

Highlights - 2006

Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs

Completion of Approved Cadre

Vacancies existing in the 6 services belonging to Combined Services and other services managed by the Ministry of Public Administration have been identified as a restraint which has a direct bearing directly to the economic, social and cultural development of Sri Lanka. Accordingly in order to circumvent such adversities, following steps have been taken in the year 2006

- Identify existing vacancies in every service.
- Identifying factors which have become barriers in the filling of vacancies and taking measure to avoid them.
- Revise services minutes, when necessary.
- Make arrangements to hold examinations, and obtain results of the interviews and examinations without delays.
- Revise in service training methodologies to suit the current requirements.
- Publish a time table in relation to the recruitments to be made in the future.

In the year 2006, Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs has taken prompt steps to successfully fill vacancies existing in various posts in Public Service

- 293 officers (limited Scheme) have been already recruited to Sri Lanka Administrative Service and another 144 officers are due to be recruited in the future.
- 871 officers have been recruited to Public Management Assistant Service and 4000 officers is due to be recruited. In the meantime 405 vacancies existing in the post of Supra grade are to be filled.
- 10 officers have been recruited to fill vacancies in the post of Documentation Assistant.
- 25 Birth, Marriage and Death Registrars have been appointed.
- 200 vacancies existing in Government Translators Service are to be filled.
- 330 Technical Officers have been appointed to Divisional Secretariats (one officer for each office)
- 1953 Grama Niladharies are also due to be recruited.

Promotions of Public Servants

It was observed that owing to the various weakness in service minutes in the public service and current administrative mechanism, public servants who work with much dedication to achieve the development of the country are facing difficulties in getting their promotions at the right time. Some of the weaknesses identified specially in this process are unavailability of Efficiency Bar Examinations (EB) which are to be held in due time, unavailability of a proper mechanism to inform such examination schedules in advance, and inappropriate and unnecessary interviews held for promotions. Accordingly, following measures have been taken to minimize above weaknesses in respect of the services managed by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs for year 2006 and onwards.

- Publish a time table in respect of examinations for promotions which have been proposed to be held.
- Maintain close relationship with the Department of Examination..
- Explore the ways to hold Efficiency Bar examination by Training Institutes under the purview of the Ministry instead of requesting assistance form the Department of Examination.
- Effect promotions directly without interviewing officers.
- Review service minutes with the application of above remedial measures. The following officers were promoted in year 2006.
 - 82 officers in the Sri Lanka Administrative Service
 - 1138 Grama Niladharies to Supra Grade.

Human Resources Development

To ensure more productive Public Service, it is an essential requirement to provide updated theoretical and practical knowledge to public servants.

Therefore, a considerable number of training programmes were designed specially to train officers at various levels. Furthermore support was given by local and international training institutes. Accordingly, 187 local training opportunities and 59 overseas training opportunities have been received by this Ministry in the year 2006. In addition to the above, 15,330 and 2,280 public servants have been trained respectively by Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration and Public Service Training Institute under this Ministry.

Japan - Sri Lanka Youth Friendship Programme

Officers who have been attached to 330 Divisional Secretariats and 25 District Secretariats Island wide, who make direct contribution to promote local industries are offered 50 placements to participate in 3 weeks study tour in Japan under Japan Sri Lanka youth Friendship Programme. With a view to improve their knowledge in the field to introduce new development strategies, Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Japan International Corporation

Agency (JICA) and the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs in July 2006. Accordingly during next 5 years, starting from the year 2006, 50 officers attached to District and Divisional Administration who are directly involved in local industries promotion will be trained. Arrangements have been already made to send the first batch of these officer to Japan in January 2007.

Tsunami Housing Support Programme (THSP)

Tsunami Housing Support Programme which is implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Construction under Technical Assistance of the Government of Germany has assisted the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs to improve positive attitudes, team building, and leadership skills of the officers who are serving in Divisional and District Secretariats. In the year 2006, a series of special in service training programmes have been conducted for 496 officers who are serving in Tsunami affected districts.

Further Public Service Training Institute of this Ministry is also assisted to conduct training programme for skill development in the fields of communication, information technology and project planning of Grama Niladharies , Field Officers, Technical Officers who are attached to Divisional and District Administration. The objective of Tsunami Housing Support Programme is capacity development of other agencies in Tsunami affected areas, while fulfilling housing needs of the people.

Ensure Convenience Life for Pensioners

In the year 2006 the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs, while making approach a new approach in public service, has initiated programme to provide various relief for around 4.5 million retired public servants. Until recent past, large number of officers was displayed in 330 Divisional Secretariats for the payment of pension which has been a highly complicated process. Under such process, in every month, approximately 4.5 million cheques have to be issued for pensioners. As a result of this system various other related documents such as receipts have also to be prepared in bulk. However, it was revealed daily by Media that the retired public servants have to face various difficulties due to shortcomings and delays that prevailed in this process.

In order to avoid such situation, the Department of Pensions, under the direction of Hon. Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs, has taken steps to pay pension through the government banking system. This new system is being implemented with huge success. Further it has given an opportunity to utilize resources as well as physical resources in the Department of Pensions and Divisional Secretariats for other development activities. Under this programme pension of pensioners is credited to the account of the respective pensioners without any failure every month. Therefore, now pensioners have an opportunity to en-cash the pension from their bank at any time at their discretion. With the implementation of this process pensioners are having chances to enjoy other benefits granted by such banks for their regular customers.

User Friendly Establishments Code

Establishments code is the major guideline in the public service which provides directions to public servants to perform efficient and productive public service to the recipients. A revised edition of the Establishments code was published in 1985. Consequently, various revisions have been made to the Establishments code and therefore public servants had to refer to both Establishments Code and other revisions made to section of the same to perform their duties. As a result of this situation, it has created difficult environment for public servants to use Establishments Code as a user friendly manner.

Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs was determined to overcome this adverse situation and accordingly, every revision made up from 1985 to June 2006 will be issued as one edition before the end of current year. Furthermore, priority is given to issue this edition not only in a hard copy but also in a softcopy, Compact Disk.

Introduction of Information Technology Service (ITS)

Considerable numbers of employees are at present are engaged in the field of Information Technology (IT) in various public Institutions. These employees mostly have been directly recruited to the institution. Now they are frustrated due to the facts such as unavailability of clear path for their carrier development and the unavailability of transfer scheme with compared to other services. Despite such situation today the significance of the contribution of these officers' service is discussed both locally and abroad.

Having considered the importance of this service, Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs has decided to establish a new Information Technology Service with a view to absorb there officers to the IT field and also to ensure their carrier development path and make there. Approval of the Cabinet has also been received in this regard.

At present, action has been initiated to prepare the service minute and is communicating with respective trade unions. The Information Technology Service will be established before end of the year 2006. Further it is expected that the new service will be an attraction for other public servants.

Minimizing the requirement of permits and contribute to development Activities

The Government of Sri Lanka from to foreign research spends, at present a considerable amount of money for the importation of sugar. However although there were many possibilities to use Kithul resource as an alternative, so far no steps have been taken to improve this sector as an industry for the production of Kitul treacle and jaggery. Under the existing procedure, a permit has to be obtained from the Divisional Secretariat for tapping. This process demanded time and money of the applicant. Further, due to various other, constraints people haven't shown much interest in entering this field.

Accordingly, under the direction of Hon. Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs, who paid special concern on this matter, Government did away with the requirement of obtaining a permit and allowing them to tap one Kitul tree at their premises for the production of Kithul treacle and Jaggery. Such a measure would minimize the out flow of local currency for

sugar importation. In the meantime, consumers would have an opportunity to enjoy the taste of Kithul treacle and jaggery at a low price. Further, the unnecessary constraints in the Kithul treacle industry would also be removed.

Under the present practice, no person is permitted to fell a Jak tree in his own land even to fulfill their personal timber requirement, without obtaining a permit. Hon. Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs having realized difficulties faced by the public in satisfying their timber requirements has initiated action to allow them to fell only one Jack tree in a particular Persons own land for his/her timber requirements, without obtaining a permit.

Better Supervision at District and Divisional Level

The Government has assigned a role for District Secretariats and Divisional Secretariats to expedite the Social and Economic development of the country. In order to achieve the expected targets, steps are being taken to ensure productive and efficient service to general public by attaching a number of graduates to Divisional Secretariats from various Departments and Ministries as field officers. In the mean time, government provides allocations directly to Divisional Secretariats to identify and implement development projects such as 'Gama Naguma'.

Having paid attention to such requirements, the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs has decided to entrust the General Administration duties of District and Divisional Secretaries to their Deputy Head. As a result of this measure, District and Divisional Secretaries will have an opportunity to maintain close supervision on the utilization of government funds and also to spend themselves more time to accelerate social and economic development programmes of the respective area. Under the new system, District and Divisional Secretaries are required to perform field duties for 3 days per week. It has made an opportunity for them to identify directly the needs of the general public. Accordingly, efficient and more effective public service will be ensured to the public.

Strengthen Public Administration at District and Divisional level

In the year 2006, the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs has focused special attention for capacity building in District and Divisional Secretariats.

Accordingly, 100 Double Cabs have been provided to Divisional Secretariats. In addition, under financial assistance of the Government of Japan, 64 Double Cab Pickup vehicles have been provided to Divisional Secretariats. Further, 35 Double Cab Pickup vehicles under Capacity Development for Recovery Programme and 28 Double Cabs under the Strengthening Civil Administration programme are also due to be provided to Divisional Secretariats. Accordingly, in the year 2005, steps have been taken to strengthen and accelerate development projects at District and Divisional level by way of facilitating 230 out of 330 Divisional Secretariats with new official vehicles. Therefore the general public will have an opportunity to receive the utmost benefits of these measures.

Further, under the Strengthening Civil Administration Programme, the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs has initiated to construct 3 new District Secretariats and 12 Divisional Secretariats Renovation works of District Secretariats at Ampara and Batticaloe has already been commenced. In order to fill existing vacancies in District and Divisional Secretariats,

in the year 2006, action was taken to recruit 253 cadets to Sri Lanka Administrative Service and 330 Technical Officers of Technological Service.

Accordingly, the main expectation of the Ministry is to ensure more productive service to general public through Divisional and District Secretariats.

Motivation of Divisional Secretaries

Even though Divisional Secretaries render an excellent service using the experience and leadership skills gained by them in various fields, they don't get opportunities to widen their experience by serving in different areas.

Having taken in to consideration of this situation, the Ministry has taken a policy decision to grant opportunity to the Divisional Secretaries who have served more than 5 year in one and the same service station, to serve at another Divisional Secretariat by giving priority to their preference. Approval of the cabinet has also been received in this respect. Accordingly, 30 officers have been transferred to new Divisional Secretariats, opening a way to provide their excellent services to other areas. This policy will be followed continuously, every year by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs.

Further, a decision has been taken to provide official quarters with all facilities to each Divisional Secretariats. In the meantime, necessary repairs will be made to the existing quarters without a delay. New quarters will be constructed in the Division where there are no quarters. The Ministry has decided that every Divisional Secretary should strictly reside at the quarters. Because of this decision, the general public will have opportunity to obtain 24 hours service from the Divisional Secretaries.

“Nila Sevana” for Public Servants

Nila Sevana is one of the special projects which has been launched by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs to satisfy welfare needs of public servants who perform valuable service to the social economic and cultural development of the country. Under this project the Ministry takes action to provide a house to public servants at a low price on installment basis. This project will finally make every public servant a house owner.

At present, 1200 houses are being constructed in Divisional Secretariats at Four Gravets and Habraduwa in Galle District with the assistance of a Malayacian company. Further construction works of 800 houses in Divisional Secretariats Kundasale in Kandy District have commenced in June 2006. Another housing scheme with all facilities is proposed to be constructed for public servants at the Summit Flat premises in Divisional Secretariats, Thimbrigasyaya in Colombo District. Under this phase 1200 houses will be constructed as storied buildings while 200 houses are constructed as separate units. Approval of the Cabinet has also been granted to this project considering this as an essential and timely requirement. Steps are being taken at present to select appropriate construction companies for this purpose. Also, arrangements are being made to obtain a land in extent 30 acres which is situated in Divisional Secretariat at Homagama belonging to Urban Development Authority for the construction of another housing

scheme. In addition action will be taken to obtain a land, situated at Divisional Secretariats, Kelaniya which belongs to Land Reclamation and Development Corporation.

e-Public Administration

With the intention to get maximum benefits of globalizations, the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs has initiated various steps to improve performance in public administration by using information technology, e-Public Administration Accordingly, general public will be facilitated to obtain services of the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs, Divisional and District Secretariat efficiently and effective through the Information Technology

An allocation of approximately Rs.350 Million has been granted to this Ministry by the Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) to supply software and Hardware for computerization of the work processes in relation to Combined Services Division, Pensions Department, Registrar General's Department and Divisional Secretariats of this Ministry. In the year 2006 computerization of Human Resources Management activities of Combined Services Division will be completed. Further financial assistance of Rs.12 million has been granted by the Plan International to issue birth certificates through computerized process and it is now being launched in Colombo District as a pilot project.

In the year 2006, various programmes have been conducted to provide computer training to the employees of the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs and other institutions under the Ministry. All the officers in the Divisional Secretariats of Colombo District have been given basic computer training by using the resources available at the newly constructed Computer Training Institute at the District Secretariat, Colombo. Tremendous support given by Information and Communication Technology Agency, should be mentioned in this respect.

Inform Grievances by Hot Line

With a view to ensure an excellent service to the nation from all Government Institutions, especially by institutions under the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs, a Hot Line Unit has been established for the use of General Public.

Accordingly complaints against any public institution or a public servant including District and Divisional Secretariats, and Departments under this Ministry in relation to malpractices or what ever difficulties faced by people in getting their service, can be directly informed by using emergency telephone numbers of 011-2667373, 011-2667100, 011-2667277, and 011-2667071. The significant factor of this method is that such complains are direct to the personal attention and observation of the Hon. Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs and the Secretary of the Ministry. General Public is welcome to use this opportunity to establish a new Public Administration System in the country.

Stop Delays by House Holders' List

When providing various services to the general public by Ministries, Departments and even the Private Institutions they require assistance of Divisional Secretariats to obtain

information in the area. However, due to the unavailability of accurate and updated official information, system of families Divisional Secretaries are faced with great difficulties in the provision of requested services.

In order to minimize such difficulties, the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs has taken steps to reintroduce the House Holder's List which existed prior to the year 1978, in a new format. The data collection format was prepared with assistance of key Ministries, Departments and Agencies, then it was circulated among all the Ministries to obtain their views and finally all of them were incorporated in to the House Holder's data collection format. Accordingly, basic information of each family is collected by Grama Nildharies from September 2006. All information collected will be computerized where the database is available at the Divisional Secretariat. At the beginning of year 2007 we will have access to the computerized data base containing information of every family living in the respective Divisional Secretariats, through the Divisional Secretary.

Inconvenience and difficulties faced by the Public Sector agencies in obtaining services from Divisional Secretariats will be minimized due to such measures.

Further, officers who are at the decision making level will have an environment to get updated and accurate information to ensure productive decision making. At the meantime, such step will assist the government or any other private institution to identify persons/families in need and also to provide necessary service to them. Remarkable cooperation of the Information and Communication Technology Institution is hereby appreciated.

Strengthening Civil Administration Programme (SCAP)

Some offices of District Secretariats and Divisional Secretariats in Tsunami affected areas have also been damaged by the disaster and it has adversely affected at the delivery of effective and prompt services. At present, some secretariats are maintained at temporary places to deliver their services to the public. In the year 2006 The Government of Kuwait, having considered this situation, has granted US \$ 7 million as a loan to the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs for renovation and construction of new Secretariats.

Under the above financial assistance, Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs implements Strengthening Civil Administration Programme (SCAP) since March 2006. Accordingly spending Rs.141 Million, for construction works of 03 District Secretariats have been commenced in Trincomalee, Killinochchi and Mullative. Further, construction of new 12 Divisional Secretariats to Balapitiya, Ambalangoda, Hikkaduwa, Four Gravets in Galle District, Weligama in Matara District, Tangalle and Tissamharamaya in Hambantota District, Ampara, Thirukkivil and Saindamardu in Ampara District and Kareinagar in Jaffna District have been commenced with an estimated cost of Rs. 190 Million. Renovation of the District Secretariats, Ampara and Batticaloe is being carried out at a cost of Rs.24 Million. Further an allocation of Rs.274 Million has been made under this project to provide 28 Double Cabs for Divisional Secretariats and 01 light Truck for the Department of Registrar General's. This task will be completed by the first quarter of year 2007. Further, steps have been taken to provide office equipments to these Divisional and District Secretariats at a cost of Rs.44 million.

Capacity Development and Recovery Programme (CADREP)

Capacity Development and Recovery Programme is being implemented by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs under financial assistance of US \$ 21 million of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Provision of human and physical resources required for strengthening civil administration of 13 district affected by Tsunami disaster, and conducting Human Resources Development Programme have been undertaken by this programme. At present office equipments have been provided spending Rs.61 millions. Data bases and training opportunities are also provided under this project in order to strengthen decision making process. 150 Motor Cycles have been provided specially for the use of field officers attached to District and Divisional Administration while 45 Double Cabs have been provided for Divisional Secretariats.