

**High Commission of India
Colombo**

PRESS RELEASE

**High Commissioner of India visits Gangaramaya Temple
and St Anthony's Church**

The new High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka H.E. Gopal Baglay visited the prominent Gangaramaya Temple in Colombo today morning to pray to Lord Buddha for health, peace and prosperity of the people of Sri Lanka and India and their friendship and cooperation. This was his first movement from his official residence after observing stipulated health protocols since his arrival on 08 May 2020 on a special flight carrying a gift consignment of medicines and medical items from India to Sri Lanka.

2. At the Temple, the High Commissioner was welcomed by Venerable Dr Kirinde Assaji Thero, who warmly recalled Prime Minister Modi's visit to the temple during the International Vesak Day Celebrations in 2017, and showed the High Commissioner photographs of the significant visit displayed at various prominent places in the Temple. Venerable Dr Kirinde Assaji Thero fondly recalled the time he spent studying in India, the land of Lord Buddha's enlightenment, and pointed out the importance of such ties the two countries share. He blessed High Commissioner Baglay and tied a pirith noola on his hand. The High Commissioner stressed the commitment of India's leadership to strengthen multifaceted ties, specially the historical and deep civilisational, religious and cultural bonds, with Sri Lanka.

3. Thereafter, the High Commissioner visited St. Anthony's Church to pay homage to the victims of last year's Easter Sunday terrorist attack. Recalling Prime Minister Modi's gesture of solidarity in visiting Sri Lanka and the Church at the first possibility after the attacks, the High Commissioner prayed for peace, safety and security of the two countries. Administrator of the Church Rev. Father Jude Raj, blessed the people of the two countries with health and happiness. He also blessed the High Commissioner in his task to foster ever closer friendship between the two neighbouring countries.

4. The High Commissioner reiterated India's abiding commitment to develop even stronger all-round cooperation with Sri Lanka, including in the sphere of people-to-people relations.

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2 Jyaishtha Saka 1942
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