

Sri Lanka Independence Day

Enjoying many years of multifaceted cooperation

Dammika Ganganath
Disanayake
AMBASSADOR OF SRI LANKA

On the special occasion of 68th Anniversary of the Independence Day of Sri Lanka, I have the deep honor to convey my sincere and warm greetings from the people and the government of Sri Lanka to their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as the people and government of Japan.



I also wish to convey my warm sentiments to all the Sri Lankan expatriates living in Japan on this auspicious occasion.

The close and cordial diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Japan date back more than 60 years and are based on trust, confidence, friendship, mutual understanding and commitment to shared values.

The year 2015 was an important milestone since the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, the Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe, undertook an official working visit to Japan, enhancing the existing relations into new vistas of mul-

tifaceted cooperation thus benefitting both the countries and the people. The teachings of the lords and the philosophy of Buddhism has influenced, molded and formed the outlook and perception of our people.

Today, Japan is one of the largest donor countries of Sri Lanka and has always stood by Sri Lanka in good times and in testing times. Furthermore, the overseas development assistance Japan provides to Sri Lanka has been significant and continues to have a positive impact on the economic and social development of the country. Sri Lanka is currently one

of the safest places in the world, with permanent peace, stability and harmony.

Today, Japan is among the largest East Asian sources of tourists visiting Sri Lanka. In addition, large Japanese corporations have expressed interest in committing to investing in, and engaging in, commercial activity with Sri Lanka, as Sri Lanka has emerged as a strategic hub in South Asia.

I eagerly look forward with confidence to the enduring friendship between Sri Lanka and Japan, as well as to further strengthening the relationship between our two countries.



Sri Lankan Prime Minister, the Hon. Rani Wickremesinghe speaks on his official working visit to Japan. EMBASSY OF SRI LANKA

Working to develop homegrown talent

Maithripala Sirisena
PRESIDENT

On this day, as we celebrate the 68th anniversary of our independence, we are proud of the progress made toward safeguarding the freedom, sovereignty, territorial integrity of the nation, as well as the strengthening of the economic and political rights of all our citizens.



resolved to continue on this path to create a sociopolitical environment that all citizens can live in securely without fear.

In addition to these, we have commenced a new drive for development, of which much remains to be done. It is our belief that the strength of our freedom largely depends on developing indigenous skills and knowledge, while zealously guarding the rich cultural and social heritage of our past and moving ahead to the victories of the future.

As we celebrate the gaining of our independence today, we recognize our requisite duty to give all honor and respect to the members of the security forces who made great sacrifices to protect our sovereignty and territorial integrity in the battle against terrorism.

Our foreign policy of following a middle path, with a commitment to justice and humanity, has won us friends in the international commu-

This occasion is of special significance because we commemorate the dawn of freedom at a time that coincides with the taking of clear and resolute steps to firmly establish democracy and good governance, the rule of law and a truly meaningful parliamentary system, establishing a long-lasting and stable structure of good governance in keeping with the mandate given by the people one year ago. We are

Celebrating history of close ties

Masahiko Komura
PRESIDENT OF JAPAN-SRI LANKA PARLIAMENTARIAN FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

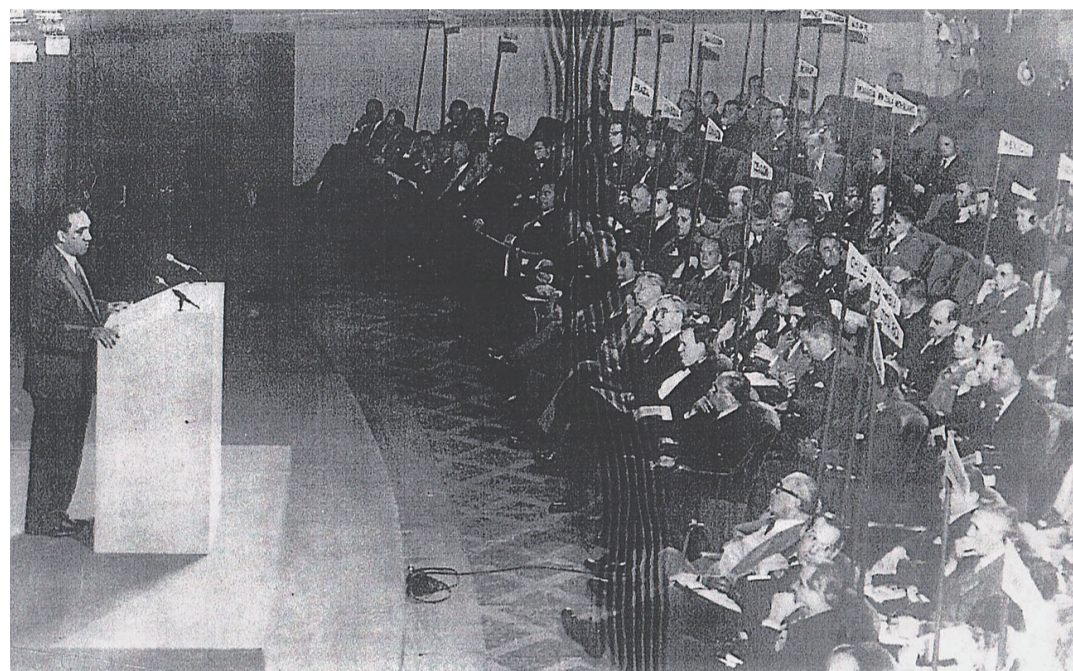
I am pleased to convey my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 68th anniversary of the Independence Day of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. I wish the people of Sri Lanka could achieve further development by unifying under the President Maithripala Sirisena.



tions were established in 1952. At the San Francisco Peace Conference 65 years ago, Sri Lanka paved the way for Japan's return to international society from the devastation it suffered after World War II.

I wish to express our appreciation once again to the people of Sri Lanka, as well as the parliamentarians of Sri Lanka, who played a pivotal role in the postwar history of Japan. I believe that Japan and Sri Lanka will reinforce the bonds of friendship and cooperation further in the future.

As president of the Japan-Sri Lanka Parliamentarian Friendship League, I am willing to extend my fullest support to further strengthen friendly relations and goodwill between our two countries.



J.R. Jayawardene, then finance minister and later president of Sri Lanka, speaks at the San Francisco Peace Conference on Sept. 6, 1951. EMBASSY OF SRI LANKA

nity who are ready to help us in our march toward prosperity.

As we commemorate inde-

pendence, let us dedicate ourselves to provide truly ethical, virtuous, wise and equitable service to all. Let us

United in ensuring democracy and freedom

Ranil Wickremesinghe
PRIME MINISTER OF SRI LANKA

It is a historic triumph for all of us to be able to celebrate the 68th anniversary of our Independence Day as a nation that prizes the values of democracy, bringing all its citizens together in a spirit of unity and strength.

Just as everyone stood together to set the country free from the grip of colonialism in 1948, on Jan. 8, 2015, Sri Lankans came together to set the nation free from the tyranny of dictatorship, corruption, nepotism and familial rule, ensuring our return to the hallowed community of democratic nations that assure people freedom and justice.

And now, the task before us is to ensure that the hard-won



Prime Minister Wickremesinghe meets Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during his official working visit. EMBASSY OF SRI LANKA

freedom retains its meaning and significance; it is a task that calls for all of us to be united, irrespective of religious, ethnic and political affiliations. This indeed is the vision of the government.

In the eyes of the world, Sri Lanka has been restored to its position as a country that abides by the revered principles of democracy. Yet, before us is

a formidable task of ensuring lasting peace and coexistence for all citizens while building on the concept of social economic development for the country.

On this Independence Day, let us strive to understand the challenges before us as a nation and determine to give of ourselves wholeheartedly to a noble vision of taking our country forward.

Congratulations
to the People of Sri Lanka
on the 68th Anniversary
of Independence

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on the 68th Anniversary of Independence

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on the 68th Anniversary
of Their Independence

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Sri Lanka Independence Day



Ancient frescos at the ruins of Sigiriya, a UNESCO World Heritage site, depict women known as the "Sigiriya Ladies." SRI LANKA TOURISM PROMOTION BUREAU

Country seeing rapid growth

Yasuo Fukuda
HONORARY PRESIDENT OF JAPAN-SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION
Isamu Nitta
PRESIDENT OF JAPAN-SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION



We wish to convey our heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 68th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. Japan and Sri Lanka are similar in that both are mari-

time nations, with Sri Lanka situated in the Indian Ocean. Sri Lanka has been increasingly drawing attention for its potential as an emerging country that has achieved

rapid economic development in recent years. Additionally, the country has seen a rapid increase in the number of visiting tourists, attracted by the natural beauty of the island and its deep historical heritage.

Japan and Sri Lanka have been enjoying congenial and excellent bilateral relations since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1952. We believe the ties of friendship and cooperation between

the two countries will be further reinforced with the new government based on the "Joint Declaration on the Comprehensive Partnership between Japan and Sri Lanka," which was released last year.

The Japan-Sri Lanka association intends to work toward vitalizing bilateral relations while maintaining friendly ties between our two nations to promote further cooperation between the two countries.

Providing equal opportunities for all

Mangala Samaraweera
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The 68th Anniversary of the Independence Day of Sri Lanka takes place at a momentous time, when our country is embarking on a new chapter both in domestic development and in our relationships with the global community of nations. This year also marks the first year of a government that is committed to moving Sri Lanka forward to be a progressive, modern and democratic nation, where our unique and rich ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity is respected, celebrated and valued.



If Sri Lanka is to truly achieve its true potential, we must ensure that we all contribute to forging a just society, where people from all communities are provided equal rights and opportunities to fulfill their hopes and aspirations and seek the betterment of their lives.

Sri Lanka since time immemorial has had open and friendly relationships with the outside world, while playing an important role on the global stage. Last year, we began the process of re-engaging with the international community, and today Sri Lanka has successfully reclaimed its rightful place in the international community of democratic nations.

We will continue to have a strong, vibrant foreign policy and healthy relationships with



Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, the Hon. Mangala Samaraweera, speaks at the High-Level Seminar on Peacebuilding, National Reconciliation and Democratization in Asia during his official visit to Japan. EMBASSY OF SRI LANKA

the countries of the world, guided by the principles of diplomatic engagement and friendship with all.

At this time, I appeal to Sri Lankans at home and overseas, to continue to contribute to the economic and social de-

velopment of the country.

On this occasion, let us rededicate ourselves to intensify collectively our commitment toward building a new Sri Lanka to lead the country into a prosperous and brighter future.



Best Wishes to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka on the occasion of the 68th Anniversary of Independence

SRI LANKA BUSINESS COUNCIL OF JAPAN

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The Sri Lanka Business Council of Japan (SLBCJ) was established in line with the policy directions given by the Overseas Business Promotion Program launched by the Ministry of Commerce & Consumer Affairs of Sri Lanka. Its mandate is to expand, develop and encourage bilateral trade between Sri Lanka and Japan while also promoting Japanese investment in Sri Lanka. Its membership is open to Japanese and Sri Lankan business entrepreneurs.