

Press Statement: Launch of the National Action Plan for Combating Bribery and Corruption in Sri Lanka

Eradication of bribery and corruption from a country requires a vision. That vision must be displayed to the entirety of the nation in the form of a Plan. This would ensure the support of the public in combating bribery and corruption. The government which came in to effect in the year 2015, realized this in October, 2017. As such, the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC) was entrusted with the task of formulating a National Action Plan for Combating Bribery and Corruption in Sri Lanka.

The Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption along with the Presidential Secretariat and the Ministry of Public Administration brought together all relevant stakeholder institutions to gather and collate the opinions/ suggestions of the public. As such, 50 consultations have been carried out throughout Sri Lanka which concluded with 4 such meetings being held at the Parliament. As such, public representatives were given an opportunity to share their ideas. Furthermore, this endeavor includes the input of various sectors including state officials, professionals, civil societies and artists. The collation of all these suggestions and recommendations have contributed to the formulation of the National Action Plan for Combating Bribery and Corruption in Sri Lanka, which received Cabinet approval on February 05th.

The approved Action Plan is scheduled to be ceremoniously launched on 18th of March 2019, in Colombo. The occasion will be graced by His Excellency the President and other Ministers. It is expected to invite 1250 guests for the launch, representing all sectors from across Sri Lanka.

The Action Plan is premised on 04 strategies for combating bribery and corruption in Sri Lanka. They are namely, Prevention Measures, Value-based Education and Community Engagement, Institutional Strengthening of CIABOC and other Law Enforcement Agencies and Law and Policy Reforms.

Additionally, 04 Handbooks will be released alongside the Action Plan, exploring decisive factors which would shape the course of combating bribery and corruption in the nation. The 04 Handbooks are as follows:

- i. Draft proposal on Gift Rules
- ii. Draft proposal on Conflict of Interest Rules
- iii. Integrity Handbook for State Officials
- iv. Law amendment proposal for areas of bribery, asset declaration, Commission Act, election campaign finance and whistleblower provision.

As such, the Action Plan and the 04 Handbooks are expected to be launched. The Action Plan as well as the 04 Handbooks have been translated to Tamil and Sinhalese, where in total, 15 publications will be launched.

The true ownership of these publications rest with the individuals representing a cross-section of the society, who contributed to this intellectual discourse for a period of one year. We aim at creating a new generation instilled with values and virtues, a public sector as well as a private sector of integrity and a law enforcement system which is just and equal to all.

Through the collective effort in dispensing their respective responsibilities, we aim at combating bribery and corruption within the course of the next 5 years.