



Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena and Fisheries Minister Douglas Devananda met with the Indian High Commissioner Gopal Bagley on 7 December 2020 at the Foreign Ministry. The two Ministers discussed matters of mutual interest with the Indian High Commissioner, mainly focussing on the Palk Strait fisheries issue and possible post Covid-19 mutual cooperation.

It was agreed to find solutions to the existing fisheries matters through the established bilateral mechanisms, including the Ministerial-level India-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group on Fisheries. The fourth Meeting of the Bilateral Working Group on Fisheries that was scheduled for last January was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation. Both sides endorsed to convene the Working Group meeting virtually at the earliest, while assurances were given to maintain the standard procedures in dealing with mid-sea encounters.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the entire gamut of areas in bilateral cooperation, including the ongoing development assistance and Covid-19 pandemic joint action. The Indian side assured fullest cooperation to repatriate the Sri Lankans who are still stranded in South India due to travel restrictions. The two Ministers thanked India for the assistance given to construct the Jaffna Cultural Centre, which is expected to become functional soon through joint collaboration. Both sides agreed to continue the close dialogue.

Foreign Ministry  
Colombo

08 December 2020