

High Commission of India

Colombo

Press Release

AERO-INDIA 2021 (VIRTUAL) FOR SRI LANKAN ARMED FORCES: 03 - 05 FEB 2021

1. The Aero India (Virtual) 2021 in Hybrid format was an unprecedented success despite the Covid 19, with 121 MoUs, 19 Transfer of Technology, 04 handing over and 18 product launch. The world's first Mega Event on a *Hybrid* format, saw Rs 203 Crore worth of orders being bagged by 45 MSMEs making it a grand success said the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The Aero India (Virtual) was attended by 16,000 people physically and 4.5 Lakh Virtually. The platform hosted 540 companies, including 84 foreign companies from 55 nations.

2. India committed to invest 130 Billion Dollars towards enhancing security by military modernization in next 7-8 years and the Aero India was a platform 'Runway to a Billion opportunities' to realize this goal. The Hon'able President Ram Nath Kovind expressed his happiness over Hindustan Aeronautical Limited bagging the 83 Tejas Aircraft deal from Indian Air Force valued at Rs 48,000 Crore. Thus significantly strengthening India's Self-reliance in Defence Sector as well as establishing India as a manufacturer for the world. The President said that Aero India 2021 was a living proof of nation's ever growing strength in the defence and aerospace sectors at the global level.

3. The event undoubtedly propelled the Hon'able Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of 'Make in India' and 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' to a new pedestal. The air show saw from fighter aircraft Light Combat Aircraft (Tejas), Maritime Patrol Aircraft like DO-228, Advanced Light Helicopter (Dhruv), Light Combat Helicopter, Light Utility Helicopter and the Air Tattoo by 'Sarang' and 'Surya Kirans' mesmerizing the crowds at Bengaluru, India.

4. The High Commission of India in Sri Lanka organized the Aero India Virtual for the Sri Lanka Defence Forces and the local business community at Taj Samudra. The events spanning over three days had RAdm (Retd) Dr Sarath Weerasekara, Hon'able Minister for Public Security, General (Retd) Kamal Gunaratne Secretary Defence and Admiral (Retd) Prof

Jayantha Colombage, Foreign Secretary gracing various seminars organized by Indian Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard virtually as the Guest of Honour in Sri Lanka.

5. Very contemporary topics of common security concerns like Air Power for Strategic Gains in IOR, Building Collective Maritime Competence towards SAGAR and Collaborative Approach for Safe, Secure and Clean Seas in IOR were dwelled upon. The events were also graced by the presence of other defence dignitaries like Chief of Defence Staff/ Commander of Army, Commander of Air Force and the Director General Coast Guard. The guests of honour during their addresses highlighted the strong bonds of friendship between India and Sri Lanka, the continued India's assistance for fight against Covid 19, capability/ capacity building of Defence Forces and proactive response to various calamities in the IOR. The strategic location of Sri Lanka and the collective responsibility of the nations towards continued availability of sea lines of communication, SAR and countering transnational crimes. The close cooperation achieved during the successful conduct of Op Sagar Aaraksha to counter fire onboard MT New Diamond, the Joint Exercise Dosti and the vision of SAGAR was highly appreciated by the guest of honour.

6. The event was attended by about resident Defence Advisers and 120 personnel from Defence and local business community. In addition, four senior officers from Sri Lanka Defence forces including former Chief of Defence Staff Admiral (Retd) Ravendra Wijegunaratne attended the event at Bengaluru, India physically. The active participation of Sri Lanka in the event showcased the close defence cooperation and keen interest in Indian manufactured defence products.

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