

Prime Minister Modi's Special Interaction with 1996 Sri Lankan Cricket Team

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the members of the 1996 World Cup-winning Sri Lankan cricket team.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with the 1996 Sri Lankan Cricket Team in Colombo. During the candid interaction, the cricketers expressed happiness and gratitude to meet the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister also expressed his happiness to meet them and remarked that the Indian people still remember the team's impactful performance, particularly the memorable victory that left a lasting impression. He added that their achievement continues to resonate with the nation. PM Modi recalled attending a match in Ahmedabad in 2010, where he noted a Sri Lankan cricketer as an umpire. He highlighted the transformative impact of India's

1983 World Cup victory and the 1996 World Cup win by the Sri Lankan team, emphasizing how these milestones reshaped the cricketing world. The Prime Minister remarked that the evolution of T20 cricket can be traced back to the innovative playing style demonstrated by the then Sri Lankan Cricket team in the 1996 matches. He expressed interest in hearing from others about their current involvement in cricket and coaching roles.

India's decision to participate in Sri Lanka despite the 1996 bomb blasts was highlighted by the Prime Minister, who emphasized the appreciation shown by Sri Lankan players for India's solidarity. He recalled his visit to Sri Lanka after the 2019 church bomb blasts, making him the first global leader to do so, and noted that the Indian Cricket team toured soon after. The Prime Minister underscored India's commitment to standing by Sri Lanka through both joy and sorrow, reflecting the nation's enduring values.

Sanath Jayasuriya, who is currently the coach of Sri Lankan Men's cricket team, thanked the Prime Minister for India's unwavering support to Sri Lanka during their recent financial crisis. He further requested the Prime Minister if India could explore the feasibility to help establish a cricket ground to host international cricket matches in Jaffna, Sri Lanka which would help the aspiring cricketers and people of the north-eastern region of Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister expressed his appreciation for the remarks made by Jayasuriya and emphasized, "India is committed to the 'Neighbourhood First' policy". He highlighted India's swift response to crises in neighboring countries, citing the earthquake in Myanmar where India acted as the first responder. He remarked on India's sense of responsibility as a nation to prioritize the well-being of its

neighboring and friendly countries. PM Modi underlined India's consistent support for Sri Lanka during its economic crisis, stating that India views it as a responsibility to assist Sri Lanka in overcoming challenges. He mentioned the announcement of several new projects and appreciated Jayasuriya's concern for Jaffna, emphasizing the importance of hosting international cricket matches there. He assured that his team would take note of this suggestion and explore its feasibility.

Prime Minister Modi expressed his gratitude for reconnecting with everyone, reliving old memories, and seeing familiar faces. He reaffirmed India's enduring relationship with Sri Lanka and pledged full support for the Sri Lankan cricket community.



PM interacts with Sri Lankan cricketers at Colombo, in Sri Lanka on April 05, 2025.

The Sri Lankan Cricket team presenting a memento to PM Modi.