

# PHOENIX

Monthly Newsletter

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Akkinip Paravaikal

“ *The measure of a community’s strength lay within its rich history and literature.* ”

Phoenix TNG

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05.02.2024: **Global powers** - According to Economy Next, SL's Foreign Minister Tharaka Balasuriya has said that SL must manage and balance all global powers to achieve its economic growth. Therefore, SL's foreign policy should be centred on economic diplomacy rather than political diplomacy. According to analysts, SL has become the centre of a geopolitical proxy war between neighbouring India and the world's

second largest economy, China.

18.02.2024: **FAO** - According to Economy Next, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), QU Dongyu, has arrived in SL for a 03-day visit to attend the 37th session of the FAO Asia and Pacific Regional Conference (APRC37). Government ministers and heads of delegations from 46 member states are meeting in Colombo for the event.

26.02.2024: **US Embassy** - According to Daily Mirror, US diplomat Elizabeth Kathryn Horst is designated to be appointed new American ambassador to SL succeeding Ms. Julie Chung whose stint will end soon.

## Bilateral

01.02.2024: **UAE** - According to Economy Next, Galadari Hotels (Lanka) PLC will enter into agreements with Mashreq Bank PSC and the hotel's holding company to finance the renovation. The company intends to enter into a series of agreements with Mashreq Bank PSC, United Arab Emirates, and the holding company Galadari Brothers Co. LLC.

01.02.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, SL has been in talks with Indian company Petronet LNG for the supply of liquefied natural gas for dual-fuel combined cycle power plants. SL company Lanka Transformers Ltd (LTL) will commission the first stage of a 300 MW dual-fuel power plant (Sobhadanavi) this year and also operates another older power plant (Yugadanavi) fuelled by fuel oil.

01.02.2024: **South Korea** - According to Economy Next, SL is keen to expand bilateral trade and investment with South Korea. SL Minister of Trade, Commerce and Food Security Nalin Fernando met South Korean Ambassador Miyon Lee to discuss investment and increasing exports.

02.02.2024: **Adani** - According to Economy Next, India's High Commissioner for SL, Santosh Jha, said the 500 MW Adani wind power project in the island nation's Northern Province should progress after a better negotiation process. Sri Lankan officials have said that the Adani wind power project is facing some delays as a Cabinet Appointed Negotiation Committee (CANC) has raised concerns over the project components.

03.02.2024: **FTA** - According to Economy Next, a free trade agreement (FTA) with Thailand, to be finalised during Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin's visit, will allow the 02 countries to benefit from currently untapped trade and investment potential. SL has also signed an agreement on cooperation in the gems and jewellery sector.

04.02.2024: **Thailand** - According to Economy Next, SL and Thailand are considering visa-free travel to strengthen economic ties between the 02 countries. SL already has a FTA with Singapore - also a key member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

06.02.2024: **China** - According to Economy Next, China has shown some flexibility in its stance on the FTA with SL after it briefly halted negotiations following 07 rounds of talks due to disagreements over the tariff schedule, the degree of liberalisation and a review process. SL is working on several FTAs, including with China, 05 years after talks with Beijing on the FTA were suspended due to concerns over China's overreach.

06.02.2024: **Japan** - According to Economy Next, the Japanese government is providing JPY 1,230 million (around LKR 2.8 billion) through the Japan International Cooperation Agency to set up solar energy generation systems at Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital, Kurunegala Teaching Hospital and Ratnapura Teaching Hospital. The objectives of this project are to reduce the consumption of non-renewable energy in the health sector, increase the overall efficiency of the health sector and promote sustainable development.

06.02.2024: **FTA** - According to Economy Next, SL's government is in talks to conclude FTAs with India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and China by the end of 2024. These agreements will open up new markets for SL companies and contribute directly to SL's economic growth.

07.02.2024: **JVP** - According to Economy Next, India's invitation to SL's Marxist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) for an official visit is seen as a positive move to push forward Delhi's plans in SL without opposition. However, it has also raised political concerns ahead of the presidential elections in 2024. The JVP-led National People's Power (NPP) coalition has gained popularity in the recent past after mass protests in 2022 forced former SL President and genocidaire G. Rajapaksa to flee and his brother, M. Rajapaksa, to resign amid an unprecedented economic crisis.

07.02.2024: **Textiles** - According to Economy Next, Sourced SL - Textile and Apparel Roadshow, an export promotion program in London, is expected to be attended by 50 SL exhibitors and attract thousands of foreign buyers and trade visitors. The exhibition is scheduled to occur in June, 2024. The aim of the exhibition is to assist apparel exporters to establish business relationships with UK buyers and expand exports to the UK through the UK's Developing Countries Trade Scheme (DCTS) and increase the share of apparel exports from SL to the UK.

07.02.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, 05 Indian firms are among the 06 bidders pre-qualified for the bidding phase, the State-Owned Enterprises Restructuring Unit (SOERU) said. The SOERU had called for expressions of interest from investors in October 2023 to divest Canwill

Holdings, which owns a nearly completed hotel building in the capital Colombo.

09.02.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, SL is in talks with India to build a multi-product oil pipeline connecting Nagapattinam, the Trincomalee tank farm and Colombo. Technical studies, market analysis, financial analysis and business modelling are being conducted to decide on the mechanism. They also spoke about the investment and expansion of the projects under the joint venture in Trincomalee tank farm, CPSTL and LIOC in the retail sector.

09.02.2024: **Australia** - According to Economy Next, officials from SL discussed further strengthening bilateral relations and discussed the possibility of direct flights between the island and Perth, Western Australia. Premier of Western Australia, Roger Cook, expressed his interest in renewable energy, agriculture and direct air links with SL - among other things.

11.02.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, SL has initiated talks with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) to set up a branch in Kandy, as SL aims for a fast-paced digital economy. The delegation, which was accompanied by eminent academics and industry leaders, aimed to explore potential collaborations and finalise details regarding the proposed campus.

12.02.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, SL will launch India's Unified Payment Interface (UPI), a revolutionary digital payment system to achieve a cashless economy that could help close loopholes that have enabled tax evasion in the island nation. The UPI

will allow citizens to use their smartphone as a virtual debit card.

12.02.2024: **Iran** - According to Economy Next, Iran's ambassador to SL, Alireza Delkhosh, has said that Iran hopes to share technology and scientific knowledge with SL. Iran's foreign policy focuses on two main areas: economic cooperation between states and strengthening regional security.

13.02.2023: **Lula** - Brazil's president Lula has accepted an invitation to visit SL.

14.02.2024: **JICA** - According to Economy Next, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is supporting the reform process of the Ceylon Electricity Board with financial and technical assistance. SL Minister of Power and Energy Kanchana Wijesekera said he has requested further support for reforms, energy efficiency programmes, infrastructure development and the integration of renewable energy.

14.02.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, a delegation of 14 senior SL officials led by the Secretary to the Prime Minister, Anura Dissanayake, is in India for talks with Indian institutions. The delegation is keen to gain insights into India's recent initiatives to transform the quality of public services and successfully implement policy improvements.

14.02.2024: **Berlin** - According to Economy Next, with the support of the delegation of the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry in SL (AHK Sri Lanka), food products from SL were showcased at the International Green Week in Berlin, one of the most important trade fairs in Europe with more than 400,000 visitors. Exporters



specialising in tea, coconuts and coconut-based products, spices, fruits and fruit-related products as well as authentic ready-to-eat SL food products were represented.

15.02.2024: **ADB** - According to Economy Next, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide USD 08 million to develop smart farming practices in the Mahaweli region using modern technologies in agriculture and animal husbandry. The agency will allocate USD 04 million to improve dairy production and USD 2.5 million to grow food crops using smart technologies such as polytunnels and drip irrigation systems, while USD 1.5 million will be used for poultry farming and freshwater fisheries.

15.02.2024: **Japan** - According to Economy Next, R. Wickremesinghe, in a meeting with the President of the Japan International Co-operation Agency, sought a "swift resumption" of Japan-funded projects that were halted after a default. Akihiko emphasised the priority of completing the debt restructuring and at the same time sought the resumption of the projects that had been stopped.

15.02.2024: **Israel** - According to Economy Next, SL has signed an agreement on direct flights with Israel. The focus of the agreement is to avoid delays in the migration of SL workers abroad.

15.02.2024: **Growth** - According to Economy Next, SL is an attractive centre for economic growth and the JICA will continue to act as a partner for SL's progress. JICA will fund a renewable energy programme that will see the installation of solar energy systems in SL's hospitals.

16.02.2024: **Israel** - According to Economy Next, the Israeli Minister of Transport and Road Safety, Brigadier General Miri Regev, met with R. Wickremesinghe. Wickremesinghe emphasised SL's stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and reiterated its support for the establishment of a Palestinian state. He also emphasised the importance of ensuring Israel's security and promoting a balanced approach to regional peace.

19.02.2024: **Agri-food systems** - Policy makers from across the Asia and Pacific region are meeting in Colombo to agree on a way forward to reform their agri-food systems and accelerate recovery from pandemics and environmental crises, according to Economy Next. Officials from 46 member states of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) will participate in roundtable discussions.

19.02.2024: **Japan** - According to Economy Next, the Japanese government has allocated 40,000 tonnes of diesel for transport in SL's health services, including ambulances. A Fuel Management Information System (FIMS) will track the distribution of diesel supplies under the direct supervision of the Japanese government.

19.02.2024: **Bharat-Lanka** - According to Economy Next, the 04th phase of India's 'Bharat-Lanka' housing project, which involves the construction of 1,300 homes in 45 settlements across 10 districts, has begun. The Tamil community of Indian origin, which has made a significant contribution to SL's economy, has unfortunately suffered great losses due to lack of land and housing. Their socio-economic rights should be safeguarded.

19.02.2024: **France** - H.E. Marc ABENSOUR, the French Ambassador for the Indo-Pacific met with the Commander of the Navy, Vice Admiral Priyantha Perera at SL's Navy Headquarters in Colombo on 19.02.2024. During the ensuing meeting SL Commander of the Navy and Ambassador of France for the Indo-Pacific held a cordial discussion on several matters of mutual importance, reports Navy LK.

20.02.2024: **Iran** - According to Economy Next, the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hossein Amir Abdollahian, is on an official visit to SL. Consultations on expanding cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, agriculture, science and technology, technical and engineering services, etc. are on the joint agenda.

20.02.2024: **Israel** - According to Economy Next, SL continues to send workers to Israel, which is actively involved in the war in its occupied territories in Gaza and the West Bank, as well as in its neighbouring countries Lebanon and Syria. A total of 602 people have left for agricultural jobs in Israel and more will be leaving in the coming days.

20.02.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, the embarkation tax for ferry traffic between SL and India will be reduced from 60 dollars to 5 dollars. This move will encourage travel between SL and India.

20.02.2024: **Data Protection** - According to Economy Next, SL's Ministry of Technology met with a team of consultants representing the European Union's (EU) Enhanced Data Protection & Data Flows project. The purpose of the meeting was to share

strategic lessons learnt from the EU with SL's Data Protection Authority.

21.02.2024: **Iran** - According to Economy Next, Iran, still struggling with the economic sanctions imposed by the US in 2012, is exploring new ventures, trade and investments in SL. SL is unable to pay for Iranian investments and imports due to US sanctions, but has successfully started to pay off the debt for pre-2012 crude oil imports through a "tea for oil" deal.

21.02.2024: **Iran** - According to Economy Next, R. Wickremesinghe and Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian discussed the crucial role of the Persian Gulf in Indian Ocean security, the ongoing violence in Gaza and ways to improve bilateral cooperation. R. Wickremesinghe emphasised the principle that any peace agreement must include all sides and must not be based solely on the demands of 01 of the 02 sides. Furthermore, the SL President proposed the establishment of a Palestinian state within a timeframe of 05 years which guarantees the security of both Palestine and Israel.

22.02.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, Indian company BAL Investment has expressed interest in a plot of land in Colombo that was used as a popular site for popular protests in 2022. An acre of land in Baladaksha Mawatha has been approached by Bal Investments for a joint development project.

22.02.2024: **GSP+** - According to Economy Next, SL will receive an update on GSP+ trade concessions at a Joint Commission meeting with the EU. 03 working groups on governance, rule of law and human rights, trade and economic cooperation and development

cooperation will report back to the Joint Commission.

22.02.2024: **Vietnam** - According to Economy Next, SL and Vietnam have signed an agreement to develop the agricultural sector in SL. The agreement covers the exchange of agricultural technology, studies and research, expertise, production of advanced seeds, application of fertilisers and pesticides, and training of farmers and officials to increase crop yields.

25.02.2024: **ADB** - According to Economy Next, SL could receive USD 500 million in support from the ADB in 2024, depending on the progress of political reforms. The ADB expects to present a USD 100 million loan for the energy sector to its Board of Directors in March or April 2024, subject to the SL Cabinet of Ministers approving a revised electricity reform law. A USD 100 million loan to support SMEs could also be approved early this year.

26.02.2024: **ASEAN** - According to Economy Next, ASEAN countries have the potential to expand intra-regional trade relations by signing more FTAs. Regional FTAs play a crucial role in implementing an institutional framework that provides a stable environment for trade and investment to thrive.

27.02.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, SL and India are working on a bilateral investment treaty. The investment agreement is separate from an economic and technological co-operation agreement, which is also under discussion, Jha was quoted as saying by Bloomberg Newswires.

27.02.2024: **US** - According to Economy Next, US Assistant Secretary of State for Management and Resources Richard

Verma has called for inclusive reforms and strengthening human rights, as well as discussing closer defence and maritime cooperation, in talks with SL government officials. The US remains committed to SL's economic growth and prosperity.

27.02.2024: **ADB** - According to Economy Next, SL will launch a LKR 20 billion loan programme for small and medium enterprises affected by the economic crisis with the support of the ADB. New and existing companies will receive LKR 15 billion. SMEs with non-performing loans will receive the balance of LKR 05 billion.

27.02.2024: **Romania** - According to Economy Next, SL and Romania have discussed cooperation and investment in new areas as well as an agreement to avoid double taxation. Another agreement on cooperation in the fields of education, culture, sport and media could be signed as soon as both sides have approved the new draft.

27.02.2024: **ADB** - According to Economy Next, SL is working with the ADB to obtain USD 200 million in loans for reforms in the water sector. The funds will be provided as a policy loan under sub-programme 1 and a further USD 100 million under sub-programme.



# Military News

01.02.2024: **Strike** - SL's military has been stationed at various hospitals to mitigate the strike of SL's Health workers.

07.02.2024: **Navy** - According to Economy Next, SL's main opposition party, the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB), has gained a second retired military commander within a week, this time former Chief of Defense Staff and ex-navy commander Admiral Daya Sandagiri, who has declared his support. The former SL navy chief has been appointed as the party's adviser on maritime and naval policy due to his expertise in maritime and naval affairs.

08.02.2024: **South Sudan** - The 10th contingent of SL's Army Medical corps departed SL towards the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

16.02.2024: **Iran** - According to SL's MoD's website, 02 Iranian naval ships have arrived at Colombo port.

16.02.2024: **MILAN** - According to SL's MoD's website, a SL naval ship has left SL towards India for the MILAN naval exercise.

20.02.2024: **SL navy** - Sri Lanka Naval Ship (SLNS) Samudura left for the Maldives from the port of Colombo to take part in Exercise Dosti – XVI on 20.02.2024. The trilateral exercise 'Dosti' is scheduled to be held in Male from 22.02.2024-25.02.2024. The trilateral exercise 'Dosti' aims to enhance cooperation, strengthen friendship, improve mutual operational capability, and develop interoperability among the Coast Guard personnel of India, Maldives, and SL, reports Navy LK.

25.02.2024: **Temples** - SL Army has announced the granting of permission for the public to visit seven Hindu temples (Kovils) situated within the high-security zone under the jurisdiction of the occupational SL Security Forces Headquarters in Jaffna. Under this decision, civilians will

be permitted to participate in weekly poojas and other associated rituals at the *Kaduwan Muttumari Amman Kovil, Vasavilan Manampirai Kovil, Visavilan Shivam Kovil, Vasavilan Naga Kovil, Palali Raja Rajeswari Kovil, Palali Naga Thampilan Kovil and Palali Shaktiveli Murugan Kovil*. The SL Army said that this decision was made in response to numerous requests from temple trustees and civil organisations, reports Daily Mirror.

25.02.2024: **Batticaloa** - The SL government is exploring the possibility of setting up a prison or a rehabilitation centre on the lonely Mantivu Island off the coast of Batticaloa, a statement from SL's Justice, Prisons and Constitutional Reforms said. Mantivu is an island in the Eastern Province with 100 acres in extent, currently housing leprosy patients. SL Minister Wijeyadasa Rajapaksha was on an observation tour of the island recently to explore the possibility of using the island to set

up a prison or a rehabilitation centre as a solution to current congestion, reports Daily Mirror.

28.02.2024: **Korea** - According to Economy Next, the SL Minister of Power and Energy has met the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to discuss energy cooperation between the 02 countries. The Republic of Korea produces large amounts of energy from floating solar plants and nuclear power plants. Russia, the US, India and France were among the countries that had offered nuclear power technology, but SL was not yet ready to host nuclear power plants, he said.

28.02.2024: **Dubai** - According to Economy Next, boat builders in SL are travelling to the Dubai International Boat Show to showcase their skills. The boat

show brings together manufacturers of superyachts, sailboats, sports boats, fishing boats and speedboats, as well as equipment manufacturers and other related products and services such as diving and fishing, water sports, maritime technology and services.

29.02.2024: **Rivalries** - According to Economy Next, R. Wickremesinghe has emphasised SL's commitment to maintaining a strategic position aimed at ensuring the absence of rivalries between major powers and preserving freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean. Speaking at the Pathfinder Indian Ocean Security Conference Phase III held in Colombo on 28.02.2024, Wickremesinghe highlighted the importance of the Suez Canal, which was particularly evident

during the Six Day War when its closure for 10 years affected the port of Colombo. This highlighted the importance of ensuring unrestricted shipping.

29.02.2024: **Japan** - According to Economy Next, the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) has trained 37 Sri Lanka Coast Guard (SLCG) officers in oil spill response with the assistance of the JICA. The establishment of a sustainable human resource development system for oil spill management in the SLCG is an important initiative for SL and the Indo-Pacific region.

# Tamil Eelam

03.02.2024: **Jaffna** - According to Economy Next, SL will seek expressions of interest to operate the Jaffna International Airport under a public-private partnership. The

preparatory work is underway, and the expressions of interest will be published soon.

07.02.2023: **Decentralisation** - According to Economy

Next, R. Ranil Wickremesinghe has stated that the economic activities that are currently concentrated in the Western Province of the island, mainly Colombo, will be

expanded to other provinces through decentralisation. Currently, 46 % of SL's economy is concentrated in the Western Province. To change this, SL is implementing a strategic plan to expand economic activities in cities such as Jaffna, Trincomalee, Bingiriya, Hambantota and Kandy.

12.02.2024: **CTUR** - According to Economy Next, SL's Interim Secretariat for the Truth and Reconciliation Mechanism (ISTRM) recently held a forum to discuss the draft bill for a Truth, Unity and Reconciliation Commission (CTUR). The main objective of the forum was to discuss various aspects of the draft law for a Truth, Unity and Reconciliation

Commission (CTUR), which will play a central role in addressing the grievances of persons affected in the Tamil homeland, as well as promoting reconciliation and preventing racism.

# Sri Lanka

02.02.2024: **ID** - According to Economy Next, the India-funded unified ID card project is in the process of appointing a new consultant, while fresh bids have been sought following the failed tenders. India has already given an advance of INR 450 million to R. Wickremesinghe's government to fund the digital identity project, which aims to capture biographical and biometric data, including facial, iris and fingerprint data.

02.02.2024: **Urumaya** - According to Economy Next, SL has established a 'National Operations Secretariat' called Urumaya in SL's

President's Office to oversee plans to grant land titles to 02 million families. This initiative aims to address long-standing concerns about land rights in rural SL.

08.02.2024: **Online Safety** - R. Wickremesinghe gazetted SL's *Online Safety Act* under the supervision of SL's Ministry of Public Security from 07.02.2024, reports Lanka Files.

09.02.2024: **Artificial Intelligence** - According to Economy Next, SL's Intellectual Property Act needs to be revised to recognised creations through Artificial Intelligence. Section 5 of the *Intellectual Property*

*Act* describes an author as "the physical person who created the work", paving the way for issues related to the use of AI in creative works.

09.02.2024: **HRCSL** - According to Economy Next, the Human Rights Commission of SL (HRCSL) has written to SL's Speaker of Parliament. According to the letter dated 08.02.2024, Sections 13, 16, 19, 20 and 27 of SL's *Online Safety Act* and the corresponding clauses of the *Online Safety Act* (13, 17, 21, 22 and 31) do not appear to be in line with the Supreme Court of SL's decision. The Commission had already pointed out in an earlier communication that law

enforcement authorities in SL face considerable difficulties in interpreting and applying the existing criminal law to online activities.

#### 10.02.2024: **Land** -

According to Economy Next, SL's Water Supply and Settlement Infrastructure Minister Jeevan Thondaman said a process has been set in motion to allocate 10 perks of land to each family living in the plantations based on ownership rights. Only about 08 % of plantation families own their homes, compared to the national average of 86 %.

12.02.2024: **ISTRM** - SL has established a new Interim Secretariat for the Truth and Reconciliation Mechanism (ISTRM) to discuss the Commission for Truth, Unity and Reconciliation (CTUR), reports Lanka Files. The discussion was led by G.L. Peiris.

15.02.2024: **Air rifles** - According to Economy Next, SL's Finance Minister Ranjith Siyambalapitiya said he is providing funds to farmers in his district to purchase air rifles to fight squirrel monkeys.

The attempt to export Macaques (*Macaca sinica*) to China was met with fierce opposition from animal rights activists who feared the monkeys would be eaten.

16.02.2024: **Money Laundering** - According to Economy Next, the Financial Intelligence Unit of the Central Bank of SL has signed a MoU with SL's Excise Department to exchange information in connection with investigations and prosecutions of money laundering, terrorist financing and other related offences. Money laundering and terrorist financing are financial crimes with a global presence that can threaten the stability of national and global economic and financial systems.

22.02.2024: **COPA** - According to Economy Next, the SL Parliament has announced the names of MPs appointed to a number of committees, including the Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) and the Committee on Public Accounts (COPA).

26.02.2024: **Police** - According to Economy Next, R.

Wickremesinghe Deshbandu Tennakoon has been appointed as the SL's 36th Inspector General of Police (IGP) after the Constitutional Council (CC) cleared the officer. He along with 03 other SL police officials had been asked by SL's Supreme Court to compensate LKR 2 crores in a fundamental rights case in 2023. SL's Supreme Court also directed its Police Commission to take disciplinary action against the said police officials after considering the petition filed by W. Ranjith Sumangala, who had accused the police officials of violating his fundamental rights during his arrest at Mirihana police station in 2011.

29.02.2024: **Cybersecurity law** - According to Economy Next, a national cybersecurity law is to be introduced in 2024, followed by the establishment of a cybersecurity authority. The digital economy, which previously stood at 4.73 %, has surpassed the 05 %. This expansion has significantly strengthened SL's overall economic resilience.

**ECONOMIC PROFILE – February 2024**

<b>Remittances</b>	January 2024	↑ to USD 487.6 million from USD 437.5 million
<b>Private credit</b>	December 2023	↑ by LKR 97.5 billion from LKR 62.5 billion
<b>Tourism revenue</b>	January 2024	USD 341.8 million
<b>Economic growth estimation</b>	Year 2024	about 2%
<b>Inflation</b>	February 2024	↑ to 5.9%

**RANJINI**  
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02.02.2024: **World Bank** - According to Economy Next, SL has signed an agreement with the Washington-based World Bank for a USD 150 million loan to strengthen a deposit insurance scheme. The funds will come from the International Development Organisation's soft window, for which SL has re-qualified after its sovereign default.

07.02.2024: **CB** - According to Economy Next, SL's banking system has accumulated foreign reserves or repaid loans amounting to USD 5.0 billion since SL's Central Bank allowed an interest rate adjustment in April 2022. SL's Central Bank has accumulated reserves or repaid debt of USD 1.69 billion since April 2022. In the meantime, commercial banks have collected around USD 3.2 billion or repaid maturing credit lines during this period.

08.02.2024: **Power Purchase Agreement** - According to Economy Next, SL's state-owned Ceylon Electricity Board has signed a power purchase agreement with Rividhanavi (Pvt) Ltd. for a 100 MW ground mounted solar

project in Siyambalanduwa. The project was tendered by the CEB in September 2022, evaluated in 2023 and awarded to the lowest and successful bidder at the end of 2023.

14.02.2024: **Trade** - According to Economy Next, SL continues to lag behind in integrating into global production networks because it pursues short-sighted goals of producing non-tradable goods rather than tradable goods that can be exported. The non-tradable goods sector, which cannot be traded on the international market, accounted for 70 % of the growth in total economic production. Non-tradable goods include goods such as public services, real estate and construction, goods with very high transport costs and goods produced specifically for local retailers.

14.02.2024: **Investment** - According to Economy Next, Arton Capital, a Canada-based financial advisory firm that provides advice and services to improve mobility and attract foreign investors, believes that SL can increase the strength of

its passport and attract investors through residency programmes. SL requires a visa for 143 countries. SL is not visa-free for Europe, the UK, Canada and the US, among others.

16.02.2024: **Competition** - According to Economy Next, SL does not have a comprehensive system in place to prevent anti-competitive behaviour. There are both statutory and regulatory provisions to promote competition and prevent anti-competitive practices in no less than 37 enactments, with responsibilities and enforcement powers divided between both regulators and service providers. A high-level delegation from the Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC) attended the seminar to provide background and key aspects of the competition laws and the agency's role in ensuring a transparent and competitive business climate in Japan.

18.02.2024: **Investment** - According to Economy Next, SL's excessive protectionist taxes with import duties and para duties on capital goods are more of a barrier to foreign direct

investment in the island than income tax. SL has sought to abolish tax exemptions and concessions for companies approved by SL's Board of Investment, particularly under its *Strategic Development Projects Act*, where discretionary concessions are believed to encourage corruption.

20.02.2024: **Investment**

- According to Economy Next, SL's Cabinet has approved a proposal to seek private investors for large-scale offshore wind farms. A feasibility study by the World Bank has shown that there is huge potential for offshore wind energy on the north, west and south-east coasts.

25.02.2024: **Wages** -

According to Economy Next, SL's Central Bank, which has become independent under SL's *Monetary Law Act*, has offered to explain to SL Parliament the recent sharp salary increase for

its employees. According to reports, which have not been denied so far, clerical assistants received a salary increase averaging LKR 47,000-199,000 rupees, executive assistants by an average of LKR 94,000-306,000 rupees and staff officers by LKR 184,000-514,000 rupees. SL's Central Bank mentioned in a statement that the increases were granted on the basis of a 03-year wage agreement.



# Oppression & Resistance

08.02.2024: **Assault** - According to SL's Human Rights authorities a Jaffna University student who had been assaulted in public on 04.02.2024 by occupational SL Police had submitted a complaint to HRCSL, reports Lanka Files. Further reports indicate that the assault of Tamil undergraduates by SL Police remains ongoing with no intervention.

08.02.2024: **Assault** - According to Lanka Files, Tamil political prisoner, Piratheepan had been assaulted by a former SL soldier who had trespassed into SL's Welikada Prison. Reports from R. Shanakiyan indicate that the soldier had entered the high security prison with an SL Prison Police team to conduct an alleged search operation.

08.02.2024: **Protest** - The Tamil fisheries community staged a protest in Jaffna's streets against attempts by occupational SL Fisheries authorities to obstruct the use of the Savalkattu Fisheries Harbour which had been developed with an investment of LKR 10 million in funds provided by the local Tamils, reports Lanka

Files. The protest amassed into a rally through the streets of Jaffna.

10.02.2024: **Protest** - Kalmunai Muslims staged a protest following Friday prayers calling on the cessation of genocide in Gaza and condemn Israel's attacks on Palestine, reports Lanka Files.

11.02.2024: **Workshops** - GTF and Buddhist monks launched district-level workshops on the Himalayan Declaration across the occupied Tamil homeland, reports Lanka Files. 05, 02-day workshops have been scheduled at the following locations:

- ◆ Kurunegala
- ◆ Kandy
- ◆ Batticaloa
- ◆ Matara
- ◆ Vavuniya

11.02.2024: **Enforced Disappearance** - According to JDS Lanka, Vavuniya High Court's Judge, Manickawasagar Ilancheliyan ruled that the occupational SL Army Commander who was stationed in Omanthai and Vanni in 2006 is responsible for the enforced disappearance of Tamil youth, Kandasamy Ilamaran.

12.02.2024: **Commemoration** - The 28th commemoration of the Kumarapuram Massacre was conducted by locals and relatives of the 26 Tamils massacred by SL's genocidal Army, reports Lanka Files.

13.02.2024: **Travel** - SL issued a temporary travel document to Santhan who had been convicted in relation to the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case and had been released on 12.11.2022 to return to SL. However, according to reports from Lanka Files, Santhan is simultaneously awaiting formal orders from the Tamil Nadu government to enable travel and a liver transplant at a Government hospital in Chennai.

16.02.2024: **SL Elections** - National People's Movement, announced former SL Army commander and genocidaire Mahesh Senanayake as their candidate for the impending SL presidential election, reports Lanka Files.

18.02.2024: **Fisheries** - Local Tamil fishers announce that "Condemning Indian and SriLanka governments for jailing

our fishermen by Kayts court we have decided to boycott the St. Antony's church annual festival in Kachchativu on 23.02.2024/23.02.2024.

18.02.2024: **Tamil** - According to Uthayan, SL's Police in Jaffna have been instructed to learn Tamil. This would help them to counter drug related crimes.

19.02.2024: **Asylum** - A group of asylum seekers - mostly Tamils located on the isolated British island territory of Diego Garcia have told Refugees investigators that they feel unsafe and forgotten, as they reported sexual assaults and harassment of children, as well as self-harm and suicide attempts, reports Lank Files.

20.02.2024: **Protest** - According to Lanka Files, Mannar locals protested opposite the Mannar courts to demand justice for the

death of a girl who was deemed missing on 15.02.2024 and found deceased on the morning of 16.02.2024. Occupational SL Police claim that the 10-year-old was sexually assaulted and a 52-year-old man had been arrested and remanded until 29.02.2024.

21.02.2024: **Protest** - Families of forcibly disappeared Tamils mark 07 years of ongoing struggle in search of justice and their relatives. According to Lanka Files, protests commenced in 2017 and 240 individuals have died in the process of seeking justice.



# SIGNS OF STRUCTURAL GENOCIDE

*Any occurrence which reflects the implementation of Tamil genocidal ideology in a structural manner.*

01.02.2024: **Valikaamam North** - 500 acres of private Tamil Land from Valikaamam North will be given to SL's Airport and Aviation authority. It is noteworthy that SL's military still has 3,000 acres of land under their control in Valikaamam North.

09.02.2024: **Fisheries** - Locals of Mullaitivu accuse large scale SL tourism investors for dislodging local Tamil fisheries communities from the

beachfront due to their claims of the beach, reports Lanka Files.

12.02.2024: **Vedukkunaari** - A group of Buddhist monks with a group of SL's soldiers have entered the Vedukkunaari temple area. There they claimed that that land belonged to them. It is noteworthy that Vedukkunaari is claimed by Buddhist monks despite being a Tamil area.

## Puradsi Media

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