



Ambassador Chen Xueyuan, Milinda Moragoda and Bernard Goonetilleke, alongside Lou Chong, Head of the Political Section of the Chinese Embassy, at the Chinese Embassy in Colombo

Chinese Ambassador briefs Pathfinder on COVID-19 situation

Pathfinder Foundation Founder, Milinda Moragoda visited the Chinese Embassy to meet Ambassador Chen Xueyuan and express solidarity with the Government and people of China.

During the meeting, Moragoda expressed his condolences to the families of the victims of the COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) and expressed confidence that China would overcome the epidemic soon. Ambassador Chen appreciated the expression of solidarity by Moragoda and said he saw the Pathfinder Foundation as a friend in need. Moragoda was accompanied by Pathfinder Foundation Chairman, Bernard Goonetilleke.

The Chinese Ambassador detailed the measures taken by the Chinese Government to contain the epidemic and prevent its spread within and outside China. He said the decision taken by the Chinese leadership to

bring the city of Wuhan, the epicentre of the epidemic, under lockdown status, was an unprecedented measure taken by the authorities concerned.

Further, China is cooperating with the WHO and publishing detailed information on those who are taken in for medical checkups, mortality details and those who recover from the disease, so that the world would be fully aware of the events unfolding in his country.

The Ambassador highlighted the feat achieved by the Chinese authorities by building two new hospitals within days to treat COVID-19 patients, which demonstrated the commitment of his Government to bring the epidemic under control and treat the infected. He added that China expects the epidemic to peak in the coming days following which the casualty rates would go down gradually.

China considers Sri Lanka as a close friend and facilitated the evacuation of Sri Lankan students stranded in Wuhan in the midst of the burden they had to shoulder. In fact, that was the fourth such evacuation facilitated by China, after the US, Japan and South Korea. The facilitation of the evacuation demonstrated the high priority given by China to Sri Lanka.

The Ambassador elaborated the measures taken by the Embassy to ensure that Sri Lanka would be safe from the virus. The embassy is keeping a close tab on those arriving in Sri Lanka from China. In the case of the Chinese tourist, who is the only confirmed case of COVID-19 so far in Sri Lanka, he said she has been cured, but is still under observation. No other positive cases have been detected in Sri Lanka, which is an encouraging development.