Rural people should be given the results of giant development works – President

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We have to give the rural people who comprises 80% of our population the results of giant development works we have initiated in the country. It is not only an expectation but also a challenge which we are ready to take up, President Mahinda Rajapaksa said. Addressing the 64th Independence Day celebrations at Anuradhapura this morning President said that we would be able to utilize the giant development works built by us for national development only if we can bring up a citizen equipped with modern, scientific, technical and language skills and who could be on par with anybody else in the world. "We would be able to exist as an independent, sovereign state only if we strengthen our economy. We have to get together and work just as we got together and worked with dedication to defeat terrorism," President added. Conspiracies and propaganda of terrorists based overseas have not abated still. When such things happen abroad some people here do various things to destabilize the Motherland. They expect to achieve in Sri Lanka certain results that happened in some countries of the world. Both these groups are one. Fuel and nutrition for this struggle in Sri Lanka are received from separatism active in foreign lands. We are engaged in the task of creating a stable peace and national unity after liberating the country from terrorism. This is not a task confined to one individual or a party. Remember, the country would not benefit by trying to please selfish groups who receive foreign funds. Similarly solutions cannot be obtained by implementing the proposals of extremist groups of whatever persuasion. What is required today is the formulation of policies based on a vision that is commonly applicable to the whole country. Ethnic communities have no separate regions. The entire country belongs to all ethnic communities, President Rajapaksa added. Referring to Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission report tabled in parliament on December 17, President said "Since then we have done a lot". Full text of the speech: Venerable Maha Sangha and clergy of all religions Hon. Prime Minister Hon. Speaker Hon. Chief Justice and other Justices Ministers and Members of Parliament Governors
Chief Ministers of Provinces Members of the Diplomatic Corps Secretary to the President and other public servants Commanders of the Three Forces The Inspector General of Police Director-General of the Civil Defence Force Mothers and Fathers Dear Children
Friends,

Today we have come to a city with a great history to commemorate the 64th anniversary of independence. This city was established prior to 400 BC. Even the wind that blows from a city that exemplified prosperity, pride, religion and great traditions for thousands of years reminds the Sri Lankan nation of independence, freedom and prosperity. On this occasion I pay the nation's respect to the war heroes who dedicated their lives and all others who were committed to freedom. Friends, You know freedom is an immense responsibility for us today. During the war previous governments could blame everything on the war and escape. However, the people who reached peace after war expected to march from inefficiency to efficiency, from unemployment to employment, from impurity to purity and from backwardness to modernity. The people who then forgot everything else and demanded a bunker for the village and a rifle to defend lives, today expect not only electricity, water, housing, highways, higher education but also a law abiding, clean and a modern Sri Lanka. What your requested me when I visited Kebethigollawa some times ago is different from what you request me today. Therefore, during the three years after gaining freedom from terrorism we have been able to use that freedom to give the Motherland an immense value much more than that given during the half century since independence in 1948. Today we have built the country to that status when we could draw the map of the Motherland more proudly than then. We have still to go a long way. We have to give the rural people who comprises 80% of our population the results of giant development works we have initiated in the country. It is not only an expectation but also a challenge which we are ready to take up. We would be able to utilize the giant development works built by us for national development only if we can bring up a citizen equipped with modern, scientific, technical and language skills and who could be on par with anybody else in the world. When the late C. W. W. Kannnangara presented the Free Education Act, D. A. Rajapaksa was also among S.A. Wickremasinghe, N.M. Perera, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, J. R. Jayewardene, A. Ratnayake, W. Dahanayke and others who supported it. Just like those who were dedicated to free education and health then Mahinda Chinthana is dedicated to defend those rights of the people today. We will not allow anyone to deprive the people of those rights. Friends, The economic crises in the world also affect our country. But thanks to the Gama Neguma, Divi Neguma and the immense revival of agriculture we face this world food crisis very well. You know that we are becoming self-sufficient in food and are strong enough even to export food to the world outside. It is also important to understand the problems we face due to the rise in oil and gas prices. It is important to be aware of the reality. In face of all these we should be prepared to demonstrate our strength and courage to the world. We would be able to exist as an independent, sovereign state only if we strengthen our economy. We have to get together and work just as we got together and worked with dedication to defeat terrorism. Conspiracies and propaganda of terrorists based overseas have not abated still. When such things happen abroad some people here do various things to destabilize the Motherland. They expect to achieve in Sri Lanka certain results that happened in some countries of the world. Both these groups are one. Fuel and nutrition for this struggle in Sri Lanka are received from separatism active in foreign lands. Friends, We are engaged in the task of creating a stable peace and national unity after liberating the country from terrorism. This is not a task confined to one individual or a party. Remember, the country would not benefit by trying to please selfish groups who receive foreign funds. Similarly solutions cannot be obtained by implementing the proposals of extremist groups of whatever persuasion. What is required today is the formulation of policies based on a vision that is commonly applicable to the whole country. Friends, Ethnic communities have no separate regions. The entire country belongs to all ethnic communities. Friends, The Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission has stated that all are responsible for this problem. All those who act according to their conscience should take heed of this statement. Therefore, we have already

started implementing what was in the Commission. The report was tabled in Parliament on December 17. Since then we have done a lot. Acting against public opinion using executive power is not democratic. We are committed to parliamentary democracy as well as to the country's law, independence of the judiciary and good governance. Sri Lanka is the Asian democratic state which has practiced universal suffrage without gender discrimination uninterruptedly for the longest period. We are committed to defend the right to make and break governments through universal suffrage. We all know that Parliament representing people including all parties, ethnic communities, religions is the supreme democratic institution. Therefore we believe that the mechanism for solving the National Question is the Parliamentary Select Committee. It is the duty of all parties in the country to solve problems according to the people's wishes by participating in this Parliamentary Select Committee rather than relying on imported solutions and utilizing foreign influences. Dear children, We are on a virtuous and steady path to the future on behalf of the people. In this path there is no repression, no threats, no influences. There is only governance and sound management. Today hundreds of thousands of youth in this country have pinned the national flag to their chests. Your hearts are full of national sentiments and patriotism. You must direct these patriotic sentiments to the supreme task of building a country in which all could live together. Friends, The words of the Buddha show the path we should take and how we should solve problems. Akkodhena jine kodham – asadhum sadhuna jine Jine kadariyam danena – saccena alikavadinam
(Let an angry man be conquered by love; an evil man by goodness. Let a miser be won over by liberality; and a liar by truthfulness)
Let this thought guide all in making the freedom of our motherland meaningful!
A happy future for you all!Source: PRIU