

## **FABC Prays for Peace, Prosperity in Sri Lanka**

By Santosh Digal

Colombo: The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) has prayed for peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka that hosted its eleventh plenary assembly.

“We pray for Sri Lanka, a land with rich traditions, cultures and religions that it may always find a way forward for prosperity, peace, progress and reconciliation,” said FABC president Cardinal Oswald Gracias on the last day of the Nov 28-Dec 4 plenary.

Presiding over the concluding Mass of in St. Lucia's Cathedral, Kotahena, near Colombo, Cardinal Gracious, Archbishop of Bombay in India, lauded the concerted efforts the Sri Lankan has undertaken with several groups, including religious leaders, to bring peace and harmony in the island nation.

Sri Lanka suffered 25 years of civil war that has claimed millions of lives. The conflict ended in May 2009, when the government forces seized the last area controlled by Tamil Tiger rebels (or Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam founded in 1976) to fight for Tamil rights.

Cardinal Gracias praised the Catholic Church's collaboration with the government and others to bring common good in the country.

The Church's efforts are led by Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, archbishop of Colombo.

“Sri Lanka has a great future and you have our prayers,” Cardinal Gracias said.

On the occasion, the Philatelic Bureau-Department of Posts in Sri Lanka issued two commemorative stamps of “Christmas 2016” of Sri Lankan Rupees 10 and 35. The first day covers were given to Cardinal Ranjith by the postal department officials and later all the delegates of FABC plenary and Catholics present for the Mass.

In his response, Cardinal Ranjith thanked the FABC for holding the meet in Sri Lanka. “It was a proud moment for the Catholic Church to host such important meeting here,” he added.

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