

# Farmers urged to start paddy cultivation

## With the onset of monsoon

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WATER CONSERVATION

The Irrigation and Water Management Ministry and the Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority (SLMA) yesterday instructed farmers in the main agricultural areas to start paddy cultivation for the Maha season with the onset of the monsoonal rain filling the tank network in the North-Central, Eastern and Sabaragamuwa Provinces.

Irrigation and Water Resources Management Minister Ivan De Silva told Daily Mirror that instructions had been issued to farmers to start tilling paddy fields immediately using rain water so as to save water in irrigation tanks.

"We expect to release water by November 15 and assist farmers to cultivate the entire

swathe of land available for paddy cultivation. My belief is that the Maha season will be a huge success in comparison to the last Yala season that destroyed nearly 1,75,000 hectares of paddy lands in the three Provinces," Mr. De Silva said.

**“Farmers had been instructed to sow paddy that could be harvested in 3 or 3 1/2 months as a measure to preserve as much water as possible in tanks.”**

He also said farmers had been instructed to sow paddy that could be harvested in 3 or 3 1/2 months as a measure to preserve as much water as possible in tanks. They had also been encouraged to cultivate additional crops such as maize, cowpea, groundnuts, green gram and kurakkan that required less water than paddy.

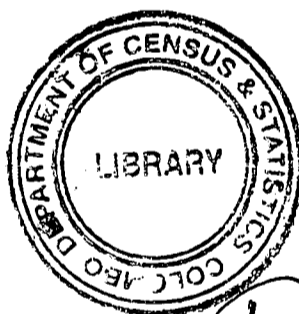
Irrigation tanks of Huruluwewa, Walawe, Uda-

walawe and reservoirs at Ulhitiya, Maduru-Oya and Rathkinda were still in low capacity and would not be released water for cultivation, but a number of reservoirs and tanks such as Kotmale, Victoria, Randenigala, Rantambe, Castlereagh, Mousakele, Kalawewa, Rajangana We-wa, Nachaduwa, Parakrama Samudra and Ulhitiya had been filled by more than half of their capacity by yesterday, enabling the release of water for cultivation if necessary, he said.



Source: Census & Statistics

DM GraphicsDesk



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