

News

Sri Lanka



Embassy of Sri Lanka
Washington D.C

July 2017

SRI LANKA CONGRATULATES THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE OCCASION OF THE 240TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

His Excellency Donald J. Trump
President of the United States of America



Your Excellency,

The government and the people of Sri Lanka join me in congratulating you and the government and the people of the United States of America as your great country celebrates 241 years of independence on July 4th.

Relations between our two countries are almost as old as the American Republic itself, dating back to the time that the American Constitution was adopted. Our peoples have been at the forefront in strengthening our bonds. With the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1948 and ensuing political and commercial engagements, the longstanding ties between Sri Lanka and the United States continued to flourish and gain greater momentum.

Today, especially after the election of the national unity government in Sri Lanka, that I lead, relations between the United States and Sri Lanka have reached a high point, with solidified cooperation in both bilateral and multilateral spheres.

I am confident that under your able leadership, the Sri Lanka – United States Partnership will receive further impetus based on our common commitment to democratic values and mutually beneficial vibrant trade and business relations.

Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for your happiness and wellbeing and for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of the United States of America.

Maithripala Sirisena

President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SRI LANKA TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Honourable Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State of the
United States of America



Your Excellency,

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on the joyous occasion of the 241st anniversary of independence of the United States of America.

Sri Lanka and the United States share a time-tested partnership based on our commitment to shared values and democratic practice. Over the years, we have successfully worked together in many areas to advance our common interests, above all to foster human freedoms, social and economic inclusion and equality and justice for all.

The goals and aspirations of Sri Lanka's unity government have brought our countries even closer and unlocked potential for further possibilities for cooperation.

I look forward to working with you to enhance bilateral ties and to further collaborate in multilateral fora for the benefit of our two nations and people. I am confident that together we will further strengthen our deep and enduring friendship, as we head toward the 70-year mark in diplomatic relations next year.

Please accept my best wishes to you and your family for a happy 4th of July.

Ravi Karunanayake M.P.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

GOVERNMENT APPROVES HISTORIC NATIONAL RECONCILIATION POLICY

On 2nd May 2017, in a historic move, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Government of Sri Lanka approved Sri Lanka's first National Reconciliation Policy.

The process for developing the National Reconciliation Policy was initiated in September 2015 by the Office for National Unity & Reconciliation (ONUR) chaired by Former President Her Excellency Madam Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga.

After a one-year comprehensive consultation process with multiple stakeholders including Government officials,

ministries, departments, members of provincial councils, civil society, academia, and experts and grass-roots activists, the National Reconciliation Policy was submitted by President Maithripala Sirisena in September 2016 to the Cabinet of Ministers for discussion. In his accompanying note to the Cabinet, the President stated that the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) had drafted the National Policy in a "manner that reflects that reconciliation is a whole-of-government effort and a multi-stakeholder endeavour." *More*

SRI LANKA MISSIONS ABROAD CELEBRATE 150 YEARS OF CEYLON TEA



Over 37 Sri Lanka Missions abroad, including an event with the patronage of the Embassy in Washington D.C., celebrated the 150th anniversary of Ceylon tea this month in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Tea Board and the Colombo Tea Traders' Association under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The globally known Ceylon tea first originated in Sri Lanka with the introduction of tea cultivation in 1867 by the Scotsman James Taylor who is known as the "Father of Tea". With the passage of time, tea from Ceylon became a well-known name among tea connoisseurs around the

world. Sri Lanka's unique tropical environment provides an ideal nursery for the tea plant with the abundance of rain. Particularly the black tea originating from Sri Lanka has earned a global reputation. [More](#)



PROVIDING RELIEF ASSISTANCE TO FLOOD VICTIMS IN SRI LANKA

The Embassy of Sri Lanka conveys sincere gratitude to all donors for their humanitarian support and generous contributions to the people affected by the recent devastating floods and landslides in Sri Lanka.

The Government of Sri

Lanka has so far received a considerable amount of donations/ relief material from many States, donor agencies and individuals and has effectively distributed humanitarian relief materials to the affected people in the immediate relief phase. [More](#)

USS LAKE ERIE JOINS FLOOD ASSISTANCE EFFORTS IN SRI LANKA



U.S. Embassy Chargé d'affaires Robert Hilton welcomed USS Lake Erie on its arrival in Colombo on June 11 with embarked U.S. military personnel to support humanitarian assistance efforts across flood-affected areas across Sri Lanka.

"We share in the sorrow of the Sri Lankan people at the loss of life and devastation brought on by this disaster," said Adm. Harry Harris, commander U.S. Pacific Command. "Friends help friends, and the United States stands with Sri Lanka during this difficult time."

Because of the long-standing friendship between the United States and Sri Lanka, American forces are able to respond with critically needed capabilities. In addition, U.S. Pacific Command will soon send military aircraft and other specialists to assist with disaster relief and risk reduction.

"Whether it's rehabilitating flooded areas and schools or providing food and water, our sailors are well trained for this mission and we are ready to provide relief and assistance to the people of Sri Lanka," said Capt. Darren McPherson, commanding officer, USS Lake Erie. [More](#)

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ATTEND EXCHANGE PROGRAMME IN WASHINGTON



The House Democracy Partnership (HDP) of the United States Congress welcomed members of parliament of four HDP partner countries, including Sri Lanka to an exchange programme in the second week of June.

A bipartisan group of members of Sri Lankan Parliament comprising State Minister of Agriculture Wasantha Aluwihare, Deputy Minister of Mahaweli Development and Environment Anuradha

Jayarathne, Keliya Rambukwella, Buddhika Pathirana and Eswarapatham Saravanapavan participated in this programme.

The exchange programme allowed the members of parliament to share lessons and experiences with their peers on the parliament's role and interacted with U.S. members of congress, congressional staff and U.S. experts on matters such as improving citizen security, social inclusion, peacebuilding, reconciliation and stimulating economic growth in post conflict societies. [More](#)

JAYATHMA WICKRAMANAYAKE OF SRI LANKA APPOINTED UNSG'S ENVOY ON YOUTH



United Nations Secretary-General's office announced on 20th June that Secretary General António Guterres has appointed Jayathma Wickramanayake of Sri Lanka as his next Envoy on Youth. She will succeed Ahmad Alhendawi of Jordan.

In this role, Ms. Wickramanayake is expected to expand UN's youth engagement and advocacy efforts across all four pillars of work

– sustainable development, human rights, peace and security and humanitarian action.

She will also play a lead role in realizing the Secretary-General's vision on youth, which places young people as a cross-cutting priority of the UN; ensures that young people's perspectives are reflected across all pillars of the UN's work; and places young people's interests at the centre of the Secretary-General's agenda for crisis prevention and sustaining peace by leveraging their talents, energy and innovation in addressing youth challenges and fostering opportunities. [More](#)

AMBASSADOR PRASAD KARIYAWASAM RE-ELECTED TO THE UN COMMITTEE ON MIGRANT WORKERS



Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the USA, Prasad Kariyawasam, who has been a member of the UN Committee on Migrant Workers since its inception in March 2004, and the first Chair of the Committee, was re-elected for the fourth time at the Election held at the UN in New York on 28 June 2017, at the 8th Meeting of State Parties to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

The 51 States Parties to the Convention voted yesterday to select 7 members to the Committee, out of 11 candidates, for the period 2018-2021. The 11 candidates were from Albania, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bur-

kina Faso, Colombia, Mali, Niger, Philippines, Senegal and Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka's candidate, Prasad Kariyawasam, was re-elected, securing the third highest number of votes, along with candidates from Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Colombia, Senegal, and Niger.

The UN Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW), consisting of a total of 14 elected members, as its main responsibility, monitors the implementation of the Convention, which is the most comprehensive international instrument that deals with the rights of migrant workers. The Convention which came into force in 2003, is an important component of the core international human rights treaties in the UN Human Rights Treaty System.

More

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST: INSIDE THE SRI LANKAN ARCHITECTURE OF GEOFFREY BAWA AND OTHERS



Sri Lanka, emerging as an upscale travel destination, has many of the usual drawing cards you'd expect—beaches, culture, cuisine—and as a bonus, you can add unique architecture to the list. Tropical modernism, heralded by the late Geoffrey Bawa, is an intriguing local evolution of international style, adapted to

the hot and humid local climate and referencing various cultural elements. His style is exemplified in his family's Lunuganga estate—but that's not the only testament to the country's unique modern and contemporary architecture. Here are a few architectural pilgrimage sites to visit in Sri Lanka. *More*

STATEMENT BY THE CABINET OF MINISTERS AGAINST VIOLENCE AND HATE SPEECH

The National Unity Government, headed by President Maithripala Sirisena reaffirm commitment, in accordance with the mandates received from the people at the Presidential elections in January and Parliamentary elections of August 2015, to ensure that our nation never again returns to a conflict-ridden past, and instead resolve to guide our nation towards reconciliation, sustainable peace, and economic progress. Communal, ethnic and religious hatred and violence, and impunity have no place in the society that we strive to build.

In this context, we are deeply concerned by the recent incidents of violence targeting places of religious worship, shops and business enterprises, and houses. We

denounce in the strongest terms, these acts of violence and hatred, including incidents of hate speech by certain individuals and groups aimed at inciting violence against the different ethnic and religious communities in our country.

We are deeply saddened by the destruction of property and loss of livelihoods as a result of recent incidents, and the pain of mind and fear caused to individuals.

We affirm that hate filled expressions and actions by individuals and groups with vested interests, resulting in demeaning, denigrating and inciting violence against fellow citizens of various ethnic, religious backgrounds has no place in Sri Lankan society. *More*

CNN TRAVEL: HOW TO EXPLORE SRI LANKA'S SOUTHERN COAST IN STYLE



One of the hottest destinations in Asia right now, Sri Lanka continues to make it onto an increasing number of international travelers' itineraries.

But to make the most of it, you're going to have to let things go a little bit south.

From untouched beaches to a UNESCO World Heritage site, leopard-spotting safaris to monkey-filled jungles, Sri Lanka's southern coastline is home to tropical surrounds, colonial digs and a wealth of wildlife.

Bear in mind weather varies dramatically throughout the country, with most travel professionals recommending January-March as the best pe-

riod to visit Sri Lanka's south.

Here, local guides and experts share their favorite destinations and travel tips.

Why head to Sri Lanka's south?

Until a few years ago, Sri Lanka's south made it onto few travelers' itineraries. But the addition of a new highway from Colombo to Galle in 2011 opened things up, offering a wealth of new attractions to experience.

"It has this wonderful seclusion, this warmth of the people and untouched nature, which makes the region so incredibly charming," Filipe de Lencastre, general manager of Amanwella resort in Tangalle, tells CNN. *More*