

To provide more benefits for the business sector and relief to people

Several ambassadors, high commissioners meet the Minister

Green economy concept to be mooted

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The government has given priority to taking necessary steps to open up the country, said Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa at Temple Trees.

“This will help to provide relief to the people and in addition through proper economic management more benefits would be delivered to the business sector as well,” Rajapaksa added.

The Minister noted that the partial closure of the country has slowed down both local and foreign cash flow and once the country fully opens this aspect would significantly improve.

He said that false propaganda has also been attributed to the increase of the Dollar vs. the Rupee and steps are being taken to correct this. “We will also look at the lowering process of some of the essential items.”

The Minister of Finance said that currently, the foreign reserves stand at around USD 4 billion and Sri Lanka had only USD 1.2 billion reserves when the country was fighting the LTTE terrorists. “Hence this is not a major area to be concerned but through prudent economic tools reserves would be further increased.”

He said that one of the key areas that the government will focus on in the future is carrying forward the concept of a green economy that aims at reducing environmental

risks and ecological scarcities and that aims for sustainable development without degrading the environment. “Using organic fertilizer too is top in this agenda to end the suffering of the people with chronic kidney and other diseases due to the prolonged use of chemical fertiliser.”

Meanwhile, last week Ambassadors of the United States, Germany, China, Russia, the European Union and the High Commissioners of the United Kingdom and India called on Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa at the Finance Ministry which was the first meeting with diplomats after assuming office. During these bilateral talks, Minister Basil Rajapaksa opined that Sri Lanka has focused on creating a green economy and seeks support for the Renewable Energy Promotion Program and the government is also focusing on upgrading the infrastructure required for the development of the transport sector in an environmentally friendly manner through the use of alternative power.