



President Maithripala Sirisena and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi hold bilateral discussions at the Hyderabad House.

President's landmark visit to India

President Maithripala Sirisena made his maiden foreign tour to India after being elected President. The four-day visit comprised bilateral talks with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on wide ranging issues. The visit marked a new beginning in bilateral relations which had been strained in the past. Discussions were centered on ways to enhance cooperation, peace and the reconciliation process and the issue of fishermen of both countries.

President Maithripala Sirisena indicated that he wants to have closer relations with India and chose it for his first foreign visit.

The Sri Lankan President and the Indian Prime Minister deliberated on all major issues such as devolution of power to the Tamil community and the fishermen issue.

India hopes that the new Sri Lankan government will develop ties on the "foundation of genuine and effective reconciliation" creating harmony among all sections of people. India has also been pressing for implementation of the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution.

President Maithripala Sirisena met his Indian counterpart Pranab Mukherjee who hosted a banquet at the Rashtrapathi Bawan. The President led a delegation that included Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera, Health Minister Rajitha Senaratne, Resettlement Minister D.M. Swaminathan, Power and Energy Minister Champika Ranawaka and Justice Minister Wijeyadasa Rajapakse.

Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera visited India last month on his first foreign trip soon after assuming duties during which he held talks with Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj.

At the meeting both sides agreed to re-engage on repatriation of refugees from India, besides holding talks on a raft of crucial issues, including political reconciliation process and the fishermen issue.



President Maithripala Sirisena and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets crowds prior to holding bilateral talks.



President Maithripala Sirisena and Jayanthi Pushpakumari Sirisena worship the Buddha Gaya at the Mahabodhi Temple in Bihar.



President Maithripala Sirisena and Jayanthi Pushpakumari Sirisena pay homage to the Buddha Gaya



Secretary General of the Indian Mahabodhi Society and Chief Prelate Ven. Pelwatte Seevali Thera and the members of the Board of Trustees welcome President Maithripala Sirisena and Mrs. Sirisena.



President Maithripala Sirisena and Jayanthi Pushpakumari Sirisena pay homage at the Mahatma Gandhi's mausoleum, Rajghat, New Delhi.



The Sri Lankan delegation led by President Maithripala Sirisena holds bilateral talks with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his delegation at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Indian President Pranab Mukherjee welcome President Maithripala Sirisena and Mrs. Sirisena at the Rashtrapathi Bawan in New Delhi.

PIX BY SUDATH SILVA