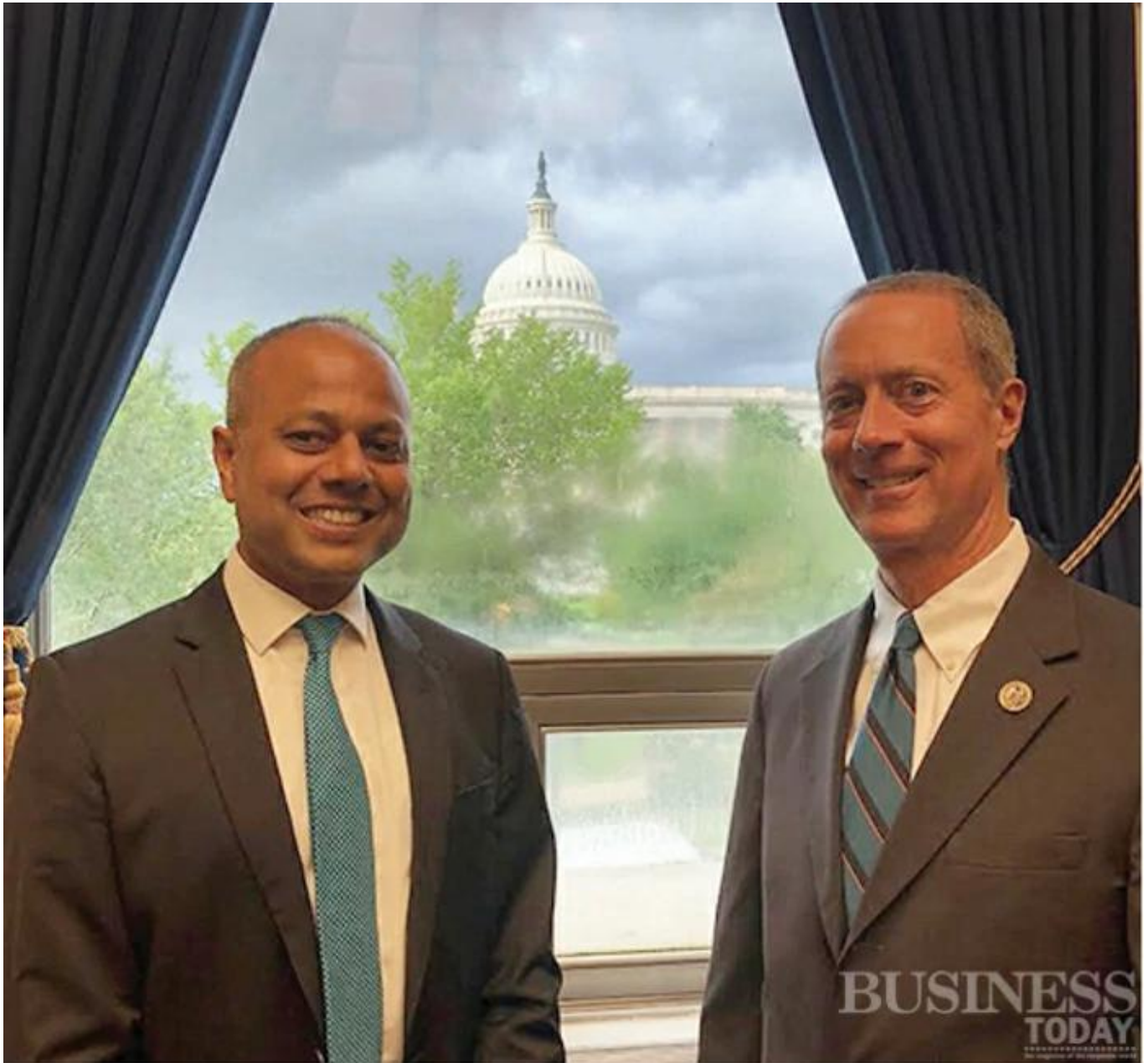


Minister Sagala Ratnayaka's Official Visit To The United States



Sagala Ratnayaka, Minister of Youth Affairs, Project Management and

Southern Development, who is also the Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister made an official visit to Washington D.C.

During the visit Minister Ratnayaka met with Mac Thornberry, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee and Ted Yoho, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific. The Minister also met with senior interlocutors of the National Security Council, the Department of State, the Department of Defence, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

Minister Sagala Ratnayaka went on to brief the delegates on the current developments in Sri Lanka and they discussed the Sri Lanka-US partnership and the opportunities for further expanding bilateral cooperation within the framework of President Trump's Indo-Pacific Strategy. In this context, he welcomed the announcement by the US of approximately 39 million dollars in Foreign Military Financing for Sri Lanka, pending congressional approval.

They Discussed The Sri Lanka-US Partnership And The Opportunities For Further Expanding Bilateral Cooperation Within The Framework Of President Trump's Indo-Pacific Strategy.

Minister Ratnayaka expressed Sri Lanka's deep appreciation to the US for the transfer of the high-endurance ex-US Coast Guard cutter to the Sri Lanka Navy in August. The cutter will be the largest ship in the Sri Lankan naval fleet and will strengthen bilateral defence cooperation. Furthermore, it will enhance the capacity and the operational capability of the Sri Lankan Navy to more effectively secure the country's maritime interests.

Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Embassy of Sri Lanka Priyanga Wickramasinghe and senior officials of the Embassy were associated with Minister Ratnayaka in the bilateral discussions.

Later, Minister Ratnayaka visited California where he attended the 2018 International Democrat Union (IDU) Meeting at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe who is the Chairman of the Asia Pacific Democrat Union is an IDU Vice Chairman (ex-officio) since 2005.

