



President Maithripala Sirisena unveils the ceremonial plaque

**A beacon for youth empowerment, the Sri Jinarathana Vocational and Higher Education Training Institute in Seenigama is the promise of flourishing opportunities for Sri Lanka's future.**

**Photographs** Vishwathan Tharmakulasingham



Ven Galaboda Gnanissara Thero  
addresses guests

The Sri Jinarathana Vocational and Higher Education Training Institute in Seenigama Hikkaduwa was ceremoniously declared open by President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe in the presence of the Maha Sanga. Ministers and Parliamentarians among other distinguished guests were present at the ceremony.

Initiated by the Hunupitiya Gangaramaya Temple, Colombo, the inauguration of the training institute was scheduled to coincide with the birthday of Ven Galaboda Gnanissara Thero, Chief Incumbent of the Gangaramaya Temple.

The Sri Jinarathana Vocational and Higher Education Training Institute, funded by the temple, empowers youth with skills and technical expertise through its diverse range of technical courses. The institute in Seenigama, which is a branch of the Sri Jinarathana Vocational and Higher Education Training Centre in Colombo, was established in the Shop House building renovated with the support of the Sri Lankan Navy. The Shop House building of Singaporean design is located in a five-acre land donated by the former Minister, Edwin Tillakaratne for the Tsunami Housing Project.

Speaking at the event, Ven Galaboda Gnanissara Thero called for political unity to enable an environment where everyone can live in harmony. Meanwhile, President Maithripala Sirisena said the Vocational Training Institute will be a strength not only to the youth in the area, but also to the country's economy. President Maithripala Sirisena further appreciated the legacy of social service initiated by Ven Galaboda Gnanissara Thero through the Gangaramaya Temple in Colombo.



Chandima Weerakody, Minister of Petroleum and Petroleum Gas; Gertie Tillakaratne, wife of the late Minister Edwin Tillakaratne; Vice Admiral Ravindra Wijegunaratne, Commander, Sri Lanka Navy; President Maithripala Sirisena; Ven Galaboda Gnanissara Thero, Chief Incumbent of the Gangaramya Temple; Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe; Ven Isho Nagatha Thero of Japan; Ven Athuraliye Rathana Thero MP; Ven Akuratiya Nanda Thero

Recognising the efforts of Ven Galaboda Gnanissara thero, especially in terms of youth empowerment, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said, the thero always celebrates his birthday with an act of benevolence to society. Citing that skills shortages in the country's work force is a challenge that must be addressed immediately, the Premeir added the Government has prioritised the provision of training in technology and technical knowledge by renovating existing facilities, thus enabling the youth to progress in the current innovative corporate landscape. In conclusion, Ven Kirinde Assaji Thero thanked those present at the ceremony and also those who assisted the project.

