

# Pathfinder Foundation sets up Hafez Centre for Cultural Understanding

RELATIONS between Sri Lanka and Iran date back to the Pre-Islamic era of the Persian Empire. In this context, the Pathfinder Foundation has recently established the Hafez Centre for Cultural Understanding (HCCU) located at its headquarters at Riverpoint, Peliyagoda. The Centre has been set up with the purpose of studying, creating awareness, and promoting cultural understanding between Sri Lanka and Iran by focusing on the historical links, culture, customs, and traditions of these two ancient civilisations. The work of the HCCU will be guided by a five-member Advisory Council consisting of respected experts and academics in the field.

The HCCU has been named after the greatest and most revered and quoted Persian poet, Khajeh Shamseddin

Mohammad Hafez-e Shirazi, who wrote under the pen name of Hafez. Born in Shiraz in South Central Iran circa 1310 A.C. (712 A.H.), his poetry is characterised by a love of humanity, contempt for hypocrisy and mediocrity, and an ability to universalise everyday experience. The influence of his work has grown over the centuries and extended beyond the borders of the East. His admirers have included several eminent 18th and 19th century poets and writers from the West including the German poet Goethe who said of him: 'Hafiz has no peer!'

The HCCU will be the 4th centre to be established under the Pathfinder Foundation. The others are The Centre for Indo-Lanka Initiatives (CILI), the China Sri Lanka Cooperation Studies Centre (CSLSCS), and the Law of the Sea Centre.



The inauguration of the Hafez Room of the newly established Hafez Centre for Cultural Understanding (HCCU) of the Pathfinder Foundation the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mohammad Zaeri Amirani



Ambassador Mohammad Zaeri Amirani handed over the copy of poem collection of Hafez Shirazi to Milinda Moragoda. Also pictured: Political Section Chief Ayoub Heidari, Cultural Counsellor Mostafa Sohrab, MMBL-Pathfinder CEO K Balasundaram, PF Chairman Bernard Goonetilleke, PF Executive Director Luxman Siriwardena