



ASIAN PALM OIL ALLIANCE

Solidaridad



Bangladesh



Nepal



India



Sri Lanka



Pakistan

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INDIA

PRESS RELEASE

PR-005/2026-27

11th May, 2026

The Commercial Editor,

Dear Sir/Madam,

Asian Palm Oil Alliance Welcomes Sri Lanka's Move Towards Reconsidering Oil Palm Cultivation Ban

The Asian Palm Oil Alliance (APOA) welcomes the recent developments in Sri Lanka indicating that the Sri Lanka Government is moving towards reconsidering the ban imposed earlier on oil palm cultivation, subject to sustainability safeguards and final approvals.

The Asian Palm Oil Alliance is a regional multi-stakeholder initiative bringing together palm oil industry associations, businesses, and sustainability stakeholders from major Asian palm oil consuming countries Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. APOA promotes sustainable palm oil, encourages science-based policy engagement, supports consumer awareness, and advances regional cooperation for responsible edible oil systems across Asia.

The attached press release highlights APOA's views on the importance of science-based policymaking, sustainable agriculture, edible oil security, farmer livelihoods, and regional cooperation for responsible palm oil development in Asia.

This is for your kind information and to cover in your esteemed media and oblige.

Yours Faithfully,

(Dr. B.V. Mehta)
Secretary General
File- A-42



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PRESS RELEASE

Asian Palm Oil Alliance Welcomes Sri Lanka's Move Towards Reconsidering Oil Palm Cultivation Ban

Mumbai/New Delhi / Colombo | 11th May 2026

The Asian Palm Oil Alliance (APOA) has welcomed the recent developments in Sri Lanka indicating that the Government is moving towards lifting the ban on oil palm cultivation, subject to final approvals and sustainability safeguards. APOA considers this a positive and pragmatic step towards strengthening edible oil security, supporting rural livelihoods, reducing import dependence, and promoting science-based sustainable agriculture in Asia.

The Alliance noted that Sri Lanka has continued to import substantial quantities of palm oil despite restrictions on domestic cultivation, while several scientific and industry discussions in recent years have increasingly emphasized the need for evidence-based policy decisions and sustainable production frameworks.

Commenting on the development, **Atul Chaturvedi, Chairman of APOA**, said: "The reported move by the Government of Sri Lanka to reconsider the ban on oil palm cultivation reflects a balanced and forward-looking approach. The real challenge today is not prohibition, but ensuring sustainability through science, responsible governance, and stakeholder collaboration. Sustainable palm oil has a vital role in ensuring food security, affordable nutrition, farmer prosperity, and economic resilience across Asia."

He further added: "Oil palm is among the most efficient vegetable oil crops globally in terms of productivity per hectare. With appropriate environmental safeguards, traceability systems, and sustainability standards, countries can achieve economic and environmental objectives together. APOA strongly supports responsible and sustainable palm oil ecosystems across Asia."

APOA also recalled that the Alliance and several industry stakeholders had consistently advocated for constructive engagement and science-based dialogue regarding palm oil cultivation and edible oil security in Sri Lanka during recent years, especially amid disruptions in global edible oil supply chains.

Dr. Shatadru Chattopadhyay, Managing Director for Solidaridad Asia, emphasized the importance of sustainability-centered growth and regional cooperation:

"Asia's edible oil future must be guided by sustainability, inclusiveness, and scientific evidence. Palm oil is an essential commodity for food systems and livelihoods across the region. The pathway forward lies in strengthening sustainable production practices, protecting biodiversity, supporting smallholders, and promoting transparent supply chains rather than moving away from the crop itself."

He added: "Sri Lanka now has an opportunity to demonstrate how responsible cultivation models, sustainability frameworks, and stakeholder participation can coexist with environmental stewardship and economic development."

Dr. B. V. Mehta, Secretary General APOA, highlighted the broader regional implications of the development: “Many Asian countries are working towards improving edible oil self-reliance while ensuring sustainability commitments. Sri Lanka’s policy reconsideration reflects the growing realization that sustainable palm oil must be part of the solution for food security, farmer income enhancement, and economic stability in the region.”

He further noted: “SEA and APOA remains committed to facilitating dialogue among governments, researchers, industry stakeholders, civil society organizations, and farmer groups to encourage responsible growth of the palm oil sector based on transparency, sustainability, and shared regional learning.”

APOA reiterated that sustainable palm oil production must continue to prioritize:

- Responsible land use
- Environmental protection
- Biodiversity conservation
- Smallholder inclusion
- Traceability and transparency
- Climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods

The Alliance believes regional collaboration and science-led policymaking will play a critical role in ensuring sustainable edible oil systems for Asia’s future.

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