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பிரதம அமைச்சரின் அலுவலகம்  
Prime Minister's Office

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ஊடக வெளியீடு  
Press Release

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**Japan Sri Lanka bonds are centuries old, deep-rooted and flourishing over the years – Prime Minister**

Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena said Japan Sri Lanka bonds are centuries old, deep-rooted and flourishing over the years. Addressing a function held to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries at the Residence of Japanese Ambassador in Colombo on Dec 16, he said, “Although I acknowledge the importance of this milestone, when it comes to deep friendship and bond between our two countries as well as the people of Japan and Sri Lanka, I strongly feel that the anniversary is merely a number, whereas Japan Sri Lanka bonds are centuries old, deep-rooted and flourishing over the years the Japan Sri Lanka.

He pointed out that strength became evident to the world, even before we established diplomatic relations when addressing the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951, at a time when the West wanted to punish Japan, then Finance Minister J R Jayewardene, quoting from the teachings of the Buddha, said hatred will beget only hatred and called for compassion. Sri Lanka voluntarily waived the right to receive war reparations from Japan and won the hearts and minds of the people of Japan for generations to come.

Japan provides generous assistance to Sri Lanka through JICA as well as through international agencies, Japan Special Fund, Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction, Japan Social Development Fund, and Human Security Trust Fund.

Japan's assistance for socio-economic development of Sri Lanka grants to build 1001-bed Jayawardanepura Hospital, Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation, Sri Lanka Telecom, National Youth Services Centre, several hospitals, schools, water projects, irrigation and agriculture have immensely benefitted Sri Lanka, he said.

The Prime Minister said Japan has implemented several development projects in Sri Lanka during the last 7 decades. “Although there were some delays in approving few joint projects, the two countries, proving once again the strength of the friendship and trust between us, did not allow them to be hurdles to the fast growing friendship and cooperation,” he said.

Premier Gunawardena expressed confidence the deep friendship and bilateral cooperation between Japan and Sri Lanka would continue to flourish to a remarkable level.

Japanese Ambassador *Mizukoshi Hideaki* assured that Japan would continue to support Sri Lanka's efforts for economic recovery and to attain speedy development.

Speaker of parliament Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena, Ministers Ali Sabry and Roshan Ranasinghe also attended the function.

**Lalith Rohana Liyanage**

**Media Secretary to the Prime Minister**