Minister Bogollagama meets counterparts on the sidelines of BIMSTEC Ministerial meeting in Myanmar

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Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama who is currently in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar to participate in the 12th Session of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Ministerial Meeting had bilateral consultations with the Foreign Ministers of Myanmar, Nepal and Thailand.
During his meeting with Mr. Nyan Win, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, Minister Bogollagama reviewed the status of bilateral relations with Myanmar. Minister Win recalled with gratitude the recent visit to Sri Lanka by the Chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council of Myanmar and stated that the visit was a landmark in bilateral relations between the two countries. Foreign Minister Bogollagama briefed his counterpart on the current political developments in Sri Lanka and the preparations for the forthcoming Presidential Elections. Foreign Minister Bogollagama also stressed that the two countries should work towards promoting bilateral trade between Sri Lanka and Myanmar and in this regard the Ministers agreed to follow up on the decisions taken at the recently concluded Sri Lanka-Myanmar Joint Commission. During his meeting with Mrs. Sujatha Koirala, Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, Foreign Minister Bogollagama reviewed the new developments in bilateral relations between the two countries. Mrs. Koirala stated that the recent visit by His Excellency the President to Nepal has added new impetus to the existing bilateral relations. She recalled with gratitude the guidance given by the Sri Lankan President on the governance and inclusive democratic process, which are at present pursued by the Nepalese Government. Both Ministers stressed the importance of linking Colombo and Kathmandu through direct air links, which would facilitate the pilgrims’ traffic to Lumbini, increase trade opportunities and people-to-people contacts. Mrs. Koilrala appreciated the interest expressed by President Rajapaksa on the developments in Lumbini, which is one of the most sacred places for the Buddhists all over the world. Foreign Minister Bogollagama also met with his Thai counterpart Mr. Kasit Piromya on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC meeting and expressed the gratitude for the contributions made by the latter at the recently held Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Ministerial Meeting in Colombo. Minister Bogollagama apprised his Thai counterpart of the situation in regard to IDPs in Sri Lanka. In responding to the request made by the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Mr. Piromya agreed to assist the demining process, which would facilitate expediting the resettlement of IDPs. Both Ministers agreed to convene the Sri Lanka -Thailand Joint Commission early next year. With respect to the progress of BIMSTEC, Mr. Bogollagama exchanged views with all three Foreign Ministers, particularaly underlining the importance of the early establishment of BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat. Minister Bogollagama recalled Sri Lanka’s offer to host the Permanent Secretariat in Colombo and solicited the support from his counterparts. Foreign Minister Bogollagama drew the attention of his counterparts to the Climate Change Conference which is being held in Copenhagen stressing that challenges posed by the climate change should be addressed globally as well as regionally. He further stated that magnitude of the climate change will cause, if not addressed in a timely manner, serious challenge to the human civilization and security. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Colombo – 01 11th December 2009