

## **President Maithripala Sirisena to visit Japan and India**

At the invitation of the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, President Maithripala Sirisena will undertake a State visit to Japan from 12 to 17 March 2018.

President Sirisena is scheduled to have an Imperial Audience with His Majesty, Emperor Akihito on 13 March, and on 14 March, he will meet Prime Minister Abe for summit talks. Following talks, the Japanese Premier will host the Sri Lankan President to a State dinner. The two leaders will discuss matters of mutual interest to deepen cooperation between Sri Lanka and Japan.

A Yen Loan Agreement between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is to be signed during the visit for implementing the Health and Medical Service Improvement Project.

President Sirisena will attend a business meeting organized by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), which will be co-hosted by the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry. During the State visit, the President will also meet with the Sri Lankan community in Japan.

Prior to his visit to Japan, at the joint invitation of Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and French President Emanuel Macron, President Sirisena will undertake an official visit to India from 10-11 March 2018 to participate at the First Conference of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Founding Members, which will be convened on 11 March, in New Delhi.

Over thirty two Heads of Government and high-level delegates are scheduled to attend the ISA Conference. Sri Lanka became a founding member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) on 12 February 2018.

The major objective of the International Solar Alliance, is to enable better harnessing of solar energy as an alternative energy source, and to address the specific solar technology deployment needs, of solar resource rich countries, located between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. The ISA, by this initiative, further aims to address the gaps in the solar energy manufacturing eco-system and to ensure universal energy access, energy equity, and affordability that are common issues facing most of the solar resource rich countries.

The Government of Sri Lanka joined the ISA in keeping with its policy declaration to prepare the groundwork for the country to fulfill the basic energy requirements of the people through renewable energy sources.

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