

President Mahinda Rajapaksa on Tuesday morning declared that professionals have a greater role to play in Sri Lanka's development drive, as the country strived to stand shoulder to shoulder with other key developed nations.

Addressing a distinguished gathering including Minister of Co - Operatives and Internal Trade, Johnston Fernando, diplomats, parliamentarians, CA Sri Lanka members, public officials and business leaders, soon after ceremonially declaring open the new multi storied building complex of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka (CA Sri Lanka), President Rajapaksa stressed that each and every one including professionals have a responsibility to serve their nation and to support the development of their country.

"Only when everyone joins in this cause can this nation be truly developed," he said.

"We should also have the strength to take on any challenge. As Investments come in, the responsibilities lying on our shoulders also increase. But we have to ensure that every area and sector is development, not just a few handful areas, and it is the responsibility of the professionals to help Sri Lanka achieve these development targets," the President noted.

He also commended the Institute for providing its students extensive facilities with the setting up of a IT training unit and a specialized English learning centre which will help groom them to be professionals who will be well versed in all areas.

"In our strive to make our city and country a commercial hub, give your support to the government, help us continue in this development journey which will ensure we are always on the right track," the President added.

Minister of Co-operatives and Internal Trade, Johnston Fernando addressing the gathering emphasized that the new state of the art building of CA Sri Lanka, was second to none and was a significant landmark which further boosted Sri Lanka's image in its strive to become the miracle of Asia.

"Today as various small and large investments come into the country, it is primarily the professional community that is enjoying the dividends of peace which we are witnessing since the end of the war," he said, while urging the professional community to play a more proactive role in the government's development initiatives.

CA Sri Lanka President, Mr. Sujeewa Rajapakse, speaking on the important occasion said, "Today we turn a new chapter in our 53-year long illustrious journey, as we unveil this important landmark of our institute. This is not just another building, but a landmark which demonstrates our continuous commitment to enhance the accounting profession to the highest level and most importantly will validate our Institute's consistent commitment at being committed to provide the best of services and facilities for the benefit of our stakeholders."

CA Sri Lanka is one of the largest tertiary education providers in the country outside the university system with a student base of over 37,000, who are currently studying the chartered accounting course. The Institute is also one of the largest and foremost professional organisations in the country with over 4300 members.

Mr. Rajapakse also disclosed that the new building was fully funded with the internal funds of the Institute through the surpluses derived from various professional and education related activities offered through the Institute.

The new building located at Colombo 7 is valued at Rs. 550 million and was constructed on a 40,000 sq. ft. floor area. The complex includes several state-of-the-art lecture and study rooms which can accommodate upto 300 students, a fully-fledged IT laboratory with over 150 computers together with a student counseling and service centre.

The new building also boasts of a modern lounge for networking and enhanced facilities to conduct continuous professional development programmes for the benefit of all CA Sri Lanka members. The building also houses various meeting and training rooms for the benefit of the institute's key stakeholders.

Central Bank Governor, Mr. Ajith Nivard Cabraal who is a CA Sri Lanka member and a past president of the Institute also expressed his appreciation to the incumbent President of CA Sri Lanka Mr. Sujeewa Rajapakse and immediate past president Mr. Sujeewa Mudalige for taking the initiative and help realize the dream which was envisioned by many presidents of the Institute.

The vote of thanks was delivered by CA Sri Lanka Vice President Mr. Arjuna Herath.

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Wednesday, 12 December 2012 03:34 - Last Updated Wednesday, 12 December 2012 04:19

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President Mahinda Rajapaksa says professionals have a greater role to play in country's development drive at CA Sri Lanka's building opening

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