
Resettlement after de-mining

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The displaced people in the North will be resettled in their original homes soon after the mines were cleared in the respective areas to integrate them into the national development process, said President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Speaking at the bicentennial celebrations of the Sri Lanka Customs Department, President Rajapaksa said the Government has faced an enormous task of clearing mines in the area which was once occupied by terrorists.

A new postage stamp was issued to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Customs Department. The cancellation of the first day cover took place at the BMICH in the presence of Customs Director General Sarath Jayathilake and Post Master General MPB Dissanayake. The first day cover was presented to the President by Export and International Trade Promotion Minister and Acting Post and Telecommunication Minister Prof. G.L. Peries. The Central Bank issued a special coin valued at Rs. 200 to mark this occasion and the coin was presented to the President by Central Bank Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal. Retired Customs Directors General and customs officials who completed over 25 years service in the Department received special awards from the President. President Rajapaksa said State revenue should be increased to meet the challenge of providing facilities to the people who were displaced by the terrorist atrocities in the North. The Government will resettle them in their original dwellings soon on completion of mine clearance activities, he said. The President added the Government's revenue should have to be augmented to provide meals and build houses for the displaced community in the North. "The country earned plaudits from the world for having implemented the free health and free education policies", he said. "The Opposition wanted to reduce the strength of the public service by 5 to 6 lakhs. But my Government increased the number of employees in the State sector to 1.2 million," he said. He said the Opposition planned to privatise the Customs Department which was the main source of income to the then Government when it was in power. The economies of the developed countries have collapsed in the face of global recession. The developed countries which insisted the Third World countries to take a cue from them have failed in their economic policies. "We allocated funds for development though the Government had to spend billions of rupees to liberate the country. The development and the eradication of terrorism went hand in hand," he said. He added that the per capita income of the country has doubled due to the sound and dynamic policies followed by the Government in the past four years. The International Monetary Fund after having closely monitored the country's progressive economic policy has approved a loan for us without any condition. Previous Governments had to bow down to their conditions to obtain loans, the President stressed. "Time has come to focus on whether the Government's revenue has increased to cope up with the country's development." by Chaminda Perera Courtesy: dailynews.lk