

The Right Honourable Sir John Kotelawala, K.B.E.  
Prime Minister of Ceylon

Sir John Kotelawala was born in 1897, was educated at Royal College, Colombo, and at Christ's College, Cambridge. He is a former Commander of the Ceylon Light Infantry. A man of independent means, he was elected to the State Council under the Donoughmore Constitution in 1931 and became Minister for Communications and Works in 1935.

Sir John was one of the founding members of the United National Party from which his government is formed, and together with the first Prime Minister, the Right Honourable D. S. Senanayake, and the present Governor General, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, was an influential leader during the war. He played a prominent part at the time independence was achieved in 1948. Appointed Minister of Transport and Works in 1947 on election to the House of Representatives, Sir John was largely responsible for the commencement of the hydro-electric scheme, the introduction and development of civil aviation in Ceylon, and the port development scheme in Colombo Harbour.

Sir John was knighted in 1948, became leader of the House of Representatives in 1950 and Prime Minister of Ceylon in October 1953, on the resignation of Mr. Dudley Senanayake. He holds also the portfolios of Minister of External Affairs and of Defence.

Sir John is a good cricketer, polo player and boxer.

Ottawa, November 26, 1954.