

Sri Lanka

Pearl of the Indian Ocean



NATIONAL FLAG

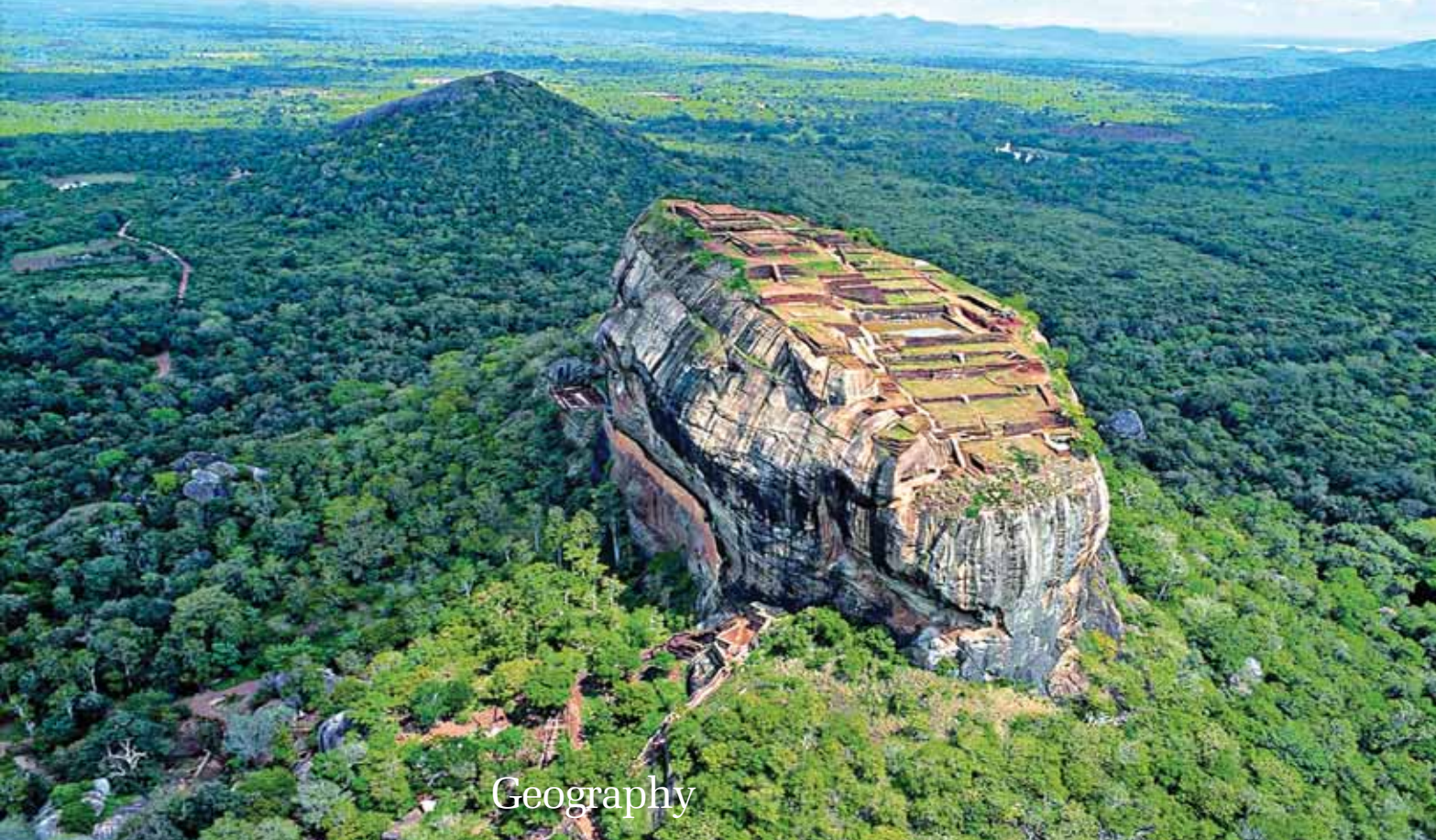


NATIONAL EMBLEM


 H.E. MAHINDA RAJAPAKSA
President

 H.E. D.M. JAYARATNE
Prime Minister

The first Sinhalese arrived in Sri Lanka late in the 6th century B.C. probably from northern India. Buddhism was introduced in about the mid-third century B.C., and a great civilization developed at the cities of Anuradhapura (kingdom from circa 200 B.C. to circa A.D. 1000) and Polonnaruwa (from about 1070 to 1200). In the 14th century, a south Indian dynasty established a Tamil kingdom in northern Sri Lanka. The coastal areas of the island were controlled by the Portuguese in the 16th century and by the Dutch in the 17th century. The island was ceded to the British in 1796, became a crown colony in 1802, and was united under British rule by 1815. As Ceylon, it became independent in 1948; its name was changed to Sri Lanka in 1972. Tensions between the Sinhalese majority and Tamil separatists erupted into war in 1983. Under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, the country got an implausible victory over the terror group.



Geography

LOCATION:	Southern Asia, island in the Indian Ocean, south of India; Island
GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES:	7 00 N, 81 00 E
AREA:	Total: 65,610 sq km; Country comparison to the world: 121
MARITIME CLAIMS:	Territorial sea: 12 nm Contiguous zone: 24 nm Exclusive economic zone: 200 nm Continental shelf: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin
COASTLINE:	1,340 km
CLIMATE:	Tropical monsoon; northeast monsoon (December to March); southwest monsoon (June to October)
ELEVATION EXTREMES:	Lowest point: Indian Ocean 0 m Highest point: Pidurutalagala 2,524 m
NATURAL RESOURCES:	Limestone, graphite, mineral sands, gems, phosphates, clay, hydropower
NATURAL HAZARDS:	Occasional cyclones and tornadoes
ENVIRONMENT - CURRENT ISSUES:	Deforestation, soil erosion, wildlife populations threatened by poaching and urbanization, coastal degradation from mining activities and increased pollution, freshwater resources being polluted by industrial wastes and sewage runoff, waste disposal, air pollution in Colombo
ENVIRONMENT - INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS:	Party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands Signed, but not ratified: Marine Life Conservation
STANDARD TIME:	GMT +5:30 hours



People

NATIONALITY: Sri Lankan(s)

POPULATION: 21,513,990; Country comparison to the world: 55

POPULATION GROWTH RATE: 0.863% (2010 est.); Country comparison to the world: 134

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH: Total population: 75.3 years;
Country comparison to the world: 85

HIV/AIDS - ADULT PREVALENCE RATE: Less than 0.1% (2001 est.);
Country comparison to the world: 157

HIV/AIDS - PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS: 3,800 (2007 est.);
Country comparison to the world: 127

HIV/AIDS - DEATHS: Fewer than 200 (2003 est.);
Country comparison to the world: 117

MAJOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES: Degree of risk: High
Food or Waterborne diseases: Bacterial Diarrhea and Hepatitis A,
Vectorborne diseases: Dengue fever and Chikungunya,
Water contact disease: Eptospirosis
Animal contact disease: Rabies (2009)

ETHNIC GROUPS: Sinhalese 73.8%, Sri Lankan Moors 7.2%, Indian Tamil 4.6%,
Sri Lankan Tamil 3.9%, Other 0.5%, Unspecified 10% (2001
census provisional data)

RELIGIONS: Buddhist 69.1%, Muslim 7.6%, Hindu 7.1%, Christian 6.2%,
Unspecified 10% (2001 census provisional data)

LANGUAGES: Sinhala (Official and National language) 74%, Tamil
(National language) 18%, other 8%

*Note: English is commonly used in government and
business sector*

LITERACY: 90.7%

Government

COUNTRY NAME: Sri Lanka;
Official Name - Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

GOVERNMENT TYPE: Republic

CAPITAL: Colombo

HEAD OF THE STATE: H.E. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT: H.E. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President

INDEPENDENCE: 4 February 1948 (from the UK)

CONSTITUTION: Adopted 16 August 1978, certified 31 August 1978;
Amended 20 December 2001



LEGAL SYSTEM: A highly complex mixture of English common law, Roman-Dutch, Kandyan, and Jaffna Tamil law; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

SUFFRAGE: 18 years of age; Universal

Economy

ECONOMY - OVERVIEW: In 1977, Colombo abandoned statist- and import substitution-policies for more market- and export-oriented policies, including encouragement of foreign investment. Sri Lanka suffered through a brutal civil war from 1983 to 2009. Despite the war, Sri Lanka saw GDP growth average nearly 5% in the last 10 years. Government spending on development and fighting the LTTE drove GDP growth to around 6-7% per year in 2006-08. Growth was 3.5% in 2009, still high despite the world recession. Sri Lanka's most dynamic sectors are now food processing, textiles and apparel, food and beverages, port construction, telecommunications, and insurance and banking. About 1.5 million Sri Lankans work abroad, 90% of them in the Middle East. They send home more than \$3 billion a year. President RAJAPAKSA's reelection in 2010 means that the Government of Sri Lanka will likely continue its more statist economic approach, that seeks to reduce poverty by steering investment to disadvantaged areas, developing small and medium enterprises, promoting agriculture, and expanding the already enormous civil service. The end of the 26-year conflict with the LTTE has opened the door for reconstruction and development projects in the north and east. Funding these projects will be difficult, as the government already is faced with high debt interest payments, a bloated civil service, and high budget deficits. The 2008-09 global financial crisis and recession exposed Sri Lanka's economic vulnerabilities and nearly caused a balance of payments crisis, which was alleviated by a \$2.6 billion IMF standby agreement in July 2009. But the end of the civil war and the IMF loan restored investors' confidence. The Sri Lankan stock market gained over 100% in 2009, one of the best performing markets in the world. Official foreign reserves improved to more than \$5 billion by November 2009, providing over 6 months of imports cover.

GDP (OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATE): \$41.81 billion (2009 est.)

GDP - REAL GROWTH RATE: 3.5% (2009 est.); Country comparison to the world: 51

GDP - PER CAPITA (PPP): \$4,500 (2009 est.); Country comparison to the world: 148

POPULATION BELOW POVERTY LINE:	23% (2008 est.)
INFLATION RATE (CONSUMER PRICES):	3.4% (2009 est.); Country comparison to the world: 109
AGRICULTURE - PRODUCTS:	Rice, sugarcane, grains, pulses, oilseed, spices, vegetables, fruit, tea, rubber, coconuts, milk, eggs, hides, beef, fish
INDUSTRIES:	Processing of rubber, tea, coconuts, tobacco and other agricultural commodities, telecommunications, insurance, banking, tourism, shipping, clothing, textiles, cement, petroleum refining, information technology services, construction
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION GROWTH RATE:	4.2% (2009 est.); Country comparison to the world: 29
ELECTRICITY - PRODUCTION:	9.901 billion kWh (2008 est.); Country comparison to the world: 92
ELECTRICITY - CONSUMPTION:	8.417 billion kWh (2008 est.); Country comparison to the world: 93
ELECTRICITY - EXPORTS:	0 kWh (2008 est.)
ELECTRICITY - IMPORTS:	0 kWh (2008 est.)
OIL - PRODUCTION:	0 bbl/day (2008 est.); Country comparison to the world: 127
OIL - CONSUMPTION:	89,000 bbl/day (2008 est.); Country comparison to the world: 80
OIL - EXPORTS:	968 bbl/day (2007 est.); Country comparison to the world: 123
OIL - IMPORTS:	87,690 bbl/day (2007 est.); Country comparison to the world: 67
OIL - PROVED RESERVES:	0 bbl (1 January 2009 est.); Country comparison to the world: 118
NATURAL GAS - PRODUCTION:	0 cu m (2008 est.); Country comparison to the world: 126
NATURAL GAS - CONSUMPTION:	0 cu m (2008 est.); Country comparison to the world: 131
NATURAL GAS - EXPORTS:	0 cu m (2008 est.); Country comparison to the world: 119
NATURAL GAS - PROVED RESERVES:	0 cu m (1 January 2009 est.); Country comparison to the world: 140
EXPORTS:	\$6.983 billion (2009 est.); Country comparison to the world: 92
EXPORTS - COMMODITIES:	Textiles and apparel, tea and spices, diamonds, emeralds, rubies, coconut products, rubber manufactures, fish
EXPORTS - PARTNERS:	US 22.1%, UK 12.1%, Germany 5.2%, Belgium 4.9%, Italy 4.8%, India 4.5% (2008)
IMPORTS:	\$9.7 billion (2009 est.); Country comparison to the world: 87
IMPORTS - COMMODITIES:	Textile fabrics, mineral products, petroleum, foodstuffs, machinery and transportation equipment
IMPORTS - PARTNERS:	India 18.9%, China 12.4%, Iran 7.7%, Singapore 7.5%, South Korea 4.8% (2008)
RESERVES & FOREIGN EXCHANGED GOLD:	\$5.12 billion (30 November 2009 est.); Country comparison to the world: 81
EXCHANGE RATES:	Sri Lankan rupees (LKR) per US dollar - 115 (2009), 108.33 (2008), 110.78 (2007), 103.99 (2006), 100.498 (2005)



Communication

- TELEPHONES - MAIN LINES IN USE:** 3.446 million (2008);
Country comparison to the world: 44
- TELEPHONES - MOBILE CELLULAR:** 11.082 million (2008);
Country comparison to the world: 56
- BROADCAST/TELECAST STATIONS:** Radios: AM 15, FM 52, Shortwave(SW) 4 (2007)
Televisions: 12 (2009)
- INTERNET TLD:** .lk
- INTERNET HOSTS:** 6,090 (2009); Country comparison to the world: 134
- INTERNET USERS:** 1.164 million (2008); Country comparison to the world: 83
- INTERNATIONAL DIALING CODE:** +94

Transportation

- AIRPORTS:** 18 (2009); Country comparison to the world: 138
- ROADWAYS:** Total: 97,286 km; Country comparison to the world: 45
Paved: 78,802 km;
Unpaved: 18,484 km (2003)
- WATERWAYS:** 160 km (primarily on rivers in southwest) (2008);
Country comparison to the world: 101
- RAILWAYS:** Total: 1,449 km; Country comparison to the world: 82
Broad gauge: 1,449 km 1.676-m gauge (2007)
- MERCHANT MARINE:** Total: 26; Country comparison to the world: 90
By type: Bulk carrier 4, cargo 18, chemical tanker 1, container 1, petroleum tanker 2
Foreign-owned: 5 (Germany 5)
Registered in other countries: 1 (Panama 1) (2008)
- PORTS AND TERMINALS:** Colombo

Issues

- INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS:** 460,000 (Both Tamils and non-Tamils displaced due to long-term civil war between the government and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)) (2007).

Source: wikipedia and various other sources