

Stamp
Bulletin
No. 37

SRI LANKA

Commemorative Issue

Opening of the

**BANDARANAIKE MEMORIAL
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
HALL**

17.05.1973

Issued by

THE PHILATELIC BUREAU

POSTS & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

DEPARTMENT

SRI LANKA (CEYLON)

STAMP BULLETIN No. 37

Ministry of Posts and
Telecommunications,
Sri Lanka,

May 12, 1973.

THE Ministry of Posts & Telecommunications of Sri Lanka will issue a stamp on 17th May, 1973, to commemorate the opening of the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall. It is a gift from the People's Republic of China as a tribute to the memory of the late Prime Minister, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. The Hall symbolises the ideals for which he lived and died. In all his actions he held aloft his belief that men must live together whatever their differences; even if there was disagreement it was necessary to preserve friendly relationships with one another, understand and respect each other; though there may be differences of ideology amongst them—(Address to the United Nations Association, Ceylon Branch, 1957).

He interpreted the principles of co-existence formulated at Bandung, Indonesia, in 1954, in their true spirit. He was the first and foremost leader of Sri Lanka to understand these principles in their true intent and purpose and he strove to implement them sincerely and boldly. It was in keeping with them that he altered the foreign policy of independent Sri Lanka soon after his electoral victory in 1956, by the establishment of friendly diplomatic relations with countries of the East and West irrespective of their political ideology. He established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in order to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries. The People's Republic of China to him, was not merely a trading partner of convenience, for the exchange of rubber or rice. To him the People's Republic of China was an essential partner in the

Comity of Nations. The place of the People's Republic of China in the progress of the human race was always uppermost in his thoughts. To him no nation was taboo because of a different economic system. Communism to him was not a fearsome bogey, but only the symptom of a changing era (Address to Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi 1957). In his address to the United Nations General Assembly on 22nd November, 1956, while affirming his faith in the United Nations Organization as the expression of the unconquerable spirit of man in its efforts to achieve peace, friendship and collaboration, he also expressed the fervent hope that the Organization would become more representative of the Nations of the world. Addressing the Ceylon Branch of the U. N. Association in 1957, he said, that he could not understand, except on the most petty grounds, how one-fifth of the population of the world represented by the People's Republic of China, could on any ground of equity or justice, be excluded from the United Nations Organization. Addressing the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce in 1958, he said, that he could not understand how bodies like ECAFE could deal with economic problems of the Asian region without the participation of the People's Republic of China. On another occasion he stated, that peace meant mutual understanding. Countries would not always agree with one another; but it was necessary to understand one another, appreciate each others point of view, realize one's particular difficulties and the context in which those difficulties arose and thereby create friendly relations, co-operation and collaboration, which were absolutely necessary for the preservation of peace and the avoidance of sharp conflict (Address to the Afro-Asian Women's Conference in Colombo in 1958).

In his Convocation address at the University of Sri Lanka in 1957, he said, "I feel that, as never before in our history we have to recognise

the dignity and brotherhood of man, that we are all one, whatever may be our religion, colour, race or ideology. We cannot permit our dislikes of one another, racial, ideological, linguistic, economic, social or otherwise to reach the point when we feel we cannot live together". Subsequent history has proved how futile and wasteful were the actions of states which failed to abide by such ideals.

A more appropriate tribute cannot be conceived for the late Prime Minister than the erection of an International Conference Hall in his memory. The Hall gifted by the People's Republic of China is a permanent testimony to the high regard held by the Chinese Government and people for the ideals of Mr. Bandaranaike in the achievement of collaboration, peace and friendship among nations. The construction of the Hall will enable Sri Lanka to offer herself as a venue for international conferences and assist in the process of promoting co-operation and understanding between nations in an atmosphere of peace and friendship.

The Conference Hall accommodates about 1,500 people comprising 540 delegates consisting of 90 delegations, 110 observers, 85 press men and the balance accommodation for the public. The long needle-like columns supporting the cantilevered roof as well as the internal walls and floors in the main entrance area are lined with marble of beautiful white, snow-white, sunset and red colours from north-east China and the Shantung province. The construction began in November 1970, engaging about 1,350 workers engineering and technical personnel of the People's Republic of China and Sri Lanka. A white marble life size bust of the late Mr. Bandaranaike adorns the main entrance hall, against the background of a mural oil painting depicting a panoramic view of the sun rise over Sri Pada and the hill country seen from the Western coast of Sri Lanka.

The establishment of this International Conference Hall is of special significance at a time when Sri Lanka has called for the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

Both the People's Republic of China and Sri Lanka laid the foundations for achievement of independence from colonial domination soon after the end of the Second World War. The achievements of the People's Republic of China since then, in the transformation of their country is an inspiration to other developing nations. The friendship between Sri Lanka and the People's Republic of China is based on the desire for peace and progress among all nations.

The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of Sri Lanka is happy to issue a stamp to commemorate the establishment of the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall which is another milestone in the progress of peaceful human relations.

The International Conference Hall, octagonal in shape, and looking alike in all directions with its towering immaculate beauty is symbolic of the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's universality of thought and spirit and is a fitting tribute to the greatest and most distinguished humanist produced by Sri Lanka within living memory.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Denomination	..	15 cents.
Designer	..	R. B. Mawilmada
Colours	..	Chalky Blue and Cobalt
Format	..	Horizontal
Date of issue	..	17th May, 1973
Size	..	45 × 32 mm.
Printers	..	M/s. Thomas De La Rue & Co., Ltd., United Kingdom
Sheet Composition	..	100 stamps per sheet
Printing Process	..	Delacryl.

FIRST DAY COVER SERVICE

An official first day cover will be available for sale. The price of a cover is 25 cents.

TERMS OF SALE

Overseas orders for the supply of the new stamps and first day covers should be addressed with full particulars to the Director, Philatelic Bureau, 4th Floor, Ceylinco House, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), and should be accompanied by Mail Transfer, International Money Order or Bank Draft payable to the Director, Philatelic Bureau.