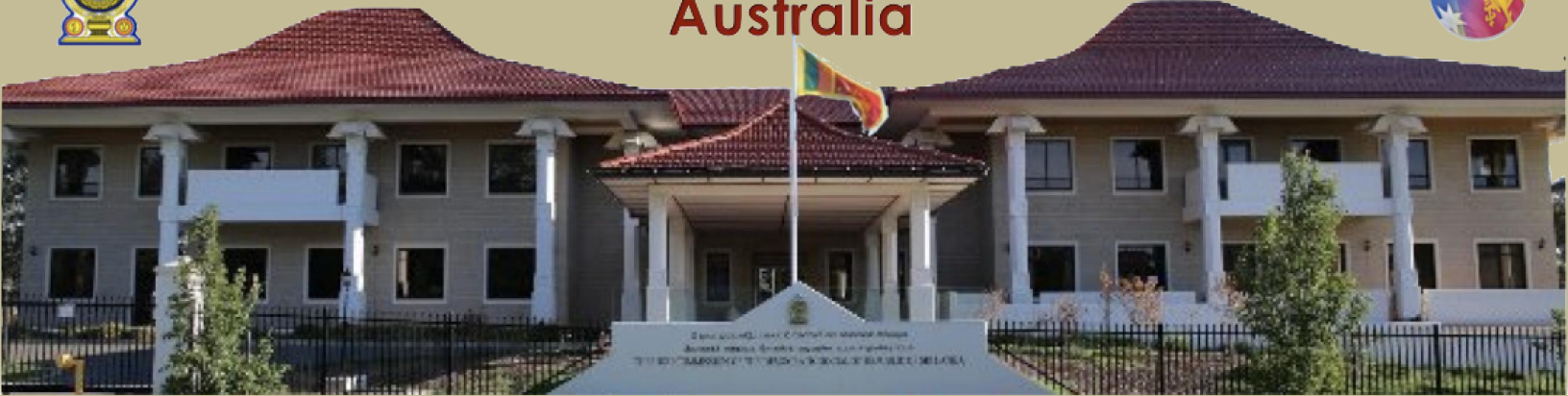




High Commission of Sri Lanka in Canberra Australia



Newsletter

August- November 2024

Volume 10/2024

Message from the High Commissioner on the eve of her Departure



On the eve of my departure on completion of my tour of duty in Australia, I wish to express my sincere

appreciation for the invaluable support and cooperation extended to me by everyone during my tenure in Australia.

I leave at a time when Sri Lanka has turned a new page with a new government with new thinking and fresh plans to make Sri Lanka a united, peaceful, a prosperous and rich country.

Australia and Sri Lanka have over the years maintained a close, cordial and friendly relation. Our multifaceted relations are been enhanced for our mutual benefit.

On reflection therefore, I leave with immense pleasure noting with satisfaction that Australia- Sri Lanka relations would grow from strength to strength.

It has been a pleasure and an honour to be Sri Lanka High Commissioner in Australia. I wish Australia every success for the future.

At a personal level, let me say that living and working in Australia has been a rewarding experience for me.

I take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to all Australians and I wish my fellow Sri Lankans every success in all their endeavors.

Chitranganee Wagiswara
High Commissioner

Her Excellency Mrs Chitranganee Wagiswara, High Commissioner for Sri Lanka, ending her tenure in Australia



Sri Lanka High Commissioner to Australia Mrs. Chitranganee Wagiswara ended her tenure in Australia and returned to Sri Lanka on 01st December 2024.

During her stay in Australia the High Commissioner was committed to enhance bilateral relations with Australia for the mutual benefit to both countries. Further, the High Commissioner had significant connections with the Sri Lankan community in Australia.

Australian political leaders Hon. Jason Wood MP Shadow Minister Multicultural Affairs, a long-standing true friend of the Sri Lankan community in Australia, Hon. Keith Wolahan MP, Local Federal MP in Melbourne and first Australian Federal Parliamentarian of Sri Lankan origin Hon. Cassandra Fernando MP joined to honour the High Commissioner for her friendship, solidarity & support to Sri Lanka

High Commission of Sri Lanka in Canberra celebrates Diwali Festival 2024



The High Commission of Sri Lanka in Canberra celebrated Diwali, the Festival of Lights on 02nd November 2024 at the High Commission premises. Sri Lankan Hindu devotees and representatives of other Sri Lankan Associations took part in the ceremony.

The High Commission premises were decorated with kolam and other festive decorations. Swami Jayshankar Shivam of Sri Vishnu Shiva Mandir in Canberra conducted the auspicious religious pooja and rituals related to the Diwali festival.

Welcoming the guests, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Australia, Chitrangane Wagiswara stated that Diwali signifies peace and joy, the presence of light over darkness, wisdom over ignorance, and victory over evil, and that Diwali is an opportunity to reflect on and illuminate one's inner self.

Further, the High Commissioner read out extracts of the President's Diwali message which emphasized the timely need to transform the orthodox ways of thinking, in order to eliminate injustice, discrimination, marginalization, hate speech and violence from the society, ultimately paving the way to end all forms of discrimination in Sri Lanka

For more information use link below;

https://www.slhcaust.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Canberra-451_2024.pdf



Gifting of a former Royal Australian Air Force Beech Craft KA350 to Sri Lanka



The Australian Government gifted a former Royal Australian Air Force Beech craft KA350 aircraft to the Sri Lankan Government on 24th October 2024. The gifting of this aircraft is part of the Australian Government's commitment to strengthening and enhancing the cooperation and collaboration that is the foundation of the strong bilateral relationship between Australia and Sri Lanka.

The aircraft will be used by the Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) to enhance Sri Lanka's sovereign aerial maritime surveillance capability in countering all forms of transnational crimes, including human smuggling and drug smuggling thus maintaining a peaceful and secure Indian Ocean region.

Land Forces International Land Defence Exposition 2024 and the Chief of Army Symposium (CAS 2024)



Captain Lanka Dissanayake, Counsellor (Defence) of this Mission has been invited to attend the “Land Forces International Land Defence Exposition 2024” held from 11th to 13th September 2024 at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC). The event provided a platform for engagement between Government, Defence, Army, Industry and Academia on issues and capability for the Australian army and international partners.

The event provided the Australian Defence industry with an opportunity to display their advanced capabilities and technologies to key partners and decision-makers on a national and global stage. The state’s top research and education institutions, along with the Defence Innovation Partnership, were also present to showcase the state’s strengths in research and innovation and explore potential new collaboration opportunities.

Further, for the first time, the Chief of Army Symposium (CAS 2024) was held concurrently with Land Forces Defence Exposition and it was open to all attendees. CAS 2024 is the Chief of Army’s capstone event, to engage his people, partner forces and allies, Defence industry, and academia and research organizations.

This time the theme for the symposium was ‘The Human Face of Battle’. The Human Face of Battle has shaped the presentations and panel discussions conducted by Defence leaders and distinguished thinkers during the symposium.

Visit of Sri Lankan University Academics; Fellowships Program of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Australia



Fifteen Sri Lankan academics from the University of Colombo, University of Sri Jayewardenepura and the University of Jaffna visited Australia on 10th November 2024 to follow a three weeks programme on Gender equality in different perspectives, organized under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The Programme was coordinated by Professor Ramanie Samaratunge of the University of Monash in Melbourne.

The delegates had an opportunity to visit reputed Australian universities such as the University of Monash in Melbourne, the University of Canberra and the University of Western Sydney to interact with academics on the subject. During their visit to Canberra, the delegation met the officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade for an interactive session followed by a visit to the Australian Parliament on 19th November 2024.

This Fellowship Program facilitated to build understanding on Australian perspectives and challenges on gender equality in different sectors. Following the productive meetings at high official level, the delegates will be presenting projects and programme that are relevant and benefit Sri Lanka to build on gender issues that need to be addressed.

During their visit, the delegation called on the Sri Lanka High Commissioner, Chitranganee Wagiswara on 19th November 2024 and had an interaction on their views on the subject.

Sri Lanka-Papua New Guinea Friendship Foundation Donates Eye Corneas to Port Moresby General Hospital.

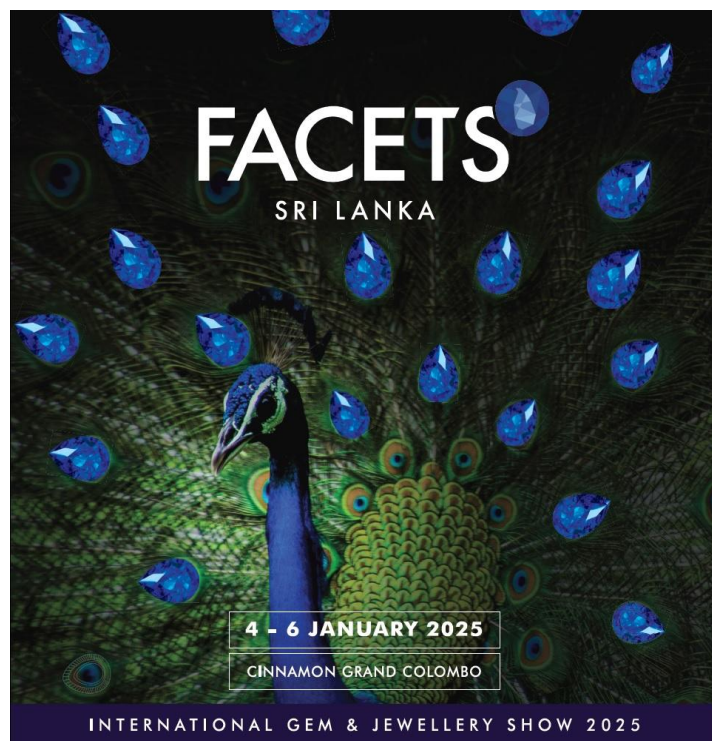


In a significant act of humanitarian aid, the Sri Lanka-Papua New Guinea Friendship Foundation, in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Eye Bank, has donated corneas to the Port Moresby General Hospital.

This initiative will restore sight to many blind individuals in Papua New Guinea, offering them the life-changing gift of vision. The first shipment of corneas recently arrived in Port Moresby and was formally handed over to the Chief Ophthalmologist, Dr. Simon Melengas, by Mr. Panditha Bandara, President of the Sri Lanka-Papua New Guinea Friendship Foundation and Honorary Consul for Sri Lanka in Papua New Guinea. Dr. Melengas expressed deep gratitude for the generous contribution, acknowledging the invaluable support from the Sri Lankan community in launching this vital initiative. Mr. Bandara assured that the donations would continue, praising the dedicated work of the Eye Clinic surgeons and the leadership of Port Moresby General Hospital's CEO, Dr. Paki Molumi.

Pictured: Dr. Simon Melengas receiving the box of donated corneas from Mr. Panditha Bandara. Eye surgeon Dr. Jambi Garap is also pictured.

FACETS Sri Lanka 2025 in Colombo from 4-6 January 2025



Changes in the High Commission Staff

The High Commissioner, Mrs. Chitanganee Wagiswara ended her tenure in Australia and returned to Sri Lanka on 01 December 2024.

Mrs. Chamari Rodrigo, Deputy High Commissioner of this Mission will act and cover the duties until the arrival of the new High Commissioner.

Mrs. Deenuka Fernandopulle, Third Secretary of this Mission left Canberra after completion of tenure on 01st December 2024.