

## **Second National Language Proficiency Programme for Public Officers**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) in collaboration with the Presidential Task Force for Trilingual Sri Lanka (PTFTSL) has taken the initiative in terms of their social responsibility towards the presidential initiative for a trilingual Sri Lanka to design and implement four certificate level second National Language proficiency courses with examinations to be conducted by the State universities for providing four levels of competence in second national language (Sinhala and Tamil). The syllabi will be identical with that provided for the four levels of public officers by the Official's Committee appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

The materials for the courses and the teaching methods and strategies will conform with cutting-edge methodologies and teaching material followed at international level. The courses with strong e-learning content will enable learners and in particular public officers to follow them from their own home, own office premises. The UGC will ensure that the latest teaching technique (both face-to-face as well as IT facilitated) will render these University certificate courses cutting-edge second national language proficiency courses of which Sri Lanka could be proud.

The UGC with the participation of the expertise subject specialist of the academia has prepared the course content/ curriculum for the four levels.

The above initiative was taken up by the Standing Committee on Humanities Social Sciences & Education of the UGC and implemented under the guidance of Mr. Sunimal Fernando, Presidential Advisor, Chairman, PTFTSL and Professor Kshanika Hirimburegama, Chairperson, UGC.

Two Academic Committees have been appointed for Sinhala and Tamil to develop the necessary modules and activity books to commence the courses. The Coordinator of the program is Professor M. Sunil Shantha, Former Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka and the program will be conducted through the Arts & Humanities faculties of state universities.

## **Second National Language Proficiency Test**

The Sinhala and Tamil employees, who are serving in junior, senior and executive-levels in the public, private and semi-government sectors, are essentially required to use Tamil or Sinhala languages respectively as a second language, as per the recommendations made by the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) and the trilingual policy of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka has momentum in the international arena as an emerging nation in Asia for mutual peace and coexistence among ethnicities. In order to improve the efficiency of the aforementioned sectors, using a second language is mandatory for the development of the economy, society and culture. These courses have been designed with the objectives of effectively implementation of the trilingual policy thereby building national peace, national integration and equality. Having identified this state of affairs, the Presidential Task Force for Trilingual Sri Lanka (PTFTSL) and the Standing Committee of Social Sciences, Humanities and Education of the University Grants Commission (UGC), recommended consulting the experts of this area of study to propose the following courses under four proficiency levels to train candidates with particular attention for the practical usage of Second National Language in following four skills.

- Listening skills
- Speaking skills
- Reading skills
- Writing skills

### **Titles of the Courses on Four Levels**

1. Certificate Course in Second National Language Proficiency in Sinhala/Tamil
2. Intermediate Certificate Course in Second National Language Proficiency in Sinhala/Tamil
3. Advanced Certificate Course in Second National Language Proficiency in Sinhala/Tamil
4. Diploma in Second National Language Proficiency in Sinhala/Tamil

The Standing Committee on Social Sciences, Humanities and Education of the University Grants Commission (UGC) has proposed following universities to introduce and continue these courses.

1. University of Colombo
2. University of Kelaniya
3. Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka
4. University of Ruhuna
5. University of Jaffna
6. Open University
7. South Eastern University
8. Eastern University, Sri Lanka