

# Independence Day of Sri Lanka

Publicity

## Independence is not Something that Ends with the Victory

By Mahinda Rajapaksa  
Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

This year, we celebrate Sri Lanka's 74th Independence Day amidst many great challenges. The challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has plagued the world for two years, are not insignificant.

Whilst historically, the people of this country had lost their freedom due to foreign invasions and separatist terrorism, today we have lost our freedoms due to the Covid pandemic which deprived us of the opportunity to develop the country for two years. The economy, education and



Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa

livelihoods were completely overturned. However, as a nation that has sacrificed for freedom, we cannot allow this frustration to overcome us.

Although the world faced massive setbacks, we have also used all the positive steps taken globally to recover from the pandemic. We have already taken steps necessary to provide the population with all three vaccinations as a solution to the pandemic. It is this approach that has enabled us to recover from the pandemic to a great extent and return public life to a sense of normalcy.

Freedom is not something that ends with the victory. It is something that should be won day by day, and it is this fact that we must highlight on each Independence Day. However, I firmly believe that a nation inspired by hundreds of years of relentless struggle for free-

dom, is fully capable of remaining undaunted and facing up to this challenge as well. As a nation accustomed to unceasingly fighting for independence, on this Independence Day, let us resolve to overcome these challenges as well.



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## Let's Unite to Defeat COVID Pandemic and Revive Economy

By Professor G. L. Peiris, M.P.  
Foreign Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

On the happy occasion of the National Day of Sri Lanka, marking our country's 74th anniversary of independence from four and a half centuries of foreign colonial rule, it is with immense pride and pleasure that I extend my warm felicitations and sincere greetings to fellow citizens, both in Sri Lanka and spread across all parts of the world.



Foreign Minister Professor G. L. Peiris

Today, we are at a critical juncture in this journey, where all Sri Lankans should re-dedicate themselves to strive hard to overcome the adverse impact of the current global COVID-19 pandemic that has plagued the entire world. In particular, the pandemic has severely and disproportionately affected the economies of developing countries, including Sri Lanka and the lives of the lower income groups. Therefore, I believe, it is vital that all Sri Lankans in the country and abroad unite and support the efforts of the government to defeat the pandemic and revive the economy.

In celebrating the 74th anniversary of independence, we are determined to fulfill the pledges of the government of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, under "The Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour" policy framework, and build a peaceful and prosperous nation, maintaining friendly relations with all the countries in the world.

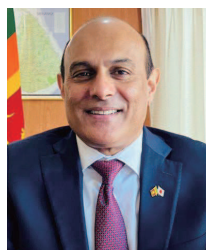
## 70 Years of Diplomatic Relations and Time-Tested Friendship

By Sanjiv Gunasekara  
Ambassador of Sri Lanka

I am privileged to convey warm greetings from His Excellency the President, the Government and from the people of Sri Lanka to their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and the Empress as well as the Government and the friendly people of Japan on this 74th Anniversary of the Independence of Sri Lanka. I also take this opportunity to extend my warmest greetings to all Sri Lankans and persons of Sri Lankan origin who are living in Japan.

**Strong Bonds from Grass Root Level:**  
This year signifies another milestone celebrating 70 years of diplomatic relations between Japan and Sri Lanka. Japanese Embassy in Sri Lanka was opened in February of 1952. It was only a few months after the September 1951 "San Francisco

Peace Conference" when Sri Lanka (then called Ceylon) stood up for a united Japan and represented the views of Asia during a historic speech given by then Finance Minister, President J.R. Jayawardena. Ceylon Mission was one of the first Japanese Embassies to open in the Asian Region.



Sanjiv Gunasekara

Sri Lanka and Japan's relationship dates back a few centuries. The oldest recorded contact being in 1856 when a Japanese boat from Kyushu Island stopped by in Galle on their way to England to replenish food and water. History is written how these 17 travellers admired this small island nations' advanced civilization. It was in 1889 when a young Buddhist

intern Anagarika Dharmapala who later who became a renowned Buddhist activist globally sailed to Kobe, Japan with Colonel Henry Steel Olcott (A Christian American who converted to Buddhism and became a strong Buddhist activist) who is credited for bringing "Theravada Buddhism" from Ceylon to Japan.

**Tourist Destination for Japanese Interests and Wellness:**  
Sri Lanka has NO quarantine and is OPEN for "fully vaccinated" Tourists with a "Negative" Pre departure PCR Test. As of January 2022, Sri Lanka was ranked as the 3rd most vaccinated country in the World with 72% of the total population and 93% of the over 20 population vaccinated.  
Sri Lanka being an island nation has been recommended and featured as one

of the best destinations to travel globally by the most renowned travel magazines as well as Print Media. Sri Lanka is known not only for its beautiful Beaches, Wildlife & Eco-Tourism, Ayurveda and wellness spas, Tea Trails and Picturesque mountains, but also over 2000 years of Culture and Buddhist Heritage to share with its visitors. The warmth and hospitality of Sri Lankans with the curry they serve with "Ceylon Tea" is a unique experience.

**Sri Lanka and Japan's time-tested bi lateral relationship roots are deep, strong, and has withstood obstacles. Trade, economic activity and people to people contact between the two countries are growing. With the emergence of "New World Order" and Sri Lankas' strategic location gives this time tested bi lateral relationship a Renewed Significance and Priority.**



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Best Wishes to the Government and the People of Sri Lanka on the occasion of the 74th Anniversary of Independence

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TO THE PEOPLE OF SRI LANKA

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