement processes
- An ID for each worker in construction that determines and certifies the social recognition and skill level of them
- A long-term insurance plan and retirement benefits for registered construction workers
- Increasing the knowledge in the field about new project management and contract management
- Certifying the participation of state sector construction institutes in managing national disaster situations and training the workforce



- A special research and development unit for the construction industry to introduce new technology and low-cost raw material
- Preparing plans and specifications to update and modify the industry according to global developments and international standards
- State sponsorship for local industrialists to enter international construction projects
- Making environmental accountability essential for all construction projects, with a deep assessment of environmental risks

## 04. A dignified life A strong country

### 4.1 A newer constitution - A united Sri Lankan nation

A new constitution will be drafted and passed through a referendum with the necessary changes, if there any, after going through a public discourse.

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#### ACTIVITIES

- Recognizing and enacting the rights mentioned in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as basic rights
- Broadening the constitutional law about the rights of children, women, and people with disabilities according to international conventions
- Safeguarding the voting rights of immigrants within and outside of the country
- Abolishing the executive presidency and appointing a president, without executive powers, by the parliament
- Introducing a new parliamentary electoral system
- Limiting official presidential residences to one
- Abolishing the pensions and special privileges given to retired presidents and their families
- Appointing 25 ministers and corresponding deputy ministers to 25 logically determined ministries and abolishing State Ministerial posts
- An advisory council consisting of specialists on the subject will be appointed to each ministry
- Introducing a code of ethics, including not allowing members of parliament (MPs) and ministers to appoint their immediate family members to their personal staff
- Abolishing allowances made to MPs for participating in parliamentary sessions
- Abolishing the pension offered to MPs after 05 years
- Preventing MPs or their close family members from directly or indirectly engaging in businesses or contracts with the government
- Removing the tax-free vehicle permits for MPs
- Giving only one vehicle for Ministers /Deputy Ministers to be used during their period of office

## **4.2. An efficient public service - A skill based professionalism**

### **Introduction**

Sri Lanka's public service is the main instrument that implements state policies. The Sri Lankan government service, which consists of a 1.4 million workforce, consists of different professionals and officers from ministry secretaries to office support staff, and the state spends a considerable portion of its income on maintaining it. Even though it consists of officers with different educational and professional levels possessing other skills, at present, the government service has become inefficient, failing to fulfil public expectations and losing public faith.

The inefficiency of public service and the associated bribery, corruption, fraud, and misappropriation of public property are the inevitable results of the ruling class and the system. They are not tragedies brought by public servants on their own accord. The government service has faced grave dilapidation as a result of factors such as political appointments, manipulation of state workers for disastrous political decisions, and the employment of officers for the large-scale fraud and corruption of rulers, and this has been the basis of the public's loss of faith in the government service.

It is our aim to convert the government service to a satisfactory state instrument by freeing it from its current state and transforming it into a non-corrupted one which has the public faith and fulfils the public expectations.

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### **Principles**

- **Ensuring transparency and accountability**
- **Merit-based appointments and promotions**
- **Efficiency and formal procedure**
- **Ethical behaviour and continuity**
- **Using advanced technology**
- **Formulating productive policies**
- **Partnership**
- **Public participation, awareness, and skills**
- **Ensuring inclusion**
- **No discrimination**

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### **ACTIVITIES**

- Resolving issues in the service minutes and amending them
- Preparing a necessary mechanism to address socio-economic issues and needs identified from the ground level, based on the national development programme
- Identifying the subject fields of the state departments and institutions and directing them to new ministries on a logical basis, and building vertical and

horizontal connections among these institutions to maintain high efficiency in achieving socio-economic goals

- Establishing new institutions as per the need, methodically integrating institutions with similar subject matter, and abolishing unnecessary institutes
- Transforming the existing state management processes towards new state management systems taking into consideration the concepts of digitalization, performance management, and citizen involvement
- Conducting an immediate census to identify information such as the skills and qualifications of workers to re-position them to achieve new socio-economic goals to increase the efficiency of the government service instead of the popular option of laying workers off
- Introducing a performance management procedure to ensure that departments and their staff are achieving targets
- Establishing Divisional Secretariat offices as multi-service provision centers using digital technology.
- Introducing a process to obtain public feedback to assess officers on providing the public service in an efficient, well-mannered, and corruption-free manner, preventing the waste of public money that occurs both actively and passively in the decision-making process
- Maintaining a state asset registry to manage state resources properly and efficiently
- Encouraging state institutions to prevent the wastage of state resources and introducing scales to measure that
- Developing digital tools to improve the efficiency of internal activities of the governmental service, including procurement, financing, auditing, planning, and administration
- Revising necessary rules and regulations for appointments and promotions of officers to all types of services in the government service within a particular time frame
- Increasing the capacity of SLIDA to support formulating state policies and develop the skills of officers in implementing the policies

### **4.3 Rule of law governance - A judicial system with equal access**

## **Introduction**

**I**ndependent and efficient administration of justice and public confidence in the process is crucial in establishing the rule of law. However, the public has lost its faith due to the allegations of undue influence, lack of independency and transparency, delays in the process and expensive nature of litigation in the judicial process. The National People's Power hopes to rebuild the broken public trust in it by creating an independent, efficient, transparent and affordable judicial system.

## Principles

- Equality and equal protection of law
- Independence and public trust
- transparency and efficiency

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## ACTIVITIES

### Judicial Process

- Appointing a committee of legal experts to review the existing laws and update the laws as necessary.
- Making the judicial process smoother and more efficient by taking steps to introduce modern technology to the judicial process and providing proper training to the judges and staff.
- Taking steps to establish Smart courthouses and maintaining soft copies of the judicial reports.
- Appointment of research officers to assist Judges of Appellate and Original Courts to get accurate, eloquent and prompt results.
- Establishing an International Arbitration and Conciliation Center for arbitration and conciliation of disputes arising in international commercial transactions within the South Asian region.
- Development of infrastructure for safe storage of evidence related to criminal law cases.
- Introducing new laws to expedite the disposal of productions to relevant aggrieved parties before diminishing the market values of the productions.
- Update the laws related to bail by looking at the present issues in the bail law and bail process.
- To introduce mechanisms to prioritize and expedite the disposal of cases related to sexual offences committed against minors and women and bring justice to the victims.
- Establishing provincial branches of the Department of Government Analyst in order to accelerate the judicial process.

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### Bribery and corruption

- Establishment of a stolen public asset recovery agency with the technical and advisory support of international organizations such as Stolen Asset Recovery (STAR) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to recover the stolen state assets.
- Facilitate the Director General of the Bribery Commission with necessary authority to give effect to the International Convention on the Prevention of Corruption and Coordinating the Recovery of Stolen Assets.

- Appointment of a permanent bench of three Judges of the High Court to streamline cases of financial crimes, bribery, and corruption.
- Establishment of Anti-Corruption Commission office in every district.
- Investigate complaints received by the Anti-Corruption Commission within six (06) months or submit a report to Parliament every six (06) months on complaints that are not dealt with.
- Prepare the necessary laws to bring to justice those who facilitate the protection to those are accused of state financial corruption and consider them too be involved in the wrongdoing.
- Prioritize legislation to prevent corrupt practices such as financial abuse, bribery, corruption etc.
- Establishment of a government-sponsored awareness campaign among the public about corruption, fraud and bribery and to empower the public against them.
- Re-visiting the cases withdrawn by the Bribery Commission and the Attorney General and resubmit appropriate cases.

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## **Attorney General's Department**

- Introducing a Directorate of Public Prosecution (DPP) as a mechanism to eliminate delays within the judicial system and establishing a main DPP office and sub offices in the provinces which will remain independent of the Attorney General's Department to conduct cases on behalf of the government.
- Documenting the prosecution guidelines that must be followed by the Attorney General's Department when prosecuting.
- Inform the complainants/aggrieved parties about the reasons, in the event the Attorney General's Department decides not to prosecute after the investigation process.
- Appointing a special Parliamentary Ombudsman to address the grievances of the aggrieved party regarding the activities of the Attorney General's Department.

## **4.4 Public security assuring - People friendly service**

### **Introduction**

Police plays a very important role in maintaining law and order in the country as an institution close to the public. An important factor that reflects how the rule of law functions is the independent and efficient functioning of the police. However, at present, the public believes that the Sri Lanka Police is an institution from which it is impossible to get any service without political or other social connections or bribery. On the other hand, some police officers are also victims of political interference and are constantly suffering due to ill-treatment. The National People's Power expects to make the police service an independent, efficient, and friendly service that is closer to the public.

## Principles

- **Independence**
  - **Efficient and friendly service**
  - **Professional skill**
- 

## ACTIVITIES

- ‘Police Public Relations Committees’ to establish a close and formal relationship between the police and the public
- Notifying the suspect’s guardians or next of kin within 24 hours of police arrest
- Informing the magistrate and following a formal procedure to protect the life of the suspect if they are taken out of a police station for any investigations
- Providing necessary infrastructure to computerize all complaints and produce e- police reports
- Expeditiously investigating and finalizing all complaints received by the police and reporting to the Police Commission when it is not possible to do so
- Utilizing scientific training, new technological tools, and information technology for crime investigation
- Empower the Police Commission to make all appointments, promotions, and transfers in the police service without politicization
- Introducing a formal promotion procedure for promotions from Police Constable to Chief Inspector
- Promotions from Sergeant of Police to Assistant Superintendent of Police to be done based solely on merit and performance without politicization
- Providing the necessary knowledge and training to make the police service a professional police service, providing opportunities to follow graduate programmes in areas such as criminology and criminal justice, police public relations, counselling, and psychology
- Appreciation of talented police officers through the awarding of prizes and certificates, providing foreign training programmes for them
- A programme to provide housing to police officers who do not own a house
- Raising the salaries and allowances of the police service in proportion to other public servants
- Strengthening the Special Investigation Unit for a police service free of bribery, corruption and fraud

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## Implementing justice

- According to the pledge announced by the National People’s Power on 17-04-2023, appropriate legal actions will be taken against the politicians and public officials who were found guilty by the verdicts of the Supreme Court for the Easter Sunday attack.

- Taking prompt legal action against the relevant politicians and officials according to the recommendations of the Presidential Commission regarding the Easter Sunday attacks on 2019-04-21
- Promptly completing investigations into political killings and abductions of journalists, sportspersons and others that have not been solved for a long time and implementing the law against the criminals
- Providing justice to journalists, security personnel, and other people who left the country under threat due to political pressure.

## **4.5. A humanitarian prison - A lawful confinement**

### **Introduction**

The vision of the Prisons Department in Sri Lanka is to social reintegration of inmates as good citizens through rehabilitation. But in the recent past, incidents of killing and inhumane torture of prisoners in various prisons show that people who are imprisoned face different forms of abuse. Also, there is a public opinion that powerful prisoners with certain political connections enjoy special privileges.

“Prisoners are also human” is only limited to a theme at present, and overcrowding and lack of basic facilities for prisoners are serious problems faced by prisons. The prison has become a place to punish prisoners rather than to reform them. Prisons at present have become criminal centres due to drug trafficking and underworld activities and have hindered the people who are serving their prison life with good behaviour.

The increase in the remand prisoner population is a major cause of prison overcrowding due to the long time it takes to complete legal proceedings. In 2022, there were 108,250 remand prisoners, 30,331 convicted prisoners, and a total of 138,581 prisoners living in prisons. Men show a higher tendency to be imprisoned than women, and the percentage of women among the total number of prisoners in 2022 was 3.23%. 19,094 or 62.95% of convicted prisoners were convicted of drug related charges. Further, 92% of the convicted prisoners had been educated up to G.E.C. O/L exam or less, while 62% were under 40. Although it is the expectation of the National People’s Power to create a social environment where people are not inclined to do crimes, we consider the welfare of the people serving prison sentences for any reason to be the responsibility of the government.

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### **Principles**

- **Guardianship and protection**
  - **Rehabilitation and re-socializing**
- 

### **ACTIVITIES**

- Preventing all forms of torture inside prisons
- Analysing the nature, mental status, and other qualities of the prisoners, and categorizing and placing of prisoners accordingly



- Expanding facilities within prisons, including special facilities according to international standards
- Ensuring the quality of the food given to prisoners
- Referral of persons convicted of minor offences to community programs without incarceration
- Launching vocational counselling service to reform prisoners
- Introducing regular exercise programs to maintain the physical health of the prisoners
- Programmes to use long-term prisoners for various production processes and services
- Streamlining the process to detain prisoners with good behaviour in open-air prisons and or send them home under regular supervision
- Educational and vocational training courses in every prison
- Improving the efficiency of institutions involved in the criminal justice system to avoid prolonged detention as remand prisoners
- Paying special attention to the welfare of prisoners and preventing all form of violence against them in prisons
- Expanding education, health, and other services to children who live in prisons with their mothers

## **4.6. A drug-free country - A healthier citizen life**

### **Introduction**

**A**t present, drug use has become a social problem due to its rapid rise. Drug use has caused many serious problems in the family as well as in society. The tendency of schoolchildren to get addicted to drugs has increased.

The current regime has failed to control the importation and distribution of drugs into the country, and jailing drug users alone is not adequate to curbing this menace. Currently, drug use has created a social tragedy and in 2022, 152,979 people were arrested for drug offences. However, only 1930 people among these were referred to rehabilitation programmes. About 60% of the offenders who go to prison are in prison for drug-related offences. Sri Lanka has become a hub for drug trafficking in the region, under the protection of political and other forces, which has contributed to the growth of organized crime. Therefore, the National People's Power prioritizes drug prevention.

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### **ACTIVITIES**

- An integrated operation to prevent drugs and organized crime in the country
- Establishment of a separate Bureau for Narcotics Prevention
- Development of naval and air surveillance facilities and provide modern equipment and training to officials to prevent the entry of drugs into the country

- Regularize rehabilitation programmes for drug addicts to free them from drug use
- Strengthening penalties for drug offences and taking measures for the speedy resolution of cases
- Implementation of continuous programmes to educate school children
- Expanding the functions of the Dangerous Drugs Control Board, and establishing monitoring committees to involve people in the fight against drugs
- Educating the community about the adverse effects of drug use

## **4.7 A dignified diplomacy - A sovereign state**

### **Introduction**

Sri Lanka's strategic location at the center of the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal has deep rooted historical antecedents. Archeological evidence provides ample materials to establish that Sri Lanka has had vibrant trade relations across the Bay of Bengal and with Southeast Asia. Sri Lanka's geostrategic location within the Indian Ocean is a blessing as the island is astride one of the world's busiest sea lanes of communication that connect East and West.

Developing Asia will be the world's largest region in terms of population. The region's share of world GDP will reach 30.5%, and Asia will essentially be a middle-income region by 2025. Sri Lanka has a history of leadership in foreign policy, grounded in the principle of non-alignment.

For the mutual growth along with the other countries of the region as well as for the National Security Foreign Policy play a crucial role. Factors that influence any State's foreign policy choices are geographical location, population, history, economic resources, ideology, government efficiency, quality of diplomacy, crisis and immediate events, technological advancements, international law and institutions, etc. However, we have observed in the recent past that the determinant of the foreign policy in Sri Lanka has mainly influenced by external factors and survival choices of ruling parties rather than the best interest of Sri Lankans. National interests should be the cornerstone of the foreign policy. Foreign policy reflects national interests and offers a perspective on human and global interests of a particular State.

When the current situation of Sri Lanka is considered, we are passing a period of worst economic crisis. One of the most important national interests of ours is to gradually withdraw from the debt crisis. Further domestic policy is formulated to protect and promote the national interest domestically within the country. A country's foreign policy is designed based on national strategy to protect and promote the national interests. Foreign and domestic policies are intertwined more closely than ever before. Sri Lanka's current foreign relations are influenced significantly by attempts to recover from the worst economic crisis in 2022 and stands as a challenge we should overcome. Rising geopolitical tension among international and regional powers in our region has become a key challenge to Sri Lanka's security and regional stability.

However, its geographical location as well as Sri Lanka's long invested diplomatic and cultural assets will become cornerstone our success. Comparatively higher human

development indicators such as the level of education and health, education of women, etc.. than other south Asian countries have provided Sri Lanka a relatively positive cultural level of the population which will be a pro factor for achieving ambitious Economic and foreign policy targets also.

Sri Lanka has important diplomatic recognition earned through some wise and correct actions of the past. For instance, Sri Lanka has been a traditional friend of oppressed and colonized nations in the world and Sri Lanka has always supported their independence. Number of those countries are now not only independent but also has become major regional powers. Sri Lanka has been standing right side of the history promoting peace, sovereignty of the nations in various international issues. Sri Lanka has never supported any international war after its independence. Sri Lanka has a good name among many nations for its principled positions. These precious diplomatic assets should be employed to achieve the new challenges of the country. Sri Lanka must regain her position as an “International consensus builder”. Examples of Stewardship of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the 1970’s, Law of the Sea in the 1980’s and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995.

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## **The principles**

- Complying with the UN Charter and its principals and UN System.
- Promote international and regional peace and security.
- Peaceful Co-Existence: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, equality of States, mutual growth, mutual respect and non-interference in each other’s internal affairs.
- Supremacy of diplomacy in managing and resolving global problems.
- Promote regional and Global integration through State to State and people to people diplomacy.

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## **ACTIVITIES**

The role and functions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Development of Clear Guidelines: Formulating a comprehensive foreign policy document outlining strategic priorities, goals, and expected conduct of Sri Lanka’s representatives abroad. This document shall undergo periodic review to adapt to evolving global dynamics.
- Internal restructuring the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to meet with new foreign policy objectives after comprehensive analysis.
- Focused and coordinated guidance on Sri Lanka Foreign Service (SLFS).
- Evaluating the economically developing, emerging countries and areas where Sri Lanka should open its missions which can strengthen the country’s economic capacity

## **Diplomatic Missions**

- Rationalization of Sri Lanka Overseas Missions and Right Sizing of Missions.
  - Having performance indicators for each Mission aligned with trade enhancement, tourism promotion, professional and vocational training and employment opportunities.
  - Appointing professional career diplomats, with a proven track record, to head Sri Lanka's Missions. Appointing qualified officers for Foreign Service on merit basis with professional excellence, the highest standards of ethical conduct, and diplomatic discretion.
  - Immediate remedial action must be taken to de-politicize the Foreign Service and make appointments on merit.
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## **Institutional Reforms:**

- Decentralization of Diplomatic Initiatives: Empower Embassies to take the initiative in line with the overall foreign policy framework of Sri Lanka while ensuring accountability through regular oversight.
  - Streamlined Processes: Simplify and streamline diplomatic processes to make them more efficient and responsive to the needs of the citizen and the State.
  - Creation of data bases of human resources (of all categories) and physical assets.
  - Restructuring and strengthening of the Diplomatic Training Institute and the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI).
- 

## **Enhancing Diplomatic Training and Capacity Building:**

- Improved Training Programs: Develop comprehensive training programs for diplomats focusing on negotiation skills, cultural diplomacy, economic diplomacy, and international law.
- Tailor training sessions to address the specific challenges faced by Missions in different regions.
- Continuous Professional Development: compulsory ongoing learning and professional development for diplomats.

Revising Diplomatic Protocols and Ethics:

- Ethical Guidelines: Establish a clear code of conduct for diplomats that emphasizes integrity, professionalism, and accountability.

Strengthening Centralized Oversight and Coordination:

- Centralized Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish a robust mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the performance of Sri Lankan diplomats. Regular reviews should be conducted to assess the alignment of their actions with national foreign policy objectives.
- Standardized Reporting: Implement standardized reporting procedures where missions are required to regularly update the Foreign Ministry on their activities, challenges, and achievements.

## **Service Efficiency Sri Lankan Missions**

- Increase the e-services provided by the Sri Lankan missions to reduce the time consumption for the services
  - Enhance the quality of the services provided to the Sri Lankan diaspora with a people oriented attitude at a reduced the cost.
  - Provide services in an efficient manner with the purpose of encouraging visits of foreigners to Sri Lanka while being vigilant of the National Security aspects.
  - Provide necessary funds, technology and technical know-how to the Sri Lankan Missions to provide services efficiently.
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## **Political Diplomacy**

- Priority shall be given to promote and strengthen the Diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with G20 countries, BRICS+ countries, ASEAN, Middle East and African Continent. After a comprehensive study, statuses of our foreign missions will be upgraded and opening new embassies shall be considered according to the recommendations of the study.
  - Providing an opportunity to participate in the global decision-making process for all States regardless of their size and development status.
  - Promoting an open, inclusive and prosperous South Asian region in which the rights of all States are respected. Ensuring maintaining a secure and peaceful environment in and around South Asia.
  - Supporting multilateralism through the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, including regional economic commissions.
  - Exploring new opportunities and new global and regional platforms which can assist to achieve national interests of Sri Lanka, especially in economic sphere.
  - Promoting the nation's self-image through values such as freedom, democracy, social justice, human rights, and the rule of law and climate justice.
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## **Economic Diplomacy**

- Engaging with the international economy and positioning its domestic economy to provide economic wealth and security.
- Interacting with foreign partners to bring in Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), financial assistance, and technology transfer for schemes and programmes. Attempting to diversify sources of FDI.
- Analyzing and promoting Sri Lankan trade, tourism, and investment, as the country aims to become a hub of the Indian Ocean, it seeks synergies with international partners and friends as it moves towards shared aspirations.
- Opening up the domestic market within the National Economic Framework pursuing positive economic management and expanding economic cooperation with other countries.

- Full priority shall be given to promote and strengthen the Diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with G20 countries, BRICS+ countries, ASEAN, Middle East and African Continent.
- Modern and comprehensive investment law shall be enacted to improve the business environment for the foreign and local private sector, including, streamlining business procedures, investing in infrastructure, improving access to finance for Small and medium-sized enterprises - SMEs, and raising skilled and quality of human resources.
- Improving access to other markets through new trade agreements and linking Sri Lanka to global production networks to increase exports.
- Developing Sri Lanka as a critical service provider to international trade. Bilateral and multilateral trade agreements with main trade partners to promote the Sri Lankan economy. Remaining trade agreements will be analysed and upgraded according to achieve the stipulated targets with the consent of the other signing partners.
- Renewable Energy Diplomacy; Positioning Sri Lanka as a leader in renewable energy by promoting international partnerships and investments in sustainable energy projects. Participating in global renewable energy initiatives and sharing best practices.

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## **National Security**

- Safeguard Sri Lanka's Sovereignty and territorial integrity including the rights of the territorial waters
- Never allow the deployment of any military force into Sri Lanka intended to perform any activities whatsoever.
- Working towards strengthening and promoting international law; regional and global stability, peace, and security; and the multilateral system.
- Strengthening the engagement with Southeast Asian and ASEAN to combat terrorism, separatism, extremism, piracy, and other non-traditional security threats.
- Attract and manage foreign investments without hindering Sri Lanka's national security and economic interests.
- Cyber security cooperation, while strictly adhering to the national security policy international collaborations shall be established to enhance cyber security infrastructure and strategies.

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## **Maritime Diplomacy**

- Acting to preserve a world in which all countries enjoy sea and air access as provided for under international law.
- Securing a safe, stable, secure maritime domain, free and open sea lanes of communication based on UN adopted law of the Sea.
- Ensuring to play an essential role in regional security in the Indian Ocean because of its strategic location proximity to major shipping lines and high-quality logistics services.

- Becoming a net security provider and first responder working closely with countries who share maritime borders with Indian Ocean on anti-piracy patrols, pollution control, marine eco system and biodiversity conservation, maritime search, maritime security, resilient and reliable supply chains, data, and counter terrorism and rescue operations, joint exercises, etc.

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## **Cultural Diplomacy**

- Establishing Sri Lanka Directorate of Cultural Relations under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Enhancing cultural exchanges and promoting Sri Lankan culture abroad to build soft power and foster mutual understanding. This includes establishing cultural centers, supporting Sri Lankan artists and performers in international platforms, and participating in global cultural events.
- Recognizing proper mutual understanding between the peoples of Sri Lanka and other nations is an essential prerequisite for conducting diplomacy. Strengthening international cultural exchanges contributes to building international relations of peace and stability by heightening mutual understanding among nations and creating a more decadent cultural climate.
- Utilizing sports diplomacy as a foundation for establishing solid relationships with other countries through sports exchanges.
- Initiating specific cultural weeks/month with countries in where considerable Sri Lankan diaspora presence and countries where we get considerable inflow of tourists.
- Promoting religious diplomacy to persuasion, attraction and cultural exchanges to promote the image of the country as well as to build friendship among people.

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## **Science and Technology Diplomacy**

- Making science, technology and innovation as a fundamental tool of Sri Lankan foreign policy.
- Attracting global scientific community with the direct involvement of prominent Sri Lankan scientists to establish laboratories, research centers, and exhibitions in Sri Lanka with regional and global significance.
- Considering to grant citizenship for the scientists and research with excellence who are ready to promote Sri Lanka as an important regional center for science and technology.
- Improving the quality of human capital by promoting the so-called STEAM combination of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics at all levels of learning and accelerating domestic economic reform.
- Encouraging multinational IT companies to invest in Sri Lanka to leverage it as the Digital Gateway to Asia. Appoint dedicated representatives to multilateral agencies like UNESCAP.



## **Parliamentary Diplomacy**

- Parliamentary diplomacy shall be strengthened as a top priority area due its global recognition, established institutional structures, multi-party representation and frequent opportunities it enjoys. Ministry of Foreign Affairs will support the Sri Lankan Parliament to establish Parliamentary friendship societies, joint programmes with other Parliaments and speaker level, Members of Parliament level and staff level programmes will be encouraged.
  - Ministry of Foreign Affairs will facilitate the Sri Lankan Parliament to use all regional and global Parliamentary forums to extract the best possible results for the country.
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## **Public Diplomacy**

- Promoting Sri Lankan NGOs and other reputed civil organizations in abroad for the common good of the peoples.
  - Ministry of Foreign Affairs will appreciate Sri Lankan diplomats, academia, security experts and experts on various fields who are ready to strengthen and promote think tanks and platforms which study and engage with regional and global political and economic developments. Ministry of Foreign Affairs will keep continuous constructive dialogue with those organizations.
  - Provincial Councils, Municipalities, Universities and other major public institutions etc.... shall be requested to facilitate to open Foreign Relations offices (within the stipulated laws of the country) in order to establish cordial and meaningful relations with their counterparts in other countries.
  - Prominent Sri Lankan individuals with par excellence in their fields shall be employed as Brand Ambassadors or Special Envoys to promote Public Diplomacy when necessary.
  - Encourage Sri Lankan Diaspora to engage with other communities in country they reside.
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## **Humanitarian Diplomacy**

- Enhancing Sri Lanka's role in global humanitarian efforts by participating in international aid programs and disaster relief missions. Building capacity within Sri Lanka for rapid response to humanitarian crises both domestically and internationally.
  - Obtaining UN peacekeeping and peace enforcement opportunities for tri forces and police to support the genuine grievances of people of other nations.
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## **Legal Reforms**

- Reforming dual citizenship laws and immigration laws to facilitate the economic contributions of overseas Sri Lankans.
- Pursuing litigation under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is an option that has been successfully used.
- Strengthening trade rules through bilateral and regional free trade agreements (FTAs) to advance our commercial interests in overseas markets.



- Establish Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnerships (RCEP) either bilaterally or multilaterally.
- Promoting and protecting the international rules that support stability and prosperity and enable cooperation to tackle global challenges.

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## **Diaspora engagement**

- Foreign Employment Bureau will be attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a better coordination, efficient use of available human and financial resources for the purpose of providing better welfare of the Sri Lankan employees in foreign countries.
- Facilitate the foreign employed Sri Lankan citizens to exercise their votes from the country they reside.
- Much needed insurance and social security system including a retirement pension for the foreign employed citizens shall be introduced.
- Entrepreneur Promotion Unit shall be established within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to facilitate capable Sri Lankan entrepreneurs living in foreign countries along with the possibilities of financial facilities as well.
- Establishing a Consultative body with the Sri Lankan diaspora in every country where a considerable number of Sri Lankans is present. This Consultative body will be mandated to engage with the Sri Lankan foreign mission in a permanent and routine manner with the respective foreign mission as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to continuously upgrade the services for the Sri Lankan diaspora. Encouraging entering active domestic social and economic spheres in their countries of residence.
- Appointing NRSLs as Honorary Consuls to further Sri Lankan interests abroad.
- Providing solutions with regard to the problems occur at remitting money to Sri Lankan accounts such as higher service charges, difficulties of opening and continuing multi-currency accounts from the country of residence and much needed insurances for such accounts.
- Facilitate the possibility of foreign employed Sri Lankan citizens to invest in Sri Lanka including on the bonds for development projects

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## **Current Foreign Policy Stances**

- We shall not allow any country or institution to use Sri Lanka's land, Sea and Air spaces to threaten or risk the national security any country in the region including India.
- We shall support to the UN adopted Two state solution to establish a Free Sovereign Palestinian State.
- We shall follow and implement to eliminate the threat of Terrorism, separatism and Extremism.
- As a firm policy, Sri Lanka shall oppose foreign military bases and similar military agreements and militarizing initiatives in the Indian Ocean.

## 4.8 High level of national security - A secured state

# Introduction

National security is the mechanism of facing dealing with any challenges that may be posed externally or internally for the security of the citizen, the territorial integrity, and sovereignty of the country, or by natural and human activities while managing such challenges through geopolitical and geostrategic means from the security measures provided by the defence forces.

Independent and balanced diplomacy, democratic governance that respects human rights, equality and harmony that embraces diversity, and a professional military dedicated to the protection of the citizens and the state are essential factors to ensure national security.

Law enforcement agencies such as the Armed Forces, Police, Coast Guard, Excise Department, Prisons Department and Customs, as well as intelligence services and civil defence services, play an important role in ensuring the internal security of the state. The strength and transparency of these security forces are reflected and maintained through transparent democratic governance capable of fulfilling the national power and the promotion of national interests, i.e. national inspirations. Political leadership, economic, geographical, and environmental presence, popular ideology, and defense forces can be identified as the components of national power. Non-aligned and balanced diplomatic policies, strategic foreign policies based on the understanding of global and regional geopolitical and balance security posture, as well as economic independence are the factors that affect the reduction of threats to national security globally and regionally.

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## Principles

- **Protection of citizens**
- **Sovereignty and territorial integrity**
- **Internal Security and National Reconciliation**
- **Maritime domain and airspace security**
- **Accountability and responsibility of national security**
- **Protection of national resources**
- **Energy security**
- **Contribution of state intelligence services to national security**
- **Formal security research and development**

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## ACTIVITIES

- Adopting good governance initiatives that can maintain harmony and coexistence among ethnicities while protecting democracy, citizen rights, and human rights on the rule of law.
- Ensuring regional security and peaceful coexistence, strengthening national security through safe international relations.

- Ensuring territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country without compromise
- Strengthening and streamlining the National Security Council, ensuring responsibility and accountability for national security.
- Establishment of a National Security Advisory Board consisting of experts in relevant fields of national security.
- Restoration of the Sri Lanka defense forces under competent leadership as professional forces with developed and technological knowledge, and proper training with knowledge and capabilities relevant to national security.
- Streamline the procedures followed for appointment and promotion to higher posts, and selection for special and foreign training in the armed forces, with accepted military procedures and based solely on merit, professional skills, and unblemished professional history.
- Streamlining the defense research and development structure, to periodically update the defense sector with modern and technological knowledge and development, to meet complex and rapidly changing challenges.
- Enhancing excellence in the defense sector by integrating knowledge of national security with science, technology, and innovation.
- Protecting the honour and dignity of the members of the armed forces and not assigning them to any civilian work that is not related to the forces, except by the procedures accepted in case of urgent national needs.
- Establishing a trustworthy and efficient integrated intelligence mechanism along with a proper procedure that certifies the responsibility and accountability in fulfilling duties for the country's future prosperity, wellbeing, social security, and public security to achieve the national security aims and good governance.
- Developing the security policy in the national information systems efficiently and productively and empowering the responsible institutes. Here, a strong, energetic, well- networked, and safe IT network will be enacted by recognizing cyber security challenges for a productive national information network.
- Reformation and formalizing of the monitoring system with the productive integration of the National Intelligence Service by certifying the complete accountability of the law enactment institutes (Police, customs, prison).
- Creating a strategic security environment and permanent foundation for economic stability.
- Strengthening and formalizing the laws to prevent corruption and financial crimes and other structure.
- Establishing a mechanism that is accountable and responsible for the consumption and conservation of national and strategic resources towards the protection of national security.
- Technical updating of the Sri Lanka Navy and the Sri Lanka Coastal Guard and the enactment of relevant laws to ensure the security and stability of the EZZ of Sri Lanka.
- Protection and conservation of a stable marine environment in the sea, and the ensuring of the maritime judiciary powers which enacts the maritime law against challenges to the development of the maritime industry.

- Introducing an integrated management mechanism with regional partnership to productively control the international maritime boundaries under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.
- Formalizing disaster management structure to minimize health and economic effects and to protect the lives of the citizenry by identifying and responding to the effects of disasters such as industrial and environmental pollution, natural disasters, fires, and droughts.
- Establishing a mechanism to ensure and formalize that all investigations take place independently and apolitically to ensure national protection by using modern methods sufficient to prevent any crime that takes place against the citizenry, where Sri Lanka Police receives professionalism, pride, and respect.
- Introducing a mechanism to raise awareness among the maritime areas, by establishing an absolute control, on air, sea, and land independence with regional partnership.
- Integrating and formalizing the search and rescue region and flight information region (FIR) in Sri Lanka Air Force, to protect the air space within the maritime control region.
- Critically integrating the technical knowledge of the Air Force with the navy and Air services and supporting to ensure regional protection to ensure national security.
- Ensuring that the retired defence force members who sacrificed their lives for the motherland, disabled members and members currently serving in the forces spend a life with respect and pride, while respecting the memory of the deceased and missing soldiers.
- Considering the fair, compassionate and humane details regarding the soldiers who have left the defense services and releasing them and empowering them to live as respected and productive citizens.
- Regulating the private security industry to ensure the professionalism and job security, since a majority who retired from the defence forces and police employed in this field

## 4.9 A Sri Lankan nation - The universal citizen

### Introduction

Sri Lanka is a country with people of various ethnicities such as Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim, Burgher, Malay and various religions such as Buddhist, Hindu, Islam, Christian, Catholic, etc. Because of that diversity, it is essential for the well-being and national unity of the country to live in a multicultural society that exists by nature, accepting and respecting each other. But the country has failed to build the Sri Lankan nation by taking advantage of the various opportunities in history. The country had to face a tragic war of 30 years as a result of creating mutual suspicion and mistrust and disunity between ethnicities and military groups for the sake of obtaining and maintaining power and narrow opportunistic political interests. The sorrows and sad results of that war still remain in Sri Lankan society. The National People's Power is dedicated to creating national unity for the building of the Sri Lankan nation, not divided based on ethnicity, language, religion, caste, or gender, and by respecting the diversity of identities and ensuring their survival and protection.

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### Principles

- Political partnership of all ethnicities
  - No citizen/community should be subjected to humiliation, oppression, degrading treatment or injustice on the basis of ethnicity, language, religion, caste, sex or any other grounds.
  - Safety, mutual understanding, trust and rights of all ethnicities and religious groups.
  - A harmonious Sri Lankan nation undivided by racist, castes and religious ideologies
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### ACTIVITIES

- Introduce a new constitution that strengthens democracy and ensures equality of all citizens. This initiative will build on the constitutional reform process started in 2015 which remains incomplete. The proposed constitutional reforms will guarantee equality and democracy and the devolution of political and administrative power to every local government, district and province so that all people can be involved in governance within one country.
- Provincial councils and local government elections, which are currently postponed indefinitely, will be held within a year to provide an opportunity for the people to join the governance.
- A Commission Against Discrimination, with a legal mandate will be established.
- Investigating and serving justice to the political assassinations, disappearances and assaults that happened in the past in all areas including the North and East.
- Expanding the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate acts of violence caused by racism and religious extremism