

# Profile of Namal Rajapaksa

## Personal Information

- **Full Name:** Lakshman Namal Rajapaksa
- **Date of Birth:** April 10, 1986
- **Age:** 38
- **Nationality:** Sri Lankan
- **Ethnicity:** Sinhalese
- **Religion:** Buddhism
  
- **Education:**
  - ✓ **Primary and Secondary Education:** Royal College, Colombo – A prestigious school that has educated many of Sri Lanka's political elite.
  - ✓ **Higher Education:**
    - LL.B (Bachelor of Laws) from the University of London
    - Postgraduate Diploma in Law from City Law School, London
    - Called to the Bar as an Attorney-at-Law in Sri Lanka
  - ✓ **Additional Education:** Diplomas and professional courses focused on entrepreneurship and political strategy.
- **Profession:** Lawyer, Politician
- **Spouse:** Limini Weerasinghe (married in September 2019)
- **Children:** One son (born in 2021)
- **Political Status:** Senior Member of Parliament (MP), representing Hambantota District
- **Residency:** Colombo, Sri Lanka; Hambantota District
- **Family Influence:** Member of the influential Rajapaksa family, one of Sri Lanka's most powerful political dynasties

## Political Background and Career

- **Current Position:**
  - **Member of Parliament for Hambantota District (2010–present)**
  - **Former Minister of Youth and Sports (2020–2022)**
  - **Former Minister of Digital Technology and Entrepreneur Development (2020–2022)**
  - **Former Minister of Development Coordination and Monitoring (2020–2021)**
- **Political Party:** Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP)
  - **Namal Rajapaksa plays a critical role in the SLPP, the party his father Mahinda Rajapaksa helped establish. SLPP is currently the dominant political party in Sri Lanka.**

- **Key Political Roles:** Namal has been active in youth and sports development, digital economy initiatives, and promoting regional development.
- **- Family Influence:**
  - Son of Mahinda Rajapaksa, the former President and Prime Minister of Sri Lanka
  - Nephew of Gotabaya Rajapaksa, former President of Sri Lanka
  - Grandson of D.A. Rajapaksa, a founder of the SLFP and a former Cabinet Minister
  - Youth Engagement and SLPP Development:
  - Namal Rajapaksa has played a significant role in engaging the youth through the SLPP, positioning it as a party focused on development, entrepreneurship, and economic growth. He is considered a rising star within his party, leveraging his family's legacy.

#### Political Rise:

- **Namal entered politics at a young age, largely thanks to the legacy of his father, Mahinda Rajapaksa, who served as President of Sri Lanka from 2005 to 2015, and his uncle, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who was President from 2019 to 2022. Namal's entrance into politics in 2010 was widely seen as part of a strategy to maintain the Rajapaksa family's influence in the country's political landscape.**
- **His political rise has focused on addressing the needs of the younger generation and building a platform centered on innovation, technology, and national pride.**

#### Notable Political Initiatives and Contributions

- **Youth Empowerment:**
  - **As Minister of Youth and Sports, Namal focused on creating employment opportunities for young people. He promoted youth leadership programs, entrepreneurship ventures, and sports-based career paths to engage the younger population.**
- **Digital Transformation:**
  - **Namal has championed digital literacy and technology-related initiatives, aiming to position Sri Lanka as a regional tech hub. Under his leadership, there were multiple programs to improve internet access, promote IT education, and encourage startups.**
- **Regional Development:**
  - **With his strong connection to Hambantota, Namal has been a driving force behind the development of the region, including initiatives around the Hambantota Port and Mattala International Airport, aiming to turn the region into a major economic zone.**
- **Sports Development:**
  - **As Minister of Youth and Sports, Namal oversaw significant investment in sports infrastructure. His efforts led to the improvement of national sports facilities and**

grassroots sports development, particularly rugby, which is a personal passion of his. He also worked to support Sri Lankan athletes on the international stage.

- **Cultural Advocacy:**
  - Namal has consistently promoted Sri Lankan cultural values, and during his time in office, he supported programs that aimed to preserve Sri Lankan heritage and promote national pride.
- **Public Service and Engagement:**
  - He is known for engaging closely with constituents, particularly through social media, maintaining a strong connection with the younger population and using modern platforms to share his ideas and policies.

### Election Campaign and Focus

- **2024 Presidential Campaign:** Though Namal has not announced a formal run for the presidency as of yet, many speculate he is being groomed as a future leader of the country, possibly positioning himself for the 2024 or 2029 presidential elections.
- **Campaign Focus:**
  - **Youth Leadership and Employment:** Expanding job opportunities through government initiatives, scholarships, and youth training.
  - **Entrepreneurship and Innovation:** Launching incubation programs for startups, encouraging digital entrepreneurship, and creating a thriving tech-driven economy.
  - **Infrastructure and Industrial Growth:** Continued development of key infrastructure projects in Hambantota, promoting international trade and investment.
  - **Social Welfare Programs:** Strengthening welfare systems for rural communities and marginalized groups.
- **Key Issues:**
  - **Economic Stability:** Amid Sri Lanka's ongoing economic challenges, Namal has highlighted the need for foreign direct investment (FDI), export promotion, and tourism growth as solutions.
  - **Education Reform:** Improving the quality of education through technology integration, teacher training, and vocational education reforms.
  - **Sports Development:** Further expanding sports programs nationwide, with a vision to make Sri Lanka more competitive in global sports.

## Election Symbol

- Candidate Symbol: Namal Rajapaksa uses the SLPP's hand symbol, a widely recognized and powerful symbol in Sri Lankan politics that aligns him closely with the Rajapaksa family's influence and the SLPP's core values of stability, development, and national unity.

## Political Achievements

- **Hambantota Development:**
  - Namal has played a major role in the development of Hambantota as an economic zone, helping secure international deals for the Hambantota Port and nearby industrial parks.
- **Youth Engagement:**
  - Through various youth programs, Namal has cultivated a strong base of support among younger voters, making youth policy a central theme of his political agenda.
- **Digital Economy and Technology:**
  - Promoted digital infrastructure initiatives, aiming to improve access to technology and boost entrepreneurship.
- **Rural Development:**
  - Focused on improving rural connectivity, healthcare, and educational opportunities in his home district of Hambantota.

## Controversies and Criticisms

- **Dynastic Politics:**
  - Namal has been criticized for being part of a political dynasty, with many accusing the Rajapaksa family of monopolizing power. Critics argue that his political success is primarily due to his family connections rather than his own merit.
- **Allegations of Corruption:**
  - He has been linked to various corruption allegations, particularly related to the Hambantota development projects and the misuse of public funds. However, Namal denies any involvement in corruption, and no formal convictions have been made.
- **Economic Policies:**

- His family's role in accumulating foreign debt, particularly with China, has drawn criticism, with some blaming their policies for contributing to Sri Lanka's current economic crisis.
- **Handling of Political Protests:**
  - During the 2022 economic crisis, Namal and the Rajapaksa government faced significant backlash, with massive protests calling for his family's resignation from power due to the handling of the crisis.

## Personal and Community Life

- **Family Legacy:**
  - Namal is the son of Mahinda Rajapaksa, former President and Prime Minister, and is considered a key figure in the next generation of Rajapaksa leadership.
- **Community Engagement:**
  - Despite criticism, Namal remains closely involved with his constituents, particularly in the Hambantota District. He is known for organizing community events and engaging in grassroots-level projects.
- **Sports Background:**
  - Namal was a rugby player during his university years, and his passion for sports continues to influence his political work, particularly in youth sports development.

## Visual and Symbolic Representation

### Appearance:

- Namal is typically dressed in smart casual or formal attire, often sporting the national dress of Sri Lanka at official events. He presents a youthful, modern political image.

### Election Symbol:

- The **hand symbol** of the SLPP is central to Namal's political identity, closely linked to the populist, nationalistic message of the Rajapaksa family.

## Color and Branding

### - Campaign Color:

📌 **Red:** Symbolizing energy, strength, and national pride, red is the primary color of the SLPP's campaign.

📌 **Blue and Green:** Occasionally incorporated to symbolize unity and growth.

### Political Vision & Policies:

#### 1. Co-operative Development Model:

##### 1.1 Background Story

Namal Rajapaksa's co-operative model is rooted in the principles of national unity, economic recovery, and adapting to global changes, while maintaining sacred national values. This plan draws inspiration from his father, Mahinda Rajapaksa's "Mahinda Chinthana" vision, which transformed Sri Lanka's development post-war. Namal seeks to extend that vision to foster both recovery from economic crises and sustainable growth.

##### 1.2 Tax Relief Plan

Namal proposes a simplified tax system that eliminates most taxes except for income tax, value-added tax (VAT), and retention tax. He aims to alleviate burdens by revising taxes on essentials like internet facilities and reducing over-targeted taxes like PAYE.

##### 1.3 Fertilizer Policy

He plans to introduce a permanent relief scheme for farmers, helping them access affordable fertilizers for paddy, vegetable, and fruit crops. This initiative will ensure sustained agricultural productivity and support farmers' livelihoods.

##### 1.4 Market Stimulation

Namal aims to boost local businesses by easing import restrictions. This would reconnect businesses to global markets, stimulate production, and facilitate growth in sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing.

##### 1.5 Employment for Youth

To create more job opportunities, especially in health, IT, software engineering, and e-commerce, Namal plans to develop IT zones and initiate personal loan schemes to support youth seeking foreign employment. His policies emphasize youth training and knowledge development for high-demand global markets.

##### 1.6 Samurdhi and Prosperity Relief Program

He commits to continuing subsidies for low-income households to ensure food security and improve the standard of living for vulnerable populations.

### **1.7 Utility Cost Relief**

Namal proposes reducing household and business costs related to water and electricity, making these services more affordable and enhancing the quality of life for citizens.

### **1.8 Efficiency in Public Services**

Namal's plan includes the integration of public services into a unified IT system, simplifying processes for obtaining important documents such as birth certificates and educational records.

### **1.9 Tourism and International Exchange**

Sri Lanka will be positioned as a major tourist and business exchange hub. Namal envisions modern facilities that cater not only to holidaymakers but also to business transactions and international conferences.

### **1.10 Health and Wellness Sector**

Under Namal's leadership, Sri Lanka aims to become a regional leader in pharmaceutical manufacturing and health care services, building advanced private hospitals and promoting Ayurvedic treatments for both physical and mental well-being.

### **1.11 Global Spiritual Center**

To attract individuals seeking personal growth, Namal plans to establish Sri Lanka as a global center for spiritual well-being, incorporating practices such as pure Buddhism and Asian meditation.

### **1.12 High-Precision Technology Manufacturing**

He envisions establishing high-precision technology manufacturing centers that provide opportunities for both foreign and local investors, ensuring Sri Lanka becomes a competitive player in the global technology sector.

### **1.13 Arts and Culture Development**

Namal intends to promote Sri Lankan arts and culture by establishing an Arts and Cultural Expert Center, which will preserve the country's heritage and foster new artistic expressions over the next decade.

### **1.14 Creative Economic Center**

Focusing on audio-visual design and creative media, Namal plans to transform Sri Lanka into a hub for creative industries, supporting entrepreneurs and driving innovation in the digital economy.

### **1.15 International Education Center**

Namal envisions turning Sri Lanka into a leading educational destination by attracting 10,000 international students annually. He plans to build new universities and educational facilities in the southern part of the country, offering a safe and welcoming environment for learning.

### **1.16 Renewable Energy Export Center**

Sri Lanka will become a regional leader in renewable energy, focusing on solar, wind, and water

power. Namal's initiative aims to produce surplus electricity for export, positioning the country as a key player in sustainable energy production.

### 1.17 National Essentials

- **Unity & Sovereignty:** Protecting the unity of all ethnic groups in Sri Lanka (Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim, Malay, Burgher, and indigenous peoples) while ensuring the sovereignty of the nation.
- **Security:** Strengthening intelligence and security services to ensure public safety and statutory rights.
- **Diplomacy:** Namal's policies maintain Sri Lanka's autonomy while fostering friendly relations with other nations, promoting independence and international cooperation.

### 1.18 Economic Growth Plan (2025-2035)

Namal's ambitious economic goals include doubling per capita income, increasing domestic production to USD 130 billion, achieving a positive trade balance within six months, and creating a strong dollar reserve for imports. He aims to reduce state debt to 30% of GDP, maintain 7% economic growth, and manage single-digit inflation.

### 1.19 Sustainable Development

His policies emphasize the sustainable use of resources, ensuring long-term environmental protection alongside economic growth. Namal also plans to expedite environmental clearances for development projects while safeguarding ecological balance.

### 1.20 Collective Vision for National Development

Namal urges collective action and participation to achieve these ambitious goals, with specific programs implemented through relevant ministries and public institutions. His vision is to build a developed and united Sri Lanka that will never experience war or economic crises due to external factors.

### Conclusion

Namal Rajapaksa's co-operative development model emphasizes a blend of traditional values, national unity, and modern economic recovery strategies. He seeks to build a prosperous and stable Sri Lanka by promoting agriculture, technology, youth empowerment, and international collaboration while ensuring the welfare of the country's most vulnerable populations. His policies aim for long-term sustainability, equitable growth, and global integration.