



Q: How do you view the brain drain and why is there still no reversal of it, in your opinion?

A: I think we are at the threshold of a reversal of the brain drain. Many Sri Lankans find it conducive and are inwardly driven to come back.

Q: What must be done to entice Sri Lankans living overseas to contribute or return to their country of birth?

A: Better earning potential for such individuals and the availability of high-quality education for their children may be two important areas that require improvement to trigger the change that you talk about.

Q: In your opinion, what should Sri Lanka focus on most in the coming decade?

A: As a first step, we need to learn from other post-conflict situations, be open to the guidance of experts, and take decisive and genuine steps to complete the post-war reconciliation process. It's important to close this chapter, so that we can move forward with confidence as a united and cohesive force.

Secondly, we need to take steps to repair internal political and social issues, so that we derive the benefits of a vibrant democracy – one that's

constructive rather than destructive. Thirdly, we need to move forward in developing the infrastructure of the country with good expressways, air and sea ports; as well as education, healthcare and public service facilities. Fourthly, we need to ensure our laws and regulations (e.g. taxation) are simplified, clear and not a burden to enforcing officials or departments.

Finally, we need to constantly publicise our unsung heroes – both in the private and public sectors. This means actively seeking out those individuals and teams that achieve notable accomplishments and give more than what is expected. These will serve as constant reminders and great examples for all to emulate when making the country a better place.

Q: What are your hopes for the country in the post-conflict era?

A: My hope is to see a vibrant nation, well developed in a balanced manner – economically, politically, socially and spiritually. A country serving as an example of real possibility to other nations that are aspiring to improve, so that we can walk in any country with our heads held high!

– LMD

SRI LANKA | SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Strategic location for international shipping and trade
- Highly literate and professional workforce
- Rapidly developing infrastructure
- Natural beauty and diverse tourist attractions
- Availability of water and fertile soil for agro business

WEAKNESSES

- Small in size – a lack of scale
- Poor international image from a human-rights perspective
- Destructive political orientation and culture (adversarial politics, instead of seeking what is best for the country)
- Poor road network, especially within cities and connecting cities
- Inadequate financial base and indebtedness

OPPORTUNITIES

- Tourism
- Agro business
- High-tech services such as IT and BPO
- Shipping and passenger hub to connect the East and West
- Centre of excellence in the region (for education, health, banking and media)

THREATS

- World and regional recessions
- India taking on some of Sri Lanka's business potential in the high-tech area and services sector
- Competitors (e.g. Bangladesh and China) taking away some of the business potential in the manufacturing sector – like garments
- UN interventions and sanctions if the post-war reconciliation process is not managed properly



MEDIA SERVICES PHOTOFILE (ROA)