

Dr. Kulasinghe, a great son of the soil: President

COLOMBO : Dr. A.N.S. Kulasinghe was noted for his pioneering spirit combined with great innovation and inventiveness in facing the challenges of engineering, particularly in the developing countries, President Mahinda Rajapakse said yesterday in a condolence message.

The President said Sri Lanka remains all the poorer due to the loss of this great son of the soil who readily used his excellence in science and engineering in the service of the country, be it in irrigation, bridge building or high-rise construction and many other aspects of engineering.

"He always considered himself a Sri Lanka first, and he went to great pains to instill this feeling of being Sri Lankan among others in the engineering profession, with a view to giving of one's best to one's country."

The message: "His development of "pre-stressed concrete" in this country, was an example of his outstanding knowledge and skill in the field of engineering, and is even today considered a revolutionary development in the construction sector.

The "Kulasinghe-CPC" system of pre-stressing, as it became known, helped in large measure to overcome the problems encountered by traditional techniques of construction, and made a great contribution of infrastructure development.

I am aware that he held virtually

every high office in the fields of science and engineering in Sri Lanka, in addition to respected recognition abroad.

He was the first engineer to be appointed as Port Commissioner. He was the founder Chairman of the State Engineering Corporation, Chairman of the National Engineering and Research Centre; and of the Central Consultancy Bureau, all of which under his guidance contributed to the development of engineering in Sri Lanka.

It was an acknowledgement of his capabilities and also his pioneering nature that saw him elected as President of the Institution of Engineers, General President of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science, and President of the National Academy of Science.

At the time of his demise he was also Chancellor of the Open University of Sri Lanka. I am personally saddened by his loss as he remained a close associate whom I treated with great respect.

Kulasinghe was always ready with good advice on a diverse range of matters.

I mourn the loss of this great national hero in his own chosen field of work.

I extend my deepest sympathies to his children and all other members of his family, and also condole with his fellow engineers who have lost a person who will be high on the Roll of Honour in their profession."