

Unity Govt., global help for Lanka's recovery

JANUARY

8 – Common opposition presidential candidate Maithripala Sirisena won a tightly-contested presidential race against war-winning President, Mahinda Rajapaksa

9 – President Maithripala Sirisena took oath as the sixth Executive President of Sri Lanka, before the senior most Supreme Court Judge, Justice K. Sripavan at the Independence Square. Ranil Wickremesinghe was sworn in as the Prime Minister.

10 – The new government launched



12 – A 27-member Cabinet of Ministers was sworn in.

13-15 – Pope Francis made a three-day pastoral visit, primarily for the canonization of the country's first Saint, Joseph Vaz, a revered missionary from Goa, India.

13 – Notorious underworld kingpin and drug trafficker, Samantha Kumara alias 'Wele Suda' was arrested in Pakistan and brought to Sri Lanka.

18 – The Sri Lanka Navy (SLN) detained a vessel carrying 12 container loads of weapons at the Galle Harbour. The vessel 'MV Mahanuwara' is the floating armoury operated by Avant Garde Maritime Services, a subsidiary of private security firm Avant Garde Security Services (Pvt) Ltd.

21 – President Maithripala Sirisena issued orders to drop charges

against former Army Commander Sarath Fonseka and to reinstate him as a General.

28 – The Government declared the appointment of Mohan Peiris as the Chief Justice was void in law due to Dr. Shirani Bandaranayake not being 'lawfully impeached' and therefore, a vacancy not having existed at any time.

29 – Dr. Shirani Bandaranayake was re-appointed as the Chief Justice. She immediately retired and was succeeded by K. Sripavan, senior most judge of the Supreme Court.



APRIL

4 – A Board of Inquiry, headed by senior lawyer J.C. Weliamuna released its probe report on large scale corruption and mismanagement at Sri Lankan Airlines, highlighting massive financial losses and recommending criminal action

8 – The Most Ven. Udugama Sri Buddhakkhitha Maha Nayaka Thera of the Asgiriya Chapter passed away in Singapore at the age of 85 years.



11 – Five senior MPs from the SLFP Central Committee and former ministers Bandula Gunawardena, T. B. Ekanayake, Salinda Dissanayaka, S. M. Chandrasena and Rohitha Abeygunawardena were sacked.

22 – Former Economic Development Minister Basil Rajapaksa, former Secretary of the Ministry Nihal Jayatilake and former Divineguma Fund Director General R.R.K. Ranawaka were arrested.

24 – UPFA MP Dullas Alahappenuma apologized for using a national flag without the two coloured strips – representing the minorities – at the protest held outside the Bribery Commission.

28 – After serious delays, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was finally passed



JUNE



3 – Following a New Delhi ban on the sale of Maggi noodles for 15 days due to high levels of lead in the product, Sri Lanka called for better standards in packaged food

14 – The Chinese construction company failed to produce documents to support Cabinet sanction and environmental clearance certificates for the US\$ 1.5 billion worth Colombo Port City Project

20 – Former President Mahinda Rajapaksa was accommodated on the SLFP list to contest the August 17 General Election

26 – Former Indian President Dr. Abdul Kalam met President Maithripala Sirisena in Colombo

26 – Elections Commissioner Mahinda Deshapriya retired from service

26 – Parliament was dissolved and a parliamentary election was scheduled for August 17

27 – Former President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga turned 70 years

29 – The Department of Immigration and Emigration halted on arrival visa facility for Pakistani nationals

30 – President of Sri Lanka Cricket Jayantha Dharmadasa was appointed president of the Asian Cricket Council



9 – Former President Mahinda Rajapaksa signed his nomination paper to contest on UPFA from Kurunegala District

13 – Former UPFA parliamentarians Duminda Silva, Mervyn Silva, Sarana Gunawardena and Sajin de Vass Gunawardena were denied UPFA nomination

21 – Former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, during a UPFA election rally in Akuresa, moved angrily towards a party supporter, as if to attack him. The video went viral.

23 – The Election Manifesto of the United National Front for Good Governance was launched at the Vihara Maha Devi Amphitheatre

24 – The government began the disbursement of payment to Golden Key deposit holders

26 – President Maithripala Sirisena left for the Maldives

JULY

to attend the country's 50th National Independence Day ceremony as the chief guest

27 – Ending months of speculation and secrecy, the Criminal Investigations Department informed court that the death of popular rugby player Wasim Thajudeen in 2012 was a murder.

27 – The father of India's missile program and former Indian President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam died at the age of 83.

28 – Sri Lanka and Google signed a partnership to launch Loon high altitude 'floating telecom tower' balloons full broadband internet coverage for the entire country.

31 – Unidentified gunmen opened fire at an election campaign rally of Ravi Karunanayake in Bloomendhal, killing a woman and wounding at least 12 people.

FEBRUARY

4 – The 67th Independence Day was celebrated at the Sri Jayawardeneperu Parliamentary Grounds in Kotte under the patronage of President Maithripala Sirisena. The theme was 'Piripun Maubimak – Abiman Heta Dinak' (a prosperous motherland, a dignified tomorrow)

13 – The controversial Uma Oya project was temporarily suspended

15 – President Maithripala Sirisena embarked on his first official overseas visit to India after assuming office as President.



MAY

2 – US Secretary of State John Kerry arrived in Sri Lanka on a two-day visit.

9 – Chief Operating Officer of the Reconstruction and Development Agency (RADA), Saliya Wickramasuriya was arrested for alleged financial fraud.

10 – Most Ven. Rajakeeya Panditha Galagama Dhammasiddhi Sri Dhammananda Aththadassi Thera was elected the 21st Mahanayaka of the Asgiriya Chapter.

13 – The body of Sivaloganathan Vidhya, an 18-year-old student from Pungudutheevu was found in an abandoned house in Kays. She had been raped and murdered.

30 – Award-winning dramatist and playwright, Somalatha Subasinghe passed away at the age of 79.



Compiled by Rukshana Rizwie

AUGUST

10 – The remains of Wasim Thajudeen was exhumed for further inquiry

10 – Government decided to obtain fingerprints as biometric data of applicants when issuing passports.

17 – The UNP won the Parliamentary Election, garnering 93 seats and 13 National List slots.

18 – A leak in an underground pipe of the Coca Cola Factory resulted in the contamination of the Kelani River. The Water Supply and Drainage Board suspended supply until the contaminated water was flushed out and the Central Environment Authority also suspended the factory's Environment Protection License temporarily.

21 – Ranil Wickremesinghe was sworn in as the Prime Minister before President Maithripala Sirisena, his fourth term as the island's Premier.

24 – international sports star, Kumar Sangakkara bid farewell to his international cricketing career

24 – Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair met with President Maithripala Sirisena.



24 – Three ministers were sworn in before President Maithripala Sirisena, Mangala Samaraweera (Foreign Affairs), Dr. Wijeyadasa Rajapakse (Justice) and D.M. Swaminathan (Resettlement and Rehabilitation).

26 – The US announced its decision to sponsor a Resolution at the UNHRC sessions in September supportive of the Sri Lankan Government and extended support for an internal mechanism.

29 – The check point established at Omanthai along the A9 Road was removed, signaling connectivity between the South and the North.

MARCH



4 – The Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport was shut down due to incurring heavy losses.

5 – The Cabinet suspended the Colombo Port City Project, temporarily. It was claimed an agreement was entered into with China for US\$1.5 billion, without Cabinet approval or adherence to procedure.

6 – External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj arrived in Colombo to set the stage for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit, the first bilateral visit to Sri Lanka by an Indian premier in 28 years.

14 – Indian Premier Narendra Modi arrived in Sri Lanka

22 – General Sarath Fonseka was promoted to the rank of Field Marshal, a rank considered equal to a Cabinet position

25 – President Maithripala Sirisena left for China on his second official overseas tour, on the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping



SEPTEMBER

12 – Seya Sadewmi, a four-year-old girl from Kotadeniyawa was found molested and murdered near her home. Her murder caused national outrage and a call to implement the death penalty.

18 – The Colombo International Book Fair 2015 opened

23 – President instructed continued investigations into the dealings of the controversial Avant Garde Company.

24 – Muslims in Sri Lanka marked Eid-al-Adha.

30 – The US-backed Resolution on Sri Lanka was tabled.

30 – The 60th anniversary of the Department of Elections was marked at the BMICH.

30 – President Maithripala Sirisena addressed the 70th Sessions of the United Nations General Assembly in New York

30 – The Colombo High Court sentenced two accused persons – to 290 years and 300 years – to be served in 30 years, in connection with the bombing incident targeting former president Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga in 1999.



NOVEMBER



8 – Most Venerable Maduluwawe Sobitha Thera passed away in Singapore where he was undergoing treatment.

13 – Object WT1190F – nicknamed WTF – entered Earth's atmosphere and crashed near Sri Lanka, in to the Indian Ocean.

27 – Former DIG Vass Gunawardena, his son and four former Police Officers were sentenced to death by the Colombo High Court today after finding them guilty of murdering businessman Mohammed Shyam.

28 – President Maithripala Sirisena attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2015 in Malta. Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron offered Sri Lanka £6.6 million for post war recovery efforts.

DECEMBER

11 – A tense situation arose in Parliament when UNP MP Mujibur Rahman who spoke on the murder of ruggerrite Wasim Thajudeen was threatened with death by three opposition parliamentarians

14 – Former Minister Basil Rajapaksa and former Director General of the Divi Naguma

Department R.K.A. Ranawaka were indicted for criminal misappropriation.

15 – President Maithripala Sirisena called upon his Holiness Pope Francis at the Vatican.

19 – The Appropriation Bill 2016 was

passed in Parliament with a majority of 109 votes.

19 – UNP Parliamentarian Vadivel Suresh attempted to commit suicide inside the parliamentary complex using a can of petrol.

