

Sri Lanka – India Environment Ministers Meet in New Delhi



Environment Minister Naseer Ahamed met with his Indian counterpart Hon. Bhopender Yadav, Union Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change on the side-lines of the World Sustainable Development Summit held in New Delhi, India last week.

Welcoming Minister Ahamed, the Indian Minister spoke of the cordial bilateral relationship the two countries are enjoying over centuries and reassured the continued support and assistance in future as well. Minister Naseer Ahamed conveyed his grateful appreciation for the recent economic and humanitarian support extended by India to Sri Lanka both during the period of the pandemic and in the economic crisis faced by Sri Lanka.

Minister Ahamed also congratulated his counterpart for India's G20 Presidency which he referred as an important achievement not only to India but to its close neighbours like Sri Lanka. In particular reference to India's G20 Green Development Pact Minister Ahamed said that India's G20 Presidency is an opportunity to articulate an agenda for the Global South to show the way ahead. Minister Ahamed hailed India's External Affairs Minister's recent remarks that India will closely consult developing states within the framework of G20 Green Development Pact to ensure food and energy security and equitable development. He assured Minister Yadav Sri Lanka's fullest support towards implementation of G20 Green Development Pact.

Referring to President Ranil Wickremasinghe's vision on Sri Lanka's Green Development initiatives, Minister Ahamed said that Sri Lanka has earmarked an ambitious green transition programme covering green economy, blue economy and digital economy. However, he said Sri Lanka is facing challenges in the implementation of its National Environment Action Plan (NEAP) 2022-2030 and achievement of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) due to limitations in investments and expertise. Minister Ahamed requested possible financial and technical support towards helping Sri Lanka in the implementation of NEAP and achievement of NDC targets.

The Indian delegation responded that it will be possible for India to consider helping Sri Lanka if the two countries can enter into an MOU on Environmental and Climate Cooperation. Minister Ahamed responded positively and the two delegations agreed to work towards early signing of the MOU.

The Deputy High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in India Mr. Niluka Kadurugamuwa also was present at the meeting along with other members of Sri Lanka delegation.