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## Presidential pledges to boost Indo - Lanka amity

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Indian President commends development initiatives in Sri Lanka: Indian President Pranab Mukherjee said yesterday it is the duty and obligation of Indian and Sri Lankan leaders to continue the centuries old friendship between the two countries. Mukherjee made this remark when he met President Mahinda Rajapaksa, who is on a three day official visit to India, called on him at Rastrapathi Bhavan in New Delhi yesterday. Both leaders focused their attention on strengthening the bilateral relationship between the two countries. The Indian President commended the development initiatives in Sri Lanka and expressed his satisfaction over the successful implementation of development projects, particularly in the North and East.

“I have a proper understanding of the development work in these areas,” he said. Mukherjee also complimented President Rajapaksa on the 90 percent completion of the demining process and rehabilitation programmes in these areas. President Rajapaksa explaining the importance of maintaining a strong Indo- Sri Lanka friendship, pointed out that the ties between the two countries should never be affected by incidents. The President also thanked the Indian government for the assistance extended to Sri Lanka in its economic development drives. President Rajapaksa giving a detailed account of the report of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), pointed out that recommendations of the LLRC report are being implemented in the country. He described the progress in the implementation of the LLRC recommendations. Thanking him for the congratulatory message sent by the Indian President after the UPFA secured victory at the recently concluded Provincial Council elections, the President said the people, irrespective of race, religion and caste, rallied round the government to expedite the development programmes in the country. The President also said Provincial Council elections will be held in the North next year. South Indian fishermen have intruded into Sri Lankan territorial waters, resulting in problems among fishing communities. This situation can also be sorted out, President Rajapaksa said. External Affairs Minister Prof G L Peiris, MP Sajin Vaas Gunawardena, Secretary to the President Lalith Weeratunga, Foreign Affairs Ministry Secretary Karunathilaka Amunugama and Sri Lankan High Commissioner to India Prasad Kariyawasam were also present. Source: <http://www.mea.gov.lk/index.php/news-from-other-media/3637-presidential-pledges-to-boost-indo-lanka-amity>