



सत्यमेव जयते

The Monthly Newsletter Of The High Commission Of India, Colombo

SANDESH

June 2011



**Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva
Felicited.**

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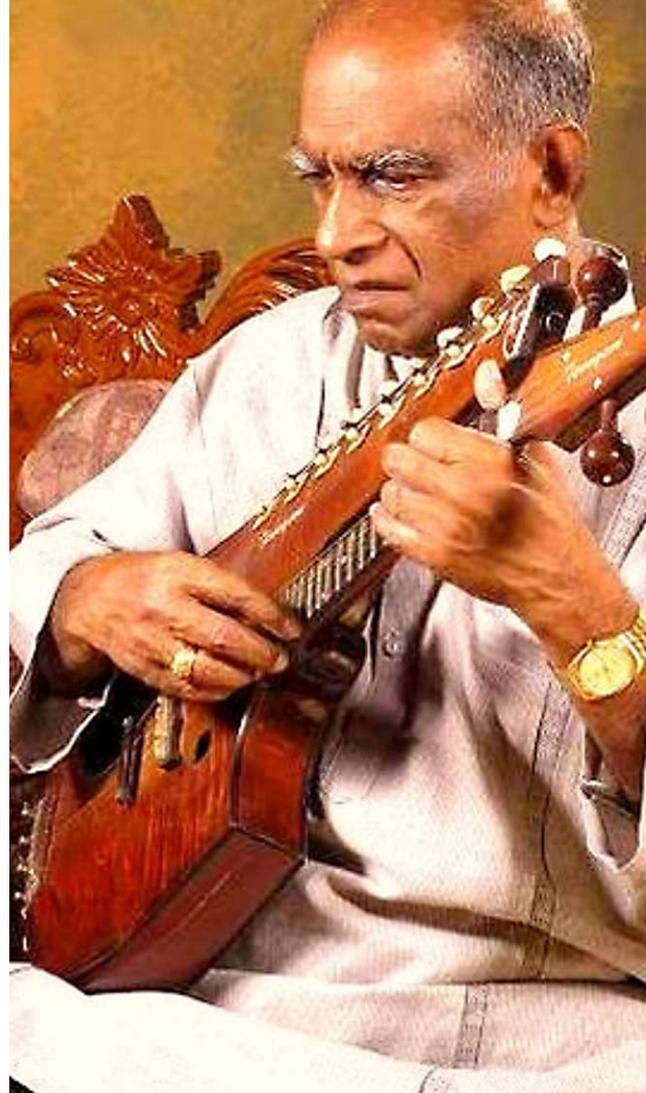
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High Commission of India felicitates Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva



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State Visit of Prime Minister of New Zealand



The Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh with the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr. John Key, at his ceremonial reception, at Rashtrapati Bhawan, in New Delhi on June 28, 2011. Smt. Gursharan Kaur and Mrs. Bronagh Key are also seen.

Prime Minister of New Zealand, H.E. John Key, accompanied by Trade Minister Hon. Tim Groser and a business delegation, paid a State visit to India from June 26-30, 2011. India's relations with New Zealand are warm, cordial and friendly. We share many common values, in particular our commitment to democracy, freedom and the rule of law. These make us natural partners in working with each other and in meeting global challenges. During the talks between the two Prime Ministers, the status of negotiations on the bilateral Free Trade Agreement was reviewed and both the countries expressed desire to expand the trade. It was also agreed to increase cooperation in the dairy, agriculture, food processing and renewable energy

sectors, where New Zealand has proven strengths and services sector, which is India's strength. The other areas identified to encourage cooperation were people to people exchanges, sports and tourism. The two Prime Ministers also agreed on a new Education Cooperation Initiative, are jointly-funded Initiative to promote partnerships in higher education and research and skills and vocational education. Two agreements on Audio-visual co-productions and a Protocol for Cooperation on Science and Innovation were also signed. It was also agreed to intensify cooperation and consultations on issues relating to the Asia Pacific region and ensuring the safety of sea lanes of communications and combating piracy

- The two way trade between India and New Zealand has grown from USD 165 million in 2003-04 to USD 755 million in 2009-10.
- Two and a half percent of the New Zealand population is of People of Indian Origin. Two Members of Parliament out of 122 are of Indian Origin.
- IT majors including Mahindra, Sathyam, HCL, Wipro, Infosys and TCS are already present in New Zealand.
- New Zealand has become a favourite destination for Indian students who are currently estimated around 10,000 from a mere 163 about 10 years ago.
- Around 120 Indian feature films have been shot in some of the beautiful locales in New Zealand.
- Diwali celebrated as a National festival.
- New Zealand is among the first few countries whose nationals are given tourist Visas on arrival.

State Visit of the Prime Minister of Slovenia to India



The Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr. Borut Pahor, witnessing the signing of agreements between two countries, in New Delhi on June 14, 2011



The Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh meeting the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr. Borut Pahor at his ceremonial reception, at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi on June 14, 2011

Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, H.E. Mr. Borut Pahor paid a State Visit, the first-ever Prime Ministerial visit from either side and coinciding with the 20th Anniversary of Slovenian Independence, to India from the 13- 16 June 2011. The two leaders discussed global issues like reform of the UN Security Council, the global financial situation and international terrorism and Prime Minister Pahor reaffirmed the support of Slovenia for a permanent seat for India in expanded Security Council.

To further strengthen the growing interactions between the two Parliaments, it was decided to

establish a Parliamentary Friendship Group with Slovenia on the occasion of the visit. A Friendship Group with India already exists in Slovenian Parliament.

India and Slovenia have traditionally enjoyed warm and friendly relations, and the economic ties date back to several decades when, as a constituent Republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, it made a major contribution to the healthy trade between the two countries. Today, Indo-Slovenian relations which are strengthened by a commitment to share values of democracy, pluralism, diversity and the rule of law are becoming broad-based and diverse. The economic and trade component, though small in value, is increasing rapidly; with a growth of about 140% over 2008-10. Investments also are gradually increasing in both directions.

Agreements signed during the visit:

- BIPPA by Finance Minister Shri Pranab Mukherji and the Economy Minister of Slovenia Ms. Darja Radia.
- Between the Indian Bureau of Indian Standards and its Slovenian counterpart.
- Between University of Nova Gorica and the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore to promote institutional cooperation in the field of research & education with a focus on Environmental sciences, Materials Science, Physics, Agriculture and Engineering.

EAM's participation at the SCO Heads of States Summit



EAM addressing the SCO Heads of States Summit at Astana

Mr. S.M. Krishna, Minister of External Affairs represented India at the 10th Anniversary Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation held in Astana on June 15, 2011.

India attaches great importance to association with the SCO and values the consistent and mature contribution made by the organisation to peace, stability and prosperity in the region. India has demonstrated its strong commitment to the SCO by participating constructively at SCO meetings open to Observers. Most SCO member countries are our neighbours or belong to our extended neighbourhood, with a strong historical and cultural legacy of centuries binding us together.

India has taken note that the SCO has taken several significant initiatives in recent years especially in

two major areas: in combating terrorism; and in the promotion of economic cooperation in the region.

India would like to see the SCO zone emerge as a terror-free zone, free of safe havens and sanctuaries for terrorists and free of infrastructure of terrorism that poisons our common region. India sees the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) as an important regional answer to the terrorism challenge.

Connectivity between SCO countries is in fact central. One bottleneck to trade and economic activity among the SCO members and observer countries is the lack of viable transport linkages. SCO can address the problem of limited connectivity through regional solutions and break barriers that inhibit trade and investment flows between our countries. India is ready to cooperate with member countries to find viable solutions to this problem and contribute to the endeavour to build bridges between Central and South Asia.

SCO members and observers could cooperate more in the future on regional and global threats arising out of climate change, environmental security, food security, energy security, particularly non-conventional sources of energy and other emerging issues which require a joint response for sustainable development. India stands ready to make a constructive contribution in these areas.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

- SCO was created by Russia, China and four Central Asian countries in 2001. India became an Observer in SCO in 2005.
- India regards SCO as an important regional forum addressing itself to a wide range of issues in our Eurasian region, including security, counterterrorism, narco-trafficking and trans-border organized crime.
- SCO members states and observers comprise close to 50% of the global population and occupy half of the entire globe.
- SCO brought in Afghanistan as a special invitee in 2005 & in 2009 SCO created a new category of dialogue partners and within that rubric invited Belarus and Sri Lanka for the first time at the Yekaterinburg summit.
- In June 2010 at the Tashkent summit, SCO approved the 'regulations on the procedure for admitting new members in SCO'
- The SCO Council of Heads of States and Governments meets every year. In addition they have regular meetings at the levels of Foreign Ministers, Defence Ministers and Finance Ministers etc.

Visit of Minister of External Affairs to Myanmar



EAM with the President of Myanmar U Thein Sein at Nay Pyi Taw 22 June 2011

Mr. S.M. Krishna, Minister of External Affairs, paid an official visit to Myanmar from June 20-22, 2011 marking the first high level bilateral interaction between India and Myanmar after the swearing in of a civilian Government in Myanmar in March 2011. Smt Nirupama Rao, Foreign Secretary, accompanied EAM during the visit. During the visit, EAM called on U Thein Sein, President of Myanmar, , First Vice President, Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw and Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw. He also held bilateral talks with U Wunna Maung Lwin, Minister of Foreign Affairs. EAM conveyed to the Myanmar leaders India's support for the cause of national reconciliation and democratic progress in an inclusive manner. He also informed that India stands ready to share its wealth of experience in parliamentary democracy through exchange of parliamentary delegations, training etc.

During the visit, the MoU on Setting Up of Indo-Myanmar Industrial Training Centre at Myingyan in Myanmar was signed by EAM and H.E. U Soe Thane, Minister of Industry-II of Myanmar. Documents pertaining to the construction of ten 500-tonne rice silos with Indian assistance of US\$ 2 million in Yangon and Ayeyarwaddy Divisions were also handed over. One silo has been constructed in Phyarpon, Kyaklatt, Bogalay, Lappotta and Malamyaingkyun townships in Ayeyarwaddy Region and in Kaumhu and Daydaye townships in Yangon Region while three have been constructed in Dawbon township in Yangon Region. EAM also handed over a cheque for USD 750,000 as part of Government of India's contribution towards earthquake relief operations



EAM visiting Bahadur Shah Zafar Mazar in Yangon (20 June, 2011)



Courtesy call by FS Nirupama Rao on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Yangon (20 June 2011)

in Shan State. The funds were used for financing reconstruction of 1 high school and 6 primary schools to facilitate continuous education in Tarlay township, the area worst affected by the severe earthquake that struck in March 2011. In all, the Government of India has contributed USD 1 million, including a cash contribution of US\$ 250,000 handed over earlier.

During the visit, EAM also visited Yangon where he inaugurated, along with the Union Minister of Commerce U Win Myint and the Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Myint Swe, the three disaster proof rice silos located in Yangon. He also visited the holy Shwedagon Pagoda and the Mazhar of Bahadur Shah Zafar.

MAJOR INDIAN PROJECTS IN MYANMAR

The Government of India is actively involved in over a dozen projects in Myanmar, both in infrastructural and other developmental areas. These include :

- upgradation and resurfacing of the 160 km. long Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo road;
- construction and upgradation of the Rhi-Tidim and Rhi-Falam roads in Myanmar;
- the Kaladan Multimodal Transport Project; etc.
- An ADSL project for high speed data link in 32 Myanmar cities has been completed by TCIL.
- ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL), GAIL and ESSAR are participants in the energy sector in Myanmar.
- RITES is involved in development of the rail transportation system and supplying of diesel engines.
- In September 2008, Ministry of Electric Power-1 (MoEP-1) and NHPC signed an

agreement for development of the Tamanthi and Shwezaye Hydro-Electric Power project in Chindwin River valley and NHPC is working on preparation of updated DPRs.

- ISRO assisted Myanmar in setting up a data processing centre in Yangon for remote sensing applications. This has been upgraded in 2007 to receive data from IRS-P5 and IRS-P6 satellites.
- A heavy turbo-truck assembly plant is being set up in Myanmar by TATA Motors with GOI(Government of India) financial assistance in the form of a line of credit.
- An India-Myanmar Industrial Training Centre has been set up by HMT(I) with the assistance of GOI, while the Myanmar-India Centre for English Language (MICELT), a Myanmar-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre (MIEDC) and an India-Myanmar Centre for Enhancement of IT Skills (IMCEITS) are all operational.

Bilateral trade has expanded significantly from US\$ 12.4 million in 1980-81 to US\$ 1207.56 million in 2009-10. India's imports from Myanmar are dominated by agricultural items (beans, pulses and forest based products form 90% of imports). India's main exports to Myanmar are primary and semi-finished steel and pharmaceuticals. **Trade with India** (at official rate of exchange, in US \$ millions)

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Export	733.59	727.85	804.96	1010.56
Import	159.54	173.46	146.18	194.03

EAM's participation in ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting

Mr. S.M. Krishna Minister of External Affairs participated in the 10th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 6-7 June, 2011 in Godollo, Hungary. Asia Europe Partnership Forum (ASEM) was constituted in 1966 with a membership of 46 Asian and European countries in addition to ASEAN and EU. India has been participating in ASEM Meetings since 2007.

ASEM Countries represent over half of the global population and account for more than half of the global GDP. EAM's participation at the event underscored India's commitment to play a constructive and proactive role, in further strengthening this vital inter-regional forum.

EAM spoke at length on many regional and international issues. His focus was on:

UN Security Council Reform:

EAM said, "The time for this reform has not only come, it is imperative that we brook no delay as that will only be at the expense of the United Nations, which is not in the interest of any of us, individually or collectively. The structure of the Security Council continues to reflect post Second World War and not contemporary realities. This detracts severely from its legitimacy. It also does not allow it to harness the benefits from the shifts in the global power balance in the last sixty-five years."

Target terror sanctuaries:

EAM underlined India's commitment to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, and urged international community to act against the continued existence of "safe sanctuaries" for terrorists outside its borders and warned against adopting a "selective approach" to tackle this menace". India has attempted to help Afghanistan in its reconstruction efforts as a means to bringing about stability in that country. During Prime Minister's visit to Afghanistan in May 2011, India had announced additional assistance of US \$ 500 million, over and above existing commitments which were almost 1.5 billion US Dollars. India's assistance projects are spread across Afghanistan

and span almost the entire gamut of economic and social developmental activities. India's assistance programme – which is Afghan owned and led – places particular emphasis on capacity building and human resource development, areas which are particularly important as the process of transition unfolds in Afghanistan.

Non-State actors:

EAM said, "Non-traditional security threats such as terrorism, piracy, illegal drug and arms trafficking, threat of terrorists gaining access to WMDs pose serious challenges to peace and security not only in Asia and Europe but also globally. These challenges can only be addressed through collective effort by the international community. Different multi-lateral processes, including various regional forums dealing with these issues, such as, the ARF and ADMM-Plus, should consolidate international efforts to address these threats." To counter the menace of terrorism, EAM suggested measures such as: the greater involvement of the UN in coordinating international efforts to enhance global anti-piracy efforts, maritime security in Asia Pacific Region for growing economies, international collaboration in the sharing of information, countering the financing of terrorism, building capacity in anti-terror mechanisms, exchange of best practices and strengthening our mutual legal assistance and extradition regimes.

EAM also offered to host the next meeting of the ASEM Foreign Ministers in 2013 in India.



European Union and Asian Foreign Ministers pose during a group photo during the 10th Asia-Europe Foreign Ministers Meeting (ASEM)

Foreign Secretary's visit to Bangladesh



Hon'ble Foreign Secretary calling on H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh

Foreign Secretary visited Bangladesh from 05-07 June 2011 for the Foreign Office Consultations. During the visit, Foreign Secretary called on Her Excellency Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister Dr. Dipu Moni. FS also met Dr. Mashiur Rahman and Prof. Gowher Rizvi, Advisers to Prime Minister. FS had extensive consultations with Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh Mr. Mijarul Quayes.

Both sides reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the Joint Communique signed by PM Dr Manmohan Singh and Her Excellency Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during her landmark visit to India in January 2010.

The key highlights pointed out by FS during interaction with press

- Implementation of projects under the \$ 1 billion LOC from India has been a high priority and FS conveyed concurrence for a number of projects under the LOC in Railway infrastructure and the purchase of buses for the city of Dhaka for immediate implementation.
- Cooperation in the power sector, including grid connectivity, supply of upto 500 MW of power from India, including 250 MW of power at a preferential rate and Bangladesh request for setting up of a high technology joint venture thermal power plant of 1320 MW capacity was progressing well.
- During the visit of Minister for Commerce and Industry of India in April 2011, the annual duty free quota for export of Bangladeshi garments to India was raised from 8 to 10 million pieces.
- Both sides are working on several projects to improve trade infrastructure and connectivity. A new LCS at Fulbari-Banglabandha was opened in January and the Government of India has now undertaken to set up five ICPs and the foundation stone of the ICP at Agartala was laid by the Home Minister Shri P. Chidambaram in May. Border Haats in Meghalaya are expected to be inaugurated soon.
- Bangladesh exports to India have increased by 52% in the first nine months of 2010-11.
- Substantial forward movement was made in respect of both water and land boundary issues. The Joint Boundary Working Group (JBWG) meeting was held in November 2010, and the Bangladesh Water Resources Secretary held talks in Delhi on 4 June. Both sides were discussing interim water sharing of Teesta and Feni rivers. The work on river bank protection and embankment construction along the common rivers was progressing and the dredging of the Ichhamati River along the 20 km common stretch was nearing completion.
- The joint Inaugural Ceremonies of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore in both our capitals were very impressive.
- India attaches the highest importance to its relations with Bangladesh and seeks a deeper and stronger partnership. The historic bonds between India and Bangladesh are deep rooted and peoples on both sides want mutual prosperity and cooperation.
- Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh was looking forward to his visit to Bangladesh

Foreign Secretary's visit to Pakistan



FS with Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Mr. Salman Bashir at talks in Islamabad (23 June 2011)

Under the resumed dialogue process, the Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India met in Islamabad, on 23-24 June 2011 for bilateral talks on Peace and Security including CBMs, Jammu and Kashmir and promotion of friendly exchanges. Three sessions of talks were held.

The talks were held in a frank and cordial atmosphere. Both sides reiterated their intention to carry forward the dialogue process in a constructive and purposeful manner.

The issues of Peace and Security, including CBMs, were discussed in a comprehensive manner. Both sides emphasized the importance of constructive dialogue to promote mutual understanding.

They noted the ongoing implementation of various Nuclear and Conventional CBMs. They also decided to convene separate Expert level meetings on Nuclear and Conventional CBMs to discuss implementation and strengthening of existing arrangements and to consider additional measures, which are mutually acceptable, to build trust and confidence and promote peace and security. The dates for the Expert level meetings will be determined through diplomatic channels.

The Foreign Secretaries noted that both countries recognize that terrorism poses a continuing threat to peace and security and they reiterated the firm and undiluted commitment of the two countries to fight and eliminate this scourge in all its forms and manifestations. They agreed on the need to strengthen cooperation on counter-terrorism.

The Foreign Secretaries exchanged views on the issue of Jammu & Kashmir and agreed to continue



FS with Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Mr. Salman Bashir at Joint Press Conference in Islamabad (24 June 2011)

discussions in a purposeful and forward looking manner with the view to finding a peaceful solution by narrowing divergences and building convergences.

Both sides agreed to convene a meeting of the Working Group on Cross-LoC CBMs to recommend measures for strengthening and streamlining the existing trade and travel arrangements across the LoC and propose modalities for introducing additional Cross-LoC CBMs. The Working Group will meet in July 2011.

Both sides agreed to the need for promoting friendly exchanges between the two countries. They noted with satisfaction the progress made towards finalization of the Visa Agreement which will help liberalize the visa regime and facilitate people-to-people, business-to-business and sports contacts.

The two sides also discussed measures for promoting cooperation in various fields including, facilitating visits to religious shrines, media exchanges, holding of sports tournaments and cessation of hostile propaganda against each other.

The Foreign Secretaries agreed that people of the two countries are at the heart of the relationship and that humanitarian issues should be accorded priority and treated with sensitivity.

The Foreign Secretary of India called on the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar.

The Foreign Secretaries will meet again in New Delhi, on a date to be decided through diplomatic channels, to prepare for the meeting of the Foreign/External Affairs Ministers in New Delhi in July 2011.

Establishment of Women's Trade Facilitation Centre and Community Learning Centre at Batticaloa

An Agreement for providing Technical Assistance and Implementation support for establishment of a Trade Facilitation Centre and a Community Learning Centre at Batticaloa, Sri Lanka was signed on 31 May, 2011 between Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), Ahmedabad. The Government of India will provide SLR 203 million for the project as a technical grant.

The above mentioned agreement is a follow up of an earlier Memorandum of Understanding entered into between Government of India and Government of Sri Lanka. The Government of Sri Lanka will provide the premises and other local support for setting up the Centre.

SEWA will be the executing agency on behalf of the Government of India and Ministry of Child Development and Women's Affairs of Sri Lanka will act as the nodal agency on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka. The programme aims to train forty (40) war affected/destitute women trainees from Batticaloa District as Master Trainers under Training of Trainers (ToT) programme in India. These women will be trained in seven vocational subjects: (i) Textiles and Garments; (ii) Surface Ornamentation; (iii) Agro food processing;

(iv) Computers; (v) Enterprise Development; (vi) Solar lantern and (vii) Roof rain water harvesting. In addition, fifty (50) women at the grassroots will undergo management training in India.

The trainers who would be trained at SEWA under the ToT programme will work as master trainers and will train 800 trainees under coordination, guidance and facilitation support from resource persons of SEWA. All the trainees will also be imparted enterprise development training. The duration of the project in Sri Lanka would be for two years.

The High Commissioner of India, Mr. Ashok K. Kantha, said that the project is very important as it would rebuild the lives of war affected women and their families. He added that the objective of the project is economic empowerment of women by imparting employable livelihood skills, capacity building among war affected women in vocational trades and assistance in creating sustainable livelihood activities. All these would contribute to the overall improvement of socio-economic indicators in the Eastern Province. Depending on the progress of the project, it is proposed to explore the possibility of scaling up the model for application in other areas of the country.

Troika Visit to Sri Lanka

Shri Shivshankar Menon, National Security Adviser, Smt. Nirupama Rao, Foreign Secretary and Shri Pradeep Kumar, Defence Secretary visited Sri Lanka from 10-11 June, 2011 for the troika consultation.

The visiting delegation had exhaustive discussion on a wide-range of issues with Mr. Lalith Weeratunga, Secretary to the President and Mr. Gothabaya Rajapaksa, Defence Secretary. During the visit, the delegation also called on H.E. the President of Sri Lanka and Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs.



Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa greets National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon (left) in Colombo on Saturday. Looking on are Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao and Sri Lankan Foreign Minister G.L. Peiris (to her right).



Foreign Secretary with the President of Sri Lanka Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa at Colombo (11 June 2011)



National Security Advisor, Foreign Secretary and Defence Secretary calling on Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka Prof. G.L. Peiris at Colombo (10 June 2011)



National Security Advisor and Foreign Secretary meeting with Mr. Lalith Weeratunga, Secretary to the President of Sri Lanka and Defence Secretary Mr. Gothbaya Rajapaksa at Colombo (10 June 2011)

Ferry Service resumed between Tuticorin and Colombo June 14, 2011



High Commissioner, Ashok K. Kantha lighting a traditional lamp marking the inauguration of a new passenger terminal at the Colombo Port on 14 June, 2011

The passenger ferry service between Tuticorin in India and Colombo in Sri Lanka that was flagged off on 12th June at Tuticorin by Hon. G.K. Vasan, Minister of Shipping, Government of India arrived in Colombo in the morning of 14th June..

The High Commissioner of India, H.E. Ahsok K. Kantha, participated in a ceremony organized at the passenger terminal at the Colombo Port to mark the occasion of the arrival of the passenger ferry service.

High Commissioner Kantha and Hon. Rohitha Abegunawardena, Deputy Minister of Ports and Highways of Sri Lanka, inaugurated the passenger terminal and visited the vessel 'Scotia Prince'. Speaking on the occasion, the High Commissioner said that it was a historic occasion for the two countries. He said that ferry services between the two countries were being resumed after about 30 years as a result of an understanding between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka in June 2010 when President Rajapaksa visited India. On that occasion, it had been agreed to start the ferry services between Colombo and Tuticorin and between Talaimannar and

Rameswaram in order to speedily restore the traditional links and connectivity between the two countries. A Memorandum of Understanding had been signed between the two government on 7 January 2011 to start the services. High Commissioner Kantha stated that the arrival of ferry from Tuticorin represented a concrete outcome of the understanding between the leaders of the two countries. He added that the ferry service will give a fillip to tourism and trade and strengthen cultural ties between the two countries.

The passenger ferry service between Talaimannar and Rameswaram will commence once the requisite infrastructure is put in place on both sides.



High Commissioner, Ashok K. Kantha and the Deputy Minister for Ports and Highways Rohitha Abeygunawardena, releasing balloons to mark the inauguration of a new passenger terminal at the Colombo Port in Colombo on 14 June, 2011

Felicitation of Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva by High Commission of India



High Commissioner, Ashok k. Kantha presenting a plaque to Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva at a felicitation event. Hon'ble Dr. Sarath Amunugama, Senior Minister for International Monetary Cooperation, Hon'ble Prof. G.L Peiris, Minister of External Affairs and Hon'ble Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara, Minister of National Languages and Social Integration are graced the event.

The living legend of Sri Lankan music, Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva, was felicitated by the High Commission of India at a ceremony organized by High Commissioner Ashok K. Kantha on Monday, 27 June 2011 at India House. The felicitation was in recognition of Pandit Amaradeva's outstanding and unique contribution to enriching India-Sri Lanka relations through the promotion of music.

A musical prodigy who learnt his art from Pandit V.G. Jog and later from Dr. Ratnajaiakar of the Bhatkande Institute in India, Pandit Amaradeva drew inspiration from classical Indian ragas as well as Sri Lanka's own rich traditions of folk music and went on to create a music that is quintessentially Sri Lankan. The only Sri Lankan citizen to have been conferred the Padma Shri award by the

Government of India, Pandit Amaradeva's citation for the award noted that he was being honoured in recognition of his unique role as the voice of Sri Lanka's musical soul.

The event organized to felicitate him at India House was attended by Hon'ble Dr. Sarath Amunugama, Senior Minister for International Monetary Cooperation, Hon'ble Prof. G.L Peiris, Minister of External Affairs, Hon'ble Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara, Minister of National Languages and Social Integration and Mr. Lalith Weeratunga, Secretary to the President. The event also brought together a number of Pandit Amaradeva's colleagues and luminaries from Sri Lanka's public and cultural life. Speakers at the event paid glowing tributes to Pandit Amaradeva. In his remarks, Dr. Amunugama called the felicitation an emotional moment for him as his friend of over 50 years was being re-honoured by India. He shared a number of delightful anecdotes from the times that both had spent together and underlined his role in single handedly creating Sinhala music, calling him a real "man of the people". Prof. Peiris too highlighted different aspects of Pandit Amaradeva's personality and acknowledged his ability to work with others and bringing out the best from them. He noted that his partnerships with other famous musician had enriched Sri Lanka and its music, adding that he had truly lived up to his name in being an "immortal god" of music. Mr. Nanayakkara called Pandit Amaradeva's music as one that transcended all barriers, complimenting him for his ability to absorb influences from other cultures and for acting as a bridge in the relations between India and Sri Lanka.

In his address, High Commissioner Kantha called Pandit Amaradeva as an embodiment of the finest traditions of symbiotic exchange that has characterized cultural interface between India and Sri Lanka over the centuries. He said that the silent but enormously powerful give and take between India and Sri Lanka over countless centuries in the fields of dance, music, literature and other art forms had been mutually enriching and provided

the civilizational bedrock to our relationship. It was important to keep this bigger picture of India-Sri Lanka relations in mind and not get distracted by odd discordant notes on any particular day. Pandit Amaradeva was the living embodiment of how India and Sri Lanka mutually enriched each other.

Pandit Amaradeva was presented a felicitation plaque by the High Commissioner. Mrs. Sharmila Kantha honoured Pandit Amaradeva and Mrs. Wimla Amaradeva by presenting them with shawls. The evening concluded with a spellbinding rendition of music by Pandit Amaradeva and his daughter, Ms. Subhani Amaradeva.



Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva and his daughter Subhanie presented a spellbinding rendition of music at the event organized at India House to felicitate Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva.

51st Annual General Meeting of Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA) Addressed by the High Commissioner



High Commissioner lighting the traditional oil lamp along with Prof. Upali Amarasiri, President SLLA and Mrs. D. Andradi, President-elect

H.E. Ashok K. Kantha, High Commissioner of India was the Chief Guest at the 51st Annual General Meeting of Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA) held on 29 June at Sri Lanka Foundation Institute. High Commissioner after lighting the traditional oil lamp, awarded the medals, awards and certificates to the members of SLLA in recognition of their professional achievements and services rendered.

In his remarks, Mr. Upali Amarasiri, President SLLA, highlighted that SLLA has excellent working relationship with its counterparts in India and is keen to further strengthen the professional and cultural relationship with India. He also highlighted that both the countries were playing active role in Regional Federation of South Asian Library Associations (REFSALA) and India will take over Chairmanship of REFSALA from Sri Lanka in 2013.

In his address, High Commissioner Ashok K. Kantha highlighted that he was delighted to address the distinguished members of SLLA at a time when Sri Lanka is well positioned to forge ahead as an economy, as a society and as a country after three decades of internal conflict and is poised to take advantage of the peace dividend and move towards reconciliation, peace, prosperity and development. High Commissioner underlined that India as closest neighbor and friend is ready to be Sri Lanka's partner in this journey. He also highlighted that at the same time India is ready to reap the benefits of growing economy and has the huge demographic advantage

to sustain momentum of growth.

High commissioner also dwelt upon the impact of technological advancements especially in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) which has revolutionized the entire approach to how information is stored, processed and accessed. The advances made in recent years in the field of digital storage of data have enabled gigantic amounts of archival and current information to be digitally stored in a very small space and retrieved from distant locations with great ease. Similarly, technological innovations have resulted in availability of huge volumes of information on the interest in multiple media. High Commissioner underlined that to make the best of these opportunities to underpin national progress. India and Sri Lanka need a knowledge-oriented paradigm of development to give its people and institutions a competitive advantage in fields of knowledge.

High Commissioner highlighted the excellent bilateral cooperation between India and Sri Lanka in the field of library and information sciences and within REFSALA and in this context suggested training of library and information science professionals from Sri Lanka at centres of excellence in India through various schemes and programmes of the Government of India such as the ITEC and the Colombo Plan. The gesture was warmly appreciated by the President, Council and members of the SLLA.



High Commissioner, addressing the 51st AGM of the SLLA

T-20 Cricket Match with Indian CEOs



High Commissioner with CEO's Forum Team

A soft ball T-20 Cricket Match was held between the High Commission of India officials & the members of Indian CEO's forum on 5th June.



High Commissioner with the HCI Team



High Commissioner inaugurating the match

ECONOMIC STRIDE

India and Malaysia implement CECA effective 1 July 2011

The India-Malaysia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) came into effect on 1 July 2011. India-Malaysia CECA is India's fourth bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement, after Singapore, South Korea and Japan. The CECA envisages liberalisation of trade in goods, trade in services, investments and other areas of economic cooperation.

Trade between India and Malaysia has reached US\$ 10 billion in 2010-11, an increase of 26% from the previous year. It is expected that the implementation of this agreement will boost bilateral trade to US\$15 billion by 2015.

The trade in goods package under India-Malaysia CECA takes the tariff liberalization beyond the India-ASEAN FTA commitments, which were implemented by both countries on 1 January 2010. Under India-Malaysia CECA, the items on which India has obtained market access from Malaysia include basmati rice, mangoes, eggs, trucks, motorcycles and cotton garments, which are all items of considerable export interest to India. At the same time, adequate protection has been provided by the Indian side for sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, textiles, chemicals, auto, etc.

Under the services agreement of the CECA, India and Malaysia have provided commercially meaningful commitments in sectors and modes of interest to each other which should result in enhanced services trade. The CECA also facilitates the temporary movement of business people including contractual service suppliers, and independent professionals in commercially meaningful sectors including accounting and auditing, architecture, urban planning, engineering services, medical and dental, nursing and pharmacy, Computer and Related Services (CRS), and Management Consulting Services.

The India-Malaysia CECA also facilitates cross-border investments between the two countries. It aims to promote investments and create a liberal, facilitative, transparent and competitive investment regime. The CECA creates an attractive operating environment for the business communities of both countries to increase bilateral trade and investment. The full text of India-Malaysia CECA, with details of commitments on goods, services and investment, is available on the websites of the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry at www.commerce.nic.in

India's domestic banking sector to be world's third largest by 2050

The Indian domestic banking industry will become the third largest in the world by 2050 after China and the United States, according to a survey released by global audit and consulting firm PwC

“China and India could have a combined share of around 35 percent of global banking assets by 2050. The United States, Japan and Western Europe are all projected to see large falls in their share of global banking assets in the coming decades,” said Harsh Bisht, Leader-Banking and Capital Markets, PwC India.

The survey also observed that India's rate of growth was expected to overtake that of China's in the long run as it has more catch-up potential and its working-age population growth would be much stronger in the long term.

Also, the combined domestic banking assets of seven of the prime emerging economies of the



world — China, India, Brazil, Russia, Mexico, Indonesia and Turkey will exceed that of the group of G7 countries. The G7 developed economies of the world are France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain, the United States and Canada.

“The GDP of the E7 countries is currently well behind that of their

G7 counterparts but we'll see them at level pegging within the next two decades and well ahead within the next four,” said John Hawksworth, Chief Economist, PwC.

The survey said that global banking assets could quadruple to around \$300 trillion by 2050. “In the banking world, this shift is happening even faster than anticipated and appears to have been accelerated by the financial crisis as emerging market banks have been relatively shielded from the effects of declining asset values,” added Hawksworth.

DEFENCE

Prithvi-II successfully test-fired



India test-fired its indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-II ballistic missile from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur in Orissa on 9th June, 2011. It was the fourth successful Prithvi-II flight within a period of eight months.

With a maximum striking range of 350 km, the missile is capable of carrying a pay-load of 500-1000 kg warhead. The missile, which has features to deceive any anti ballistic missiles, had demonstrated flight duration of

483 seconds reaching a peak altitude of 43.5 km in 2008 users trial.

'Prithvi', the first ballistic missile developed under the country's prestigious Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP), is propelled by liquid propulsion twin engine. With a length of

nine meter and one meter diameter, Prithvi-II uses an advanced inertial navigation system with manoeuvring trajectory.

The test firing of the surface-to-surface missile, which has already been inducted into Indian armed forces, was a routine trial conducted by the personnel of "Strategic Force Command" (SFC).

India signs deal with US to procure 10 C-17 aircraft



India signed on 14th June its biggest defence deal with the US to procure ten C-17 Globemaster III heavy-lift Aircraft for \$4.1 billion under which American defence major Boeing will set up test facilities for hi-tech aeronautics engines for the DRDO. The aircraft delivery would be done in 2013 and 2014. As per the agreement, the US defence major will set up defence facilities in India. It will also establish a High Altitude Engine Test Facility at DRDO, which will allow the research organisation to test engines indigenously.

During rigorous field evaluation trials in India in June 2010, the C-17 met all of the IAF's airlift requirements. A tactical and strategic airlifter, the C-17 can land combat-ready troops in remote locations or airdrop them directly where needed. With a maximum payload of 164,900 pounds (74,797 kg), the C-17 can take off and land in 3,000 feet (914.4 m) or less.

Boeing is partnering with India's leading technology and manufacturing companies to build a supply chain out of India. The company also has opened a Research and Technology Center in Bengaluru to collaborate with India's technical talent for research in aero structures, materials and network systems.

Boeing has delivered 232 C-17s worldwide, including 22 with international customers. The U.S. Air Force -- including active National Guard and Reserve units -- has taken delivery of 210 C-17s. Other customers include the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force, the Qatar Emiri Air Force, the Canadian Forces, the Royal Australian Air Force, , and the United Arab Emirates Air Force and Air Defence.

Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva Felicitated.



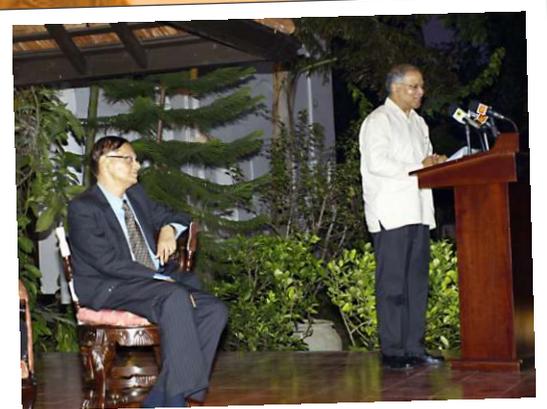
Dr. Sarath Amunugama, Senior Minister for International Monetary Cooperation, greets Pandit Amaradeva, while Mrs. Wimla Amaradeva looks on



Gathering at India House on the occasion of felicitation of Pandit Amaradeva



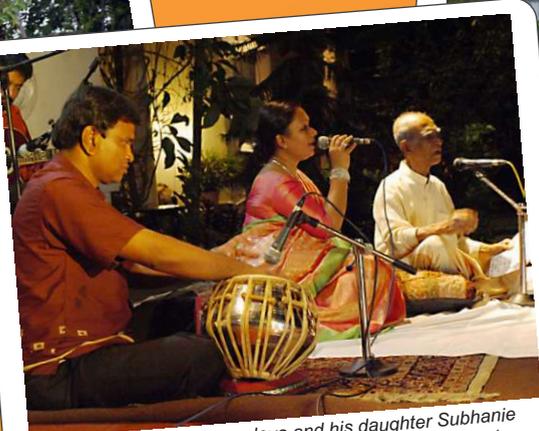
Hon'ble Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara, Minister of National Languages and Social Integration addressing the gathering



H.E. Ashok K. Kanth, High Commissioner, addressing the gathering



Dr. Sarath Amunugama, Senior Minister for International Monetary Cooperation, addressing the gathering



Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva and his daughter Subhanie presenting a spellbinding rendition of music at the event organized at India House to felicitate Padma Shri Pandit Amaradeva



Hon'ble Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs, addressing the gathering



July 8

Film: "Mahabharat" India's Greatest Epic (Volume XI)

Venue & time: ICC Auditorium 5.30 p.m
Duration: 3 hours

July 12

Film: Bhumika (with English subtitles)

Director: Shyam Benegal
Venue & time: ICC Auditorium 6.00 p.m
Duration: 3 Hours

July 15

Hindustani Vocal Music Recital

Palinda Udawela Arachchi accompanied on Tabla by Visharad B. Isuru Tharaka Perera on Violin by P.A. Amila Madhusanka and on Harmonium by Visharad Nalin Ginendra Alwis
Venue & time: ICC Auditorium 6.00 p.m

July 19-24

Harmony & Rhythm

An Exhibition of Paintings by Ruchi Goyal Kaura, Deepa Seth Bhando, Sonika Agarwal, Sandhya Singh (In association with the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Arts, Government of Sri Lanka)
Inauguration: 6.00 p.m. 19 July 2011
Exhibition dates: 20 - 24 July 2011 1 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Venue: National Art Gallery (West Wing), Ananda Coomaraswamy Mw., Colombo 07



MAHABHARATA

July 21

Violin Duet

Shasthrapathi Mahinda Seneviratne & S. Dibakaran accompanied on Tabla by Chandralal Amarakoon and On Mrindangam by V. Jambunathan
Venue & time: ICC Auditorium 5.30 p.m

July 28

Nrithyopasana

Bharatha Natyam Recital Presented by the students of Natya Kala Mandhir & The Indian Cultural Centre trained by their Guru Kalasuri Vasugy Jegatheeswaran
Venue & time: ICC Auditorium 6.30 p.m

July 29

Meet the Writer and Launch of Literary Forum

Dr. Gunadasa Amarasekara (Eminent Sinhalese Poet and Novelist)
Venue & time: ICC Auditorium 6.30 p.m

Admission to all programmes is free and on first come first served basis



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The information and articles are collected from different sources and do not necessarily reflect the view of the High Commission

Suggestions regarding improvement of the "SANDESH" may please be addressed to

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