

Sri Lanka takes strong objection to the imposition of travel restrictions on Lt. Gen. Silva and his immediate family by the US

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It was announced a short while ago that the US Department of State has designated Lieutenant General Shavendra Silva, current Commander of the Sri Lanka Army and Acting Chief of Defense Staff and his immediate family members. The public designation makes them ineligible for entry into the United States.

The Government of Sri Lanka takes strong objection to the imposition of travel restrictions on Lt. Gen. Silva and his immediate family members by the Government of the United States, based on independently unverified information.

The Government reiterates that Lt. Gen. Shavendra Silva was appointed as the Commander of the Army by the then Head of State, taking into account his seniority and that there were no substantiated or proven allegations of human rights violations against him. His elevation as the Acting Chief of Defence Staff by the current Head of State President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, was on account of his being the senior most serving military officer.

While the timing of the imposition of this travel restriction 6 months after Lt. Gen. Silva's appointment as Army Commander is concerning, it is disappointing that a foreign government should question the prerogative of the democratically elected President to call upon persons with proven expertise to hold key positions on national security related matters.

The Government of Sri Lanka requests the United States to verify the authenticity of the sources of information and to review its decision.

Public Diplomacy Division
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