President Ranil Wickremesinghe Inaugurates the University of Science and Technology in Batticaloa

July 20, 2024



President Ranil Wickremesinghe opened the plaque at the inauguration ceremony of the University of Science and Technology, Batticalao.

President Ranil Wickremesinghe stated that the influence of threatening politics should be eliminated from the university system to ensure that students can pursue their education freely. He emphasized the need to reorganize the university system and transform the country’s schools and universities into formal educational institutions without disruption. President Wickremesinghe made these remarks during a ceremony held to inaugurate the University of Science and Technology in the Poonani area of Batticaloa.

During the event, the President unveiled a plaque and officially handed the new university to the students. He also toured the facility and engaged in friendly conversation with the students.

Additionally, President Ranil Wickremesinghe exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding between the university administration and higher education institutions in Sri Lanka.

A commemorative stamp was launched to celebrate the establishment of the University of Science and Technology as a student-owned institution.



President Ranil Wickremesinghe together with M. L. A. M. Hizbullah, Former Governor of Eastern Province; Rishad Bathiudeen, MP and Rauff Hakeem, MP.



A commemorative stamp was launched to celebrate the establishment of the University of Science and Technology in the presence of President.

President Ranil Wickremesinghe further stated, “I first met M. L. A. M. Hizbullah in 1985. Today, he has established this international university, prioritizing technology and science. The university was created to provide our children with knowledge in these fields. The government aims to advance science and technology in our country. We need people skilled in these areas, making this university crucial for our nation’s development. Thank you for your efforts in educating our children in science and technology.

Hizbullah has made a significant contribution to this region. With this new university, the Eastern Province now has three universities.

This institution is not for profit. Any surplus funds should be used for its development. Around the world, there are many non-profit universities, including

Harvard, Oxford, and Cambridge. Similarly, Kotelawala University and NSBM Green University are non-profit institutions in our country. However, some people refer to these institutions as ‘degree shops.’ Does that mean Cambridge, Harvard, and Oxford are also degree shops? This mindset has destroyed our public universities, and we need to change it. Today’s universities face new challenges, including groups that disrupt education and manipulate students.

I commend the teachers who continue to educate under these conditions. We should ignore derogatory terms like ‘degree shops’ for universities. We need to reorganize our university system to ensure students can learn freely. I may face criticism on social media for saying this, but universities should be free from political interference. We must remove threatening politics from our universities and allow students to choose their courses freely. Our schools and universities should become formal educational institutions without disruptions. If this university thrives, it will set a precedent for developing other university systems, and we hope to see more universities like this in the future. We also plan to establish an educational institution in honor of Lalith Athulathmudali, who significantly contributed to higher education in this country. Additionally, it should be noted that the government is working on launching four new educational institutions, including technical universities.”

Dr. M. L. A. M. Hizbullah, Founder of the Batticaloa International University of Science and Technology and former Governor of the Eastern Province, said, “I would like to extend my gratitude to the President for inaugurating this university. I searched extensively for a suitable location to build it, and ultimately chose Poonani area of Batticaloa, where many low-income families reside. This location, central to the North Central and Eastern provinces, will benefit the people of all three regions.

President Wickremesinghe directed that educational activities at this university should commence as soon as possible. Around 1,200 students from nearly every province in the country are enrolled here. This university is open to all children, regardless of race or religion. Our goal is to nurture well-rounded Sri Lankans. Our country faced a severe crisis, and during that time, President Ranil Wickremesinghe took office and worked tirelessly to rebuild the nation. Thanks to his efforts, we can proudly declare to the world that we are Sri Lankans.”



President with P. S. M. Charles, Governor of the Northern Province; Rauff Hakeem, MP; Senthil Thondaman, Governor of Eastern Province; M. L. A. M. Hizbullah, Former Governor of Eastern Province; Ravi Karunanayake, Former Minister of Finance; and Pramita Bandara Thennakoon, MP.



President overlooking the faculties at the university.