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Pioneer

Sri Lankan railway line gets helping hand from India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amidst the recent bad blood between India and Sri Lanka over violation of human rights of Tamils of the island nation, here is some good news. A Government company under Ministry of Railways has successfully laid tracks in Sri Lanka that were destroyed during years of war in the region.

On Tuesday, the local Government threw open the 43-km long railway line from Medawachchiya to Madhu Road. IRCON International Limited, headed by CMD Mohan Tiwari, has built this line on time and with a cost of 81 million USD.

“It was an historic occasion as the train service recommenced in on this section after a gap of 23 years. The reconstructed railway track is designed with a speed potential of 120 km per hour,” IRCON’s public relations officer Rajeev Ranjan Dwivedi said.

After the railway network was devastat-



ed in Sri Lanka, India had extended lines of Northern Province. The entire stretch is credit to build the 252 km railway lines in being built by IRCON.

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Hinder

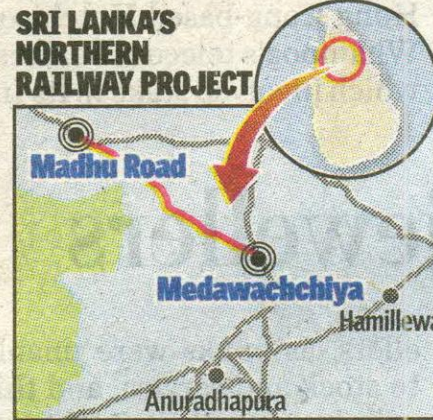
India-backed rail link commissioned

Meera Srinivasan

COLOMBO: The first phase of Sri Lanka's northern railway project, funded by a line of credit facilitated by India, was commissioned on Tuesday.

Coaches chugged along from Medawachchiya in Anuradhapura, the North Central Province, to Madhu Road, marking the return of a crucial transportation link.

Tracks along the 43 km-stretch were reconstructed as part of the \$800 million-project, being executed by the Indian Railway Ministry's IRCON International Limited to restore the 252 km-railway line that would connect different parts of the country.



Commissioning the service, Minister for Economic Development Basil Rajapaksa said India had been with Sri Lanka at every stage of rehabilitation and reconstruction of the north. High Commissioner Ashok K. Kantha and Sri Lankan officials were present.

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Indian Express

India finishes phase I of Lanka rail project

NEW DELHI: The Indian Railways has completed phase I of a 43-km rail link from Medawachchiya to Madhu Road in Sri Lanka at a cost of \$81 million. According to IRCON, a subsidiary of the Indian Railways, services resumed on this track on Tuesday after a gap of 23 years. The tracks on the section were destroyed during the civil war in the region. The time required to cover the distance would be 30 minutes. **ENS**