

Presidents of Iran and Sri Lanka in Significant Meeting

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Iranian President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi, and President Ranil Wickremesinghe.

A meeting was held between Iranian President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi, who arrived in Sri Lanka to attend the inauguration of the Uma Oya Multipurpose Development Project, and President Ranil Wickremesinghe.

President Wickremesinghe warmly greeted the delegation, which included the Iranian President, upon their arrival at the Presidential Secretariat. A ceremonial Guard of Honor was accorded to the visitors accompanied by a 21-gun salute.

After the introduction of the delegations from both nations, President Wickremesinghe escorted the Iranian President and his team to the Presidential Secretariat. Following amicable discussions between the leaders, bilateral talks began. Diplomatic ties between Iran and Sri Lanka were established in 1962, predating formal recognition. Historical exchanges between the two nations date back to the Persian era, with trade primarily conducted through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran established its embassy in Colombo in 1975, while Sri Lanka reciprocated by opening its embassy in Tehran in January 1990.

The two nations have maintained a strong and productive relationship across various sectors and have been actively engaged in multilateral endeavors. During the meeting, the leaders emphasized the importance of enhancing bilateral relations between their respective countries, highlighting their mutual commitment to increasing collaboration and cooperation.

President Wickremesinghe took the opportunity to express his gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for the support provided during Sri Lanka's recent economic crisis and subsequent debt restructuring efforts. This assistance was greatly appreciated and has been instrumental in helping Sri Lanka overcome the challenges it faced.

Updating President Raisi on Sri Lanka's recent economic stability and recovery, President Wickremesinghe conveyed optimism regarding the nation's future progress and prosperity. During their discussions, the leaders delved into key areas of mutual interest, emphasizing the need to bolster economic and trade ties while fostering political and cultural cooperation.

Following these deliberations, five Memorandums of Understanding were signed between Sri Lanka and the Islamic Republic of Iran in the presence of both leaders.

Susil Premajayantha, Minister of Education signed on behalf of Sri Lanka for the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Library and Archives of Iran and the

National Library of Sri Lanka, with Minister of Cultural Affairs Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili representing Iran. A MoU was inked between the National Film Corporation of Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance of Iran, witnessed by Bandula Gunawardena, Minister of Transport, Highways, and Mass Media and Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili, Iranian Minister of Cultural Affairs. A Memorandum of Understanding was also sealed between Sri Lanka and Iran concerning cooperation in media and tourism. Bandula Gunawardena, Sri Lanka's Minister of Transport, Highways, and Mass Media, along with Ali Akbar Mehra Biyan, Iran's Minister of Energy, signed the agreement. Furthermore, an agreement encompassing cultural, scientific, and technical collaboration, as well as media, youth, and sports programs between Sri Lanka and the Islamic Republic of Iran, was signed. Ali Sabri PC, Foreign Minister represented Sri Lanka, while Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili, Minister of Cultural Affairs represented Iran. Another MoU was established between the Iran Cooperative Board and the Sri Lanka National Cooperative Board. G.V. Sarath Weerasiri, Chairman of the Sri Lanka National Cooperative Board, and Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili, Iran's Minister of Cultural Affairs, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective governments.



President Ranil Wickremesinghe.



Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi.



Susil Premajayantha, Minister of Education (right) signing the MoU with Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili, Iran Minister of Cultural Affairs (left).



Bandula Gunawardena, Minister of Transport, Highways, and Mass Media (right) signing

the MoU with Ali Akbar Mehra Biyan, Iran's Minister of Energy (left).



Ali Sabri PC, Foreign Minister (right) with Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili, Iran Minister of Cultural Affairs (left).



G.V. Sarath Weerasiri, Chairman of the Sri Lanka National Cooperative Board (right) with Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili, Iran Minister of Cultural Affairs (left).