

Ministry of Public Administration,
Provincial Councils & Home Affairs,
Independence Square,
Colombo 07.

18th December 1992

Secretaries to Ministries,
Chief Secretaries,
Government Agents,
Heads of Departments,
Secretaries to Governors,
Divisional Secretaries,
Secretaries to provincial Public Service Commissions,
Chairman/ Competent Authorities of Public Corporations,
Statutory bodies and Government Owned Companies.

**Preparation of Infrastructure for the implementation
of the official Languages Law**

It is the Government's objective to provide the freedom of use of languages to the public by effecting the language law as envisaged in Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. It is therefore necessary to invite special attention of Ministries and Heads of Departments with regard to steps to be taken for implementation of the Language Law.

2. Current Language Law confers on the citizen, the right of transacting business in any one of the three languages - Sinhala, Tamil and English with Government Institutions. Hence all Government institutions should be in a position to fulfil such expectations of the citizen.
3. The major impediment in this connection at present is the scarcity of officers equipped with skills in the said languages at provincial, district and divisional levels. In the circumstances members of the public who know only one language appear to lose their faith in Government offices.
4. Although teaching of languages to state officers is already in progress, implementation of the Language Law should not be delayed until completion of the Language Teaching Programme. All Heads of Institutions are requested to have at least one officer attached to his organisation who is conversant with the language of minor ethnic groups in the particular area.
5. Further, attention of all Heads of Institutions is drawn to the urgent need of supplying equipment such as typewriters to their institutions. as well as creating posts of Typists and recruiting personnel for such posts. In instances where there is a clerk who can work in a language other than his mother tongue, it will be more desirable to train him in typing that language and pay him an additional allowance for the typing work he is required to do, rather than requesting a typist to be appointed.

6. All Secretaries are kindly requested to look personally into discrepancies in the implementation of the Language Law in Departments and Organisations that fall within their purview and take remedial measures.

7. In future will not entertain absence of officers proficient in languages and shortage of equipment as explanations for non-compliance with the Language Law.

Sgd: M.N.Junaid
Secretary,
Ministry of Public Administration
Provincial Councils & Home Affairs