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வெளிநாட்டு அலுவல்கள், வெளிநாட்டு வேலைவாய்ப்பு மற்றும் சுற்றுலாத்துறை அமைச்சு
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

Media Release

Sri Lanka commemorates IORA Day 2026 with the launch of IORA Centre of Excellence on Ocean Sciences and Environment

Sri Lanka commemorated IORA Day 2026 on 11th March with the official launch of the IORA Centre of Excellence on Ocean Sciences and Environment. The hybrid event organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment & Tourism and the Ocean University of Sri Lanka, which host the Center of Excellence, was attended by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment & Tourism, Arun Hemachandra.

The commemoration highlighted Sri Lanka's continued commitment to the objectives of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), particularly in advancing regional cooperation on ocean governance and environmental sustainability. The event also reflected the theme of IORA Day 2026, IORA Improves Lives, underscoring the tangible benefits of regional collaboration for the well-being and livelihoods of communities across the Indian Ocean region.

In his remarks, Deputy Minister highlighted the importance of strengthening partnerships within the Indian Ocean Region and Sri Lanka's role in promoting sustainable ocean-based development. Highlighting the significance of the new initiative, the Minister stated that Sri Lanka's IORA Centre of Excellence on Ocean Science and Environment will serve as a hub for research, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building to support science-based ocean governance across the Indian Ocean region.

A message from the Secretary-General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association, Sanjiv Ranjan, was also delivered virtually.

During the event, Sri Lanka officially launched the IORA Sri Lanka Centre of Excellence (CoE) on Ocean Science and Environment, marking an important milestone in strengthening regional scientific cooperation and knowledge exchange. The launch also initiated a series of webinars aimed at advancing dialogue on key ocean and environmental issues across the Indian Ocean region. The inaugural webinar featured a keynote address by Prof. Charitha Pattiaratchi of the University of Western Australia, followed by an interactive Q&A session.

The programme saw a large gathering of Heads of Mission of IORA Member States joining both in person and virtually, along with Heads of Mission of Dialogue Partners, Observer Countries, and stakeholders from Sri Lanka and abroad.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment & Tourism
Colombo

11 March 2026

Foreign Affairs
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17 ஆவது தளம், "மெஹெவர பியெச", நாரஹேன்பிட்டி, கொழும்பு 5
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