

High Commission of India
Colombo

Press Release

India sends Oxygen to vitalize Sri Lanka's fight against COVID-19

Aligned with the Government of India's ongoing commitment to support Sri Lanka in the fight against COVID-19, Indian Naval Ship Shakti set sail to Colombo with 100 tons (5 containers) of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) on board from Visakhapatnam on 19 August 2021. Named Operation Samudra Setu-II, deployment of the Indian Naval Vessel for the delivery of oxygen was in response to a personal request for assistance by H.E Gotabaya Rajapaksa for urgent supply of LMO. The Vessel is scheduled to arrive in Colombo on 22 August 2021.

2. Camaraderie and coordination between Navies and various other stakeholders in India and Sri Lanka were on display as Sri Lankan Naval Vessel Shakti with 40 tons of LMO on board also commenced its journey from Chennai to Colombo around the same time as INS Shakti. It was a rare instance wherein two Shakti vessels commenced their journey from two different ports in India to the same destination almost at the same time for a common purpose.

3. In addition, another 140 tons of LMO from Haldia and Chennai ports are also expected to reach Colombo during the coming week.

4. Samudra Setu-II is an initiative of the Indian Navy to undertake urgent shipments of LMO containers and associated medical equipment to various countries. Seven Indian Naval Ships were deployed for such missions earlier. It may also be recalled that stranded citizens from India and Sri Lanka were repatriated into their respective countries via INS Jalashwa under Operation Samudra Setu last year.

5. India's assistance to Sri Lanka during the pandemic has been varied and need-based in nature. Close to 26 tons of essential medical supplies were gifted in April-May 2020. Currency swap of USD 400 million was provided in July 2020. The first consignment of vaccines which was donated by India in January 2021 enabled Sri Lanka to roll out their vaccination programme ahead of schedule.

Colombo
20 August 2021