

High Commission of India
Colombo

Press Release

75th Independence Day of India celebrated at Param Dhamma Chaitya Pirivena, Ratmalana

75th Independence Day of India was celebrated on 15 August 2021 at Param Dhamma Chaitya Pirivena, Ratmalana with great fervor. Ven. Dr. MapalagamaWipulasaraMaha Thera and the Mahasangha led these celebrations. The flag of India was hoisted by Ven. Dr. WipulasaraMaha Thera on the occasion. A special 'Ashirvad Puja' to invoke the blessings of Lord Buddha for the well-being of people of India and Sri Lanka was also conducted.

2. In his address, Ven. Dr. MapalagamaWipulasaraMaha Thera underlined that Buddhism has been a strong bond that reinforces spiritual ties between India and Sri Lanka. He recalled the deep Buddhist linkages between the two countries which date back to the times of Lord Buddha. He noted that close ties continued throughout history, and in modern times, it has metamorphosed itself into a multi-dimensional relationship cutting across different spheres. He also expressed hope that the India -Sri Lanka ties will continue to flourish in the future.

3. The Indian monks studying at the Pirivena delivered speeches on India's freedom struggle and expressed their resolve to work for stronger connections between India and Sri Lanka. Director, Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC) offered *Mahadana* to the Venerable Mahasangha and lay devotees.

4. High Commissioner Gopal Baglay expressed his gratitude to Ven. Dr. Wimalasara Thero telephonically for marking the milestone event at the Pirivena. It may be recalled that Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a USD 15 million grant for the promotion of Buddhist ties between India and Sri Lanka at the Virtual Bilateral Summit with Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa in September 2020. Modalities of the grant are being finalized by the two Governments.

Colombo
18 August 2021