

《中国与斯里兰卡将进一步推进两国的战略合作》

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斯里兰卡总理维克勒马辛哈已经开始对中国进行为期三天的国事访问。两国有望进行高层讨论促进经济，投资和技术方面的合作机制。

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has begun a three-day official visit to China. The two sides are expected to hold high-level discussions to promote cooperation mechanisms covering economic affairs, investment, and technology.



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang (L) holds a welcoming ceremony for Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe in Beijing, China, April 7, 2016. (Xinhua/Wang Ye)

This is the Sri Lankan Prime Minister's first official visit to China, after the country's new government took office last year. Seven agreements are signed during the visit. They span from sciences, tourism development, financial services, to water resources management.

Business representatives from Sri Lanka will also hold discussions with leading Chinese entrepreneurs, to solicit Chinese investment to the country.

Ahead of his visit, the Prime Minister said Sri Lanka wanted to build long-term economic and investment relations with China. This is despite a hiccup between the two sides last year, when the Sri Lankan government ordered a review of a Port City project in the capital Colombo, which involves Chinese investment.

Approved by the previous government, the 1.4-billion dollar project is expected to boost local economy and create over 80,000 jobs.

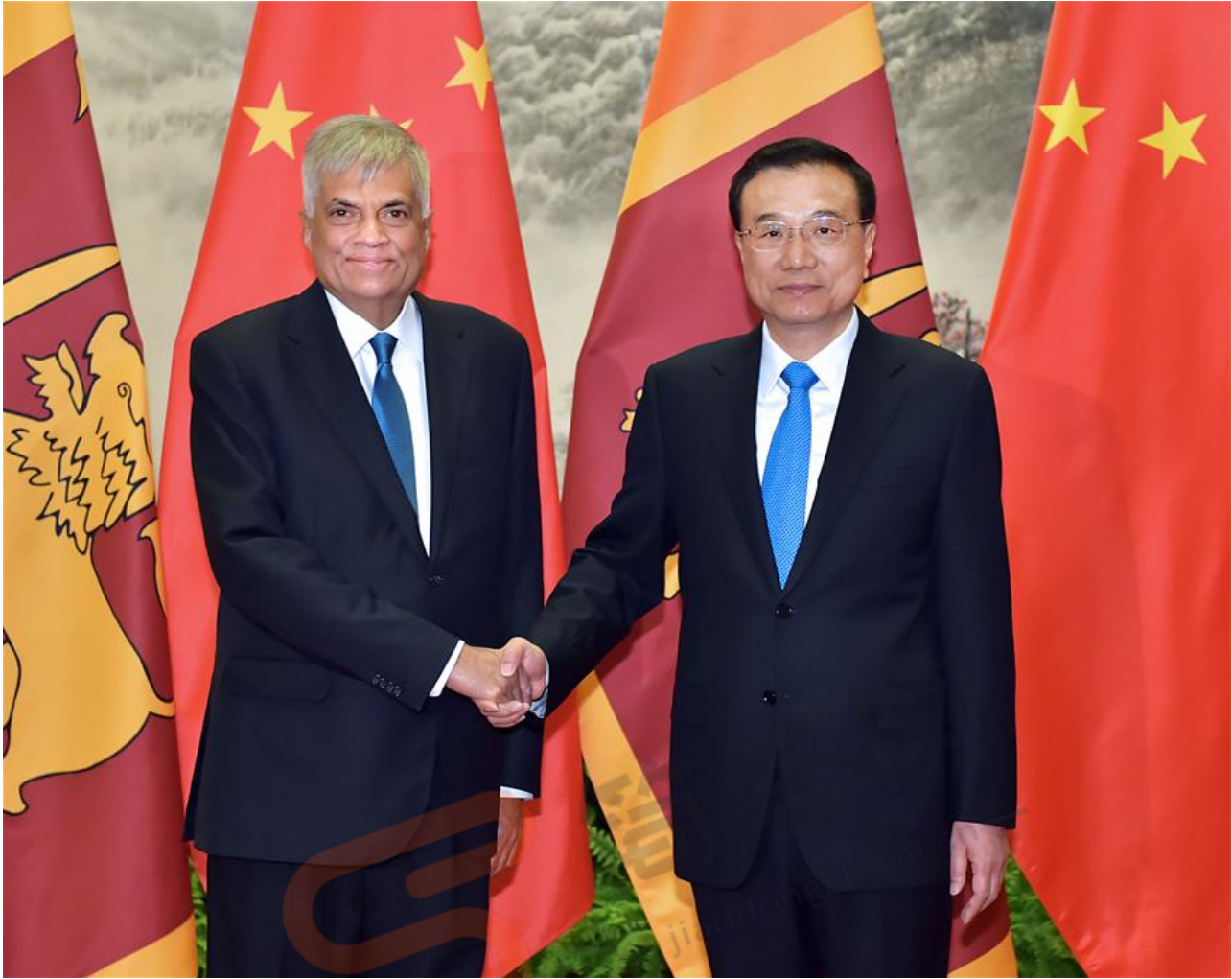
Despite the project being recently brought back to life, the one-year suspension has resulted in more than 120 million dollars in losses to the Chinese side.

But this incident appears not to have deterred the bilateral cooperation. China's Foreign Ministry says both sides still see their economic ties promising. And there have been talks on setting up a special economic zone in southern Sri Lanka.

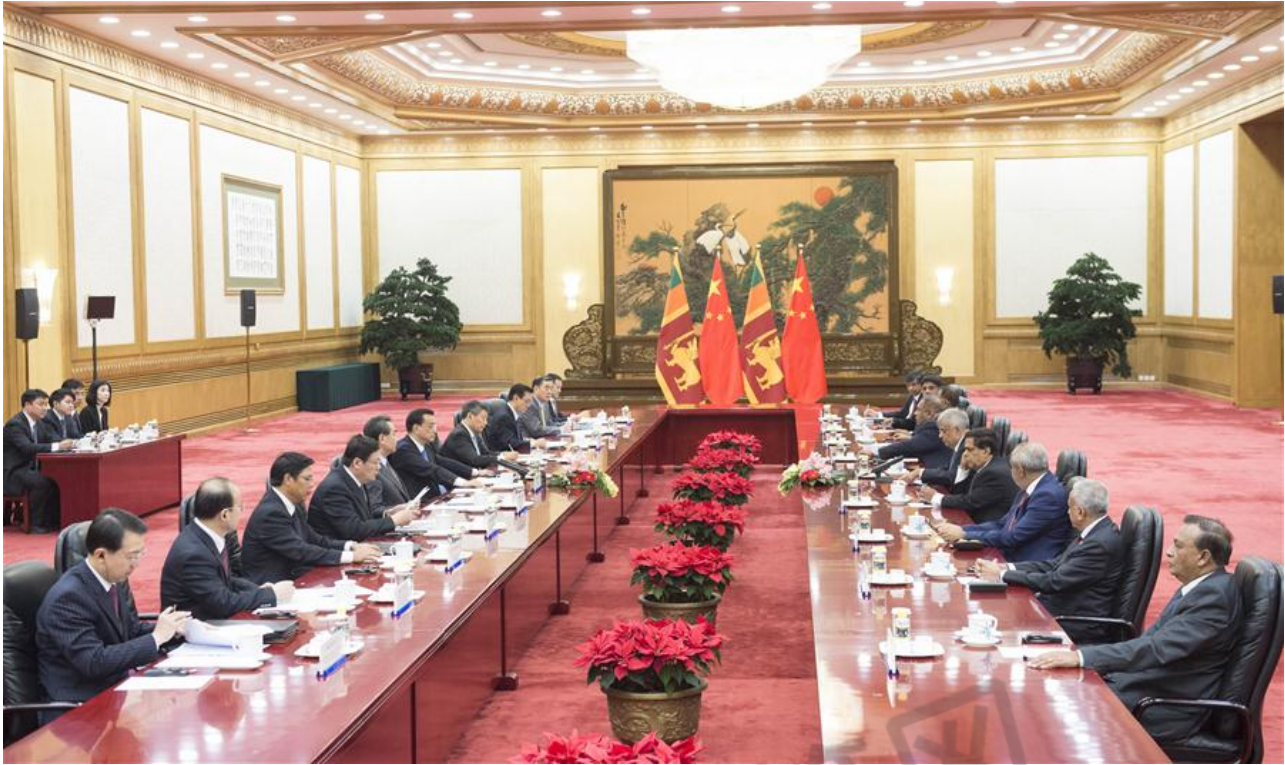
"I believe your visit this time is going to highly improve the Sino-Sri Lankan Strategic Partnership, and inject new vitality to the bilateral ties. I would like to exchange views with you on the issues of common concerns," Premier Li said.

The Prime Minister said earlier that with China-led One Belt One Road Initiative, Sri Lanka hopes to regain its status as the economic hub of the Indian Ocean region. Experts say that anticipation paves the way for deeper political and economic ties between the two countries, despite differences on certain issues, at certain times.



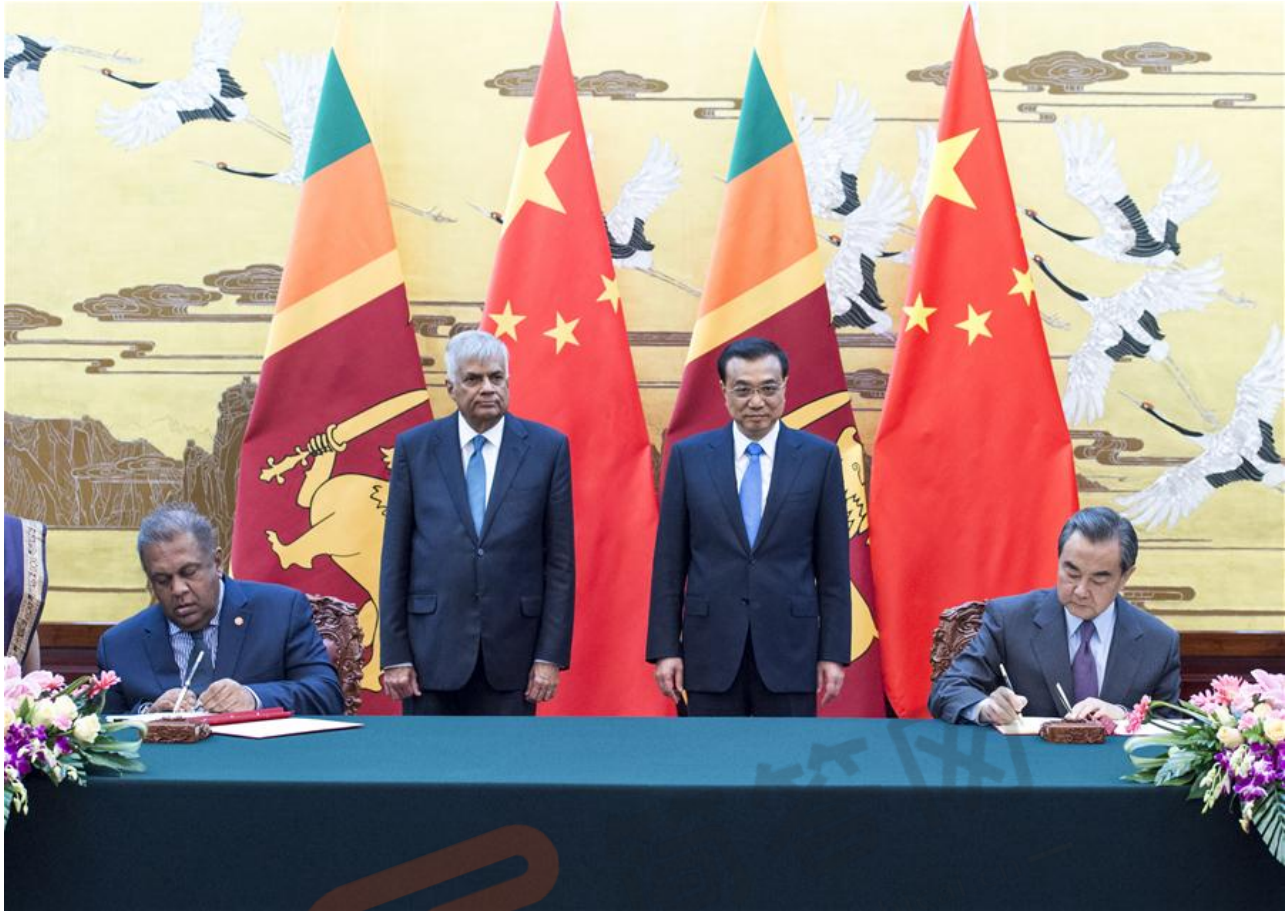


Chinese Premier Li Keqiang (R) holds talks with Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe in Beijing, China, April 7, 2016. (Xinhua/Li Tao)



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Chinese Premier Li Keqiang (2nd R) and Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe (2nd L) attend the signing ceremony of bilateral cooperation documents in Beijing, China, April 7, 2016. (Xinhua/Wang Ye)