

NATIONAL APEX CHAMBER

INDIA - SRILANKA BILATERAL RELATIONS

REINFORCING TRADE AND INVESTMENT PROSPECTS



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India – Sri Lanka Bilateral Relations: Reinforcing Trade and Investment Prospects

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Foreword



Message by Mr. Anil Khaitan President, PHD Chamber

India and Sri Lanka are both proud, independent nations and the closest neighbours in every sense. The two nations not only have inter-connected histories but are also alike in culture, food, customs, epics, religion and traditions. The two nations are known to have deep and strong bond of friendship.

India has keen interest to boost trade and investment with Sri Lanka and to make it more balanced. On the other hand Sri Lanka, as a matter of fact has the potential to be India's strongest economic partner.

We, at the PHD Chamber, aims to strengthen the vision of an ideal bilateral cooperation, where there are new opportunities as well where trade, investments, technology, ideas and people flow easily across borders.

Message by Mr. K V Rajan Convenor, PHD Ambassadors Economic Forum



In recent years Indo-Sri Lanka relations have become increasingly Multi -faceted, including in areas like trade, investment, and sub-regional cooperation.

A number of exciting new possibilities are emerging, for example in the context of India's pro-active Act East Policy and the reinvigoration of the Commonwealth for accelerating trade, technology flows, investment and development across the geographical spread.

The initiative of the Ambassadors' Economic Forum in focusing on opportunities for expanding and diversifying India-Sri Lanka business relations will hopefully lead to a proliferation of contacts, studies, discussions and seminars on achieving the true potential of the bilateral relationship.

Message by Mr. Saurabh Sanyal Secretary General, PHD Chamber



India and Sri Lanka share a similar and opulent history bound by tremendous business and investment opportunities in the coming years. Also, they share

favorable demographic dividend, complimenting the growth dynamics.

India's trade complementarities have significantly increased with Sri Lanka. The export pattern has become more aligned with the import pattern of Sri Lanka, which indicates potential rise in exports towards the nation. Further. the untapped opportunities that have been created between India and Sri Lanka are profound and inordinate.

PHD Chamber is working diligently to strengthen the existing ties between India and Sri Lanka through continuous dialogue and discussions both at micro and macro level.



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Executive Summary

India and Sri Lanka have embarked upon establishing new areas of trade and development. The partnership has remained strong, extending and touching greater heights in terms of growing trade and investment to technology transfers, knowledge sharing and skills development.

India is Sri Lanka's most balanced trade partner. It is the only country among the top ten Sri Lankan trade partners where both exports and imports are substantial. Sri Lanka is one of India's largest trading partners in South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

The trade between two nations increased from USD 0.7 billion in 2001 to USD 5 billion in 2017. India's exports to Sri Lanka grew from USD 0.6 billion in 2001 to USD 4.5 billion in 2017 whereas India's imports from Sri Lanka grew from 0.06 billion to 0.7 billion during the same period.

Since the implementation of SAARC Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) in 2007, the average tariff rates between India and Sri Lanka have witnessed a consistent drop. The tariff rates have been moderated in the past few years. However, the trade cost between India and Sri Lanka is at rise due to stringent non-tariff barriers at play, which has hindered the true potential of trade between the two nations.

On the FDI front, Sri Lanka is the 52^{nd} biggest investor in India. Sri Lanka invested USD 74 million during April 2000 – December 2017, at a share of 0.02%. On the other hand, India is the 2^{nd} biggest investor in Sri Lanka.

Prime sectors in which India has invested in Sri Lanka are hotels, steel, information technology, and FMCG among others. While the flow of investments from Sri Lanka to India are in the areas of telecommunications, banking and finance, protective and decorative coatings, telecom, glass containers for packaging, cement, IT, tyre manufacturing.

In the global world marketplace, India and Sri Lanka enjoy comparative advantages for labor and resource intensive sector. Sri Lanka import baskets



consist of many commodities for which country has to depend on India to import the commodities.

As far as trade cost is concerned, both nations are engulfed by severe and debilitating connectivity issues. The urgent need of the hour is to address the connectivity issues via strengthening ports.

With the imposition of Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA), Sri Lanka could become a significant part of the Indian supply chain, using India's "Make in India" movement to boost India's manufacturing sector. This will also be beneficial for Indian producers as it will enable Indian manufacturers to set up factories in Sri Lanka to export their products to countries with which Sri Lanka has or is planning to have Free Trade Agreements. The ETCA would pave the way for Indian professionals and semi-skilled and unskilled persons to enter into the Sri Lanka's labour market. To gain the full potential of India – Sri Lanka ETCA, non-reciprocity, special and differential treatment should be focused on to ensure timely and fruitful implementation of the agreement.

Going forward, India and Sri Lanka can take advantage of the steady economic conditions prevailing globally and enhance bilateral cooperation in some key areas like agriculture, education, health, science and technology, tourism, telecom, automobiles, apparels, banking and financial services and space. On the back of intensified trade complementarities and intra-industry trade, we anticipate the trade between India and Sri Lanka to double to USD 10 billion by 2022.



India – Sri Lanka Bilateral Relations: Reinforcing Trade and Investment Prospects

1. Introduction

The relationship between India and Sri Lanka is centuries old¹. Both countries have a legacy of intellectual, cultural, religious and linguistic interaction. In recent years, the relationship has been marked by close contacts at all levels. Trade and investment have grown and there is cooperation in the fields of development, education, culture and defence.

The significant progress in implementation of developmental assistance projects for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and disadvantaged sections of the population in Sri Lanka has helped further cement the bonds of friendship between the two countries.

India and Sri Lanka have embarked upon establishing new areas of trade and development. The partnership has remained vivacious, extending and touching greater heights in terms of growing trade and investment to technology transfers, knowledge sharing and skills development. Both countries enjoy a vibrant and growing economic and commercial partnership. The India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA) has led to significant increase in overall bilateral trade between the two countries.

2. Trade Dynamics

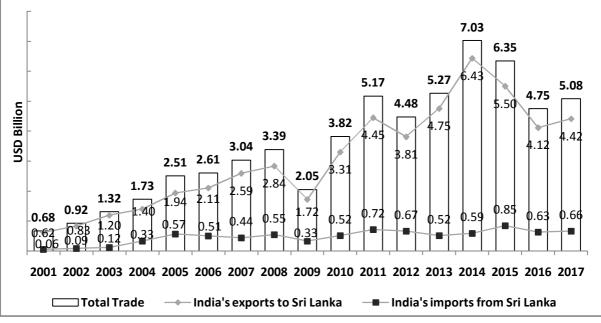
India is Sri Lanka's most balanced trade partner. It is the only country among the top ten Sri Lankan trade partners where both exports and imports are substantial. Sri Lanka is one of India's largest trading partners in South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC). India in turn is Sri Lanka's largest trade partner globally. Trade between the two countries grew particularly rapidly after the entry into force of the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement in March 2000.

The trade between two nations increased from USD 0.7 billion in 2001 to USD 5 billion in 2017. India's exports to Sri Lanka grew from USD 0.6 billion in 2001

¹ India – Sri Lanka Relations, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India



to USD 4.5 billion in 2017 whereas India's imports from Sri Lanka grew from 0.06 billion to 0.7 billion during the same period.



India – Sri Lanka Trade at a Glance

Notably, the trade between the two nations has witnessed a consistent decline, which needs to be addressed at the earliest. Since 2014, the trade volume has decreased from USD 7 billion in 2014 to USD 5 billion in 2017.

India's top ten exports to Sri Lanka comprise of 66% of the total exports to Sri Lanka. Major exportable products include (HS 87) Vehicles other than railway (15.24%); followed by (HS 88) Aircraft, spacecrafts (10.09%); (HS 27) Mineral fuels (9.07 %); (HS 89) Ships, boats, etc (6.3%); (HS 52) Cotton (5.91%) among others.

HS	Description	India's	Share in total
Code		exports to	exports to Sri
		Sri Lanka	Lanka
		USD million	(%)
'87	Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling	627.78	15.24%
	stock, and parts and accessories thereof		
'88	Aircraft, spacecraft, and parts thereof	415.54	10.09%
'27	Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their	373.47	9.07%
	distillation; bituminous substances; mineral		
'89	Ships, boats and floating structures	256.58	6.23%
'52	Cotton	243.40	5.91%

India's top ten exports to Sri Lanka in 2016

Source: PHD Research Bureau; Trademap Database



'30	Pharmaceutical products	198.75	4.83%
'84	Machinery, mechanical appliances, nuclear reactors, boilers; parts thereof	175.52	4.26%
'25	Salt; sulphur; earths and stone; plastering materials, lime and cement	172.91	4.20%
'85	Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; sound recorders and reproducers, television	123.56	3.00%
'60	Knitted or crocheted fabrics	113.73	2.76%
	Total exports to Sri Lanka	4118.25	100.00%

Source: PHD Research Bureau; Trademap Database

Astoundingly, India has a significant presence in Sri Lanka's imports from world. Around 20% of the Sri Lanka's imports arise from India. For products like Aircrafts, spacecrafts, boats, pharmaceutical products, organic chemicals, vehicles, mineral fuels, among others.

India's imports of top ten products from Sri Lanka comprise of 65% of the total imports from Sri Lanka during 2016. Majority of the imports from Sri Lanka are of Coffee and tea (19%), residue and waste from food industries (10%); Edible fruit and nuts (8%); among others. Sri Lanka has a significant footprint in India for some products as 15% and 12% of India's imports of Coffee, tea, and spices (HS 09) and residues and waste from food industries (HS 23) comes from Sri Lanka. Other major importable products from Sri Lanka are (HS-60) Knitted or crocheted fabrics (5.7%) and (HS-62) Articles of apparel and clothing accessories, not knitted or crocheted (5.3%); among others.

HS Code	Description	India's imports from Sri Lanka	Share in total imports from Sri Lanka	Share in Imports from World
		USD million	(%)	(%)
'09	Coffee, tea, maté and spices	121.1	18.25%	14.95%
'23	Residues and waste from the food industries; prepared animal fodder	64.0	9.64%	12.68%
'08	Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruit or melons	49.3	7.42%	1.44%
'47	Pulp of wood or of other fibrous cellulosic material; recovered (waste and scrap) paper or	37.6	5.66%	1.93%

India's top ten imports from Sri La	anka in 2017
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'60	Knitted or crocheted fabrics	31.2	4.70%	5.68%
'85	Electrical machinery and equipment and	28.9	4.35%	0.06%
	parts thereof; sound recorders and			
	reproducers, television			
'74	Copper and articles thereof	28.5	4.30%	0.67%
'40	Rubber and articles thereof	27.7	4.17%	0.85%
'94	Furniture; bedding, mattresses, mattress supports, cushions and similar stuffed	21.6	3.26%	1.24%
	furnishings;			
'62	Articles of apparel and clothing accessories,	19.6	2.96%	5.26%
	not knitted or crocheted			
	Total imports from Sri Lanka	663.8	100.00%	0.15%

Source: PHD Research Bureau; Trademap Database

Ad valorem equivalent of Trade Cost					
Country	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Afghanistan	151.02	165.46	161.10	181.17	169.19
Bhutan	97.52	95.61	94.68	99.37	-
Bangladesh	131.32	128.47	114.33	-	-
Nepal	99.61	100.19	98.44	97.29	93.48
Maldives	267.87	280.48	286.80	252.16	-
Pakistan	152.62	148.20	159.31	155.84	146.64
Sri Lanka	109.90	104.76	101.88	100.27	104.48

India's trade cost with Sri Lanka

Source: PHD Research Bureau; Compiled from World Bank's Trade Cost Database

On the trade cost front, India – Sri Lanka trade cost is at rise which has hindered the true potential of trade between the two nations. The trade cost between the two nations has increase from 100% in 2014 to 105% in 2015. Compared to other SAARC regions, India's trade cost with Sri Lanka is rising.

3. Tariff Structure

With the implementation of SAARC Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) in 2007, the average tariff rates between India and Sri Lanka have witnessed a consistent drop. The tariff rates have been moderated in the past few years.

	Tariff Structure	World	Sri Lanka
<u>s</u>	Simple Average Tariff (%)	9.43	0.15
w rrials	Minimum Rate (%)	0	0
Ra	Maximum Rate (%)	100	3.75
5	Number of Tariff Lines (No.)	14852	205

Tariffs	imposed	by India	(2016)
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liat s	Simple Average Tariff (%)	7.65	1.27
Intermediat e goods	Minimum Rate (%)	0	0
ern go	Maximum Rate (%)	150	8
lnte e	Number of Tariff Lines (No.)	90734	1109
er	Simple Average Tariff (%)	10.87	1.66
	Minimum Rate (%)	0	0
Consum goods	Maximum Rate (%)	150	150
S	Number of Tariff Lines (No.)	83420	1284
_	Simple Average Tariff (%)	6.42	0.02
ita ods	Minimum Rate (%)	0	0
Capital goods	Maximum Rate (%)	100	5
•	Number of Tariff Lines (No.)	61370	604

Source: PHD Research Bureau; Compiled from WITS Database

The tariffs imposed by India on Sri Lankan products are comparatively very lower than average tariff imposed on world. Highest average tariff imposed by India on Sri Lanka is on intermediate goods, viz. 1.27%, wherein 1109 tariff lines are imported. On the other hand, lowest tariff imposed by India on Sri Lanka is on Capital goods, viz. 0.02%, wherein 604 tariff lines are imported by India.

	Tariff Structure	World	India
s	Simple Average Tariff (%)	11.76	7.31
Raw materials	Minimum Rate (%)	0	0
Ra	Maximum Rate (%)	75	75
E	Number of Tariff Lines (No.)	2496	208
iat	Simple Average Tariff (%)	4.81	1.9
ermedi	Minimum Rate (%)	0	0
go	Maximum Rate (%)	25	25
Intermediat e goods	Number of Tariff Lines (No.)	18749	1753
er	Simple Average Tariff (%)	13.13	5.58
Consumer goods	Minimum Rate (%)	0	0
goc	Maximum Rate (%)	125	125
S	Number of Tariff Lines (No.)	31158	1718
	Simple Average Tariff (%)	3.92	1.02
ods	Minimum Rate (%)	0	0
Capital goods	Maximum Rate (%)	25	25
	Number of Tariff Lines (No.)	19455	1004

Tariffs imposed by Sri Lanka (2016)

Source: PHD Research Bureau; Compiled from WITS Database

The tariffs imposed by Sri Lanka on Indian products are comparatively higher than the tariff rates imposed by India on Sri Lanka. Highest tariff imposed by Sri Lanka on India is on raw materials, viz. 7.31% compared to 11.76% to average



tariff imposed on world. On the other hand, lowest average tariffs are imposed on capital goods, viz. 1.02% on Indian products compared to 3.9% on World.

4. Investment Scenario

Sri Lanka is one of the major recipients of development credit given by the Government of India, with total commitment of around USD 2.63 billion, including USD 458 million as grants. Under a line of credit of USD 167.4 million, the tsunami-damaged Colombo-Matara rail link has been repaired and upgraded. Another line of credit of USD 800 million for track laying and supply of rolling stock to support construction railway lines in Northern Sri Lanka is already operational.

The Emergency Ambulance Service was launched in Sri Lanka on 28th July 2016 under Indian Grant Assistance of USD 7.55 million. The project involves deployment of 88 ambulances Western and Southern provinces, setting up of an Emergency Response Center and first year of operations.

On the FDI front, Sri Lanka is the 52nd biggest investor in India. Sri Lanka invested USD 74 million during April 2000 – December 2017, at a share of 0.02%. On the other hand, India is the 2nd biggest investor in Sri Lanka. Prime sectors in which India has invested are hotels, steel, information technology, and FMCG among others. While the flow of investments from Sri Lanka to India are in the areas of telecommunications, banking and finance, protective and decorative coatings, telecom, glass containers for packaging, cement, IT, tyre manufacturing.

The majority of foreign investments are in electricity, textiles and telecommunications. Growing presence of India in telecommunications in Sri Lanka is taking shape and currently benefiting the Sri Lankan economy.

Sri Lanka has been a priority destination for direct investments from India. India is among the four largest overall investors in Sri Lanka. The main sectors in which investments flow from India to Sri Lanka are petroleum retail, hospitals, telecom, vanaspati, copper and other metal industries, real estate, telecommunication, hospitality and tourism, banking and financial services, IT and food processing among others.



Besides the Indo – Sri Lanka FTA (2000), India and Sri Lanka also share the membership in other regional and multilateral trading arrangements namely; Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) in the SAARC context, Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) and the World Trade Origination (WTO) which have been successful in strengthening and trade and economic ties between the two countries.

5. Conclusions

The trade dynamics between India and Sri Lanka is of immense potential. The rapport between the two nations emanates immense promise for the future. India's trade complementarities have significantly increased with Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka has been a priority destination for direct investments from India. India is among the four largest overall investors in Sri Lanka. The main sectors in which investments flow from India to Sri Lanka are petroleum retail, hospitals, telecom, vanaspati, copper and other metal industries, real estate, telecommunication, hospitality and tourism, banking and financial services, IT and food processing among others. India has continued to be Sri Lanka's top source of foreign tourists in 2017, with 384,628 arrivals in Sri Lanka, growing at 7.8% compared to previous year.

As tariff is no more a strong instrument to apply, India needs to work on developing WTO compatible rules of origin, Stringent Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures to minimize rerouting of dumping of products in India. Promoting trade and investment facilitation and industry exchanges and cooperation should be looked upon to further intensify the trade relations between two nations.

In the global world marketplace, India and Sri Lanka enjoy comparative advantages for labor and resource intensive sector. Sri Lanka import baskets consist of many commodities for which country has to depend on India to import the commodities. Commodities such as feeding stuff for animals (not including unmilled cereals), furniture, and parts thereof; bedding, mattresses, mattress supports, cushions and similar stuffed furnishings matches the trade potential between India and Sri Lanka.



Around 83% of Sri Lanka's exports are under the FTA, compared to only 13% of imports (major imports from India such as Oil, Vehicles, Transport Equipment, Pharmaceuticals, Agricultures, etc., are in the Sri Lanka's 'negative list'). Thus deficit in terms of the FTA has fallen in recent years. FTA has helped in narrowing the trade gap between the two countries in favour of Sri Lanka and has contributed towards more equitable and balanced growth of bilateral trade.

On the investments front, the business environment in India had improved at a fast pace and India is among the top ten improvers globally. India's economic prospects are promising on the back of high savings and investment rates, a favourable demographic dividend and expanded integration into the global economy.

Going ahead, there is a need to build economic cooperation between India and Sri Lanka, which would benefit in pushing bilateral relations in positive direction.

6. Suggestions

The urgent need of the hour is to address the connectivity issues via strengthening ports. It was also revealed that India holds huge potential in Sri Lanka market for its exports however the reverse is quite bleak, i.e. Sri Lanka's export doesn't hold much ground in Indian market due to significant mismatch in the demand and supply from India and witnessed a decline in trend between 2010 and 2015. Such an event can be addressed by constant involvement in the trade of goods manufactured from similar industries so as to keep the nations engaged in higher intra-industry trade.

As far as trade cost is concerned, both nations are engulfed by severe and debilitating connectivity issues. The exorbitant trade costs reveal a true picture of trade between India and Sri Lanka. Despite holding a significant factor in trade - Contiguity, trade cost has been kept high due to re-routing of products. This process of re-routing led to a significant surge in the unit price of the various products.

India has to comprehend the need of the hour and initiate on direct investments in Sri Lanka similar to the development of Chabahar port in Iran to



stay connected with Afghanistan indirectly. Similar kind of investments in form of development of ports, roads, railways, warehouses, common logistic hubs are essential in Sri Lanka.

With the imposition of Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA), Sri Lanka could become a significant part of the Indian supply chain, using India's "Make in India" movement to boost India's manufacturing sector. This will also be beneficial for Indian producers as it will enable Indian manufacturers to set up factories in Sri Lanka to export their products to countries with which Sri Lanka has or is planning to have Free Trade Agreements. The ETCA would pave the way for Indian professionals and semi-skilled and unskilled persons to enter into the Sri Lanka's labour market. To gain the full potential of India – Sri Lanka ETCA, non-reciprocity, special and differential treatment should be focused on to ensure timely and fruitful implementation of the agreement.

Going forward, India and Sri Lanka can take advantage of the steady economic conditions prevailing globally and enhance bilateral cooperation in some key areas like agriculture, education, health, science and technology, tourism, telecom, automobiles, apparels, banking and financial services and space. On the back of intensified trade complementarities and intra-industry trade, we anticipate the trade between India and Sri Lanka to double to USD 10 billion by 2022.



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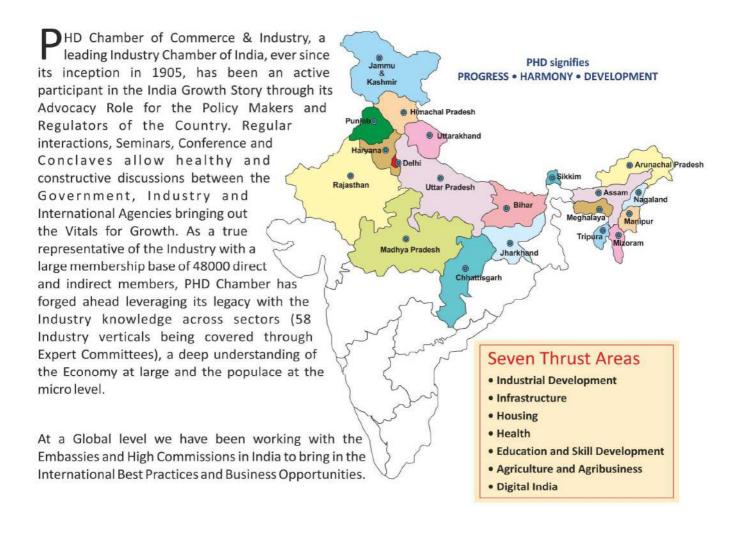
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