

June 2024

ISSUE 59

# PHOENIX

## Monthly Newsletter

ISSUE

59

June 2024



## Akkinip Paravaikal

“  
*No matter how many obstacles are in the way,  
we will keep fighting*  
”  
Phoenix TNG

<b>International</b>	<b>03-06</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>10-12</b>
<i>Bilateral</i>	03		
<b>Military</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>Oppression &amp; Resistance</b>	<b>13-14</b>
<b>Domestic</b>	<b>07-09</b>		

05.06.2024: **UK** - UK's Terrorism Police who are involved in a probe into war crimes allegations from the early 2000s have appealed for information that could assist their investigation into the killing of two TNA supporters and the injury of 2 MPs in Jaffna during the 2001 elections.

20.06.2024: **Restructuring** - According to Economy Next, discussions on the restructuring of bilateral debt have been finalised. SL is ready to sign agreements and can resume the stopped credit-financed projects.

## Bilateral

04.06.2024: **Pakistan** - According to Economy Next, SL is considering the inclusion of pharmaceuticals and machinery in the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Pakistan. The 02 countries began implementing the FTA in 2005, which allows each side to export up to USD 01 billion worth of goods to the other.

04.06.2024: **UK** - According to Economy Next, SL faces legal

SL has bilateral debt with Paris Club creditors, India and China.

26.06.2024: **Restructuring** - According to Economy Next, SL has reached a "definitive restructuring agreement" on USD 5.8 billion of bilateral debt at an official creditors' committee in Paris. This agreement provides significant debt relief, enabling SL to provide funding for essential public services and secure concessional financing for its development needs. SL's bilateral debt amounts to EUR 10.58 billion.

obstacles in its efforts to reclaim priceless artefacts from the UK, as many of these items are owned by private individuals and not the state. In 2023, in response to a formal request, the Netherlands returned six Candian artefacts, including ceremonial swords of gold and silver, two wall cannons and the cannon of Lewke Disave.

04.06.2024: **US** - Deputy Commanding General (Strategy and Plans),

26.06.2024: **BRICS** - According to Economy Next, SL has been exploring plans to join BRICS, a bloc of the world's largest emerging economies. SL's move comes at a time when the country is seeking further funding after finalising a formal bilateral debt restructuring agreement.

United States Army Pacific (USARPAC) Major General Scott A. Winter met genocidaire K. Gunaratne. They discussed enhancing defence cooperation, maritime domain awareness, human trafficking through sea routes and the mutual responsibilities of both countries towards fostering peace and stability in the region.

06.06.2024: **South Korea** - According to

Economy Next, SL will send 10,000 workers to South Korea in 2024. South Korean workers prefer not to work in jobs that are considered "dirty, dangerous or difficult" (3Ds). Therefore, SL is sending workers to manufacturing, fishing and construction.

06.06.2024: **Greece** - According to Economy Next, SL has asked Greece if it could increase employment opportunities for Sri Lankan seafarers on Greek ships. Bilateral relations, trade and investment promotion, maritime issues and employment opportunities in the merchant navy were discussed..

07.06.2024: **Vietnam** - According to Economy Next, the Vietnamese Ambassador to SL, Thi Thanh Truc, paid a farewell visit to SL Prime Minister D. Gunawardena at Temple Trees in Colombo. Over the years, co-operation between the 02 countries has grown steadily in the areas of bilateral trade, investment, high-level visits and people-to-people contacts.

#### 09.06.2024: **Swearing-in ceremony** -

According to Economy Next, South Asian heads of state, including R. Wickremesinghe, will visit India for Narendra Modi's swearing-in ceremony on 09.06.2024. Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu, Seychelles Vice President Ahmed Afif, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay have accepted the invitation.

11.06.2024: **Russia** - According to Economy Next, Russia will no longer recruit SL military personnel for the war against Ukraine. SL Foreign Minister Ali Sabry held a bilateral meeting with Lavrov on 10.06.2024 at the BRICS 2024 foreign ministers' meeting with developing countries in Russia. They discussed bilateral relations, agreed to enhance co-operation and discussed issues related to former SL military personnel in the Russian military.

11.06.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, R. Wickremesinghe has

stated that Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar will visit SL ahead of Narendra Modi's visit. They discussed the resumption of development projects with Indian investment, India's Neighbourhood First policy and plans for an industrial zone in Trincomalee.

#### 13.06.2024: **China** -

According to Economy Next, SL is in the final stages of an agreement in principle to restructure the debt of the China Development Bank. SL has debt with the China Development Bank that is categorised as commercial and bilateral, according to published debt data.

13.06.2024: **Switzerland** - According to Economy Next, the Museum der Kulturen and the Naturhistorisches Museum in Basel, Switzerland, have returned a collection of about 90 aboriginal artefacts from SL, including human bones and tools. The artefacts, which were brought to Basel in the late 19th century, include 42 human skeletons and skulls of Veddas, weapons such as bows and arrows, and

everyday objects such as bags, plates and pots.

13.06.2024: **US** - According to SL's MoD's website the US has donated equipment and spare parts. The worth of the donation is USD 03 million.

18.06.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce has signed an agreement with the Southern Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SGCCI) to strengthen trade cooperation between India and SL. Trade involves initiatives such as trade fairs and delegations, business networking events and training programmes.

20.06.2024: **Brazil** - According to Economy Next, SL's Ambassador Sumit Dassanayake in Brazil has held talks with the Rio de Janeiro City Council on a twin city project with Colombo. With this visit, the relationship between SL and Rio de Janeiro will take a new direction that could further expand co-operation between SL and Brazil in the areas of trade, tourism and investment.

20.06.2024: **Saudi Arabia** - According to Economy Next, SL and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the promotion of direct investment. The agreement aims to attract direct investment to the country and improve the investment environment of both countries through policy and legal reforms, provision of advanced and integrated infrastructure, process re-engineering, etc.

21.06.2024: **India** - According to Economy Next, S. Jaishankar met R. Wickremesinghe and a number of senior leaders during his visit to SL, focusing on commitments Sri Lanka has made to India, including land connectivity and energy pipelines. SL has committed contracts to India's Adani Group for renewable energy, the development of the Trincomalee port, an investment zone around the port, a bridge between Mannar in North India and Rameshwaram in South India, a power grid and an oil and gas pipeline between the 02 countries.

24.06.2024: **Palestine** - According to Economy Next, R. Wickremesinghe says SL continues to support the establishment of a Palestinian state within five years. He says it is important to set a deadline because discussions have been going on for 04-05 decades.

25.06.2024: **World Bank** - According to Economy Next, the Washington-based World Bank said it has approved a USD 150 million loan to improve primary health care facilities. This will help alleviate the current overcrowding of tertiary facilities and address the ageing population..

26.06.2024: **China** - According to Economy Next, SL has reached a final agreement on the bilateral debt arrangement with the China Export-Import Bank. It has signed a debt restructuring agreement totalling USD 4.2 billion. The formalities for signing the implementation agreements are underway.

28.06.2024: **Russia** - According to Economy Next, SL has proposed a joint working committee with Russian officials to



deal with hundreds of former soldiers deployed in Russia's war with Ukraine. Returnees and families of the ex-soldiers have complained that they were lured to Russia as camp helpers and then forced to fight on the front lines. Now SL mercenaries fighting on the Russian side in the Russia-Ukraine war should receive up to RUB 03 million (LKR 10,740,257.48) in compensation if they are injured.



Swearing-in ceremony  
Source: Economy Next

# Military News

06.06.2024: **Military** - According to Economy Next, SL's government has decided to provide a contingent of overseas deployments for retired military personnel following reports of more than 15 deaths of former soldiers who had gone to Ukraine and Russia to take part in the ongoing war for money. At least 16 SLs are believed to have been killed and more than 600 are believed to have joined the Russian side in particular as fighters - taking the risk for a higher salary.

25.06.2024: **Russo-Ukrainian War** - A SL delegation head towards Russia to investigate the involvement of retired SL military personnel in the Russo-Ukrainian War.

27.06.2024: **Navy** - According to Economy Next, SL is recruiting members for its naval

forces and is calling for applications for officer candidates, direct recruits, machinists, sailors and officers in advertisements. GoSL plans to strengthen its occupational navy to protect SL's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Indian Ocean.

**Russo-Ukrainian War**  
Source: News First



# Domestic News

06.06.2024: **Land** - A businessman from Canada who fenced a strip of land to construct a luxury tourist resort in Mullaitivu was found to have falsely-claimed ownership over the said land.

07.06.2024:  
**Kokkuthoduvai** - The SL's UN Resident Coordinator Marc-André Franche has visited the Kokkuthoduvai mass grave site.

10.06.2024: **SL Constitution** - According to Economy Next, a government led by SL's main opposition party Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) will implement the 13th amendment to SL's Constitution - SL's Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa said. He also claimed that people in Jaffna district and the Northern Province have become addicted to the candy politics of various politicians. They distribute these sweets at election times.

11.06.2024: **Fisheries** - According to Economy Next, India and its southern state of Tamil

Nadu should take strict action against their fishermen who use banned bottom trawling methods to illegally fish in SL seas. SL has detected bottom trawling by Indian fishermen in the northern waters off Jaffna during the peak fishing season. Bottom trawling is banned and criminalised in SL, which has led to the arrest of a number of Indian fishermen and their bottom trawls.

12.06.2024: **Power Purchase Agreement** - According to Economy Next, Suryashakthi (Pvt) Limited has signed a power purchase agreement for the development of the 10 MW Vavunathivu II solar power plant in Batticaloa on SL's east coast. The Vavunathivu II solar power project is expected to attract an investment of around LKR 2.2 billion.

17.06.2024: **Mannar** - According to Economy Next, R. Wickremesinghe and the Bishop of Mannar discussed the ongoing negotiations on the sale

of surplus renewable energy to India and land connectivity between the 02 countries. They discussed future development plans for the Mannar district, including the development of Paruthiththurai and Mullaitivu as renewable energy hubs. They also discussed plans to develop Mannar as a tourist centre, including the possible development of Mannar Fort to attract cruise tourists.

17.06.2024: **Mannar** - According to Uthayan, R. Wickremesinghe stated that a decision on a possible land connection with India over Mannar will be taken in the following days.

20.06.2024:  
**Coordination Centre** - According to Economy Next, R. Wickremesinghe and S. Jaishankar officially launched a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in SL. The MRCC was set up with a grant of USD 06 from India. It comprises a centre at SL's Naval HQ in Colombo - a sub-

centre in Hambantota and unmanned facilities in Galle, Arugambay, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Kallarawa, Paruthithurai and Mollikulam.

25.06.2024: **Mannar** - According to Economy Next, SL will float a tender to select a new contractor to operate and maintain the Ceylon Electricity Board's Thambapavahini wind farm. Thambapavani, located on the island of Mannar, is the largest wind farm in SL.

public procurement - thereby increasing the risk of corruption and weakening the level playing field.

## Sri Lanka

04.06.2024: **Electricity** - According to Economy Next, a draft bill to reform SL's *Electricity Act* has been ruled by SL's Supreme Court to be incompatible "in its entirety" with Article 12 (1) of SL's Constitution. However, SL's Supreme Court has proposed several amendments to allow the bill to be passed with a simple majority.

05.06.2024: **Visa deals** - According to Economy Next, the Public Accounts Committee of the SL Parliament has concluded its investigation into a visa deal with IVS-GBS-VFS Global, a private company. The VFS deal has resulted in an increase in visa fees and additional charges, including undisclosed fees levied on tourists.

06.06.2024: **Electricity Bill** - According to Economy Next, SL's Parliament has passed a new Electricity Bill. The law will unbundle the sector and help bring the grid up to the 70 % renewable energy target. The target will require an investment of USD 12 billion.

07.06.2024: **Procurement** - According to Economy Next, Transparency International Sri Lanka (TISL), a non-governmental organisation that fights corruption, has filed a petition in the Supreme Court against R. Wickremesinghe's government's Public Financial Management Bill, citing concerns over public procurement. The bill significantly weakens controls on

11.06.2024: **SL Constitution** - According to Economy Next, SL's Constitution could allow SL President R. Wickremesinghe to extend his term by almost a year. The reason for this is an error in the constitution that has been overlooked since the 19th amendment in April 2015. While all references to the 06-year term of the SL President and Parliament were changed to 05 years in line with the 19th Amendment Act, Article 83(b) was overlooked and left unchanged, providing SL President Wickremesinghe a loophole to extend his term. However, according to Article 83(b), such a referendum is only required if the Bill



extends the term of office to more than 06 years, and not 05 years as it should be.

**13.06.2024: Nuclear Energy** - According to Economy Next, SL's officials are discussing the proposed regulatory framework and expressions of interest for nuclear energy projects in SL. The SL Cabinet has provided approval to invite applications from suitable investors to set up a nuclear power plant in SL, but the legal framework for setting up a nuclear power plant in SL is set by international authorities.

**13.06.2024: SL Constitution** - According to Economy Next, Sajith Premadasa has proposed to devolve power to the village level through a Grama Rajya system in addition to implementing the 13th Constitutional Amendment to SL's Constitution. All provinces are said to benefit from SL's 13th amendment.

**18.06.2024: Telecommunications** - According to Economy Next, SL's Supreme Court has declared a number of clauses in a proposed amendment to

the *Telecommunications Act* unconstitutional. The sections of clauses 8, 12, 13, 18, 20, 33 and 35 also violated SL's Constitution and could only be passed with a special majority in SL's Parliament.

**19.06.2024: Homeowners** - According to Economy Next, Sri Lanka Railways has asked people living on SL Ministry land to register online by 15.07.2024 to legitimise them. SL Minister of Transport, Highways and Mass Media Bandula Gunawardena has sought SL Cabinet approval to have the land and properties occupied by squatters for over 10 years valued and then enter into a lease agreement with them. All squatters who have lived there for less than 10 years will be prosecuted.

**Electricity**  
Source: Economy Next



**24.06.2024: Appointment** - According to Economy Next, Sathasivam Viyalendiran has been appointed as SL's new Minister of State for Commerce and Environment. Viyalendiran was elected to SL Parliament through the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna Party (SLPP) from the Batticaloa district.

**24.06.2024: Port** - According to Economy Next, an international university is to be established in SL's Port City, a multi-service special economic zone, which will offer undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes, including medicine and IT. The university will be home to an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 students and will be located next to the city's international school on a 2.5 hectare site.

ECONOMIC PROFILE – June 2024		
Remittances	May 2024	↑ by 13.5% to USD 544.4 million
Gross FOREX Reserves	May 2024	↓ to USD 5,421 million
PMI	May 2024	58.2
Foreign debt	March 2024	
- Central Government External Debt		USD 5,881.1 million
- Bilateral Debt		USD 2,167.5 million
- Commercial Debt		USD 3,713.6 million
Trade	May 2024	
Exports		1,011 million
- Goods exports		5,016.30 million
- Service exports		USD 327.35 million
Imports		USD 1,404 million
GDP	first quarter of 2024	↑ by 5.3%
Agriculture		↑ by 1.1%
Industry		↑ by 11.8%
Services		↑ by 2.6%
Tourism earnings	May 2024	USD 154 million
- arrivals		896,779 persons

**RANJINI**  
AP Economic Analyst  
& Coordinator

04.06.2024: **Budget deficit** - SL's budget deficit has narrowed to LKR 129.3 billion in the first two months of 2024 compared to LKR 322.9 billion rupees in 2023, with tax revenues rising 41 % and interest costs also showing a downward trend. Total revenue increased by 41 % to LKR 647 billion in the first 02 months of 2024, following a 35 % increase in 2023.

04.06.2024: **SEC** - According to Economy Next, SL's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has said it has taken action over the past year to protect the public from unscrupulous investment advisers who use social media to offer investment advice. The SEC has a history of fining investment advisers for stock market manipulation offences.

07.06.2024: **Export** - According to Economy Next, SL's Excise Department and the Customs Department were summoned to appear before SL's National Economic and Spatial Development Plan Committee to discuss and clarify issues related to these exports. At the meeting, it was agreed to

"remove barriers to the wholesale distribution of toddy palm produced in the Northern Province both domestically and internationally.

12.06.2024: **IMF** - According to Economy Next, the IMF has approved a review of SL's programme. The approval will make around USD 300 million available to SL's Treasury.

17.06.2024: **Car import** - According to Economy Next, SL's facilitation of car import will be linked to ending the practice of granting permits to special interest groups such as civil servants, according to an IMF programme. SL has submitted an initial plan to abolish vehicle imports by 21.05.2024 and has committed to submitting a detailed plan by 15.06.2024.

17.06.2024: **Public Debt** - According to Economy Next, SL's public debt has fallen from 105.49 % of GDP to 100.56 %t by March 2024. SL's economy grew by 8.4 % in nominal terms in the March 2024 quarter, increasing rolling GDP from LKR 27,629-28,249 billion.

19.06.2024: **Development Bank** - According to Economy Next, SL is considering a new development bank to provide low interest loans as the country suffers from high interest rate volatility as inflationary interest rate cuts destabilise the external sector. Wickremesinghe mentioned that GoSL is keen to support industry to build competitive capacity.

26.06.2024: **Debt repayments** - According to Economy Next, the repayment of the bilateral debt of USD 10 billion under the restructuring agreements reached with the Paris Club, China and India has been deferred until 2028. SL will then have until 2043 to repay the loans on concessional terms. The finalisation of the agreement would remove the legal obstacles that friendly countries had to provide new assistance to SL

28.06.2024: **Investment** - According to Economy Next, 99x, a global product development company, said it is focused on exploring potential collaborations to invest in SL. Hasith Yaggahavita, CEO of 99x Technology, emphasised

that there is a wealth of talent and skills available in SL.

28.06.2024: **Bank** - According to Economy Next, SL's Central Bank has announced that the Banking (Amendment) Act No. 24 of 2024, which aims to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework for licensed commercial banks and licensed specialised banks, is in force from 15.06.2024. This should improve the resilience of the banking sector in SL.



**Car Import**  
Source: Economy Next



**Debt repayments**  
Source: Economy Next



**Investment**  
Source: Economy Next





# *Commemoration*

01.06.2024: - The  
burning of the Jaffna  
Public Library was  
commemorated in  
the rebuilt Jaffna  
Public Library,  
reports Uthayan.



# Oppression & Resistance

01.06.2024: **Land** - A land grab attempt for the enlargement of an occupational SL Navy camp was thwarted by the local population, reports Uthayan.

05.06.2024: **Media** - Tamil journalists expressed their support for an international inquiry in specific demands on investigation into the killings of journalists. The inquiry request was made to coincide with the 20th commemoration of Ayyathurai Nadesan, reports Lanka Files.

06.06.2024: **Delist** - According to Lanka Files, GoSL has delisted poet and teacher Ahnaf Jazeem from their list of individuals linked to terrorist activities. The delisting was only completed a year after he was cleared by court.

07.06.2024: **Summons** - Jeevarethinam Thaveswaran of Tamil Youth People's Movement and L. Thivakaran - former Batticaloa youth wing leader of ITAK - were summoned by SL's terror police, reports Lanka Files.

11.06.2024: **Land** - According to Uthayan, SL's Forestry

Department attempted to measure land in Kathirvelar Puvarasankulam in Vavuniya. Further reports indicate that local Tamils resisted and foiled the attempt.

12.06.2024: **Protest** - Discontent Tamil fishermen protested in Mullaitivu and issued a 02-day ultimatum to occupational SL authorities. The ultimatum called for the immediate cessation of illegal poaching in occupied Tamil waters by occupiers from the South of SL, reports Lanka Files. The fishermen further warned of consequential violence at sea if GoSL's inaction continued.

13.06.2024: **Commemoration** - 21 oil lamps were lit and floral tributes were made at the Poonagar Pillayar Kovil in Verugal of Trincomalee to commemorate the 38th memorial of 21 Tamils and Muslims massacred by occupational SL Military, reports Lanka Files.

13.06.2024: **Media** - According to Lanka Files, Tamil journalist Jaffna Tambithurai Pratheepan's residence in Achuveli was attacked by 05 unknown

individuals. His house was subject to an arson attack with further damages to his vehicles - a motorcycle and three wheeler.

16.06.2024: **Land** - GoSL aims to pass laws to establish an authority to acquire property purchased through illegally earned money, including drug trafficking. The body would be able to legally acquire land without any court orders, reports Lanka Files.

16.06.2024: **Land** - According to Uthayan, local Tamils staged a protest in Mannar against an illegal land grab incident in Kavayan settlement in Mannar.

20.06.2024: **Padayatra** - Sinhalese buddhist monks have arrived in Mullaitivu for a Padayatra towards the illegally constructed Buddhist viharai in Kurunthumalai. SL's occupational security forces tightened the security in the region.

25.06.2024: **Dead SLN** - According to the Hindu, an occupational SL Navy sailor died in an arrest attempt of fishermen from Tamil Nadu fishing in the waters of Kankesanthurai, Jaffna.



**AKKINIP PARAVAIKAL**

*This service is provided by:*

Akkinip Paravaikal Newsletter

Overseen by Puradsi Media  
*the Media outlet of Phoenix-the Next Generation*

**Address** Phoenix TNG  
Zentweg 27  
3600 Bern  
Switzerland

**Phone** +41 79 618 10 33  
**Email** ap.puradsimedia@gmail.com

**Puradsi Media**

*Puradsi Media is the media outlet of Phoenix-the Next Generation*

**URL** <https://www.puradsimedia.com/>  
**Email** [contact@puradsimedia.com](mailto:contact@puradsimedia.com)

© Copyright 2016-2024

Facebook page created: 29.02.2016  
Puradsi Media's first article: 04.01.2017