

His Excellency Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe visited India between December 22-24 at the invitation of the Government of India. He was accompanied by His Excellency Tyronne Fernando, Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Milinda Moragoda, Minister of Economic Reform, Science and Technology and other high officials.

The visit of His Excellency Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has been most productive. Wide-ranging discussions were held in the most cordial atmosphere reflecting the close relations between the two countries.

His Excellency met Indian leaders across the political spectrum. Substantive discussions were held with Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister. India reiterated its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka.

Government of India welcomes the cessation of hostilities announced by the LTTE and the positive response of the Government of Sri Lanka and hopes this will begin a process to restore lasting peace. Government of India is fully supportive of the measures outlined by His Excellency Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe to take the peace process forward.

Given the close relations between the two countries and following a request from the Government of Sri Lanka, India will provide 25000 tons of wheat per month for the next twelve

months, to Sri Lanka at terms agreed to by both sides.

The two sides also agreed to cooperate in a number of other areas with immediate priority on agriculture, power and the IT industry.

Both sides also agreed to work on commissioning a feasibility study on a land bridge between the two countries, keeping in mind the spirit of the closest of historical, cultural and social ties that has bound the two nations over millennia.

New Delhi   December 24, 2001