

Press Release

Indian Navy's Advanced Light Helicopter in Sri Lanka

Indian Navy's Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), arrived at SLAF base Katunayake for training of Sri Lanka Air Force Pilots and Sri Lanka Navy ships for shipborne helicopter operations on 23 March 2022.

2. The training is planned over a week to familiarise SLAF Pilots to the ALH and provide co-pilot experience as envisioned by the then Chief of Naval Staff, Adm Karambir Singh in 2019.

3. The training deployment is in line with the capacity building initiative of the Government of India amongst its neighbours as part of 'Neighbourhood First Policy'. The engagement would also foster closer interoperability and seamless conduct of coordinated Maritime Operations.

4. An SAR demonstration was conducted by the visiting training team on 25 March 2022. The demo was attended by Air Cmde Lasitha Sumanaweera, SLAF Base Commander Katunayake, who was able to witness the diverse capability of the multi role helicopter. The training team is also scheduled to undertake extensive Deck Landing Practice onboard Sri Lanka Navy's Advanced Offshore Patrol Vessel Sayurala over the week.

5. It may be recalled that the indigenous ALH helicopter as part of the 'Sarang' Aerobatic Display Team of IAF had participated last year during the 70th Anniversary Celebrations of Sri Lanka Air Force. The high level of understanding and coordination between the Armed Forces of the two countries further cement the close relations achieved through millennia old friendly ties between the two neighbours.