

CHINA, INDIA VALUED FRIENDS: DISSANAYAKE

Agencies COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's new President Anura Kumara Dissanayake said the country doesn't want to be sandwiched, especially between China and India, signaling a bold stance on his foreign policy.

As Sri Lanka navigates its place in an increasingly multipolar world, Anura Kumara Dissanayake, in his interview with Monocle magazine, emphasised that under his leadership, the country will avoid being drawn into geopolitical rivalries. Instead of aligning with any power bloc, the National People's Power (NPP) government intends to foster balanced relationships with both China and India, two of Sri Lanka's closest neighbours.

"We won't be a competitor in that geopolitical fight, nor will we be aligned to any party. We don't want to be sandwiched, especially between China and India. Both countries are valued friends and, under an NPP government, we expect them to become close partners. We also want to maintain relations with the EU, the Middle East and Africa," Dissanayake said on the foreign policy.

This neutral foreign policy approach, Dissanayake suggests, is critical for Sri Lanka to safeguard its sovereignty amid growing regional tensions. The president made it clear that Sri Lanka will not be a player in the power struggles between global superpowers, focusing instead on building diplomatic partnerships that are mutually beneficial.

Sri Lanka's leftist leader Dissanayake took office as

president on Monday, promising change in the island nation long led by powerful political families which is emerging from its worst economic crisis in more than seven decades. Dissanayake was declared the new president late on

Sunday, displacing Ranil Wickremesinghe, who had been appointed by Parliament to serve out President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's remaining term.

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