**Consulate General of India**

**Hambantota**

**Press Release**

68th Republic Day of India celebrations in Southern Province Sri Lanka

  The Consulate General of India, Hambantota in Sri Lanka celebrated the 68th Republic Day of India on Thursday, January 26, 2017 at the premises of the Consulate General of India, Hambantota. Vice Consul (Admn.) Mr. A.S. Shenoy, unfurled the Indian flag at 9.30 a.m. He read out the Address to the Nation by the Hon´ble President of India H.E. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee on the eve of the Republic Day 2017.

2.         About 60 Guests, including, Additional District Secretary, Senior Government officials, local police officials, representatives of Hambantota Chamber of Commerce, Banks, Hospitals etc. participated  in the flag hoisting ceremony. Snacks were served after the event.

3.       In the evening, to commemorate India’s 68th Republic Day, a reception hosted by Consulate General of India at Jetwing Light House Hotel in Galle,  which was attended by more than 80 guests including Southern Provincial Council Members, , Secretary Ministry of Fisheries (SP), Engineering Faculty Dean from Ruhuna University, Municipal Commissioner Matara, Galle District Chamber of Commerce Chairman & CEO, employees of the Agriculture Ministry (SP), Shiplakalashram Principal and other prominent local persons. Hon’ble Agriculture Minister of Southern Province Mr. U G D Ariyathilaka was the Chief Guest. The event was well received by the local people.

4. Speaking about the state of India-Sri Lanka relations, Vice Consul (Admn.) highlighted that India shares a special relationship with Sri Lanka which is not just geographical, but dictated by ties of shared religions, cultural practices, family linkages, linguistic commonalities, economic inter-linkages, and political understanding between two democracies.

5.       Vice Consul (Admn.) stated that Government of India has been undertaking various developmental activities at Southern Province and Monaragala District such as construction of Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Auditorium at Ruhuna University, donation of Indian musical instruments, providing ITEC Scholarships, conducting of Hindi and Kathak dance classes, etc.

 Few Photographs are attached herewith for suitable publication in newspapers.

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**Hambantota**

**27th January 2017**