

High Commission of India  
Colombo  
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**Press Release**

**Project Steering Committee Meeting on various housing projects**

A Project Steering Committee [PSC] meeting, co-chaired by Deputy High Commissioner Mr. Vinod K. Jacob and Mr. Keerthi Ranjith Abeysiriwardana, Secretary, State Ministry of Rural Housing and Construction and Building Materials Industries Promotion, on the Grama Shakti Housing Projects in Northern and Southern Provinces and Model Village Housing scheme spread across the 25 districts of Sri Lanka was held in Colombo on 1 February 2021. Under these schemes, the Governments of India and Sri Lanka are constructing 2400 houses all across the island. The project implementing partner for these schemes is the National Housing Development Authority of Sri Lanka. The relevant ministries/departments from the Government of Sri Lanka are Ministry of Urban Development and Housing and Development, State Ministry of Rural Housing and Construction and Building Materials Industries Promotion, Ministry of Finance and Department of Project Management & Monitoring.

2. It may be recalled that in order to address some of the challenges faced due to COVID-19 restrictions, the original MoU governing the four schemes was amended in December 2020. During the PSC meeting, the impact of restrictions placed by Covid 19 pandemic was discussed and a series the decisions taken to address the same. While the completion of project and handing over the houses in four districts have been accomplished, the handing over of additional slots of housing in Badulla, Matale and Vavuniya in the next phase is envisaged.

3. Deputy High Commissioner, while inaugurating the meeting recalled the commitment of the Government of India to development cooperation with Sri Lanka. In November 2020, both Governments renewed the MoU for High Impact Community Development Projects for the period 2020 to 2025.

4. This was the first PSC meeting on development cooperation held after the arrival of the COVISHIELD vaccine from India on Duruthu Poya Day on 28 January 2021. The meeting noted with satisfaction the close cooperation in COVID-19 vaccine supplies as well as the successful progress in the vaccination program in Sri Lanka. Deputy High Commissioner recalled that such cooperation

was in line with the instruction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of sharing vaccines with the whole of humanity, while giving priority to the neighborhood. He also took the opportunity to extend advance wishes to the people and Government of Sri Lanka on the occasion of their Independence Day on 04 February 2021.

5. Housing projects across the island are aligned with people-oriented, community-driven developmental assistance programmes by Government of India in Sri Lanka. India's overall commitment of development assistance in the island nation stands at a total of around US\$ 3.5 billion. Out of this, close to US\$ 560 million are being offered as grants. India's development assistance projects in Sri Lanka are spread across diverse sectors including Education, Research & Training; Health & Medical Care; Industrial Development; Livelihood & Shelter; Transport; Vocational Training and Art, Sports & Culture.

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***Colombo***  
***1 February 2021***