

SRI LANKA

Location

South Asia.

Area

65,525 sq km (25,299 sq miles).

Population

20.9 million (CIA estimate 2007).

Population Density

319 per sq km.

Capital

Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte (official).

Population: 115,826 (census 2001). Colombo (commercial). **Population:** 2.4 million (official estimate 2006). Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte is only 10km (6 miles) from Colombo.

Government

Democratic Socialist Republic since 1978. Gained independence from the UK in 1948.

Language

Sinhala, Tamil and English

Religion

Buddhist majority (70%), with Hindu, Christian and Muslim minorities.

Time

GMT + 5.5.

Electricity

230 volts AC, 50Hz. Round three-pin plugs are usual, with bayonet lamp fittings.

Head of Government

Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake.

Head of State

President Mahinda Rajapakse since November 2005.

Telephone

Country code: 94. Phone cards are available at post offices and shops.

Mobile Telephone

Roaming agreements exist with some international mobile phone companies. Coverage in the south and west is good; in the north and east it is average.

Internet

There are Internet cafes in main towns and resorts.

Media

The diverse press is divided along linguistic and ethnic lines. Many broadcasters and publications are state-owned.

Post

Overseas mail usually takes 10 to 14 days.

Post office hours: Mon-fri, 0830-1700, and Sat, 0830-1300.

Press

- *Daily News* is a state-run English-language daily.
- *Daily Mirror* is a private English-language daily.
- *The Island* is a private English-language daily.
- *Lankadeepa* is a private Sinhala daily.
- *Uthayan* Private Tamil-language daily.

Radio

- *Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC)* is a state-owned network that operates services in Sinhala, Tamil and English.
- Privately owned English radio stations include *TNL Rocks*, *Sun FM* and *Yes FM*.

Note

* Date to be confirmed.

All full moon poya days to be confirmed for 2010.

(a) *Poya holidays* are observed on the day of each full moon. In general, Hindu and Buddhist festivals are declared according to local astronomical observations and it is often only possible to forecast the approximate time of their occurrence. (b) Some public holidays are followed by an additional holiday for banks only. (c) Muslim festivals are timed according to local sightings of various phases of the moon and the dates given above are approximations. During the lunar month of Ramadan that precedes Eid al-Fitr, Muslims fast during the day and feast at night and normal business patterns may be interrupted; however, since Sri Lanka is not a predominantly Muslim country restrictions (which travelers may experience elsewhere) are unlikely to cause problems.

Below are listed the Public Holidays for the January 2010-December 2011 period.

- 1 Jan** *New Year's Day.*
- 1 Jan** **Tamil Thai Pongal Day*
- 1 Jan** **Duruthu Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 4 Feb** *National Day.*
- 1 Feb** **Navam Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 1 Mar** **Medin Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 26 Feb** *Milad un-Nabi (Birth of the Prophet).*
- 2 Apr** *Good Friday.*
- 1 Apr** **Sinhala and Tamil New Year.*
- 1 Apr** **Bak Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 1 May** *May Day.*
- 28 Apr** *Vesak (Buddha Day).*
- 1 Jun** **Poson Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 1 Jul** **Esala Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 1 Aug** **Nikini Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 1 Sep** **Binara Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 11 Sep** *Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan).*
- 1 Oct** **Vap Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 5 Nov** *Deepavali.*
- 1 Nov** **Il Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 17 Nov** *Eid al-Adha (Hadji Festival Day).*
- 1 Dec** **Unduvap Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 25 Dec** *Christmas Day.*
- 1 Dec** **Duruthu Full Poya Day.*
- 1 Jan** *New Year's Day.*
- 19 Jan** *Duruthu Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 14 Jan** *Tamil Thai Pongal Day.*
- 4 Feb** *National Day.*
- 18 Feb** *Navam Full Moon Poya Day.*
- 23 Feb** *Maha Sivarathri Day.*

9 Mar *Milad un-Nabi (Birth of the Prophet).*

19 Mar *Medin Full Moon Poya Day.*

18 Apr *Bak Full Moon Poya Day.*

22 Apr *Good Friday.*

13 Apr

14 Apr *Sinhala and Tamil New Year.*

1 May *May Day.*

10 May

11 May *Vesak (Buddha Day).*

15 Jun *Poson Full Moon Poya Day.*

15 Jul *Esala Full Moon Poya Day.*

13 Aug *Nikini Full Moon Poya Day.*

12 Sep *Binara Full Moon Poya Day.*

30 Aug *Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan).*

12 Oct *Vap Full Moon Poya Day.*

26 Oct *Deepavali.*

10 Nov *Il Full Moon Poya Day.*

6 Nov *Eid al-Adha (Hadji Festival Day).*

10 Dec *Unduvap Full Moon Poya Day.*

25 Dec *Christmas Day.*