

Media Release

SRI LANKA DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSION IN CHENNAI CELEBRATES THE 71ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE DAY

The Deputy High Commission of Sri Lanka in Chennai conducted the 71st Independence Day celebrations today, on the 4th of February 2019 at the Chancery premises.

The celebrations began with offering of the *Heel Dhanaya* with the participation of 13 Venerable Monks.

The official flag hoisting ceremony began amidst a large gathering of Sri Lankans and Indian well-wishers amounting to more than 150 persons.

The Deputy High Commissioner of Sri Lanka for Southern India, Mr. Vadivel Krishnamoorthy, ceremonially hoisted the National Flag followed by the singing of the National Anthem of Sri Lanka in Sinhala. Two minutes silence honouring the Sri Lankans who sacrificed their lives for the Motherland was observed. The traditional oil lamp was lit by Mr. Krishnamoorthy and other dignitaries. As a reflection of Sri Lanka's multi-religious outlook, Venerable Kalawane Mahanama Thero, Monk-In-Charge, Maha Bodhi Society representing Buddhist faith, Dr. T.S. Shanmugam Sivachariar Swami, Chief Priest & Administrator of Sri Kaligambal Kamateswarar Devasthanam, representing the Hindu faith, Rev. Fr. Suresh, Parish Priest, Fathima Church representing Christianity and Dr. Salahuddin Mohammed Ayub, Chief Quazi, Royapettah Mosque representing the Muslim faith imparted blessings on those present and the motherland.

The tri-lingual National Day Message of His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka was read by the Officers of the Mission. The Deputy High Commissioner addressed the gathering wherein he underscored this Mission's objectives along three pillars to develop Sri Lanka's historical and significant relations with India, in particular Southern India. The first objective emphasizes on deepening and broadening Sri Lanka - India relationship in all realms, including diplomatic, political, economic, cultural, security, defense and anything that allows to further build the bilateral relations between the two countries. The Second objective focuses on elevating economic cooperation between Sri Lanka and India to secure greater trade and a higher level of Indian investment and technology into the Sri Lankan economy. Third, and the most significant

pillar focuses on the Mission's services, ensuring top notch quality of consular service provided to all who visit this Mission. Sri Lankan's living in refugee camps in South India is a priority area and this Mission focuses on addressing any challenges they face.

Further, he highlighted the Mission's Special Consular Program that targets to reach zero level unregistered birth registration for Sri Lankan refugees living in Southern India. He also expressed his gratitude to the Sri Lankan establishments and expatriate community in Southern India for their exemplary services that has continued to contribute towards the economic and social development of the country strengthening the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Deputy High Commissioner Mr. V. Krishnamoorthy also stated that to mark the 71st Anniversary of Independence of Sri Lanka, the Mission will be conducting month-long Special Consular Services and business meets which will conclude with a reception on 2nd March 2019.

Today's official segment ended with the singing of the National Anthem in Tamil and to highlight Sri Lankan hospitality, the participants were offered a wide variety of traditional Sri Lankan refreshments.

*Deputy High Commission of Sri Lanka
Chennai*

04th February, 2019
