

Sri Lanka celebrates

76 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

Independence Day is celebrated on February 4 to commemorate the country's political independence from British colonial rule in 1948

INVADERS OF SRI LANKA



Portuguese period
(1505-1658)



Dutch period
(1658-1796)



British period
(1796-1948)

LAST KING OF CEYLON



King Sri Wickrama Rajasinha

Sri Wickrama Rajasinha was the last of four kings to rule the last Sinhala monarchy of the Kingdom of Kandy in Ceylon. He was taken prisoner by the British and was deported to Vellore Fort, Tamil Nadu in South India.



Keppetipola Dissava



Veera Puran Appu



Gongalegoda Banda



Utuwakande Sura Saradiel

In 1817 one of the collaborators, Veera Keppetipola Dissava, was sent by the colonial administration to put a stop to agitation against British rule in the Uva Province. But Keppetipola betrayed the British by launching the Uva Rebellion.

The Matale Rebellion of 1848 was notable for the recapture of the town by Veera Puran Appu and Gongalegoda Banda, who was proclaimed as King of the Kandyan Kingdom by the chief bhikkhu of the Dambulla Vihara. Inevitably,

they succumbed to the British, but are National Heroes of Sri Lanka in the struggle for independence from British colonial rule.

THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

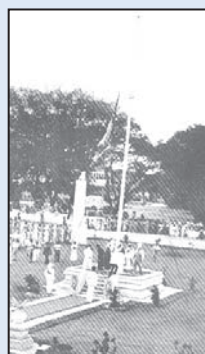
■ **1505:** The Portuguese arrived in Ceylon and occupied the country and established direct rule of the coastal region following the death of King Dharmapala of Kotte.

■ **1640:** The Dutch conquered the country and established their rule in coastal areas of the country overthrowing the Portuguese.

■ **1796:** The Dutch surrendered to the British who initially planned to administer the island from India as part of their Madras Presidency. They made the island a crown colony with its own Governor independent and separate from British India.

■ **1802:** The island became a crown colony of the British Empire.

■ **1815:** With the capture of the highland Kingdom Kandy and the signing of the Kandyan Convention, the entire island came under the British. And thus the country became Ceylon.



First Independence day ceremony

■ **February 4, 1948:** Ceylon was granted independence as the Dominion of Ceylon. The self-rule was achieved by negotiation, consultation and compromise. Largely due to the efforts of nationalist leaders such as D.S. Senanayake (who became the nation's first Prime Minister), D.R. Wijewardene, Ponnambalam Ramanathan, James Pieris, E.W. Perera and T. B. Jayah. Ceylon became a dominion within the British Commonwealth. Ceylon after independence was governed by a democratically elected bicameral legislature modelled on Britain's two Houses of Parliament in Westminster.

■ **1972 May 22:** Having been a dominion under the British crown for 24 years, the country voted to become a republic and was renamed the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka with its own Head of State.



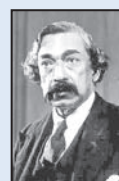
D.R. Wijewardene



Ponnambalam Ramanathan



James Pieris



E.W. Perera



T. B. Jayah



D.S. Senanayake - First Prime Minister of Ceylon

Don Stephen Senanayake was the first Prime Minister of Ceylon when the country became independent of Great Britain. He was an activist in the struggle for independence and served as the first Prime Minister of Ceylon. He played an active role in the independence movement first supporting his brother Fredrick Richard Senanayake. An avid horseman, Senanayake died on March 22, 1952 from injuries when he fell off his horse.

Leaders of Ceylon (1948-1972)



1948: 1st Prime Minister D.S. Senanayake, 1952: 2nd Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake, 1953: 3rd Prime Minister Sir John Kotelawala, 1956: 4th Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, 1959: 5th Prime Minister Wijeyananda Dahanayake, 1960: 6th Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake, 1960: 7th Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, 1965: 8th Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake, 1970: 9th Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Republic of Sri Lanka (1972-1977) 1977 10th Prime Minister J.R. Jayewardene

The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka 1978 to present Executive Presidents

1978	1989	1993	1994	2005	2015	2019	2022
1st Executive President	2nd Executive President	3rd Executive President	4th Executive President	5th Executive President	6th Executive President	7th Executive President	8th Executive President
J. R. Jayewardene	Ranasinghe Premadasa	D.B. Wijetunga	Chandrika Kumaratunga	Mahinda Rajapaksa	Maithripala Sirisena	Gotabaya Rajapaksa	Ranil Wickremesinghe

Source: Wikipedia.org Graphic: Mahil Wijesinghe