

**Speech by Hon. Governor, Northern Province at the
Implementation of “Poverty Free Sri Lanka” Programme at
Thellippalai Divisional Secretariat on 20 November 2012**

District Secretary / Government Agent

Provincial Ministries’ Secretaries

Divisional Secretary

Officials from the Divisional Administration

Security Forces Officials

General Public

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning all of you!

I am extremely happy to take part in this National important occasion in this morning.

You are fully aware that the prime aim of Government is to declare that Sri Lanka is a poverty free middle income economy Country and to go beyond Millennium Development Goals by 2016. Therefore, Government has allocated Rs. 1500 million under the 2013 Budget to intensify poverty reduction by uplifting the rural economy.

Government also invites development partners and the Private Sector to join this national effort as resource providers. I hope that all the Government Institutions, Private Sector especially business

community and community-based organizations in Northern Province will participate in this National effort by implementing special Poverty Reduction Programmes and fulfill their Corporate Social Responsibility. (CSR)

In the past, Government has seriously concerned over the Poverty Alleviation Programmes and Poverty deduction programme which contributed to the poverty in our Country has decline to 8% (percent). Anyhow, access to water, housing and sanitary conditions among certain low income families requires considerable improvements. Child and Maternity Care should be addressed through dedicated facilities provided to such areas. School enrollment of children among these families is unsatisfactory. Access to transport and connectivity to market places is poor, depriving basic opportunities for a decent living, many low income families have become victims of drugs, illicit liquor, crimes and violence. Therefore, we altogether should work to eliminating these activities in our Country by eradicate route courses of these poverty in those villages.

I like to mention here some strong action has been taken by our Government with the leadership of His Excellency the President Mahinda Rajapaksa and the able directions of Hon.Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development along with our ministers Hon. Douglas Devananda and Hon.Rishard Bathiudeen.

- i. The 14000 new graduates who have been posted to each Grama Niladhari Divisions along with all other field level officers of line agencies are engaged as Poverty Reduction Animators to uplift the living conditions of the poor people in each village.
- ii. “Divi Neguma” Act already passed in the Parliament. Under the Divi Neguma, all Government’s Poverty Alleviation Programmes are amalgamated and take new face to act in full swing.

Divi Neguma is one of the most innovative and farsighted programmes launched by the Economic Development Ministry, under the leadership of His Excellency the President Mahinda Rajapaksa and the direction of Hon. Basil Rajapaksa MP, Minister of Economic Development. Its main objective is to uplift the livelihood of both rural and urban communities which is the valuable “Pongal Gift” for Northern Province.

- iii. The goals of the Divi Neguma are; setting up community-oriented financial organizations, providing people with microfinance facilities, ensuring food security, establishing a social security network, storage facilities for various products, processing, packaging and sales, increasing job opportunities for Divi Neguma beneficiaries, encouraging people to adopt a environment-friendly lifestyle, encouraging them to save part of their earnings, increasing investment opportunities, strengthening their self-confidence, stressing the importance of

collective social responsibility and ethical and moral standards.
Some of the programmes initiated in the connection are;

- a. Divi Neguma National Movement
- b. Gama Neguma
- c. Pura Neguma
- d. Regional Development Programmes
- e. Investment Development Programmes
- f. Tourism Development Programmes

Under these Programmes, all activities are focused on Low Income group to uplift their living conditions up to the standard or above the poverty line.

Therefore, I take this special opportunity to request you all to work hard according to the National requirement and give the opportunity to our Northern Community to emerge from the poverty especially with the wider contribution from Northern Province.

Thank you very much,

GA Chandrasiri
Governor
Northern Province