

FOR A SECURE, PROSPEROUS SOCIETY  
WHERE HUMAN VALUES REIGN  
DEVOID OF CORRUPTION AND TERROR



**THE POLICY STATEMENT**  
**OF THE**  
**PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE GOVERNMENT**



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# MANIFESTO OF THE PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE GOVERNMENT

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# MANIFESTO OF THE PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE GOVERNMENT

The People of Sri Lanka, have an undeniable right to

- \* live without fear
- \* end the war and ethnic crisis
- \* eradicate bribery, corruption and waste
- \* end unemployment and hunger
- \* live in dignity and self-respect in a society with no repression.

The People's Alliance, humbly and solemnly present the programme aimed at ensuring; government,

- \* Rapid and sustainable economic development
- \* A free and democratic society with law and order, and
- \* freedom to live in a humane society.

## PREAMBLE

The people of Sri Lanka have firmly resolved to *defeat* the UNP Government and *look upon* to the People's Alliance *as their* trusted representatives to formulate and implement policies and programmes on *their* behalf with the objective of achieving the following aims:

- i. Freedom to live in a humane society.
- ii. A free and Democratic Society with law and order.
- iii. Rapid and sustainable Economic Development.

The members of the People's Alliance in furtherance of the trust and confidence reposed in the respective parties jointly and severally by the people of Sri Lanka as a whole; do hereby proceed to present the proposals to the nation.



The government gives the nation a positive assurance that the People's Alliance is committed to the following fundamental principles in furtherance of which we propose to replace the decadent and corrupt UNP regime and usher in *a new era* of stability, development, democracy, freedom, peace and harmony thereby creating the necessary atmosphere for every individual citizen equal opportunity to develop his or her personality and respective individual resources and the right to participate fully in the decision making process, *of the nation*.

The political agenda of the Peoples' Alliance will give priority to the following cardinal themes:

- \* Peaceful resolution of the war and the ethnic crisis by the recognition of group rights and community rights.
- \* Eradication of bribery, corruption and waste.
- \* Promotion of an honest and genuine free market economy, subject to the preservation of a welfare state.
- \* Employment opportunities for all *on the basis of merit, competition and affirmative action*.
- \* Eradication of hunger and poverty.
- \* Every citizen's right to a dignified and decent life with self respect, without fear and repression.
- \* Formulation and implementation of special welfare programme for displaced people living as refugees with the objective of giving them immediate relief, so that their temporary refugee status should not deprive them of the basic rights and equal opportunities available to other citizens.

The UNP has always been identified with lies and deception. The division that existed in the opposition had helped in the past to enable the UNP to remain in power by its manipulation and deception practised on the intelligence of the average voter.

## **MISTAKES OF THE UNITED FRONT GOVERNMENT**

Those of us the constituent parties of the Alliance who were partners in the United Front Government of 1970-1977 are not ashamed to admit our mistakes and errors of judgement. The SLFP leadership is genuinely sorry for the unfortunate consequences of certain policies of the United Front Government. But what is most important to bear in mind is the fact that they were honest mistakes made in good faith taking into consideration the larger interests of the

nation. Although some of the policies of the United Front Government did not produce desired results, no one could accuse Mrs. Sirimavo R. D. Bandaranaike - our *beloved and respected* leader of dishonesty, deception and corruption - This was the real strength upon which the Peoples' Alliance was asking a mandate from the people to overthrow the UNP Government. The UNP and morals are far apart. Political ethics and democratic behaviour were concepts alien to the UNP and those concepts had no place in their theory and practice of politics.

The Government has committed itself to a dedicated, honest and genuine free market economy subject to the preservation of a welfare state.

## THE DISASTROUS JVP

The return to the terror of the southern rebellion was another ugly weapon in the hands of the UNP. The PA wishes to assure the nation that the JVP is not a partner in our Alliance and that we are not in any way influenced by the JVP directly or indirectly. At the same time the PA will not desist from accommodating any ex-JVPer who has genuinely given up his policy of political violence and wishes to join the progressive forces who are committed to "non-violence" and the "democratic process."

Let us also remind you that the UNP after coming to power in 1977 by deception and manipulation through a special Presidential Commission deprived Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike - our leader - of her civic rights and denied her even the opportunity to move the Supreme Court to revise the order of *the Special Presidential Commission* by amending the constitution using their 5/6th majority in Parliament. The subversion of the democratic process continued with the Referendum that was imposed on the confused and hapless people and thereby extending the life of parliament by deceptive and dubious means.

*The UNP is adopting these cowardly strategies in order to suppress the legacies of its 17 year long rule. These strategies are aimed at diverting the attention of the people from having a close, critical and objective look at the ill-effects of the UNP Regime that has led to a serious social and economic crisis, war and bloodbath, bribery and corruption, moral and spiritual decadence and the total collapse of our cherished value system.*

## THE CRISIS

At the end of the UNP's long rule of seventeen years, corruption had been elevated to be a fashionable norm in our society.

Our noble traditions were dying while civility, moral virtues and discipline had been replaced by a greed for corruptive power and illicit wealth.

The Sri Lankans, are heirs to a great civilization which drew sustenance from the great Indian traditions and the Buddhist philosophy. We have historically developed a great literary and artistic tradition and an immensely advanced technology. People of all communities in Sri Lanka the Sinhalese, Tamils and the Muslims have constantly preserved and enriched this splendid legacy. The cultural synthesis forming our heritage and our common civilization had been successfully preserved through the centuries by the constant sacrifices of successive generations comprising all ethnic groups blending into a common Sri Lankan identity.

Today, that great culture and civilization is under threat from the forces of absolute power and unbridled corruption. Our entire social fabric is in danger of disintegration; It has become a monumental challenge to all Sri Lankans - Buddhist, Hindus, Muslims and Christians - to defend these cultural and historic values and to make their children inheritors of a secure future.

## THE TERROR AND THE WAR

The whole country had been under the darkest clouds of terrorism, both in the North and in the South. The people believe that in the South terrorism has been often encouraged by and did at times emanate from the seats of power. The will of the people was controlled and the right to the free and fearless expression of opposition to the government and its actions were suppressed through terror squads, black-cats, green tigers etc., which liquidated those who disagreed with the powers that be.

## THE MURDERS

The South witnessed within the last 6 years in particular, the brutal murder of over 60,000 of our youth. There are still thousands of parents searching for their missing sons and daughters, refusing to believe that they have been executed.



## **THE MASSACRES**

The Sooriyakanda massacre and the mass graves found there are sordid records in the annals of our history, exposed by Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge the Deputy Leader of the People's Alliance. Whilst the parents of the Embilipitiya school children identified the dead bodies, the previous regime prevented the exposure of countless other bodies! Whom were they - the powers that be - seeking to protect? The answer was obvious to every right thinking citizen of this country.

## **THE GANGS AND THE GOONDAS**

Was it not members of the ruling UNP who accused the ruling leadership of employing terror gangs and goondas in their onslaughts? The people have not forgotten that the grave charges brought against the UNP leadership in the form of an "Impeachment" were made by angry members of their own party. But some of them, shamelessly abdicated their cause and the people in exchange for portfolios! That is the tragic composition of the then Government.

Similarly in the North East thousands of our people were massacred. The North East is a grim picture of mutual annihilation of Sinhala and Tamils with Muslims too becoming unfortunate victims.

With 1/5 of our national budget being utilised to perpetuate this costly war, politicians and armament dealers, the people believe, were reaped private profits. For those exploiting this senseless carnage, the war is big business! All the while, nearly a million Sri Lankans are languishing in refugee camps, living on state dole, while the other half left the country.

## **THE LTTE AND THE ARMS**

It is the UNP which gifted arms to the LTTE and hosted them in 5 star hotels. The blunders of the UNP government enabled the LTTE to prepare themselves more effectively both in the North and in the city. These murderous gangs, the people believe, had served the objectives of the UNP leadership, from time to time. It is the people's perception that terror gangs were employed to annihilate General Denzil Kobbekaduwa, Major-General Vijaya Wimalaratna, the Navy Commander Clancy Fernando, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, Vijaya Kumaratunge, Richard de Zoysa, and several others, in their greed for power. People have entertained similar suspicions about the Premadasa assassination.

The Election Commissioner's report on the General Election - 1989 has found that of the 9 candidates who were murdered during the elections, 8 were candidates belonging to the present Government.

The people know who is benefiting from the war in the North!

## **THE WAR THAT WILL NOT BE OVER**

The UNP was talking of continuing the war! The war in this country would have never ended so long as the UNP was in power. That is because the corrupt vested interests behind the UNP are benefitting from the war and the powers that be, have a continuous opportunity of annihilating the opposition.

## **THE COMMITMENTS**

**Let us together** build a new society with equal opportunities for all.

**Let us join hands** to turn a new leaf in the history of this country where all our citizens will be free from fear and want, terrorist and terror gangs.

**Let us bind ourselves** together to preserve our heritage, our traditions, our values, our culture and our civilization, as we enter the 21st century.

## **POST ELECTION VIOLENCE AND POLITICAL VENDETTA**

Finally, the UNP in anticipation of defeat which had already been written on the wall had sought to instil fears in the minds of the people that there will be violence, mayhem and unleashing of political vendetta if PA comes to power.

We assured that once the PA wins, the life and property of not even a single citizen of this country will be subjected to any risk. For in our view these rights are sacred and inviolable under any circumstances and it is the bounden duty of the state to protect them. It is also our responsibility to protect the life and property of every citizen and to maintain law and order.

## **LET'S JOIN TOGETHER**

Please join hands with the million progressive minded Sri Lankans who are marching together to achieve a historic, peaceful and democratic social change!

## CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

The People's Alliance sought a mandate from the People of Sri Lanka to abolish the Executive Presidency and to promulgate and operate a new Constitution designed to restore fully to the people their sovereignty, which will be exercised through their representatives in Parliament. The People's Alliance, government, will convene a Constituent Assembly, consisting of the Members of the Parliament, to formulate and adopt the new Constitution which will derive its force and validity from the expression of the political will of the People.

The salient features of the new Constitution are set out below:-

1. Sovereignty of the people should be the cornerstone of the entire constitutional regime. Periodic elections, which determine the composition of Parliament, represent the lifeblood of the processes of representative democracy. Acknowledging the pivotal importance of this principle, the government will immediately abolish the mechanism of a two-thirds majority and a referendum designed to allow the lifetime of Parliament to be extended.
2. The Executive Presidential system which has been the bane of our country since 1978, will be abolished as a matter of the highest priority, and the supremacy of the People's political will restored by means of a return without delay to the system of Cabinet and Parliamentary Government. The contemporary experience of our country leaves no room for doubt that the concentration of an unparalleled volume of power in the Executive President, without any viable or effective system of checks and balances, is wholly destructive of core values anchored in freedom, initiative and creativity - in sum, all that is best in human nature, individually and collectively. The Executive Presidency has debased and debilitated all other institutions (such as the courts, Parliament and the media) which had previously enriched the political life of the nation. The government is irrevocably committed to the reempowerment of our people by restoration of the Cabinet system of government, headed by a Prime Minister having membership of, and responsibility to, Parliament, while a ceremonial or titular Head of State will act on advice tendered to him/her by the Cabinet of Ministers.

3. The system of proportional representation will continue, subject to the modification that one-half of the seats in Parliament will be filled on the basis of territorial constituencies, while the other half will be catered for by the principle of proportional representation, much as it operates in the German system. This hybrid structure will enable retention of the advantages of proportional representation, coupled with scope for closer contact between a Member of Parliament and his constituents.

Where a Member of Parliament loses membership of the political party, on whose ticket he or she was elected, whether by reason of resignation or expulsion, his or her seat will fall vacant, and there will be a by election at which the member changing his or her party affiliation will be entitled to seek re-election. In this contingency, the election will be held in accordance with the 'first past the post' system in the District.

4. There will be a Constitutional Council consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, two retired Judges of the Supreme Court, the Chairman of the Chief Minister' Conference, the Speaker of the Parliament and representatives of political parties having seats in Parliament. It will be the responsibility of the Constitutional Council to appoint the members of the Public Service Commission, the Permanent Commission on Bribery and Corruption, the Official Languages Commission and the University Grants Commission. The Commissioner of Elections and the Auditor-General will be nominated by the Prime Minister, but the nomination must secure the concurrence of the Constitutional Council. Their tenure of office will be protected against political interference.
5. Convinced of the need to do a great deal more than paying lip service to human rights, the PA will include, in the new Constitution, the principle relating to judicial review of legislation. The Supreme Court, as part of the exercise of its constitutional jurisdiction, will have the power to declare invalid legislation which Parliament has purported to enact, to the extent of inconsistency with fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution. The Director of Human Rights will perform a conciliatory function in respect of the resolution of disputes involving the alleged infringement of fundamental rights; but where this is not successful, the aggrieved party will have access to the Human Rights Commission which will prepare appropriate cases for presentation to the Supreme Court.

6. The Government's powers to change laws governing any aspect of the conduct of elections, by having recourse to Emergency Regulations promulgated under the Public Security Ordinance, will be removed. The enactment and modification of laws pertaining to elections will be a function entrusted exclusively to Parliament. The authority of the Commissioner of Elections to ensure the conduct of free and fair elections, and in particular to issue necessary directions to police officers, in connection with the conduct of the poll, will be strengthened.

## **BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION**

One of the fundamental problems with regard to our political culture today is the incidence of bribery and corruption on an ever increasing scale in all sectors of our public life. This is a malaise which has bedevilled Sri Lankan society throughout the period of UNP rule and has currently assumed unprecedented proportions. Not surprisingly, the reaction on the part of the public has been unqualified cynicism and revulsion engendered by the calculated removal of all norms and standards of morality, decency and fairplay from public life. The emergence of a political system pervaded by insatiable greed and the manifest lack of scruple stands today as a grotesque monument to 17 years of power wielded by the UNP.

The government is determined to arrest this disastrous trend in our society and to revive sound and healthy values in the public life of our country. The mechanism which commends itself to the government for the restoration of public confidence in our political and administrative system is the establishment of a Permanent Commission on Bribery and Corruption. The government assures the public that this Commission will be established within 6 months.

Recent developments connected with the fate of former Bribery Commissioner, Mrs. Nelum Gamage, vividly illustrate the weakness and inadequacy of procedures currently applicable to bribery and corruption against prominent political personalities enjoying government patronage. It is evident that the office of Bribery Commissioner, as constituted at present, is unacceptably vulnerable to pressures, both covert and overt, and indeed to victimization at the hands of the incumbent administration.

It is for this reason that the Government advocates that the power of appointment of the Permanent Commission on Bribery and Corruption should reside not in the Government of the day, but in a Constitutional Council, the composition of which guarantees its non-partisan political character. the Constitutional Council will consist of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, two retired Judges of the Supreme Court, the Chairman of the Chief Ministers' Conference, the Speaker of Parliament and representatives of political parties having seats in the legislature. It is the Constitutional Council, so constituted, that will be responsible for the appointment of the Permanent Commission on Bribery and Corruption.

The Commission will consist of 3 members, 2 of whom will be retired Judges of the Supreme Court. One of them will function as Chairman.

By virtue of the sensitive and crucial nature of their functions, members of the Commission will be afforded, in respect of security of tenure, all protection available to judges of the Supreme Court. The Commission will report directly to Parliament; and they cannot be removed from office, except for misconduct, their removal being called for by a substantive resolution which is passed by a two-thirds majority of Parliament. Their salaries will be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and cannot be reduced during their term of Office. These measures will ensure the provision of a frame work within which the Commission will be able to function with impartiality and intrepidity.

The Permanent Commission, as its name implies, will set about its work not *ad hoc* but on a continuing basis. The government will not be able to rescind the Commission's mandate (as UNP governments have shamelessly done), when investigations being carried out by the Commission prove irksome or embarrassing to powerful politicians. This pervasive weakness, which marred the structures established by the Presidential Commissions of Inquiry Act, will be obviated by the constitutional scheme envisaged by the PA.

The Commission, if it is to be effective in discharging its responsibility in a field of indisputably national importance, must not only be independent, but it must have at its disposal the wherewithal to perform its task. The Commission will, therefore, be provided with an adequate staff of competent investigative and legal officers whose salaries, as well, will be charged on the Consolidated Fund.



The Commission will have 2 clusters of functions entrusted to it: (a) duties pertaining to investigation, and (b) the prosecution of alleged offenders. The Attorney-General's Department will no longer be identified as the authority on which the task of prosecution devolves.

The Commission will not exercise judicial powers; nor does the PA repose faith in a special category of bribery courts or tribunals. The forum in which trials for offences involving bribery and corruption are held, will be the High Court.

There is a widespread perception, with good reason, in Sri Lanka today that only small time offender, or the "sprats", are brought to trial for their petty delinquencies, while large scale corruption usually goes unchecked, for the most part because of the ample political patronage enjoyed by the "sharks". The Permanent Commission will have an extensive mandate to investigate allegations of bribery and corruption directed against Members of Parliament, Members of Provincial Councils and local authorities, officers of Ministries, Government Departments, State Corporations and Statutory Boards. These persons will be required to make a public declaration of their assets and liabilities each year. The Commission, in bringing within its net the coterie of persons who have hitherto been excluded from scrutiny, will contribute significantly to the elimination of double standards - one set of standards for the powerful politicians and their cronies, and another for the ordinary citizens: a hallmark of UNP rule.

In order to make the application of a uniform standard a reality, the PA will take prompt action to do away with the shield currently available to Members of Parliament under the guise of privilege. The existing law requires the Bribery Commission, prior to embarking on the investigation of Members of Parliament, to seek and obtain the approval of the Speaker of Parliament. The government will abolish this requirement immediately. The Speaker will no longer be in a position to abort or stultify an investigation.

With a view to ensuring a sufficient degree of deterrence, the applicable legislation will enhance appreciably the penalties which attach to offences involving bribery and corruption, and action will be taken to prescribe minimum penalties in suitable circumstances.

The Commission will be empowered to entertain written representations by members of the public about persons who are alleged to have acquired assets, the value of which is incommensurate with declared sources of income. Since this requires secrecy, the governing legislation will protect, subject to appropriate limitations, the confidentiality of sources of information. Monetary incentives will be offered for the provision of useful information. On the other hand, stringent penalties will be imposed on persons who wilfully provide false information.

Assets accumulated here or abroad by illegal means will be restored to the Treasury and applied towards the public welfare.

Corruption is the implacable enemy of Sri Lanka's progress, stability and well being. Its incidence and scale at the present time give rise to fundamental questions about the moral underpinnings of our society, and the quality of our perspectives on core social issues. The government is convinced that immediate legislative action directed toward the establishment of a Permanent Commission on Bribery and Corruption is a measure that is urgently required to restore salutary criteria of morality, transparency and accountability in the public life of our country.

## **THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

Restoration of the dignity and self-respect of the public service, which has been strikingly eroded by successive UNP regimes, is an objective of the greatest importance.

The cornerstone of the government's policy, designed to create the conditions in which men and women of our public service could function with probity and rectitude, is the establishment of a truly independent Public Service Commission. (PSC).

The government will introduce into the Constitution a series of provisions which will bring to an end the dismal era in which the whims and idiosyncrasies of politicians decided the fate of all echelons of the public service. The PSC, which will be appointed for a period of 5 years by the Constitutional Council, will be assured of a degree of constitutional entrenchment conducive to its

impartial and effective functioning in a manner designed to inspire public confidence. Thus, the salaries of members of the PSC, which will be charged on the Consolidated Fund, will not be capable of reduction during their term of office; nor can they be removed except for misconduct and, even then, on a substantive resolution which will require the support of not less than two thirds of the members of each House of Parliament.

As a salutary mechanism calculated to strengthen surveillance, the government will infuse new vigour and vitality into the concept of the Ombudsman. In the first place, action will be taken to introduce the required constitutional provision and to appoint a series of Ombudsmen in charge of different spheres of public administration, as in Britain and some other Commonwealth countries, in contrast to the single Ombudsman for whom provision is made in Sri Lanka at present. For example, separate Ombudsmen will be appointed to investigate complaints and grievances of the police, government officials, teachers in secondary schools, employees of the Corporation sector, and employees of banks in the State sector. Secondly, any public officer who feels aggrieved because of political interference or denial of justice of due process will have direct and unimpeded access to the relevant Ombudsman without the need for having recourse to the present devious and unsatisfactory procedure, in terms of which access to the Ombudsman is through a Parliamentary Committee where the government is able to assert its will by means of invocation of the majority at its disposal.

Professionalism within each segment of the public service will be fostered consistently and assiduously. Politicians will not be permitted to exploit any part of the public service as a vehicle for the redemption of political debts or as an instrument for the conferment of political favours.

## **ELIMINATION OF WASTE AND EXTRAVAGANCE**

The most important characteristic of political power is that it is neither an entitlement nor a reward but a trust. Political authority is sustained by a moral justification only as long as it is applied for purposes which are of benefit to the community, as a whole. In a functioning democracy, political power is neither more nor less than an instrument of service to the people.

These ideas, which form the core of representative democracy, are indisputably the opposite of the consistent practice followed by successive UNP regimes. 17 years of power have inculcated in the UNP a degree of arrogance, complacency, indifference and insensitivity that is quite unique in our country's political experience.

It is instructive to compare the number of Ministers in other countries with our own record number of 91. India is 60 times the size of Sri Lanka. It has population of 920 million, compared with 18 million people in our country. And yet, India is content with 53 Ministers in all. Pakistan, with a population of 120 million, has no more than 16 Ministers.

The attitude of so affluent a country as the United States of America to this question is of special interest. The United States had the equivalent of 5 Ministers in 1789, still only 7 by 1840, 9 by 1901, 10 by 1913, 11 by 1945, and then came down to 10 again by 1953. Today, the United States has no more than 20 persons who could be considered the equivalent of Ministers. This means that, if the number of Ministers is assessed in relation to population, each Minister in the United States represents a segment of the American people larger than the whole of the population of Sri Lanka.

No country in the world applies the standards of callous and cynical disregard of all norms of responsibility and decency, of which UNP government have shown themselves capable, in siphoning off this unique volume of public funds to enhance the standard of living of politicians of the previous government.

The PA assured the public categorically that a government led by it will contain a limited number of Ministers. The enormous resources which will be saved by this measure, will be applied towards the public welfare.

Ministers and Members of Parliament will no longer be driven around in luxury vehicles such as BMWs and Benz cars. They will have the use of vehicles of reasonable size and capacity, to enable them to discharge their public duties effectively. The government strongly believes that persons who have dedicated themselves to the service of the people, should not enjoy an ostentatious life style at the expense of the public. The days of "the spoon", when the ruling party helped itself without shame or remorse to the wealth of the people, will happily be at an end.

## **THE ETHNIC ISSUE**

The government consider it our duty and responsibility to protect the rights of all other ethnic and religious communities, while protecting and safeguarding the rights of the majority Sinhalese Buddhist community. We affirm that human rights and economic and social rights should be equally enjoyed by all ethnic groups.

The government believes that the ethnic question is one of the most complex problems of our country which needs an urgent solution. It is our conviction that without restoring peace through a political solution to the ethnic question, it would be impossible to achieve our goals of economic development, social

progress and political stability. Having considered the magnitude of the loss of life and property and the challenges to the progress of the entire country, the government affirms its commitment to taking every step necessary to find a solution to the ethnic problem in order to ensure peace to all communities.

The government aim is to arrive at such a solution and then utilize all the resources spent on the war for the welfare of all communities of our country and to preserve law and order and political stability.

We believe in vigorous implementation of genuine and adequate devolution of power.

The government is committed to building new administrative units, having regard to geographical, economic and social factors, in order to arrive at a durable solution of problems relating to the ethnic issue and the devolution of power.

When introducing constitutional amendments in respect of the establishment of new administrative units to which power is to be devolved, the PA will adopt necessary measures to consult the views of all ethnic communities with a view to reaching an acceptable solution.

## **ECONOMIC POLICY**

The objective of the government is to build up a strong national economy within a market framework. In the accomplishment of this task, an important role will be assigned to the local and foreign private sector. In this task technology, scientific expertise, and financial and material resources, local as well as foreign, will be utilized fully.

Our endeavour is to build and develop a practical, well-balanced, disciplined and flexible economy in a free and democratic environment.

The govt. believes that a strong domestic industrial base will provide the foundation for a stable and sustainable economic development process. Therefore, we will take a series of specific measures to strengthen and promote the domestic industrial sector, based on domestic raw materials and resources.

## **The Salient Features of the Economic Policy Envisaged by the PA :**

- 1. Replacement of current economic policy, which is both disorganised and beneficial only to a few, with clear economic perspectives and policies based on national objectives and priorities.**
- 2. All necessary facilities will be provided for local and foreign investors in order to achieve rapid development in such areas as technology, scientific advancement, investment, management, financial and professional services and employment generation.**
- 3. The market economy should be open to all. The best guarantee of this is public scrutiny. We undertake to ensure that all economic activity in the country is carried on in a responsible and open manner in full conformity with the requirements of transparency and accountability. "Crony capitalism", which is notoriously in evidence in the country today, will be a thing of the past.**
- 4. The private sector will be completely free to participate in all economic activities which it is equipped to perform. The private sector will be governed by market forces and will not be hindered by unnecessary government regulations and bureaucratic controls. However, we consider it the responsibility of the government to formulate a legal framework which will ensure openness and transparency.**
- 5. There will be no return to the era of queues; nor will there be any scarcity of goods. We will ensure that goods and commodities are available in the market with no restrictions and at fair prices.**
- 6. The aim of the government and its officials will be the development of the country by ensuring sound economic performance and management. Every attempt will be made to totally eradicate all forms of bribery, corruption and waste.**
- 7. A special subsidies programme will be implemented to safeguard the poorest sections of society from hardships that they will encounter in the initial stages of the free and competitive economy.**



8. Instead of giving handouts which are not in keeping with human dignity, the government will introduce a carefully conceived and viable system of subsidies which will enhance the productivity and income of the poor.
9. We believe that public utilities which are essential for day-to-day life must function under government control, but with adequate autonomy for efficient management. The participation of the public and private sectors will be utilised to develop these services.

These sectors are: health education, water, electricity, power generation, highways and railway, irrigation, main state banks, public sector insurance establishments, the C.W.E the Ports Authority and the Shipping Corporation, airports, transport, the plantation sector, the Employees' Provident Fund and the Public Trustee's Fund (with sufficient freedom and flexibility for investments.)

A Transport Authority will be created to maintain an efficient and competitive transport service with the involvement of both the public and the private sectors.

The management, administration and supervision of the plantation sector -an important national asset where public investments are still dominant will be streamlined in accordance with national needs and with due consideration for environmental factors.

10. It is no secret that the previous government, on the pretext of adhering to World Bank guidelines, has embarked upon a haphazard and unplanned programme of selling or privatizing state enterprises in order to raise funds for the government's routine expenditure. Many such acts have been tainted by corruption, nepotism, fraud and political patronage. The government will totally eradicate this legacy.
11. We are committed to controlling inflation and bringing down the prices of goods, while encouraging savings and investment. Government expenditure will be subject to rigorous financial discipline.
12. Incentives will be offered with a view to improving the manufacture of goods and the provision of services by the public and private sectors.

13. Facilities will be provided under a liberalized scheme to import inputs necessary for industrial and agricultural production for local and foreign markets, as well as capital goods essential for the increase in the real output of goods and services.
14. Maximum incentives will be made available to those industries which utilise local technology and domestic raw material.
15. A special scheme will be devised to enhance to the optimum the capacity of all production sectors, and thereby to maximise national income levels.
16. A new programme will be formulated to provide financial and other resources for research and development activities aimed at innovations and new technological inventions in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors.

## **OTHER ASPECTS OF OUR ECONOMY POLICY**

1. The private sector's tax burden will be reduced in order to stimulate and encourage its participation in development efforts. We will abolish the PAYE tax.
2. Necessary incentives will be provided to promote the production of milk, livestock and animal products, and the fisheries sector. We will particularly encourage the participation of local entrepreneurs in this sector.
3. An adequate and proper scheme of subsidies will be introduced to encourage new plantations and replanting activities in existing estates.
4. In the interest of consumer protection- a vital need in our country - the role of the Fair Trading Commission will be strengthened. Its branch officers will be established at district and provincial levels. However, care will be taken to ensure that the activities of private enterprises are not regulated unnecessarily.
5. In order to develop such infrastructure services as roads and highways, water and drainage, telecommunication and irrigation, and to ensure maximum participation of the private sector in these sectors, we will establish an independent Infrastructure Development Authority, which will be devoid of cumbersome administrative regulations and documentation procedures.

6. While recognizing the crucial importance of science and technology for Sri Lanka's economic development, we will give priority to Sri Lankan scientists and engineers in the direction and management of all development projects.
7. Since the achievement of a stable economy through the parallel processes of development and conservation is one of our main objectives, we will formulate systematic plans for all development projects, ensuring their economic viability, social desirability and environmental suitability.
8. Every effort will be made to develop Sri Lanka as a financial services centre in the region.
9. We intend to develop and make more efficient our harbours and airports so that Sri Lanka could emerge as a centre of international trade and an entry port to the entire South Asian region.
10. We will reduce the prices of petrol and diesel. This will lead to price reduction in food items and other essential commodities.
11. **A National Development Council**  
We will establish a National Development Council, with the participation of representatives from various areas of the private sector, the state sector, the professionals and the workers. In this regard, we will follow the example of East Asian NICs where co-ordination among all sectors has been responsible for economic policy formulation. While separate Development Councils will be set up for industrial, agricultural and services sectors, the National Development Council will be the overall institution. The Council will facilitate a productive dialogue between the private sector and the government. The Council will assist in identifying lead sectors in manufacture, industry and services that will initiate Sri Lanka's industrialization with correct and appropriate strategies and perspectives.
12. A rapid national programme will be launched to provide drinking water, electricity, roads, postal and telecommunication facilities for every village.

## **AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

The failure of UNP governments since 1977 to develop the country's potential in agriculture is now unmistakably evident. The extent of the current crisis in this regard is tragically indicated by the action of 17 farmers in the Polonnaruwa area in taking their own lives. As we have indicated elsewhere in this Manifesto, immediate measures will be taken to provide relief to farmers who singularly bear the burden of this crisis.

The govt. attaches the highest priority to the formulation and implementation of effective strategies in the field of agricultural development. An integrated development plan for agriculture, which will include crop production, the plantation sector, fisheries and livestock, will be formulated and implemented.

Although the structure of the Sri Lankan economy has shifted towards industrialization, the fact remains that agriculture is the most important single economic sector in the country. It contributes about 50% of the employment opportunity, 40% of foreign exchanges and 23% of the GNP of the country. The govt. will take every necessary step to strengthen and protect the agriculture, the natural resource base and the rural people of Sri Lanka. We firmly believe that farmers in the country should enjoy a reasonably comfortable life and not remain at the level of hewers of wood and drawers of water.

The PA is convinced that the state has a vital role in activities connected with agricultural production. The fertilizer subsidy will be reintroduced at a substantial level. The UNP's talk of Rs.500/- subsidy was a last minute carrot which is totally inadequate. Under our policies all agricultural implements will carry appropriate tax exemptions, and subsidies will be provided for whenever necessary. Accordingly, the prices of agricultural inputs and implements will be substantially reduced. We will also set up an extensive marketing network, in collaboration with the private sector, in order to ensure a guaranteed minimum price level for paddy, chillies, green gram and other farm products.

The UNP government has completely neglected the credit needs of the small producer. The credit facilities available at present through the commercial banks, Thrift and Credit Co-operative Societies, Rural Development Banks and the NGOs is altogether inadequate. The govt. recognises the compelling need for a bold initiative in this area. Agricultural credit will be expanded and vitalised through a Rural Financial Institution (RFI). Loans on easy terms will be made available to farmers for the purchase of agro-chemicals and agricultural equipment.

A new pension scheme for farmers and an improved agricultural insurance scheme will be introduced.

We will also revitalize the agricultural services centres and extension services, hitherto neglected by the UNP government.

The govt. will improve the facilities for farmers to procure high quality seed varieties and seed plants. Similarly, infrastructure facilities specifically needed by vegetable farmers, such as plant nurseries, storage and freezing centres, processing centres and sales outlets will be provided. This will ensure stable prices for vegetable products during the harvesting season.

Rural based industries will be given necessary incentives and support to be viable and competitive in a market atmosphere. Technology necessary and appropriate for rural industries will also be provided.

The govt. is committed to providing financial and material support for agricultural research activities.

## **OTHER ASPECTS OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

1. Agricultural land in our country is under-utilized. In order to maximize the productivity of agricultural land, we intend to formulate and implement a national agricultural productivity programme. Since agricultural research can make a significant contribution to this end, we will launch a special scheme to provide financial and other facilities for research.
2. Urgent steps will be taken to revive the agricultural and livestock research and training centres which remain completely neglected. We will accord highest priority to their development with state and foreign assistance.
3. A systematic agricultural extension service will be introduced throughout the country.
4. Priority will be given to the setting up of agro-based industries as a solution to the rural unemployment and under-employment problem.
5. In the minor crops sector, income can hardly cover the costs of production. A special subsidies and assistance programme will be implemented to support existing crop cultivation, re-planting, inter-cropping, animal husbandry and related activities.
6. The situation of the Dry Zone farmer is tragic. We will implement a programme with the assistance of international agricultural organizations, to develop the high land in the Dry Zone through permanent crops and low lands through crop diversification, exploiting ground water resources.

7. An agricultural and Fisheries Bank will be set up with branches, to provide short- and long term credit for agricultural , livestock and fisheries sectors. Capital for this bank will be obtained from the state, the Central Bank and Public participation.
8. A special scheme will be set up to prevent the waste of agricultural produce during harvesting seasons, to store and preserve the produce and then to release it to the market in a systematic manner, guaranteeing stable prices for the farmers.
9. A special national programme will be implemented to develop the coconut and palmyrah cultivation and to improve productivity encouraging small industries based on coconut and palmyrah.
10. Special state assistance will be provided for the promotion and development of the cultivation of kithul trees, and the production of treacle, sweet-toddy and jaggery.

## **SUBSIDIES AND ASSISTANCE TO THE FISHERIES SECTOR**

1. Steps will be taken to provide at specially subsidised prices fishing boats equipped with new technology, engines, fishing nets, implements, and fuel.
2. A special subsidies scheme will be worked out to support the fishing communities during periods of low income.
3. Fishermen who are willing to participate in export-oriented fisheries activities will be provided with capital under a special assistance scheme.
4. Credit facilities, tax concessions, extension and advisory services will be provided for the setting up and development of fishery-related ancillary industries.
5. Steps will be taken to develop the fresh-water fishing and ornamental fish industries. Local and foreign investment in this area will be encouraged. Extension and advisory services will also be made available.



## **SUBSIDIES AND ASSISTANCE TO THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR**

1. A special scheme will be worked out to provide animal feed and quality farm animals at subsidised prices.
2. Concessionary long-term credit will be made available to develop livestock farming.
3. A special assistance programme will be implemented to develop livestock-based ancillary industries.

## **INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The industrial policy of the government will not consist of a passive role as at present. While continuing to provide an economic environment conducive to the growth of industry with minimal regulations and controls, economic and financial incentives, a clear policy perspective and without favouritism, it will usher in a package of policies to foster many new industries which will be of lasting benefit to the country.

Industries based on local raw materials will be identified, and special facilities for their development will be provided. These will include industrial infrastructure, credit and assistance in marketing.

An industrial Development Bank for small industries will be established.

A comprehensive assessment will be made to assess the extent to which local industries are affected by dumping and other unfair trading practices which put them at a disadvantage vis-a-vis for foreign imports.

Local industries which have a proven record of excellence and international competitiveness will be identified, and means for their expansion for exports will be provided.

A few key high technology industries will be identified, and foreign investors will be induced to establish these in Sri Lanka.

The energy capacity of the country will be very rapidly enhanced by a diversified energy base, so that an impending energy crisis is averted. Feasibility of foreign supplies and private investments in energy development will be explored together with the expansion of energy in the public sector.

The Govt. is committed to explore the possibility for developing an industrial strategy among SAARC countries where our industries will be integrated with SAARC country industries, and our industrial planning will be complemented with those of our neighbours to provide a market for our industrial products. We will establish industries which provide components for industries in the larger South Asian countries.

Institutions like the EDB, which have become too bureaucratic, will be revamped. Small and medium exporters will be a special responsibility of the EDB.

Greater emphasis will be placed on promoting exports of the plantation sector and the agricultural sector. More intensive efforts will be made to promote non-traditional exports such as wood based products, cashew, tobacco, foliage plants, minerals, ceramics, coir, medicinal herbs and imitation and costume jewellery.

Every attempt will be made to stimulate and support the development of the gem mining industry and the construction industry. A national policy will be formulated and implemented in these fields.

Local interests in the shipping industry will be strengthened and supported by appropriate incentives.

## **SPECIAL FEATURES OF OUR INDUSTRIAL POLICY**

1. We will develop our industrial sector, which presently lacks any clear objectives, under a clear and long-term plan.
2. We will initially identify the priority sectors in our industry in order to formulate appropriate policies and programmes.
3. The industries (i) based on local natural resources and human resources, (ii) aimed at providing for the basic needs of our people, (iii) oriented towards favourable export markets, (iv) support industries for large-scale industries, (v) support industries for large-scale industries, (vi) agricultural processing, and (vii) related to livestock and fisheries sectors. will take priority in our agenda.
4. We will work towards the development of a domestic industrial sector by providing protection and guidance for infant industries that have the potential to be effective and competitive in the long run.

5. Our main objective is to create a well-integrated institutional framework for sustainable and stable industrial development in Sri Lanka. To achieve this, we will co-ordinate international trade and industrialization through appropriate government policy.
6. The small industries sector suffers near paralysis due to innumerable problems. We will set up a Medium and Small Industries development Institute to facilitate the solution of these problems in a well-coordinated manner. The Institute will combine all existing state institutions in the area of small and medium industries.
7. The proposed 'prosperity programme' will accord high priority to the rapid development of the small and medium industries.
8. A Skills Development Fund will be inaugurated to train skills necessary for a free economy. Priority will be given to areas that promote exports. Our Skills Development Programme will assist our industrial sector to reach a higher level of technical sophistication and productivity from the primitive technology prevailing in the wearing apparels sector. This Programme will also promote small industries as well as high-tech and export industries.

## **LAND**

1. Since land is a limited resource, a proper land policy will be worked out to ensure proper use of land in meeting the needs of the rising population and national development needs.
2. The land that had been acquired by private individuals by unjust means during the past 17 years will be taken over by the state and then re-distributed among landless people.
3. A national Conservation Programme will be designed to protect our forest and fertile land.
4. We will formulate a national policy to govern the sale of land to foreigners.

## **FISHERIES**

1. A special national programme will be devised to assist the development of the fisheries and water resource-based industries. Benefits of the fishing industry will be made available to the fishermen, their families and consumers.

2. We will develop the fisheries harbours, and the launching, landing and anchoring locations used by fishermen in a planned way.
3. A special scheme will be worked out to provide for the fishing industry modern fishing boats, engines, fishing nets and implements.
4. Necessary legislation will be introduced to protect the fishing and water resources and fishermen from all local and international sea pirates.
5. A special Fisheries University Institute will be established to train our fishermen in new technology and improved methods of navigation. This will make our fishermen skilled navigators so that the fisheries industry can be further developed and the navigators could be entrusted with the task of safeguarding our coast and sea.
6. Our fishing industry still remains at a primitive stage, merely as a hunting activity and not as a modern fishing sector. The poverty among fisher people and the low productivity are the main contributory factors to this state of affairs. We will take all necessary steps to elevate the place of this sector in the national economy through a policy of modernizing the fishing industry.
7. Steps will be taken to provide an insurance scheme for fishermen.

## **CO-OPERATIVES**

1. The co-operative sector will be accorded an important place in the economy. We believe that this sector needs to be strengthened in order to make the production and services sectors competitive, the distribution of essential commodities efficient as well as to protect the consumer from the middlemen.
2. We are committed to develop the co-operative sector in such a manner that it will be modernised and be competitive with the private sector.
3. Special incentives and assistance will be given to co-operatives to improve their business and investment activities.
4. All tax and credit concessions available to private and public companies will be extended to the co-operative sector.

5. The business turn over tax and stamp duties currently levied on co-operatives will be removed.
6. We will ensure that the monies owned to co-operatives by government institutions are settled without delay. In situations where co-operatives run short of funds, steps will be taken to provide special low interest bank loans similar to bank overdrafts.
7. Co-operatives will be encouraged to set up their own co-operative banks and insurance services.
8. All facilities will be provided to co-operatives engaged in animal husbandry and production-oriented activities.
9. The Govt. will also provide assistance and facilities for a group of co-operatives to initiate large scale production and business activities.
10. The Govt. is committed to make the co-operative movement a profit-making venture and to provide job security and better salaries for co-operative employees.
11. Steps will be taken to provide co-operative employees housing facilities through housing schemes to be undertaken by the co-operatives themselves.
12. It is our aim to free the co-operative movement from state and political control. We will introduce new legislation to this effect.

## **WELFARE MEASURES AND SPECIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES**

A Programme of Assistance to the People to enable them to increase productivity and income and to ensure a life with dignity.

1. All low income families will be given a special allowance, not exceeding Rs. 2000 a month.  
  
School leavers after the age of 18 will be provided an allowance of Rs. 1,500 per month pending employment.
2. The Govt. ensure that the Janasaviya recipients will immediately receive the entire sum of Rs. 25,000 which the government claims to have deposited in banks on behalf of each Janasaviya beneficiary.

3. A complete social security system will be designed to support mentally and physically handicapped people and orphans. The state will take the responsibility of looking after their wellbeing.

## **ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS**

1. We will restore the fertilizer subsidy.
2. Taxes levied on seeds, agro-chemicals and agricultural machinery will be removed, and excessive profits made on them curtailed; and they will be provided at subsidized prices.
3. Accumulated agricultural bank loans will be immediately cancelled.
4. Water tax will also be abolished.
5. A special scheme will be worked out to guarantee stable prices and an effective market for vegetable products.
6. The Government will purchase paddy and other agricultural products under a guaranteed price scheme.
7. An effective and well-organised agricultural extension service will be established throughout the country.
8. Crop insurance payments will be promptly made to farmers to compensate for crop failures. The compensation will be made relative to the income from the previous harvest.
9. An interest free as well as low interest credit scheme will be implemented as an immediate relief measure.
10. An island-wide soil conservation programme will be implemented with the participation of both state and private sectors.
11. A special programme will be worked out to ensure maximum prices for tobacco, gherkin, sugar cane and other cash crop cultivators.

## **ASSISTANCE TO SMALL INDUSTRIES**

1. Machinery and raw material will be provided for the small industries sector at concessionary prices under a special assistance programme.
2. Tax concessions will be granted to small industrialists to enable them to increase production.



3. Special short-term and long-term industrial credit schemes will be worked out to help the small industries sector.
4. An extension and advisory service will be inaugurated throughout the country to assist small industrialists.
5. Special state assistance will be provided for this sector to ensure better and competitive marketing facilities in the domestic and international markets and to maintain the quality and standards of small industrial production.
6. Adequate assistance and subsidies will be made available in order to protect local industrialists.
7. A scheme providing incentives and marketing facilities will be implemented for the growth of small industries that are linked with large-scale industries.

## **THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY**

1. The Govt. will embark on a national programme for the eradication of poverty, which will be called "The Prosperity Movement".
2. Family-level economic development projects will be linked with rural, district and provincial development projects, all of which in turn will constitute the Prosperity Movement at the national level.

### **PROSPERITY CENTRES**

1. In the implementation of the Prosperity Movement, Prosperity Centres will be formed in each Grama Sevaka Division.
2. These centres will link and co-ordinate family development projects and rural development projects.
3. Each of these centres will employ a development officer and an extension officer, selected from among educated youth in the village.
4. Officers chosen to implement the programme will be specially trained in order to enable them to formulate development projects, to co-ordinate with state and other institutions and to implement the projects efficiently.

5. The main criterion in initiating a Family Development Project will be the economic development goal that each family can achieve, having regard to its circumstances, resources and capabilities. The relevant activity may be employment in the private sector, a self-employment project or a group economic project. Wherever necessary, family members can also be directed to state employment.
6. Prosperity centres formed in the village will pay special attention to the progress of each family.
7. These centres will provide, in collaboration with relevant institutions and individuals, knowledge skills, training, capital, banking and advisory services necessary to implement the development projects successfully.
8. The services necessary for the implementation of the development projects initiated by these 'Prosperity Centres' will be provided, in the form of mobile services, by banks, extension centres, state institutions, other financial and technical institutions, and private sector institutions.
9. In order to implement these projects effectively, the services and assistance of rural development banks, co-operative rural banks, SANASA, non-governmental organisations and the private sector will be harnessed to supplement state support. The assistance of foreign countries, international aid agencies, international non-governmental institutions and other development agencies will be sought towards this end.
10. The Govt. expects to provide part of the capital needed by these families through the 'Prosperity Bank', which will be set up specifically to support the national Prosperity Movement. Experience in other developing countries in the area of rural development banking will be drawn upon in establishing this 'Prosperity Bank'.
11. The 'Prosperity Centre' will function under the guidance of an advisory Council whose members will be drawn from the clergy and the intelligentsia in the village.
12. People's participatory institutions will be evolved to supervise and monitor the progress of family developments projects.
13. In the implementation of the Prosperity Programme, there will be no room for waste and for political ceremonies. It will be a development goal-oriented programme, with collective participation by the people.
14. The co-ordinating and monitoring of the Prosperity Programme at local, district and national levels will be ensured by a network of non-bureaucratic institutions. There will be a separate Ministry entrusted with responsibility for the National Prosperity Programme.

## **CREATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

1. A PA government will launch a programme to create one million jobs within two years.
2. Additionally, 300,000 self-employment opportunities will be created in the first year. Our "Prosperity Centres" will play an active role in this scheme.
3. To make the one million employment generation Programme successful, the following economic and developmental activities will be initiated.
  - (i) Rapid and systematic expansion of small, medium and large scale industries.
  - (ii) Provision of credit and facilities for vocational and managerial skills training.
  - (iii) Local and foreign investors will be invited to start employment-orientad projects.
  - (iv) We will obtain foreign capital investments and technology and will be invited to develop and expand roads, electricity, telecommunication and irrigation facilities.
  - (v) Opportunities will be increased for employment abroad, ensuring the safety and self respect of workers. Vocational training necessary for employment abroad will be provided.
  - (vi) The harassment suffered by foreign employment seekers at the hands of job agents and other middlemen will be totally eradicated.
4. Local and foreign trained doctors, engineers and diplomats from vocational fields will be assisted to start their own professional ventures. Short and long term credit facilities will be made available to them for this purpose.

## **EDUCATION**

At a time when the future of free education is being threatened, the PA is determined to uphold, safeguard and develop free public education at all levels including university education and to ensure that national education will not be left to the mercy of market forces.

The Govt. will provide a national system of education which assures a high quality of life for the individual and the nation, national harmony and peace, economic and social progress and humane ethical, cultural and moral values. The educational process will be designed to inculcate democratic attitudes and to wean children away from drugs, liquor and socially delinquent behaviour.

The Govt. will take effective measures to assure every child of school-going age a place within the school system, thereby eliminating the problem of non-school going children and school drop-outs. Every effort will be made to keep children in school at least until they pass the G.C.E. (Ordinary Level) Examination.

The Govt. will focus attention on the special requirements of the 21st century and provide an education in keeping with contemporary and international developments, especially in the fields of science and technology, that will enable the individual to live and compete successfully in the modern world.

There will be emphasis on language capability, and exposure to English as an international language and to computing skills. School holidays will be used after hours for this kind of training. Schools and places of work will be utilised for training programmes in English.

Facilities will be provided for Sinhalese students to learn the Tamil language and Tamil and Muslim students to learn the Sinhalese language.

Sri Lanka is in the unfortunate position of enrolling the lowest percentage of youth in higher educational institutions. To remedy this situation, an increasing number of higher educational institutions will be opened throughout the country. Steps will be taken to minimize the effects of socio economic and regional disparities on access to higher education by restructuring admission procedures.

## **THE UNIVERSITIES**

The Govt. is specially concerned about the grave crisis faced by the entire university system in our country. Only a very small percentage of our students with secondary education are admitted to universities. We are acutely aware of the difficulties that university students have been experiencing with regard to hostel facilities, financial support, transport facilities, and employment after graduation. Lacking in adequate state support, our universities are beset with shortages of qualified teaching staff, inadequate building, research and library facilities, and the virtual non-existence of housing facilities for the academic and non-academic staff.

The Government is committed to formulating and implementing a special scheme, in consultation with academic, student and non-academic communities in the universities; aimed at reforming and developing the existing university system. The main components of the proposed changes are as follows.

1. Maintenance and further improvement of the quality and standards of university education.
2. To encourage the revision of existing curricula and the introduction of new courses.
3. To rectify salary anomalies of academic and non-academic staff.
4. To initiate a job placement service in collaboration with private and public sectors.
5. Provision of residential facilities to all students.
6. Steps to solve the housing problem of academic and non-academic staff.
7. Strengthening the teaching staff in accordance with the increase in student intake.
8. Expanding research fund and facilities for all Faculties.
9. Improving existing library facilities and to initiate a programme of text book translation.

A special programme will also be worked out and implemented, in consultation with the universities, to clear up without any delay in the present backlog of university admissions.

## **TEACHING SERVICE**

Necessary steps will be taken to restore the pride, dignity and independence of the teaching service which has been subject to politicization and political interference. All forms of political interference will be eliminated by due place to qualifications, commitments and skills of teachers.

A fully professional teaching service of trained and qualified personnel will be established. Effective steps will be taken to ensure that recruitment and promotion of teachers are based on merit, that their employment in schools will not be influenced by factors extraneous to educational needs, and that their remuneration is commensurate with their qualifications and professional status. Welfare measures, including housing, health insurance and scholarships for children of teachers serving in "difficult" areas, will be adopted.

A special Teachers' Service will be established to cater for the requirements of teachers, to facilitate further training and career advancement for them, and to improve the quality of the teaching service. In setting up this Teachers' Service, teachers' trade unions will be consulted.

## **ADULT EDUCATION**

The non-formal training agencies of the state NGOs and the private sector will be utilised to provide opportunities for continuing and adult education by addressing functional literacy, legal literacy, language and vocational training, and re-training programmes for adults who have been disadvantaged in access to education.

## **PIRIVENA EDUCATION**

A special programme will be formulated to develop and promote Pirivena education with the following components :

1. A scheme to propagate the teaching of Buddhist philosophy and to teach Buddhist principles to lay children.
2. Promotion of the teaching of Sinhala, Pali and Sanskrit languages.
3. Improvement of library and other education-related facilities in the Pirivenas.

## **DHAMMA SCHOOLS**

Facilities will be provided to enable all school children to receive a religious education.

## **PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION**

We will take steps to establish pre-schols in every village and to streamline the pre-school education. All children will receive free pre-school education.

To achieve this objective, state assistance will be provided for all pre-schools. With the assistance of voluntary organizations, a scheme will be implemented to train pre-school teachers.

## **HEALTH**

About 40% of children under 5 years are malnourished in Sri Lanka, and the prevalence of anemia and malnutrition among pregnant women is alarmingly high (about 60%). About 27% of children born in our country at present are below the normal birth weight of 2.5 kilos. Alleviation of the problem of malnourishment among children and pregnant women will be one of the lead programmes of the Government.

Equal attention will be paid to preventive medicine, the disregard of which by successive UNP administrations has taken a heavy toll on the health of the nation.

The Govt. will improve health facilities in relatively disadvantaged parts of the country. The resources and expertise will be made available to upgrade one district hospital in each district every year.

Each divisional hospital will be provided with basic investigative equipment (including laboratory facilities and X'ray). An efficient ambulance service will be made available to each divisional hospital.

According to the current classification by the World Health Organisation (WHO), about 270 drugs are characterised as essential. The Govt. will take rapid action to identify 50 other drugs for which there is a widespread demand, and to make these available throughout the State hospital sector. Over and above this, any drug which is prescribed by a consultant at the Cancer Hospital in Maharagama will be provided, free of charge by the State.

The Govt. will identify all underserved, underprivileged and vulnerable groups, making them the object of focussed, immediate and intensive intervention. About 4% of the population suffer from some form of physical disability. Approximately the same proportion requires geriatric attention. These gaps will be filled rapidly.

Facilities for day-care centres for handicapped children will be improved in every district, using the support of NGOs and the community.

The curricular of Nurses' Training Schools (NTSs) will be revised with inputs from the Faculties of Medicine and the Ministry of Health; adequate resources will be made available to upgrade teaching facilities at all NTSs.

The Govt. will do all in its power to promote the development of the indigenous Ayurvedic system of medicine and the homeopathic system of medicine.

## **TRANSPORT**

The Govt. attaches the greatest importance to improvement of the quality of public and private transport services in both the urban and the rural sectors.

Private bus operators will be encouraged to import high-roof buses by lowering import duties. Import duties on motor cycles with a low engine capacity and on 3 wheelers will be abolished. private sector factories and business establishments will be encouraged to provide transport facilities for their working staff. For this purpose, concessionary import facilities and fiscal incentives will be granted to the private sector to import buses. School bus services run by Provincial Councils will be improved.

The present bus routes will be carefully assessed, and necessary changes made to provide a satisfactory service. There will be regular monitoring of the condition of buses in order to ensure a transport service of quality to the public. Training will be provided for personnel involved in the transport services to ensure courteous public relations and compliance with road rules and public safety requirements.

Action will be taken to revitalize and expand the existing railway system. We will also take immediate steps to remedy the difficulties currently faced by railway computers.

## **SPORTS AND RECREATION**

1. We value sports and recreation as vital to the health, well being and the discipline of our people. Therefore, we will formulate and implement a national sports policy.
2. A special programme will be worked out to eliminate narrow divisions and factionalism in the field of sports.
3. No individual will be allowed to tarnish the image of Sri Lanka's sports, and individuals engaged in such activities will be removed from the field of sports.
4. Athletics and cricket will be popularized and supported throughout the country through a national programme. All divisional secretaries, offices and schools will be provided with facilities to achieve this objective.
5. Rural children with special talents in sports will be given scholarships to enter schools with better facilities. A special food and nourishment programme will be implemented to further support them.
6. A special programme will be designed to ensure the support of sportsmen and sportswomen who have reached international standards, for the promotion of sports.
7. All sports controlling bodies will be freed from political interference.
8. We will also take steps to ensure proper management and sound financial transactions by sports bodies. We will ensure that there will be no favouritism in foreign sports tours and scholarships.
9. Steps will be taken to set up sports schools in every district.



## **HOUSING**

1. A special national programme will be worked out to guarantee the right of every family to own a house, according to their needs.
2. Highest priority will be given to the need to provide better housing facilities to slum dwelling people in urban and coastal areas and in rural areas.
3. In order to solve the housing problem of middle and lower-middle classes, special housing schemes suited to their income levels will be initiated.
4. We will eliminate wasteful public expenditure and utilize money thus saved to construct houses for the people.
5. A National Housing Fund will be established to enable fixed income earners to obtain easy and low interest housing loans. All employees will contribute to this Fund, starting with their very first salary.
6. We will take steps to provide land, cement, bricks and other building material a low cost.
7. A special programme will be worked out to assist newly married couples to purchase land and obtain housing loans at low cost.

## **TRADE UNION AND LABOUR RIGHTS**

Conventions of the International Labour Organisation will be adopted, and all trade union rights will be protected. Equal rights for women will be assured, and steps will be taken to ensure child care and protection of children from child labour and child abuse.

A solution to the unemployment problem in estates will be found, and social mobility improved. All barriers which control labour in the estate system will be removed, and free movement and community development promoted. Action will be taken to provide infrastructure and other facilities to expand education and human development, and modern health care for the estate population will be provided.

### **Rights and Privileges of the Working People**

The Govt. is committed to the formulation and implementation of an Employees' Charter. The main components of the Charter will be as follows :

#### **1. Trade Union Rights :**

Compulsory recognition of trade unions by employers; provision of facilities to unions and safety to union officials; special facilities for national level trade unions; Emergency regulations will not be utilized to deal with workers; strikes; the recognition of International Charters of Labour.

**2. Industrial Relations :**

The extension of collective agreements : formalization of in house disciplinary procedures; the strengthening of Labour Tribunals ; updating of the Industrial Disputes Act and the setting up of a special judicial body to adjudicate on industrial disputes.

**3. Salaries, Wages and Service Conditions :**

Setting up of a National Wages Commission: Issuing of appointment letters to employees will be made mandatory and the recruitment of casual workers for long-term employment will be prohibited. We will implement the principle of 'Equal pay for equal employment.'

**4. Social Security :**

A pensions scheme in addition to the Provident Fund: We will encourage medical insurance schemes at work place ; Employees exposed to risk will be covered by special insurance schemes.

**5. Welfare :**

Setting up of Welfare Committees at work places ; a National Employees' Bank will also be established.

**6. Restoration of Lost Privileges :**

Provision of employment for all employees who lost their jobs after 1977 as a result of political victimization ; priority will be given in filling vacancies in state institutions to those who have lost employment due to privatization.

**7. Nationalized Ventures :**

Continuation of nationalized ventures that are profit making and of national importance, ensuring their efficiency ; Streamlining of management of the estate sector while maintaining the state ownership of plantations ; housing schemes for plantation workers and the improvement of their health and education ; complete re-organization of the co-operative movement ; and state assistance to improve the quality of the state transport sector.

**8. A scheme to provide university and foreign educational training for young trade unions activists; setting up of National Trade Union Training Institute.**

## **PLANTATION WORKERS**

1. A special scheme will be worked out and implemented to improve the living standards and environmental and health conditions in the plantation areas.
2. An accelerated housing programme will be initiated to solve the housing problem of plantation workers.
3. New steps will be taken to improve school education in estates.
4. An urgent plan will be implemented ensuring the provision of electricity, water and road transport facilities.
5. Action will be taken to stabilize the income levels of plantation workers.
6. Under a special programme, facilities necessary for the health needs and welfare of mothers and children in the plantation sector will be provided.
7. All necessary steps will be taken to eliminate injustices faced by plantation workers, because of their recent Indian origin.
8. Legislation will be introduced ensuring equality and equal status to all citizens.
9. Settlements of plantation workers will be brought under the administration of Pradeshia Sabhas.
10. Necessary provision will be made to guarantee the labour rights of plantation workers and to protect their welfare entitlements.

## **WOMEN'S ISSUES**

Action will be taken to give legal expression to the Women's Charter accepted in 1993 through an Act of Parliament. Extensive legal reforms will be undertaken in a variety of fields to reduce the vulnerability of women. These initiatives will be taken in the fields of marriage and divorce, custody of minor children, inheritance to lands, domestic violence and sexual offences. Necessary legal and administrative procedure will be adopted to ensure equal opportunity for women in the field of employment.

The following are the main components of our policy on women's issues :

1. Effective legislation will be introduced to safeguard the dignity and self-respect of women and to protect them from physical, sexual and other forms of harassment and discrimination. The new legislation will also prohibit cruelty to girl children in domestic employment. We will also ensure the proper implementation of the legislation.
2. To protect the interests and well being of women employed abroad, steps

will be taken to enter into necessary agreements with the authorities of relevant countries.

3. Since the falling standards of nutrition have affected particularly the women and girl children, special nutrition programmes will be provided to cater to their needs.

## **THE YOUTH**

The youth are the lifeblood of the economic, social and cultural life of a country. We believe that it is the duty of the state to create an environment conducive to prepare them for the task of shouldering future responsibilities. The criteria that should be employed to measure the value of young people are education and intelligence.

While acknowledging that radicalism, critical spirit, impatience, etc., make the youth creative as well as complete human beings, we will implement a special scheme to ensure that the youth are duly recognised and represented in every sphere of public life.

Specific steps will be taken to mobilize the talents, creativity and initiative of rural youth who were subjected to terror during the recent wave of repression.

## **PENSIONERS**

1. Our attention is particularly drawn to the problems and the plight of pensioners who have spent the best years of their life for the development of the country and therefore deserve a comfortable life in their retirement. Most of them live in rented houses ; in some cases, their children are still young and dependent on them. The repayment of loans and debts erodes the bulk of their pension. In order to remedy this situation, a national programme towards the welfare of pensioners will be launched.
2. Anomalies with regard to pensions will be rectified, and an uniform and equitable structure introduced. Action will be taken to make pensions index linked. Concessionary fares will be available to senior citizens in respect of public transport.
3. The arrears due from the Rs. 260/- pension allowance will be immediately paid.
4. Special consideration will be given to the children of pensioners when vacancies in their former work places are filled.

5. Suitable steps will be taken to solve the problems that have arisen regarding the security of their property due to long periods of absence while serving in far-off places.
6. In cases where there is no beneficiary to receive POW benefits, the money deducted from salaries and accumulated interest will be given to the pensioner.
7. A hostel system with all health care and other facilities will be provided at district levels to those who need to spend their retirement at leisure. Facilities will be made available for them to pay only a small amount of money to enjoy this benefit.
8. An extra allowance will be added to the pensions of those who have children attending school.

## **POLICE AND ARMED FORCES**

A fully democratic society which we pledge to uphold, requires that every citizen be entitled to equal protection under the law. One of the primary institutions through which this objective achieved is an independent, efficient and contented police organisation. In order to restore its credibility and render it an efficient and professional instrument dedicated to serving the community with justice and fairplay, the govt. will take steps to introduce the necessary legislation and institutional mechanisms to ensure the independence of the Head of the Police and the Services from political pressures and influence. We will also take steps to ensure a high level of morale of all ranks in the service by a fair and just recruiting and rewarding system which takes into account seniority and merit. Our primary aim in effecting the proposed police reforms is to ensure freedom and protection equally to all citizens under the law and thereby to promote respect for law and order.

1. The unfortunate practice of using the police and armed forces for narrow political ends will be totally done away with and necessary steps will be taken to build a service where people can perform their duties with self-confidence, dignity, and impartiality.
2. A system will be devised to pay adequate remuneration, honoraria, and other benefits to the members of the police and armed forces, who are working day and night with dedication and loyalty for the country sacrificing their personal and family interests.

3. Adequate housing-loans at very low interest will be given to those who have served the police and armed forces for a minimum period of five years.
4. The Reserve Police Service will be absorbed into the permanent police service.
5. All those who have completed 15 years service will be entitled to their next step in promotion.
6. The police battalions which have completed 3 years will be dissolved and attached to the regular police service. Battalions will be formed for new recruits.
7. Those who have long served in operational areas will be given opportunities for transfer stations of their choice.

### **GRAMASEVA OFFICERS**

1. In the entire service of public administration, the Grama Seva officers are the closest to the people, and as such, it is necessary to make it a completely impartial service, free of political interference.
2. Necessary facilities and adequate powers will be given to Grama Seva officers, enabling them to perform their duties with dignity, self-respect and confidence.
3. A special scheme will be introduced to provide them with office, residential and transport facilities, so that can serve the people efficiently and diligently.
4. A rational promotional scheme will be devised whereby they can move up in the Public Administrative Service, based on their educational qualifications, honesty, devotion, efficiency, and impartiality.

### **OTHER GOVERNMENT FIELD OFFICERS**

1. The official work of the social-service officers, rural development officers, agricultural instructors, development officers, cooperative inspectors, health inspectors, agrarian officers, settlement officers, will be reorganized on a rational basis ; they will be placed on reasonable salary scales according to their qualifications and service ; a suitable scheme will be devised to enhance their promotional prospects ; transport facilities will be provided ; a scholarship scheme will be devised for special training, both locally and abroad.
2. The services of all these officials will be obtained for our proposed Prosperity Programme for the Eradication of Poverty. Their salaries and allowances will be revised, to accord with their duties and responsibilities.

3. Salaries, promotions, transfers and allowances of all government employees, including Field Officers, will be reviewed so that necessary changes could be introduced to enhance their benefits.
4. Officers in charge of sub-post offices will be absorbed into the state postal service.

## **OTHER MAJOR AREAS OF POLICY**

### **Religious Affairs**

Our religions, religious and cultural values have suffered considerably during the past 17 year rule of the UNP. Politicization of religious activities has made people move away from religious institutions. We are committed to support and foster Buddhism and all other religions. To achieve this objective, we will provide all necessary assistance to the clergy of all religions.

### **Culture**

The PA recognizes the importance of culture as a necessary dimension of total development, and an essential component of overall planning and a medium of national integration.

In order to implement this, a National Council for Cultural Policy and Planning will be established, with an agenda flexible and able to meet the needs of our society, and the changes it is likely to undergo. The Council will be representative of all ethnic groups, religions and regions. It will be responsible directly to Parliament.

To assist in defining and planning cultural policy, a Documentation Centre, which will survey cultural needs, resources and statistics, will be set up.

While maintaining the autonomy of the arts and literature, steps will be taken to restore the autonomy of the National Arts Council and the Sahitya Mandalaya, with the minimum of interference by the State but with substantial assistance.

The Public Performances Boards Act will be revised to include modern visual media, such as television and video. The code of Intellectual Property Act will be re-examined, with special reference to copyright policy.

Conservation, creative innovation and cross-cultural exchange will be the key concepts of the PA's overall cultural policy. Some salient features of our stand and policy towards culture are :

1. We believe that cultures and traditions of all communities need to be protected and preserved. The identity of a people is built on their art, literature, architecture, music, dance, cinema and TV and other living cultural forms. We also believe that the cultural identity of the people is essential for their socio-economic progress. We will pay special attention to formulate a programme to revive the cultures of all communities of Sri Lanka.
2. A national programme will be worked out to promote Sinhala and Tamil literature.
3. Under a special programme children's literature will be accorded special attention so that the quality of children's literature could be raised.
4. A special national programme will be implemented to promote the publication of quality books and to encourage new writers. All import duties currently levied on books, journals and newspapers of educational, literary and cultural value will be removed.
5. Steps will be taken to preserve nurture and traditional art forms in music, dance, and folk art.
6. We will provide financial, material, and other assistance to local film, teledrama and drama producers so that the quality and standards of our visual art forms will be raised.
7. State assistance will be provided for the field of drama by setting up a National Theatre Institute. Auditorium and training centres with all facilities will be set up in every district for the benefits of artistes and the public.
8. The National Film Corporation, which was established by our government of 1970-77 will be reviewed and revitalised to facilitate the progress of national film artistes as well as the public.
9. Special facilities will be provided to create children's drama and films of high standard. New facilities will also be made available for the performance of children's plays and the screening of films.
10. Special tax concessions will be granted for artistes on cinema and theatre equipment.
11. Steps will be taken to protect and promote our cultural traditions through cultural centres that would be formed in every Divisional Secretary's area.
12. A monthly allowance will be granted to aged artistes to enable them to live a life of dignity and comfort.
13. Legal protection will be provided for artistes to accomplish their work without political interference.



## **Media Policy**

We will provide all necessary assistance for the establishment of an independent National Media Institute which will cater to the professional needs of journalist and media personnel, including their training, development of professional skills and the maintenance of professional dignity.

The PA is firmly convinced that the freedom of the individual cannot be safeguarded without a viable system of checks and balances operating as a restraint on governmental power; and that the checks and balances required for this purpose can be applied with any degree of effectiveness only if there is healthily and vigorous expression of public opinion.

The PA, therefore, attaches the greatest importance to strengthening the media and providing a framework within which the media can function independently and without inhibition. This entails significant changes with regard to structures on ownership, policy objectives, the legislative instruments applicable, administrative policy in respect of such matters as facilities and the attitude of government to issues which are indispensable for a sound media policy.

Major constraints arising from provisions contained in the Constitution, the Public Security Ordinance, the Press Council Law, the Official Secrets Act and the Parliament (Powers and Privileges) Act, will be removed by amendment of this legislation. Journalists will no longer be punished by Committees of Parliament.

Action will be taken to broaden the ownership of Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. in keeping with the intentions of Parliament, as set out in the original legislation. The shares of Lake House will be traded in the Stock Exchange, with arrangements to ensure that no single person, organisation or group will be able to own and / or control more than 20% of the shares. In the initial issue of shares priority will be given to journalists and employees of Lake House journalists, organisations, associations that encourage freedom of expression, trade unions and professional organisations.

Government will not use its advertising to control, influence or threaten any newspapers or media organisations.

The PA will recognise the right of privately owned electronic media to have their own news Services free of any governmental control.

The current structure of taxes and duties on newsprint will be drastically revised, to provide relief.

There will be better salary structures, and opportunities for training, for journalists, the payments to outstation correspondents will be increased considerably.

The PA is committed to assist the media in setting up an independent National Media Institute to cater to the professional needs of journalists, including their training, skills development and professional dignity.

### **Foreign Policy**

The conduct of foreign affairs under the UNP has been characterized by the absence of any coherence of policy and total disregard for the professional and institutional mechanisms required for its application. The PA will give high priority to rectifying this position.

The PA believes that a coherent foreign policy must be based, inter alia, on, sound and cordial relations with India, effective regional co-operation in the SAARC area and correct understanding of the implications for us of the changing world order, including emphasis on the need for effective South-South collaboration, recognizing the Non-Aligned Movement, continuing vital role in this regard, responding to the growing global importance of an emergent Asia and support for all measures conducive to general and nuclear disarmament.

A substantial proportion of posts in the Foreign Service at all levels, including Head of Mission, will be reserved for career officers. Retired politicians or bureaucrats, and unqualified persons from constituencies represented by interested Ministers, will not be appointed to these positions.

### **Science Policy**

Professionalism and expertise will be fostered and encouraged by direct State intervention. Recognition and support by all available means will be extended to professionals. In particular, the PA will discontinue the current practice of involving politicians in decisions which fall within the scope of scientists and professionals.

### **The Environment**


Consideration relating to ecology and the environment will form a vital element of the PA's industrial policy.

## **Disappearances and Political Murders**

1. A special Commission of Inquiry will be appointed to investigate murders, disappearances, unresolved crimes and political victimization which occurred in recent past.
2. The Commission will have the mandate to inquire in political murders as well as under-world crimes.
3. Within three months of coming into power, we will take immediate steps to provide to families information about the disappeared.
4. Those who are being detained in secret camps and prisons without legal proceedings being instituted, will be immediately released.
5. Legal proceedings will be expedited with regard to political prisoners against whom there are grounds for legal action.
6. We will pay compensation, without any political discrimination, on behalf all of those have disappeared, been tortured of lost property.

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**ONE OF THE SACRED  
PRINCIPLES OF  
PUBLIC MORALITY  
IS THAT  
THE POLITICAL POWER  
IS NEITHER A RIGHT  
NOR AN ENTITLEMENT,  
BUT A TRUST.**

