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வெளிநாட்டு அமைச்சு
FOREIGN MINISTRY

ජනරජ භවනගිරිල්ල, කොළඹ 1, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව, குடியரசு கட்டிடம், கொழும்பு 1, Republic Building, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka

Media Release

Foreign Minister Gunawardena conveys appreciation to Australian counterpart for support to Sri Lanka

Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena in a telephone conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia Marise Payne on Wednesday (09/06) expressed his deep appreciation for the support extended by Australia towards Sri Lanka in addressing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Foreign Minister welcomed Australian assistance in the form of a COVID-19 containment package amounting to Rs. 1,787 million; donation made through UNICEF of essential COVID-19 supplies; and provision of protective equipment. In addition he welcomed the Royal Australian Aircraft's delivery of 9.8m facemasks and 3,200 coveralls to the Ministry of Health on the 4th of June 2021.

The Foreign Minister requested for the Australian government's support to procure Astra Zeneca vaccines which the Australian Minister agreed to consider positively.

The Ministers also agreed to launch appropriate programs to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and Australia, in April next year. Acknowledging the positive role that Australian Development Assistance has played in the national development efforts of Sri Lanka, Minister Gunawardena emphasized the importance of continued support to Sri Lanka at this critical time. In response to a specific request made by the Sri Lanka side, the Australian Foreign Minister offered to make available to Sri Lanka technical assistance to mitigate the environmental damage caused by the Express Pearl ship in Sri Lankan waters.

During the conversation, Minister Gunawardena conveyed H.E. the President's request for support for organic fertilizer based agriculture, and Minister Payne responded that Australia would provide technical assistance in that field, through Australian research institutes.

The Ministers discussed a wide range of bilateral and multi-lateral matters including, Australia's ongoing projects in Sri Lanka amounting to AUD \$58m. Minister Payne's assurance that Australia would continue to cooperate with Sri Lanka in its work with Commonwealth organisations and Asian regional organizations such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the Bali Process was especially appreciated by Sri Lankan Foreign Minister.

Foreign Ministry
Colombo

10 June 2021