

# No new IMF programme – Cabraal

## Pursuing Govt to Govt consultations preferred

### IMF team to visit next month

By **PANEETHA AMERESKERE**

Sri Lanka will not discuss a new programme with the IMF team who will visit the country next month for their (IMF's) regular 'Article IV' consultations with the Government. Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal told reporters yesterday.

He said, instead the Government is pursuing 'Government to Government' (G to G) consultations to uplift the country's foreign reserves, which talks are at an advanced stage. Among those G to G talks are those with India as well, the Governor speaking from...



Story Continued on **PAGE 2**

## Ferry tragedy Kinniya UC Chair remanded

By **THAMEENAH RAZEK**

Kinniya Police arrested Kinniya Urban Council Chairman S.H.M. Naleem yesterday in connection with the ferry tragedy that killed six people on 23 November.

According to Police Spokesman, SSP Nihal Thalduwa, the Chairman was arrested on many counts, including aiding and abetting.

Kinniya Police took the Chairman into custody after recording statements, and the suspect was produced before the Trincomalee Magistrate and remanded till 9 December.

Story Continued on **PAGE 8**

## Decision to 'fully' reopen economy subject to task force approval

By **DILANTHI JAYAMANNE**

The Health Ministry announced on Wednesday night that a decision had been taken to resume normal public events and activities adhering to health safety guidelines while doing away with restriction of numbers.

Minister Keheliya Rambukwella noted that in order to improve the economy a decision had been taken to conduct marriages and event managements, open eateries, hotel complexes and cinema halls as operated during the pre COVID-19 pandemic times.

Story Continued on **PAGE 2**

## Inflation to hit record double-digits – Cabraal

By **PANEETHA AMERESKERE**

Islandwide inflation may hit an all time high, by entering record double-digits in the coming months. Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal told reporters yesterday (25).

Cabraal, speaking at CBSL Headquarters in Colombo, said their inflationary expectations computations haven't taken the possibility of a fuel price hike at the pump, in the backdrop that international fuel prices are rising.

"We have presumed in our calculations that fuel prices will be kept steady," the Governor said.

Since the Census and Statistics Department (CSD) started computing islandwide inflation seven...

Story Continued on **PAGE 2**

## Sirisena sounds warning to Govt

By **GAGANI WEERAKOON AND METHMALIE DISSANAYAKE**

Former President Maithripala Sirisena, in what appears to be a warning, told the Government, in Parliament yesterday (25), not to be overconfident of the 2/3 majority as it is wielded by the 14 SLFP MPs in the House.

In response to Agriculture Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage's recent claims on extravagant expenses of former President, Sirisena warned Aluthgamage and other ruling party...



Story Continued on **PAGE 2**

# CEYLON TODAY



## In Sports

### West Indies flunk trial by spin, Sri Lanka grab lead

West Indies, who were 18/6 at one point on day four, showed tremendous grit but could not avoid defeat as Sri Lanka wrapped up the innings in the second session of day five to take a 1-0 series lead.

A16

## Fortress Deal Saga Continues

# CEBEU Declares Indefinite Work-To-Rule

### Disruptions to power supply inevitable | Minimum effect to Hospitals and places of importance

By **FAADHILA THASSIM**

The Ceylon Electricity Board Engineers' Union (CEBEU) commenced an indefinite work-to-rule campaign yesterday (25) as a trade union action until several demands, including that of terminating the New Fortress Energy LNG deal are met.

Chairman of CEBEU, Saumya Kumarawadu, said this could lead to intermittent and prolonged recovery of power outages however, adding that a concerted effort would be made to minimise its effect to hospitals and places of importance including national security.

Accordingly, CEBEU would only



work during the normal office hours but would attend to emergencies and breakdowns even after normal working hours during the 'level 1' work-to-rule

campaign. "If demands are not met within a reasonable period of time, we will be reluctantly compelled to extend our trade union action to

'level 2', where even breakdowns/emergencies would not be attended to, after the normal office hours," he said.

He remarked that the main demand is to ensure the discontinuation of the New Fortress Energy Deal which was an illegal agreement and pointed out that the American Company, New Fortress Energy, is bankrupt and does not in any way merit the selection criteria of an International Tender.

Furthermore, those who had opposed the New Fortress Energy LNG deal have since been removed from their respective positions while noting that the Standard Procedure of appointing...

Story Continued on **PAGE 8**

## SJB protests Govt MP's action against women

By **GAGANI WEERAKOON AND METHMALIE DISSANAYAKE**

SJB MPs staged a protest in Parliament Chamber yesterday (25) in protest over violence against women.

The MPs were seen wearing orange coloured ribbons around their arms. They also had stickers on their attires that stated 'Stop Violence against Women'. This protest had taken place following SLPP MP Janaka Tissakuttiarachchi's verbal sexual slurs made against MP Rohini Wijeratne and the Opposition Leader's wife in Parliament Chamber on 20 November.

Wijeratne, addressing the House, said that the protest was to mark 'International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women' that fell on 25 November.



Story Continued on **PAGE 8**

## After Rambukwella reassures PSUNU

# Health service TUs up in arm

By **DILANTHI JAYAMANNE**

Health service trade unions including doctors, a section of nurses, and Professions Supplementary to Medicine (PSM) are up in arms following a move by Health Minister Keheliya Rambukwella to send the Public Service United Nurses' Union (PSUNU) Chief, Ven. Muruththetuwe Ananda Thera a letter reassuring him that some of his union's demands would be met.

Secretary of the Government Medical Officers' Association (GMOA), Dr. Senal Fernando, yesterday (25) said, "The Health Minister should..."

Story Continued on **PAGE 2**

## RDA given nine months to build Kurunjankeni Bridge

By **THAMEENAH RAZEK**

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has given the Road Development Authority (RDA) nine months to build the Kurunjankeni Bridge in Kinniya.

Speaking to the media yesterday (25) at the Presidential Media Centre, Highways Ministry Secretary R. W. R. Premasiri expressed sorrow about the tragedy in which six people, including...



Story Continued on **PAGE 2**



## Jaffna Uni students mark 'Maaveerar Day'

### Mullaitivu Magistrate revokes restraining order

By **SULOCHANA RAMIAH MOHAN AND T. PRATHEEPAN (JAFFNA CORR)**

A number of Jaffna University students organised an event at the Campus premises yesterday (25) to observe the Maaveerar Naal (Heroes' Day), commemorated on 27 November.

Story Continued on **PAGE 8**

## European list of terrorist organisations Court dismisses LTTE's plea

By **SULOCHANA RAMIAH MOHAN**

The General Court of Luxembourg dismissed on Wednesday the European Political Subdivision of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE's) plea to repeal the decision of placing the LTTE on

the European list of terrorist organisations. The failed applicant (LTTE) claimed that the Court should, "annul Decision 2019/25, Decision 2019/1341, Regulation 2020/19, Regulation 2020/1128 and Decision 2020/1132 (together, 'the contested measures'), in so far as they...

Story Continued on **PAGE 8**

## Another gas cylinder explodes

By **THAMEENAH RAZEK**

A domestic LP gas cylinder had exploded in a house at College Junction, Hokandara Road, Kottawa, in the wee hours of yesterday. Kottawa Police confirmed that the explosion was caused by a Gas leak at around 4 a.m.

The explosion has severely destroyed the house, but no casualties were reported.

Several explosions have been reported in the last month at restaurants in Weligama and Colombo 7, as well as a bakery in Ratnapura.

Prior to yesterday's blast, the most recent explosion was reported on 20 November at an...

Story Continued on **PAGE 2**

## New Swedish PM resigns on first day in job

Sweden's first female Prime Minister, Social Democrat Magdalena Andersson, resigned on Wednesday after less than 12 hours in the top job after the Green Party quit their two-party coalition, stoking political uncertainty.

But Andersson said she had told the Speaker of Parliament that she hoped to be appointed Prime Minister again as the head of a single-party government, and the prospects of that...



Story Continued on **PAGE 2**

# UN will Always Work Closely with SL

- Khiari

The United Nations will always work closely with Sri Lanka, said Khaled Khiari, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political, Peacebuilding and Peace Operations.

Khiari said so when he met President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at the Presidential Secretariat, yesterday (25).

UN Assistant Secretary-General Khiari is visiting Sri Lanka as a follow-up to the bilateral meeting with the President and the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres held in September this year on the sidelines of

the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly. Khiari conveyed the best wishes of UN Secretary-General Guterres to President Rajapaksa and said the UN is willing to engage in a constructive and positive engagement with Sri Lanka.

Expressing satisfaction over the President's affection and interest in the environment, the Assistant Secretary-General appreciated Sri Lanka's commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The President explained that steps are being taken to plant 100,000

mangroves with the assistance of the Navy and action is being taken to prevent climate change through environmental conservation programmes.

President Rajapaksa expressed gratitude to the UN agencies and donors that have assisted Sri Lanka through the COVAX facility to make the vaccination drive successful and in facing other challenges in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.



The President pointed out that the Government's development programme implemented in the North and East after the end of the war in 2009 had brought about rapid development. The President recalled his invitation made while participating in the UN General Assembly to the Diaspora to work together with all communities after visiting Sri Lanka. The President said he hoped that the invitation would be met with positive initiatives. The two sides exchanged views on unity and relations between

communities. An environment where all communities can live freely has been made available in Sri Lanka. The President pointed out that the Minister of Justice is from the Muslim community, the Attorney General is from the Tamil community, and many of those holding other key posts are from different communities. President Rajapaksa said the Government has undertaken a great task in building unity among the communities and therefore, no one should have any doubt in this regard.

Both sides were of the view that education was fundamental to unity among the communities.

President Rajapaksa said the process by which South Africa has been able to end apartheid and move forward will be studied and the lessons that can be learned from it and what can be implemented will be looked into.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

## New Swedish PM resigns...

... happening appeared fairly strong given support from other parties.

The Green Party quit after Parliament rejected the coalition's Budget Bill. "I have asked the Speaker to be relieved of my duties as Prime Minister," Andersson told a news conference. "I am ready to be Prime Minister in a single-party, Social Democrat Government."

The Green Party said it would

support her in any new confirmation vote in Parliament, while the Centre Party promised to abstain, which in practice amounts to the same as backing her candidacy. The Left Party has also said it would back her.

While these parties were unable to agree a Budget, they are united in the goal of keeping the Sweden Democrats, a populist, anti-immigration party, from having a role in government.

## Inflation to hit...

... years ago in 2014, the highest islandwide inflation figure was registered nearly seven years ago in January 2015, with a figure of 9.4 per cent. January 2015 coincided with the year Sri Lanka had its one but the last Presidential Poll to date.

Inflation as at last month was 8.3 per cent, up sharply from 6.2 per cent in September. Cabraal said the expected uplift in inflation was due to supply side effects. It didn't warrant for a rate increase, he said. CBSL kept its rates

steady at five per cent (deposit rate) and lending rate (six per cent) at its last monetary policy review for the year held on Wednesday (24). Meanwhile, prior to 2014, CSD's calculation of inflation was restricted to Colombo only. During that period, the last time inflation hit double-digits was nearly 13 year ago in January 2009, where inflation was recorded at 10.4 per cent. January 2009 was the height of Sri Lanka's war with LTTE terrorism, which was finally subjugated on 18 May 2009.

## RDA given nine...

... schoolchildren, were killed when a ferry capsized in the Kurunjankeni Lagoon in Kinriya, Trincomalee.

He said that though the RDA is not in charge of the road or the bridge, the President has ordered it to complete the Kurunjankeni Bridge in nine months.

RDA Director General Sardha Weerakoon in his speech said that work is underway to upgrade the Colombo-Puttalam main road to mitigate the impact of rain water on Chilaw town and on the road portion.

The press conference focused on Sri Lanka's road network. President's spokesman Kingsley Ratnayake chaired the discussion.

## Another...

... international franchise restaurant, on the ground level of the Race Course building on Reid Avenue in Colombo. Meanwhile, Government Analyst Gauri Ramana, refuted claims that the occurrences were caused by a change in the propane to butane ratio in domestic cylinders. According to the analyst, the main cause of the explosions was discovered to be gas leaks.

## No new IMF...

...CBSL Headquarters in Colombo said.

"A programme with the IMF may entail the requirement to increase interest rates, depreciate the rupee, reduce the number of public servants, sell State assets and curtail pensions, which actions at the moment are not necessary," Cabraal said.

He said the country's reserves are expected to end the year at US\$ 3.5 billion, but was evasive as to whether that number will also include a Yuan swap

with China equivalent to US\$ 1.5 billion. The country's foreign reserves without this swap, which, however, is also currently available, has sunk to a near 13-year low of US\$ 2.3 billion as at last month.

A figure lower than this was last seen in March 2009 with a number of US\$ 1,082 million, immediately available data showed. March 2009 was the height of Sri Lanka's war with the LTTE terrorism, which was finally subjugated on

18 May 2009.

Cabraal, however, said despite the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism, traditionally Sri Lanka's third-largest foreign exchange earner, was growing, with 30,000 tourist arrivals recorded in the first three weeks of this month, and with this number expected to end the month at 50,000.

The month of November is the beginning of Sri Lanka's tourism season, which peaks

next month and ends in March of next year.

The Governor said the industry expects a month-on-month increase of 10 per cent in tourist arrivals from next year.

Though Cabraal knew of tourism figures as at 21 November, he was, however, unable to say what the value of the country's foreign reserves were as at that date when questioned. The Governor also said the economy is expected to grow by five per cent this year, from a lower base in 2020.

## Decision to 'fully'...

However, a final decision will be taken today (26) at a meeting with the Presidential COVID Taskforce to decide within what limits the aforesaid functions should operate. The public would have to bear in

mind at all times that even when these areas are opened, they would have to wear masks, maintain social distancing and be fully vaccinated. Rambukwella in a tweet said, "I

strongly reiterate that if health guidelines are not rigorously upheld, strict measures will be taken by the Government authorities to curb any future possible pandemic spike."

## Sirisena sounds...

... members, who criticise coalition allies, not to throw stones while living in a glass house.

He recalled the Sri Lankan political history where former governments collapsed owing to coalition allies withdrawing support.

Since 1948, all the governments needed the support of other parties. Lalith Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake resigned from the then UNP government and that party never recovered after that, the same thing happened during the tenure of former President Chandrika Kumaratunga. In 2014, I

resigned from the government due to fair concerns and contested the Presidential Election as the common candidate. It was the end of that government, he pointed out.

Therefore, it is better to act in a wise and responsible manner regarding the government's 2/3 majority in Parliament. It should be remembered that the 2/3 majority is wielded by the 14 MPs representing the SLFP. So, it should be very clear what will happen if someone wants to fight. This is a coalition government. People need to learn from history, he warned.

This verbal confrontation

occurred when Sirisena responded to Agriculture Minister Mahindananda Aluthagamage's recent claims regarding expenditures made by Sirisena during his Presidency.

"First, Aluthagamage said that I amalgamated three houses to build my official residence. I challenged him to prove it and said I will resign from the parliament seat, if the accusation is correct. He did not say anything about it thereafter."

Sirisena criticised Aluthagamage, saying a minister of the government carrying out 'mudslinging' campaign against another

government member is unacceptable.

"I am saddened to see this happen again and again. During the Committee Stage debate on the President's Expenditure Head, Aluthagamage again accused me of using 200 vehicles during my presidency. This is a blatant lie. He tried to paint me as a president who wasted money while saying that the current president saves money. This is just wrong."

He also requested leaders of the government not to let the same thing happen in the future.

Speaking after Sirisena, State Minister Dayasiri Jayasekara launched a scathing attack on Aluthagamage.

"If Aluthagamage said those remarks on one occasion, we can let it pass. But he is repeating the same conduct. We cannot simply let it go when he insults the former president and the leader of the SLFP MPs group. Aluthagamage is like a dancing peacock. He thinks that what he does is great, but it only uncovers his disgraceful behaviour," the State Minister stressed.

He said that the former president had spent Rs. 3.5 billion. This money was spent for seven projects on rural area development; eradicating CKDu etc. he only used three vehicles during the Presidency. Former President Sirisena never used 200 vehicles like Aluthagamage said,

Jayasekara asserted.

The situation was triggered, when Aluthagamage responded to Jayasekara later in the day and said that he is ready if the former president wants to confront him.

"Jayasekara had criticized me earlier when I was out of chambers. He said that if one digs into my conduct, they would find it horribly stinks. Who accepted cheques from Arjun Aloysius? We can also dig into others' conduct. I only said the incumbent President had set an example by saving a total of Rs 1.7 billion," Aluthagamage said.

The former president also said that I was responsible for the criticisms levelled at the government. I am the Minister of Agriculture and I defend the green economy policy. That is my duty, he said.

Sirisena who responded, again said, "Aluthagamage made very impulsive and sensitive speech. He even said that he is ready for any fight. Well, we do not want to fight. We only pity those who want to fight. But if we want to attack someone, we will not do it in Aluthagamage's way. We have other methods to do things that others cannot even imagine."

There is no problem in Aluthagamage praising the current President. The Leader of the House said that same thing. That is fine. But the problem is that he does that by comparing expenditures during my presidency. I do not want to

throw stones while living in a glass house, he said.

"I also set up examples compared to the presidents who ruled the country before me. I did not use helicopters like they did. I did not travel like they did. So if they want to fight, then there will be a huge problem. We are ready to fight, but we do not know what kind of casualties there would be."

Speaking further, Sirisena said that it is okay to build the image of the current President. "But people should not attack us while doing so.

We are also in the same government with your leader (the President). So there is no problem. I do not want to 'play boxing' with anyone. But it does not mean that I am incapable of playing," he added. He then went on criticising Aluthagamage severely claiming that the latter is the sole reason for the people's hate towards the government at the moment.

"He lied to the President, the government, the Cabinet and the people, especially farmers. This is why the people hate this government today. People set fire to effigies of government leaders today and Aluthagamage's conduct led to people doing so. You (Aluthagamage) always say that you have some evidence and records against us. Why are you hiding them then? I have decades-long experience in politics. So I know the reason behind such statements," he stressed.

Application for a License under Section 34 of the Companies Act No.07 of 2007 from the Registrar General of Companies

In pursuance of section 34 of the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007 an application has been made to the Registrar General of Companies for all license that an Association be formed under the name and style of "SYMPOSA FOR ANCIENT THERAVADA INTERNATIONAL" to be registered with limited liability without the addition of the word LIMITED at the end of its name

The objects for the Association are as follows,

- To promote, foster and disseminate the social teachings of the religion, by studying, researching, and interpreting the ancient Pali canonical texts, commentaries, and associated treatises for the benefit of all beings
- To disseminate and propagate the teachings through print media (books, newsletters etc.) social media, website, blogs, YouTube channel, blogs and FB and the like to ensure maximum reach out to the global community.
- To appoint representatives of the SATI in all six continents and to encourage and support them in disseminating such teachings
- To promote friendship and harmony amongst all communities of the world, leading them to a common meeting point in terms of understanding the original teachings

A copy of the Articles of Association may be inspected at the office of the company secretary of "SYMPOSA FOR ANCIENT THERAVADA INTERNATIONAL", No.95/2/C, Kandy Road, Imbulgoda, Gampaha.

Notice is hereby given that any person, Company or corporation objecting to this application may bring such objections 21 days from the date of this publication by a letter addressed to the Registrar General of Companies, "Samagam Medura", No. 400, D.R. Wijewardena Mawatha, Colombo 10.

M & C BUSINESS CONSULTANTS (PVT) LTD - COMPANY SECRETARY

### VEHICLES FOR SALE

Vehicle Number	Category	Make & Model
<b>WELISARA TEL NO: 0714 390 101</b>		
NW- BIA - 5962	MOTOR BIKE	TVS APACHI
NW- BIA - 2668	MOTOR BIKE	HERO MAESTRO EDGE
NC - BIE - 9555	MOTOR BIKE	HERO MAESTRO EDGE
NW- BH - 7019	MOTOR BIKE	HERO MAESTRO EDGE
WP- BIJ - 6051	MOTOR BIKE	TVS NORTOR D5C
<b>EBILIPITIYA TEL NO: 0712 965 262</b>		
SP - BHS - 5760	MOTOR BIKE	HERO MAESTRO EDGE
<b>GALLE TEL NO: 0711 666 168</b>		
SP - BHZ - 8646	MOTOR BIKE	TVS XL HD 100

Bids are invited. Company reserves the right to withdraw any vehicle from the sale without prior notice.

**Kanrich Finance Limited,**  
No. 69, Ward Place, Colombo 07. Tel: 011 4 381 381

**KANRICH FINANCE**  
Relationship without borders

# President says Easter Attacks PCol Recommendations Actionable

The Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) into the Easter Sunday Attacks appointed by the previous Government has made recommendations that the then Government, including the former President, Prime Minister, and the Cabinet should be held responsible for the attack. It has been referred to the Parliament, the Attorney General, and the CID to take further action. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said through an Act of Parliament, the law can be enforced against the culprits revealed by the Commission.

The Government has two-thirds majority required for this purpose. Therefore, the President urged the Opposition to be vigilant when making demands and not to deceive the people.

The President said so addressing the ceremony held to declare open the "Golden Gate Kalyani," which was constructed with advanced technology, on Wednesday (24).

After the opening of the New Kelani Bridge by the President and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, both leaders activated the state-of-the-art lighting system set up on both sides of the bridge.

The new bridge was constructed to mitigate and ease the traffic congestion on the Kelani Bridge due to



vehicles entering and leaving Colombo.

The Government of Sri Lanka and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) prepared the initial plans for the bridge in 2012 and its feasibility study was conducted in 2013. The Cabinet approved the construction of the bridge in 2014. The relevant agreements were also signed in the same year. Construction work began in 2017 after providing houses for the affected people as well as after providing alternative places for the public and private institutions that were affected by the project. The cost of the project is Rs 55,000 million and it took four years to complete the project. The Bridge consists of six lanes from the entrance of the Colombo-Katunayake Expressway towards the Bandaranaike Roundabout and from that point onwards, the flyover will be four lanes towards Orugodawatta and the

Ingurukade Junction. This will enable access to the elevated expressways from Ingurukade Junction to the Colombo Port City and from Orugodawatta to Athurugiriya.

It is significant that the bridge has been constructed in such a way that it does not obstruct the flow of the Kelani River and that many species of plants including *Koboneela*, *Esala*, *May-Mara*, *Mee* and *Kumbuk* have been planted on both sides of the main road to protect the beauty of the environment.

During the tenure of President Mahinda Rajapaksa from 2005 to 2010, a massive development took place in the country. The President assured that sustainable solutions will be provided for all other issues as well.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of infrastructure development projects have been initiated. While stating that all these activities will continue,

President Rajapaksa said all the promised projects will be completed if there are no more lockdowns in the country in the future.

The intelligent people should always be on alert. Do not leave any room for the lies. Highways Minister Johnston Fernando said the Opposition should not be allowed to sabotage the development programme being carried out by the Government in the face of the COVID-19 challenge.

Back then, President Mahinda Rajapaksa made all the plans to build the Kinniya Bridge, the Highways Minister said, and added that he regrets the tragedy caused by the previous government's negligence to implement the project. He said precious lives could have been saved if the project had been implemented.

The 'Golden Gate Kalyani' is another symbol of Japan-Sri Lanka friendship. Japanese Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Hideaki Mizukoshi, said Japan will continue to provide assistance to Sri Lanka.

The Maha Sangha, other religious leaders, Cabinet and State Ministers, Governors, people's representatives including Members of Parliament, Ambassadors, Foreign Representatives, Secretaries to Ministries and Government Officials attended the event.



## Mangala Samaraweera

*Son of the late Mahanama and Khema, brother of late Jaimini and Jayanthi, brother-in-law of Nimal Gunewardena and uncle of Yeshanth, Sunimalie and Chanchala, passed away on 24th August 2021.*

**His ashes will be interred at 4.30 pm on 26th November 2021 at the family grave at Matara cemetery.**

SAMSUNG



Galaxy A52s | A22 5G

Awesome 5G,  
Awesome speed

5G 12 band support\*

120Hz, FHD+ sAMOLED display

IP67 for water and dust resistance\*

Available at:



Image simulated. Galaxy A52s is 5G ready and Galaxy A22 is 5G enabled. Compatibility dependent upon 5G network availability. Price starting at Rs. 59,990/-.  
\*Features vary by devices. Prices may subject to change without prior notice. For more details, visit [www.samsungsrilanka.lk/](http://www.samsungsrilanka.lk/)

Contact Us  
**011 Samsung  
7267864**

## Easter Sunday Attacks Trial

## Fmr SIS Chief Says Had No Inkling of Attack Until 20 April

By HANSI NANAYAKKARA

Former State Intelligence Senior Chief DIG Nilantha Jayawardena responding to cross-examination by the Defence yesterday (25), said that he did not have any inkling until 20 April 2019, that an attack would take place on 21 April 2019.

Jayawardena was testifying in two cases, filed by the Attorney General in the Colombo High Court, against former Defence Secretary Hemasiri Fernando and former IGP Pujith Jayasundara for failing to take appropriate action in connection with the 2019 Easter Sunday attacks.

The two cases were taken up for hearing for a third day before the three-Judge Bench comprising Justices Namal Balalle, Aditya

Patabendi and Mohamed Irshadeen.

President's Counsel Mohan Weerakoon, appearing for former Defence Secretary Hemasiri Fernando, cross-examined the witness.

Responding to a question from Counsel Weerakoon, Jayawardena said that if Zaharan and his group had bought clothes for the attack on the 16th, they would have decided on the attack during that time and asked how he could believe information received on the fourth day.

Saying if the Chief of the Intelligence Service himself began to consider this only on 20 April 2019, the President's Counsel inquired from him what he could say about others. Witness Jayawardena said that even if he was the Director of the Intelligence

Service, if a curfew was imposed on the grounds that an attack was going to take place on the following day and if an attack did take place or not, ultimately, he would have been the one to have been found guilty.

The witness testified that although attempts were made to contact the President until the 21st, to provide information regarding the attacks, they had been unable to do so.

Deputy Solicitor General Dileepa Peiris and Deputy Solicitor General Sudharshana de Silva appeared for the Attorney General while President's Counsel Mohan Weerakoon and Attorney-at-Law Roshan Dehiwala appeared for the defendants.

The case is due to be heard further today (26).

## Adheres to SLSI requirements

- LAUGFS

As an importer of LPG to the country, LAUGFS Gas follows the standards published by the Sri Lanka Standards Institute (SLSI) and LAUGFS Gas PLC has its LPG specifications accordingly, LAUGFS in a statement yesterday.

LAUGFS has never released LPG with low standards as said by certain sections of the media, it said.

LAUGFS further said: 'Composition of LPG is used according to the temperature zones and in a range of propane/butane: 30 per cent/70 per cent used in Sri Lanka accordingly.

Mostly 100 per cent propane is used in ice-forming cold countries. LAUGFS uses LPG with average composition of propane/butane: 30 per cent/70 per cent ratio in Sri Lanka. LAUGFS has never released LPG with composition of propane/butane: 50 per cent/50 per cent. There is no truth in the statements made by sections of the media that LAUGFS violates the standards stipulated by SLSI. It is the responsibility of gas companies to ensure the standards of LP gas cylinders and LAUGFS ensures the same properly and adheres to standards stipulated by SLSI, the statement said.

'It is the duty of the SLSI

and other relevant State institutions to define the composition of ingredients and properties of LPG and monitor compliance.'

on certain occasions, media has declared LPG-related incidents are caused by 'bursts' of LPG cylinders but in reality, there is no single incident of such 'explosions' of LPG cylinders in recent history in Sri Lanka. Most of the incidents are caused by a lack of knowledge by LPG consumers and improper usage, LAUGFS claimed. 'Some media and 'personnel' have declared the opinion of the LPG tank as a bomb. It is a misleading concept.

It is revealed by LAUGFS and other State institutions in their investigations that the root cause for domestic and industrial LPG-related incidents is the lack of awareness of proper usage of LP Gas and malpractices, LAUGFS said.

A process of making consumers aware by conducting programmes and by distributing leaflets is practised by LAUGFS countrywide. It will be supportive to protect society from LP gas incidents if State Institutions and media effectively contribute to such awareness programmes, the statement in conclusion said.

## Central Expressway ready by 2024

By THAMEENAH RAZEEM

Development work on the Central Expressway will be completed by 2024, according to the Director General of the Road Development Authority (RDA), Sardha Weerakoon.

The RDA has taken steps to consult the appropriate agencies to discuss proposals outside the present system in order to prevent the damage to completed roads during the implementation of development projects such as water, electricity, and telecom.

Weerakoon, stated that a two-metre area will be set aside on each side of the road to be used in development initiatives conducted by other institutions. He said that all major traffic congestion areas in Colombo would be widened, and modern signal lights systems would be put in place.

He was speaking at a press conference, conducted at the

Presidential Media Centre yesterday (25), on the latest information on Sri Lanka's road network. Highways Ministry Secretary R. W. R. Premasiri stated that all byroads and access roads around the country have been constructed and linked to the main road network. The Director General noted that the 41-kilometre portion of the Central Expressway, from Mirigama to Kurunegala, which has been long sought by the people, will be opened to the public shortly, adding that the opportunity was realised with great determination in the face of the pandemic. He went on to say that the road development procurement procedure is conducted in accordance with international standards and the technical specifications specified by the Construction and Training Institute in order to preserve international standards in construction.

## IMF team here for two weeks

The International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) Mission Chief for Sri Lanka, Masahiro Nozaki, based at IMF Headquarters in Washington, DC, by email on Wednesday (24), said an IMF staff team is scheduled to visit Colombo for two weeks from 7-20 December, to conduct the 2021 Article IV consultation with Sri Lanka.

Under Article IV of the IMF's Articles of Agreement, the IMF holds regular bilateral discussions with all member countries such as Sri Lanka to review economic developments and policies, Nozaki said.

Consequently, following approval by the IMF Management, the IMF's Executive Board discusses such staff reports based on these discussions, he said.

Nozaki in conclusion said the IMF has not received a request for financial support from Sri Lanka recently, but the staff stands ready to discuss options if requested. (PA)

## No dispute between Govt and SLFP - Dinesh

By GAGANI WEERAKOON AND METHMALIE DISSANAYAKE

Leader of the House Dinesh Gunawardena said yesterday (25) in Parliament that there is no dispute between the Government and the SLFP.

He made this remark, during a verbal confrontation between former President Maithripala Sirisena, Agriculture Minister Mahindanada Aluthgamage and State Minister Dayasiri Jayasekara in the Chamber, with regard to Sirisena's expenses during his presidency.

'Former President is aware of the traditions of Parliament because he had also acted as the Leader of the House in the past. There is a tradition in Parliament that if an MP delivers a speech against another MP, then the latter should be in the Chamber at that time. It is the procedure in Parliament. I believe that if Aluthgamage did something wrong he would accept it. If he is not at fault, I believe that he would provide a clarification,' stated Gunawardena

So, we should protect these parliamentary traditions. It is not fair to say that the Government and the SLFP have disputes because of this situation, he remarked.

42<sup>nd</sup> National Youth Awards today

The 42nd National Youth Awards, jointly organised by the Youth & Sports Ministry and the National Youth Services Council (NYSC) will be held today (Friday, 26 November) under the patronage of Minister Namal Rajapaksa at the Nelum Pokuna Mahinda Rajapaksa Indoor Theatre.

In this event, selected 'short' and 'long' drama in both Sinhala and Tamil young dramatists versed in aesthetic skills from islandwide who have performed well in singing, acting, dancing, prose, and verse will win awards. More than 130 young dramatists, artistes, and literary figures competed under 45 categories will be recognised at this event.

Youth Film Awards Festival' organised for the 9th time, assessing the works of upcoming cinematographers, islandwide has also been included in this awards ceremony.

A segment of this event is the 'Thurunu Shakthi' Next Generation-Reality Show presented by the NYSC.

Among the others who will be present at this event are Public Security



Thenuka Vidanagama, Vidura Wickramanayake and Nalaka Godahewa, NYSC Chairman/Director General Damitha Wickramasinghe and Ministry Secretary Anuradha Wijekoon.

## Hartal in Kinniya town over fatal ferry capsizing

By REBECCA PAVEY AND NABIYA VAFFOOR IN KINNIYA

A hartal was staged in Trincomalee yesterday (25) by closing all shops in Kinniya town to protest against the Kinniya ferry tragedy. They demanded justice for the six lives that were lost and the several others who were injured in the incident two days ago.

Police arrested the owner of the ferry and two of its operators on Wednesday (24).

Assistant Director of the District Disaster Management Centre (DMC) K.B. Suganathas made these remarks after the ferry capsized along the Kurinchakeni Lagoon.

When questioned on what action was being taken by the DMC for those affected by this incident, Suganathas said the families of the deceased will be compensated.

He added, however, that the provision of relief for those injured is still being discussed, while only those in critical condition will be eligible.

Furthermore, he said discussions pertaining to the matter are being held at the district level.

When questioned on whether any person would be held accountable for this tragedy, Suganathas said while no one can be held accountable yet, he questioned the grounds on which the Chairman of the Kinniya Urban Council had permitted the operation of this ferry service. The Kinniya UC Chairman was arrested yesterday evening on charges of aiding and abetting the owner of the ferry service.

Suganathas said local authorities and the Rural Development Authority (RDA) must both implement guidelines and criteria for the operation of such ferry services across Trincomalee, if such tragedies are to be prevented in the future.

A similar incident is believed to have occurred several years ago. When asked about this, he said no casualties had been reported in this incident, and that it had occurred nearly seven to eight years ago.



## Public pay last respects to Mangala



A three-month remembrance of the late Mangala Samaraweera was held yesterday (25) in Colombo, where his political allies, members of the diplomatic community, and the public paid their last respects to the ashes of the late MP.

(Pix by Laksiri Rukman)





**CEYLON  
TODAY**

## Ceylon Newspapers (Pvt) Ltd.

No: 101, Rosmead Place, Colombo 07.  
 Editorial Tel: 0117566522, 0117566526, 0117566527  
 Fax: 0117566545  
 Marketing Manager: 0117566550, 0117566551  
 Circulation Manager: 0117566580, 0117566581  
 E-mail: editor@ceylontoday.lk

## 'Growth' Beats 'Inflation'

Central Bank of Sri Lanka's (CBSL's) dilemma at its Wednesday's monetary policy meeting was whether to cap record high inflationary pressure or to spur growth?

But with CBSL keeping its policy rates unchanged at Wednesday's meeting, that shows that 'growth' has won over 'inflation.'

Islandwide inflation due to supply side effects may end up in record high double digits in the coming months, CBSL Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal warned the Media in a briefing at CBSL Headquarters, Colombo yesterday.

This has to be looked at in the context that inflation last month alone at 8.3 per cent was at a 47-month high.

Nonetheless, CBSL didn't use a key policy tool in its armour to control inflation at its last monetary policy meeting for the year held on Wednesday by keeping its monetary policy rates unchanged. A key tool to draw down inflationary pressure is by increasing rates. Increased rates draw in money to institutions such as banks, thereby reducing money circulation in the economy, which in turn dampens inflationary pressure.

Nevertheless, Cabraal's excuse for not raising rates was that inflationary pressure was not due to demand side concerns, but because of supply side effects. However, with the possibility of companies and even the Government paying bonuses to its employees next month, that will be an impetus to grow demand side inflationary pressure, on top of supply side inflationary pressure as well, as averred by the Governor, which will make a bad situation worse.

Howbeit, demand side inflationary pressure caused by bonuses may be transitory, but transitory or not, inflationary pressure is bad for a developing economy like Sri Lanka, where a considerable number of its population is living a 'hand to mouth' existence.

Referring to the aforesaid possibility of inflation hitting double digits in the coming months, CBSL in a statement yesterday said, "A further acceleration of headline inflation is possible in the immediate future, although such movements are expected to be transitory. The monetary policy measures already taken by the Central Bank will help curbing excessive demand pressures and preventing the buildup of adverse inflation expectations." This statement was issued in respect of CBSL's Thursday's monetary policy stance.

If, as Cabraal said that record double digit inflationary pressure expected in the coming months is due to external factors beyond Government's control, then the obvious solution to keep supply side inflationary pressure at bay is to have a strong rupee.

Meanwhile, CBSL in its aforesaid statement further said that, "In consideration of the current and expected macroeconomic developments as highlighted above, i.e., in the CBSL statement in question, the Monetary Board was of the view that the current policy interest rates are appropriate."

However, CBSL's Director Economic Research Dr. Chandranath. Amarasekara let the cat out of the bag as to why CBSL didn't increase rates despite record double digit inflationary pressure expected to envelop the economy in the coming months.

Speaking to the Media, he said that private sector credit growth in September decelerated to 13.8 per cent, year on year, from 15.1 per cent in August, with this decelerating trend continuing up to last month, though October's figures weren't divulged.

This deceleration in private sector credit growth has to be looked at in the context that the private sector is considered the engine of growth. Therefore, if rates rise that will jeopardise private sector credit growth as borrowings would become costlier. That may well be the reason by CBSL didn't raise rates at its Wednesday's Monetary Board meeting, but rather, kept its rates unchanged.

And, also in the wider context, Census and Statistics Department in its latest labour bulletin showed that Sri Lanka's labour force participation rate (LFPR) scarred by COVID-19 and exchange controls which dampens trading activities went under 50 per cent for the first time after 34 quarters in second quarter (2Q) 2021.

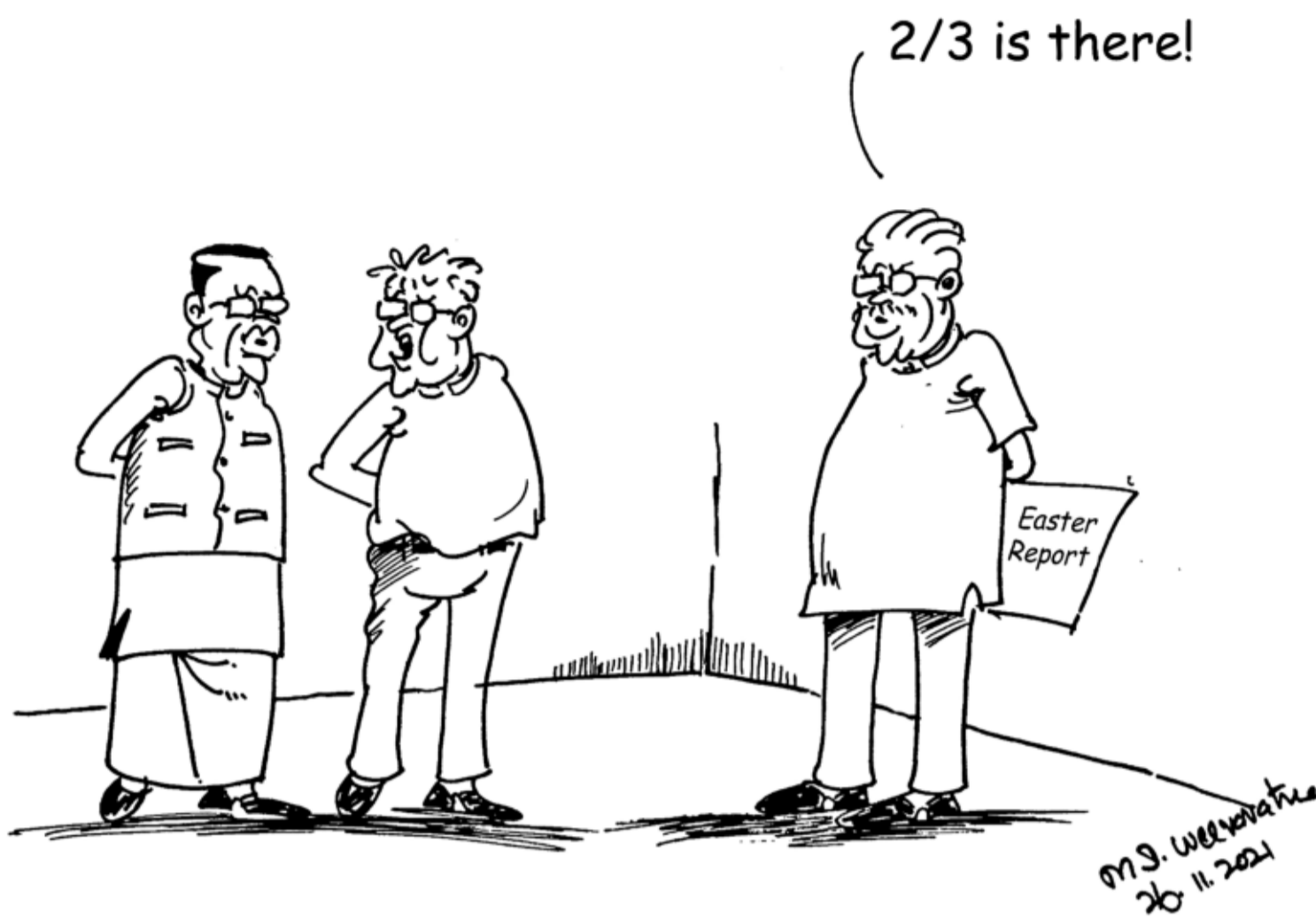
2Q 2021 yielded an LFPR of 49.8 per cent. A figure lower than this was last registered 34 quarters ago in 4Q 2012 with a figure of 49.3 per cent, data showed. LFPR is the cumulative total of those employed as well as those who are seeking employment and who are 15 years and above in age. A lower LFPR generally means that people of employable age have given up looking for work.

Year 2012 was a year when CBSL/Government liberalised the rupee in order to protect the country's foreign reserves, but at the expense of steeply depreciating the rupee to then record lows at the expense of the economy, not least employment growth.

CBSL's salve to mitigate these economic ills is by keeping rates unchanged despite record inflationary pressure at its Wednesday's Monetary Board meeting.

Besides, in two consecutive months, i.e., in August and September, domestic credit by the banking sector and CBSL to the Government and its agents such as corporations have exceeded credit to the private sector, a phenomenon last seen 32 years ago for 10 consecutive months from January to October 1989, when the country was in flames due to the activities of the unholy 'triumvirate,' the IPKF the LTTE and the JVP.

Nonetheless, what is needed to boost private sector credit growth is by restoring their confidence, both on the economy and on the Government and not necessarily by keeping rates low, despite inflationary pressure. Sri Lanka's six-year-old growth story from July 1977 to June 1983 is a key example.



# The Budget with No Perspective

By SUMANASIRI LIYANAGE

The second reading of the maiden budget of Basil Rajapakse, the new Minister of Finance, was passed by the Parliament on 22 November with 153 votes in favour and 60 against. The budget was presented at a time when the Sri Lankan economy is in severe all-encompassing crisis. The crisis may be discussed at two levels. The first refers to what we can see at the surface level and this is the level at which mainstream economists are primarily concerned with. At this level, the foreign exchange crisis is the predominant aspect being all the others connected to it either as a cause or as an outcome. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic is felt particularly on the trade balance and the current account of the balance of payment. This crisis is extended to the fiscal crisis exerting heavy pressure on Government spending at a time Government revenue is dwindling partly because of the very policies the Government has adopted in the last two years. The crisis at this level has been widely described, so that I do not need to dwell on that using the limited time given to me. I believe, the crisis at second level is of great importance as the crisis at the first level is in a way a symptom of the second level of crisis that has been spread to deeper into the body-economic of the country. I call this a structural crisis in opposition to surface level crisis. The budget expressed its conspicuous silence, wittingly or unwittingly, about the sicknesses of the economy at both levels. One may even wonder that the Finance Minister in presenting his maiden budget was much more concerned with maintaining political power of his party/alliance than correcting the economic impasse of the country.

## Understanding the Crisis

Prior to the development of a strategy, it is imperative to understand the crisis with its all-encompassing linkages. It is not incorrect to start with the forex crisis as it is linked with the post-1977 development strategy. In August this year, the net foreign assets of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) was down to minus 400 million US dollars. It rose to minus 1200 million dollars in October. There is no doubt that this is a critical situation. The question that should be raised is why such a situation arose after 43 years of export-oriented development strategy that was introduced in 1977 and has been highly praised by the mainstream economists. Moreover, the continuation and deepening of the same strategy has been proposed by them as remedy for the crisis. Simply, they say, following Margaret Thatcher, 'there is no alternative'. On the contrary, I submit this so-called export-oriented development strategy has failed and the country should abandon it.

The present crisis is not as W. A. Wijewardena presumes a product of "the domestic economy-based economic growth model used by Mahinda Rajapaksa administration" between 2005 and 2015. As Prof. Lalithasiri Gunaruwan has shown the so-called export orientation in fact did not work and Sri Lanka has had a negative trade balance throughout the entire period in which this strategy was put into practice. Throughout this period of 43 years we based more on imports of goods and as a result, Sri Lanka's

## NOTES TO THE PEOPLE



Sri Lankan situation has reached an alarming level as it has immediate needs of foreign currency in the vicinity of 3 billion US dollars to import essential goods and services. It is in this context that going back to the IMF was raised by mainstream economists, think tanks and bureaucrats. The Government's opposition to it is not based on principle or past experience but just to avoid the close supervision by Washington over the running of the economy

import bill rose to 25 per cent of the GDP in 2019. Hence, the export-oriented development strategy was at the end metamorphosed into an import-based consumption and production strategy. The import-based consumption and production strategy was financed by foreign assistance and soft loans in the initial years and then by foreign debt. As a result, Sri Lanka was transformed from foreign-assistance State to foreign-debt State. This process is somewhat similar to the model developed with regard to

developed countries in the West by a German political economist, Wolfgang Streeck. He has shown that in Europe it was a transition from a tax State to a debt State. Sri Lankan situation has reached an alarming level as it has immediate needs of foreign currency in the vicinity of 3 billion US dollars to import essential goods and services.

It is in this context that going back to the IMF was raised by mainstream economists, think tanks and bureaucrats. The Government's opposition to it is not based on principle or past experience but just to avoid the close supervision by Washington over the running of the economy. I discussed this issue in two recent columns, so, there is no intention to repeat them.

Forty-three years (1978-2021) of experience provides an adequate time frame for the evaluation of a developmental strategy. The time has come that we should think of not just an alternative but a paradigmatic shift. Nonetheless, it is hard to see such a perspective in the Budget 2022. It does not have a deep understanding of the nature of the current crisis and as a necessary corollary nor remedial prescription.

## Whither Sri Lanka

Two blurred ideas scattered here and there in the speech may be found. The first idea reads as follows: "At present, our economy is tilted more towards the trading sector. For a long time now, imports have been double of exports. This is not sustainable, and it is challenging. We will have to transform our economy into an advanced manufacturing economy." The second is a restatement of the idea of making Sri Lanka five major hubs that was initially outlined in Mahinda Chinthanaya 2010. Thus, the budget envisions the possibility of making Sri Lankan economy following the example of Singapore and Dubai. Nevertheless, how these ideas could be materialised has not been adequately shown in the budget speech except for one or two indications.

It appears that the Minister is aware of the fact that the transfer of capital within the economy is not conducive to the development of the manufacturing sector. In a capitalistic economy capital usually moves from less profit sectors to high profit sectors. The natural tendency is to move capital to high profit areas. In Sri Lanka, high profit areas include FIRE + HE. (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate + Health and Education). The Budget proposes an additional tax on the financial sector. However, it would not be adequate to inverse the market process. Hence, one may describe the Finance Minister as a medical practitioner who knows the correct medicine that is to be prescribed but does not know the dose and the frequency it is to be taken.

The world knows varying development paths. In the final analysis, the relevant question is how the social surplus is used. Besides this fundamental issue, there are so many questions that have to be addressed soon in order to take the country out of its present impasse. Unfortunately, both issues are completely neglected by the maiden effort of the new Finance Minister.

**The writer is a retired teacher of Political Economy at the University of Peradeniya. sumane\_1@yahoo.com**

# Health Ministry In an Utter Mess

By FAADHILA THASSIM

There is a dearth of health specialists in the country. President of the Government Medical Officers' Forum (GMOF), Dr. Rukshan Bellana opined while expressing his disappointment over the local drug manufacturing failure.

Dr. Bellana in an interview with *Ceylon Today* further slammed the Government Medical Officers' Association (GMOA) for having deviated from the basic objective of a trade union.

**Excerpts of the interview:**

**What is the role of the GMOF in addressing the shortcomings in the health sector?**

**A:** GMOF is one of the most popular and fast-growing medical trade unions in the country gaining popularity not only among the doctors but also among the public.

One of our basic principles is that we don't want to see doctors engage in strikes, we enroll only doctors that are willing to say no to strikes as we only want to see powerful personalities running the trade union without a personal agenda which would pave way for a win-win situation for the doctors.

We are not rivals of the GMOA but we are competing with them in order to achieve welfare and professional goals of the medical professionals in Sri Lanka.

Venerable Muruththettuwa Ananda Thera is the unofficial leader of the GMOF and he goes as the patron of the GMOF and has given the freedom to the Executive Committee to take our own stand in regard to issues in the health sector. He is a trade union leader in the health sector since 1966 and thereby nobody can be a leader in the health sector other than him.

**Has the GMOA which is an age-old Union managed to gain consistent recognition?**

**A:** The GMOA is a hijacked organisation at the moment and they are deviated from the basic objective of a trade union and we are therefore compelled to criticise them.

GMOA had a golden era before 2000. The doctors in the service as well the citizens remember such era and the due respect is given for that past. It is a 95 year old organisation and 80 years of a golden era but the people and the Government are unaware that for the past 15 years, it has become an obsolete organisation.

Out of the 23,000 doctors, only around 500 are actively participating and they are keeping the others by force at ransom thanks to the Government support.

We too would like to see the GMOA do well because that would eventually

help the doctors but without a competitive setup, we don't see any good for the doctors happening through the GMOA.

A union that attempts to seek the attention of politicians and one that asks for personal help will never be able to win demands for doctors and that is what has happened to the GMOA.

Therefore, we are trying our best to replace them but the biggest obstacle in doing so is the Government itself, as the Government gave them a good hearing and support and they have managed to create an impression that the President is in support of them.

Therefore, doctors in fear of repercussions did not want to leave the GMOA and join us for the past two years but nevertheless we are getting a few memberships but 'chicken-hearted' doctors are still in persistent fear because of the harassment they might be subject to due to the impression that the Government has given that they are with the GMOA.

We need to break the shackles here but unfortunately, it has been so far a struggle. The Government is totally misdirected with the presence of the GMOA in the main decision making mechanisms.

The control of COVID-19 could have been much better if not for the GMOA involvement. They should be removed from the Presidential Task Force so that independent, right thinking professionals can express their views.

GMOA has no medical experts in their teams. They have ordinary medical officers holding main positions but top ranks of the Government are under the impression that they are the experts.

They have ignored the Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA), Association of Medical Specialists and other professional colleges. They



Doctors are harassed through the annual transfers; compulsory transfers are illegal but it happens. Some of the Officials of the Ministry of Health act as puppets and fear if they resist GMOA, they might be in the blacklisted category of the Government



Dr. Rukshan Bellana

don't even know the difference between the GMOF and such professional colleges.

The maximum participation when observing the last five minutes of the AGM of the GMOA is only 208 doctors while the GMOF can easily gather over 500 doctors at a given time, but we are not for going behind politicians and attention seekers.

We are also trying to grow not by force but through voluntary understanding of the difference between the two competing organisations.

**What in your opinion are the main shortcomings in the health industry?**

**A:** Doctors are harassed through the annual transfers; compulsory transfers are illegal but it happens. Some of the Officials of the Ministry of Health act as puppets and fear if they resist GMOA, they might be in the blacklisted category of the Government.

Those high ranking officials who were thrown out of the Ministry of Health such as Dr. Anil Jayasinghe, Dr. Amal Harsha De Silva, Dr. Jayaruwan Bandara, Dr. Praba Palihawadana, Dr. Sudath Samaraweera were such victims in the recent past.

Tales are carried to the top of the hierarchy, with false information, by the GMOA and hence the remaining officers are living in a fear psychosis and duties are

only carried out on the demand of the GMOA.

We as the GMOF do not like to interfere with the decision-making processes other than to create a win-win situation for doctors. In the process; one of our other principles is to cooperate with the Health Minister who is in charge of the subject matter whatever the Government.

We had a healthy relationship with almost every Health Minister of the country, even in the past when we were not registered as an organisation.

Other than the GMOA, all the other trade unions had to agitate continuously to change the situation.

For the past two years, the Government has messed up the entire health services sector by

giving the GMOA priority in decision making and based on that feedback removing some of the best administrators in the country who could have done much better if they were given a free hand.

The appointment of the Military Health Secretary has not brought any successful results other than maintaining a low profile. However, we see a strong leadership with the incumbent Minister of Health Keheliya Rambukwella who might face attacks from the mafia organisation because so far he has showed a straightforwardness in administration.

**What are the main issues in the pharmaceutical industry?**

**A:** State Pharmaceuticals Manufacturing Corporation (SPMC) and the National Medicines Regulatory Authority (NMRA) are highly inefficient and corrupt organisations. The country is losing lots of business opportunities as these organisations can create employment opportunities within the country but the pharmaceuticals industry is slowly shrinking and shutting down its operations in Sri Lanka as a result of the huge losses they make due to corruption and inefficiencies in these organisations.

Drug manufacturing in Sri Lanka is another failure and is only done to fool the public by using the term local manufacturer. Through local manufacturing, unless we create an export opportunity, we have no future. We manufacture within the country by bringing raw materials at a high price and importing the technology from foreign countries together with technical expertise.

Therefore, the price of the locally-manufactured product is much higher than that of the imported products. Apart from such price, the commissions and the corruption related to the industry makes the price of the product much higher anyway. It is a useless venture but the Chairmen of these establishments want the Government to believe they can save money for the country hence fooling the public health sector.

We have a dearth of health specialists in the country and therefore there is a need to increase the number of specialists. We do not believe in duty concessions but we believe that doctors should be given a vehicle by the Government on par with the parallel officers in the Government receiving it.

The intern and post-intern appointments are delayed because of one single trade union and not because of the inefficiency of the Director General of Health Services or his subordinates. The Health Ministry is in an utter mess and if the Government is willing to cooperate with us, we know how to put it right.

# Ramayana heritage tourism

Indo-Sri Lankan cultural relations will get a re-boost with the 'spiritual tourism' efforts as a part of the Ramayana heritage tourism.

The cultural tourism initiative got a major boost under the Narendra Modi Government as a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed to promote Ramayana in 2016, said an article in Colombo Gazette.

The MoU said the two countries would work jointly to promote mutual tourism interests.

Earlier, both India and Sri Lanka had agreed in 2008 to work on enhancing shared cultural and religious values based on Ramayana heritage.

The Colombo Gazette article said that Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) helps create the 'Ramayana Trail in Lanka' to promote its 'spiritual tourism.'

In October 2021, new measures to boost bilateral travel between Sri Lanka and India came under review at the third meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) dedicated to tourism. Jeewana Fernando, who is in charge of the Ramayana Trail at the Sri Lankan Tourism Development Authority, said that they are gearing up to promote the Ramayana Trail post-pandemic and have already earmarked promoting many of the 52 sites that are located in the country. "The SLTDA annually allocates



around Rs 20 million for promoting the Ramayana Trail in Sri Lanka and they have coordinated with many Hindu religious missions in India to bring devotees to Sri Lanka on the Ramayana heritage," he said. "The SLTDA has identified and promoted only 32 sites that are located in the fabulous natural beauty of the county and is hoping to promote the rest of the attractions in the coming years."

he added. The JWG follows the mandate of the Indo-Sri Lankan inter-Governmental bilateral MoU signed in January 2004 which has developed bilateral tourism and has drawn a large number of Indian visitors to Sri Lanka in recent times.

The 'Ramayana Trail in Sri Lanka' and the spiritual tourism had cricketers Arjuna Ranatunga and Arvinda De Silva as brand

ambassadors. Despite being a Buddhist country, Sri Lankan audience is fascinated by the Ramayana movies and television episodes aired from India which helps them to be culturally connected.

Sri Lanka understands the importance of the cultural connection between New Delhi and Colombo through the Ramayana epic along with the other being the 'Mahabharat'.

The fillip to the initiative has assumed more significance post-pandemic with the Sri Lanka Government having earmarked the initiative to promote the Ramayana Trail as a part of its expanding tourism industry.

The Sri Lankan Tourism Development Authority along with the Indian Government has been the brain behind 'Spiritual Tourism.'

According to SLTDA, at least 250,000 Indian tourists annually visit one of the 52 sites of the Ramayana Trail in Sri Lanka which will increase following the easing of the restrictions once the pandemic is over. Ramayana Trails is the Sita Amman Temple in Nuwara Eliya which Indian tourists never fail to visit.

Despite facing competition from China, Indian tourists are the top visitors. Factually, there were around 426,000 Indian tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka, whereas Chinese tourists accounted for only 267,000.

While the Indian Government is promoting Sri Lankan Buddhists to visit the Buddhist trails in India, it's an opportunity for both countries to promote each other to strengthen the economies when the global economy has plummeted due to COVID-19.

Sri Lanka has more attractions for all religions, and the Ramayana Trail tops them all.

(ANI)

# Medawachchiya Economic Centre Building Unused



BY EUNICE RUTH AND GAYAN

Berty Premalal Dissanayake Economic Centre in Medawachchiya which was built under the North Central Province council, is left unused without giving an opportunity to the traders in the villages.

The members of the Multi Purpose Cooperative Society (MPCS), Medawachchiya, said that millions were spent on constructing the economic centre and after the construction the shops were informally distributed by the then officials. The members have requested the Government to distribute the shops to the members of Medawachchiya Multi Purpose Cooperative Society to continue their businesses.

The economic centre was built in 2017 by the former President, Maithiripala Sirisena for the people of Medawachchiya. The building has 28 stalls, an administration office, and two staff offices. This building belongs to the North Central Provincial Council and the building has all facilities including electricity and water services. However, the building was opened and operated only for a few days.

The Medawachchiya Multi Purpose Cooperative Society members are focusing on reopening the Economic Centre. The members of the society recently inspected the economic centre to check the status of the building. Accordingly, under the guidance of Multi Purpose Cooperative Society General Superintendent, E. K. G. Ekanayaka, a committee has been appointed to conduct the inspection. The committee was led by the Director of Medawachchiya Multipurpose Cooperative Society, Thushitha Dharmapriya.

Ekanayaka noted that even though millions were spent on the construction of the economic centre,



currently, it is left abandoned. "If the Government gives us the building, we can make use of it to build a good business environment within the economic centre. We can also bring the harvest of the village farmers to the centre and distribute it to others", he said. Especially, this economic centre can be operated successfully by distributing goods to Medawachchiya, Kebithigollewa, Padaviya, Horowpothana and other parts of North Central Province. The economic centre can conduct wholesale distributions and provide the needed facilities for others just like co-operatives, if this is operated

correctly. "It is not good to waste an asset of our country like this and we request the responsible authorities and the Government to help us by giving us the economic centre. We can ensure that we will help our farmers and other village people by providing them stalls to uplift their lives," said Ekanayaka. Commissioner of North Central Province, N. H. R. Nishantha, said that the control of the economic centre is under the Chief Ministry of North Central Provincial Council and still it has not been passed on to the provincial office. We have raised



concerns in this regard to the Governor and we are waiting to resume the trading activities of the economic centre with the involvement of the Governor. "We are looking forward to speeding up the process of resuming trading activities", said Nishantha.

Divisional Secretary of Medawachchiya, M. C. Malaviarachchi, said that, the economic centre was operated only for a few days after the opening and later, it was closed and it remains closed for more than three years. She also noted that, the economic centre is located in a good place where everyone can carry on trading



E. K. G. Ekanayaka Thushitha Dharmapriya

activities without any issues. However, due to closure, the building is becoming dilapidated and if not for an economic centre, the building can be used for any other purposes. Currently, a part of economic centre is used as the Samurdhi Bank. As the ownership of the economic centre falls under Provincial Council, we are unable to take direct decisions regarding its opening and functioning, she added. "Currently, we are sending our harvests to Dambulla Economic Centre and if we have one for us, it will be very useful for farmers as well as to conduct trading activities. As Divisional Secretary, I assure we can give our support to the Provincial Council in any future development and we need a discussion with the relevant officials to find the reason behind the closure, and to make decisions regarding opening of the economic centre.

If the Government transfers the ownership of the building to the Pradeshiya Sabha, we can take measures to restart the economic centre's activities," said Malaviarachchi.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

## Jaffna Uni students...

University students placed floral tributes at the memorial located inside the University of Jaffna.

Meanwhile, the restraining order issued by Mullaitivu Magistrate, on 17 November banning the Heroes' Day commemoration was revoked yesterday. "To mourn the dead, is human," said lawyer V.S.S. Thananjayan, who appeared for the petitioners. The Magistrate ordered not to use any symbols and emblems of the LTTE while commemorating. He has said, "People can remember the dead, without using the name or symbols of any banned organisations."

However, the Jaffna Magistrate's Court has refused to withdraw the order banning the Heroes' Day event.

Judge V.R. Sivalingam of the Jaffna Magistrate's Court advised that the injunction was permanent and that the defendants should appeal to the

High Court if they wanted to object to it.

The Jaffna Magistrate's Court granted the application filed last Friday on behalf of the officers in charge of Kopay and Jaffna Police Stations. Arrangements were being made to hold the Maaveerar commemoration in front of the Army's 512 Brigade Headquarters, located at the former Maaveerar Tullum Home (burial site) in Kopay, and in the vicinity of the Jaffna University and the Jaffna Police Station.

The Police had demanded that Section 106 of the Code of Criminal Procedure be sited under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and that it was a crime to conduct such an event. The Court issued an injunction restraining the commemoration of Heroes' Day for one week from 21 November to 28

November. In this case, the lawyers representing the defendants and the attorneys representing the defendants requested that the restraining order to be reconsidered. Accordingly, the case was called and the submissions on behalf of the defendants were allowed.

Leading senior counsel on behalf of the defendants presented a lengthy submission. Attorneys noted in the submission that the Police application should be rejected on the basis that it was granted by the other Magistrate Courts of the district under the same law. The Police submitted a strong objection. Judge Sivalingam, after examining the submissions of both the parties, directed that the restraining order could not be withdrawn and that the objections on behalf of the defendants should be taken up in the High Court.

## Court dismisses...

... concern the LTTE: - in the alternative, adopt a lesser measure than maintaining the LTTE on the European Union's (EU's) list of terrorist organisations; - order the Council to pay costs plus interest.

But the Council of the European Union (EU), supported by the United Kingdom (UK), contended that the Court should: - dismiss the action as inadmissible; - in the alternative, dismiss the action as manifestly unfounded;- order the applicant to

pay the costs.

The judgment of the General Court (Fourth Chamber) composed judges S. Gervasoni, President, L. Madise and P. Nihoul (Rapporteur) ordered the European Political Subdivision of the LTTE to bear its own costs and to pay those incurred by the Council of the EU, but ordered the UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to bear its own costs as well. The UK is not a member of the EU. The Council of

the EU was represented by B. Driessen and S. van Overmeire, acting as agents was supported by UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, represented by F. Shibli and S. Mc Crory, acting as agents, with P. Nevill, Barrister, appearing for the defendants.

In 2017, another EU court, European Court of Justice also based in Luxembourg, removed the LTTE from the blacklisted terrorists groups.

## CEBEU Declares...

... a General Manager to the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) has been violated and attempts are now underway to politicise such appointments, he said.

"The motive behind such politicising is to create a corrupt environment within the CEB that would condone the approval of the New Fortress Energy LNG deal," he alleged.

Elaborating further, Kumarawadu said, until the demands of the CEBEU, including that of permitting the ongoing transparent Tender Procedure by the CEB for continuous LNG development, to stop attempts to unbundle the CEB, to cease proposed amendments for the Board Act No.17 of 1969, to stop interference and politicisation by the

appointment of a new General Manager of CEB and to stop abrupt and arbitrary transfers of the Senior Management are met, trade union action shall continue.

CEBEU previously commenced a 'Non-cooperation' campaign against the Chairman of CEB on 22 November which is still in force while a picketing campaign was also staged.

## SJB protest Govt...

She said, "It is reported that one out of every five women in Sri Lanka goes through physical abuse or other forms of abuse. Even when something like that happens in this

Parliament no action is taken against it. No punishment imposed against such actions either. Issuing warnings alone is not enough to prevent abuse. It is

because of these, perpetrators continue to walk free when women are harassed and abused by them. Victims are suffering because of this situation."

## Kinniya UC...

The ferry that sank was granted a permit by the Kinniya Urban Council on 28 October 2021, requiring the ferry owner to implement safety

protocols. However, it was claimed that the UC failed to check whether the ferry owner complied with its conditions.



Paris, France

After migrant tragedy

# France and Britain seek answers while trading blame

France and Britain sought answers on Thursday on how to deter migrants from trying to cross the sea separating them after 27 people died making the attempt in an inflatable dinghy, the worst accident of its kind in the Channel on record.

President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Boris Johnson had differing views over who was to blame for the tragedy.

In a phone call with Johnson on Wednesday night, Macron emphasised the shared responsibility the two governments carried. Johnson said Britain had had difficulty persuading the French to tackle the problem in the correct way.

French Prime Minister Jean Castex was due to hold a crisis meeting on Thursday morning, as authorities announced that a fifth suspected people smuggler had been arrested in connection with the disaster.

British Interior Minister Priti Patel said she would be having talks with her French counterpart Gerald Darmanin, who said Britain, Belgium and Germany needed to do more to help France tackle the illegal migrants and human trafficking.

"It's an international problem," Darmanin told RTL radio.



A damaged inflatable dinghy and a sleeping bag abandoned by migrants are seen on the beach near Wimereux, France (Reuters)

Britain said the drownings highlighted how the efforts of French Police to patrol their beaches and secure their northern border were inadequate. "We have had difficulty persuading some of our partners, particularly the French, to do things in a way that we think the situation deserves," Johnson said on Wednesday.

He repeated an offer to have joint British-

French patrols of the northern French coast near Calais, from where Britain can be seen on a clear day and from where most migrants launch their bid to reach England's shores.

Paris has previously resisted such calls. London has in the past threatened to cut financial support for France's border policing if it fails to stem the flow.

(Reuters)

Canberra, Australia



Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison speaks with the Media following a day of meetings with foreign counterparts at the White House in Washington, US (Reuters)

## Australia introduces contentious religious anti-discrimination legislation

Australia on Thursday introduced contentious religious anti-discrimination legislation to Parliament that if approved would allow faith-based organisations to prioritise the hiring and enrolment of people from their faith.

Religious freedom has been in the spotlight in Australia since same-sex marriage was legalised in 2017.

In a move seen as targeting religious voters with an election just months away, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the legislation would protect people who express their religious faith outside of the workplace as long as it did not cause financial damage to their employer.

"People should not be cancelled or persecuted or vilified because their beliefs are different from someone else's," said Morrison, a devout Pentecostal Christian, while introducing the Bill in the Parliament's Lower House.

Morrison said the legislation would also protect Australians who make 'statements of belief' from discrimination laws, but only if those statements do not "threaten, intimidate, harass or vilify a person or group."

New Delhi, India



A man stands on the banks of the Yamuna River on a smoggy morning in New Delhi (Reuters)

## Delhi's schools, colleges to reopen next week

Air quality still very poor

Schools and colleges in India's capital will reopen on Monday after closing for nearly 15 days due to a spike in air pollution, the Government said, even though air quality remains very poor in New Delhi and its neighbouring cities.

Pollution levels dropped marginally earlier this week, but the Air Quality Index (AQI) on Thursday touched 393 on a scale of 500, indicating risks of respiratory illness from prolonged exposure.

Government offices would also open from next week but State employees should use public transport and government-run feeder buses, according to the Delhi

Government.

A ban on the entry of diesel trucks with non-essential goods would continue, the Government said, with only natural gas and electric powered vehicles allowed into the teeming city of more than 20 million people.

The Delhi Government has hired an extra 700 CNG buses to encourage people to use public transport. And a ban on construction has been re-imposed to curb dust, a major source of pollution. Delhi's foul air is putting more children in hospital with breathing problems, raising concerns among parents.

(Reuters)

Jakarta, Indonesia

## Controversial Labour Law Indonesia Court orders revisions

Indonesia's Constitutional Court on Thursday ordered the Government to amend parts of a new job creation law within two years, citing procedural flaws in how the controversial legislation was handled.

The law, which was passed last year and saw the revision of more than 70 existing laws, sparked protests across Indonesia and complaints that it undermined labour rights and environmental safeguards.

Ruling on Thursday in a judicial review brought by unions, Chief Judge Anwar Usman said if changes were not made in two years, the legislation would be deemed 'permanently unconstitutional.'

The ruling described the way the legislation was handled as procedurally flawed and, in some parts, unconstitutional, including changes made after parliamentary approval.

While the Judges acknowledged the rationale behind some of the

Government's actions in pushing through a law designed to attract investment and create jobs, the ruling said proper processes should have been followed.

"It doesn't mean that reaching those goals then could set aside the ways or formal procedures that are in effect," it said. Airlangga Hartarto, coordinating minister for economic affairs, said the Government respected the ruling.

"The Government will immediately follow up the Court's ruling by preparing for the law revision and carry out as best as we could the Court's instructions," he told a news conference.

The law had been designed to streamline bureaucratic procedures, spur investment and boost labour competitiveness, but critics argued comprehensive revisions took place that were rushed through without sufficient consultation.

(Reuters)



Members of Indonesian trade unions hold placards during a protest against the Government's labour reforms as Indonesia's Constitutional Court reads the verdict on a judicial review filed on the controversial 'omnibus' or Job Creation Law in Jakarta, Indonesia (Reuters)

Manila, Philippines



The BRP Sierra Madre, a marooned transport ship which Philippine Marines live on as a military outpost, is pictured in the disputed Second Thomas Shoal, part of the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea (Reuters)

## Removing grounded Navy ship Philippines rejects China's demand

The Philippines will not remove a dilapidated Navy ship grounded on an atoll in the South China Sea, its Defence Chief said on Thursday, rejecting a demand by China after it blocked a mission to resupply the vessel's crew.

Defence Secretary Delfin Lorenzana dismissed China's assertion on Wednesday that the Philippines had committed to remove the BRP Sierra Madre, which was intentionally grounded at the Second Thomas shoal in 1999 to reinforce Manila's sovereignty claims in the Spratly archipelago.

The 100 metre-long (330-ft) tank landing ship was built

for the US Navy during World War Two.

"That ship has been there since 1999. If there was commitment it would have been removed a long time ago," Lorenzana told reporters.

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman Zhao Lijian on Wednesday said, Beijing demands the Philippine side honour its commitment and remove its illegally grounded vessel."

The Second Thomas Shoal, 105 nautical miles (195 km) off Palawan, is the temporary home of a small contingent of military aboard the rusty ship, which is stuck on a reef.

(Reuters)

Islamabad, Pakistan



People wait for their turn to get petrol at a station, after the Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) announced a countrywide strike, in Karachi, Pakistan (Reuters)

## As profit margins drop Pakistan petrol retailers start nationwide strike

Pakistan's petrol retailers began a nationwide strike on Thursday as the main industry body flagged low profit margins, exacerbated by the Government's move to raise taxes and boost revenue under its agreements with the International Monetary Fund.

"This strike is nationwide. This is all over Pakistan and it will be for an indefinite period. We will not make our pumps operational till our demands are met," Khwaja Asif Ahmed, Secretary of Information at Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association, told reporters in Lahore on Wednesday

evening.

The country's Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) said it would try to curb the impact of the strike, adding that any disruptions would be met with legal action.

"All oil marketing companies have been advised to ensure uninterrupted oil supplies at retail outlets and OGRA enforcement teams are in-field to ensure the same," the OGRA's statement said.

"Anyone involved in oil disruptions causing public inconvenience shall be dealt strictly in accordance with OGRA laws."

(Reuters)

Stockholm, Sweden

## New Swedish PM resigns on first day in job

Hopes for swift return

Sweden's first female Prime Minister, Social Democrat Magdalena Andersson, resigned on Wednesday after less than 12 hours in the top job after the Green Party quit their two-party coalition, stoking political uncertainty.

But, Andersson said she had told the Speaker of Parliament she hoped to be appointed Prime Minister again as the head of a single-party government, and the prospects of that happening appeared fairly strong given support from other parties.

The Green Party quit after Parliament rejected the coalition's Budget Bill.

"I have asked the Speaker to be relieved of my duties as Prime Minister," Andersson told a news conference. "I am ready to be Prime Minister in a



Current Finance Minister and Social Democrat leader Magdalena Andersson is appointed as the country's new Prime Minister after a vote at the Swedish Parliament Riksdagen in Stockholm, Sweden (Reuters)

single-party, Social Democrat government."

The Green Party said it would support her in any new

confirmation vote in Parliament, while the Centre Party promised to abstain, which in practice amounts to

the same as backing her candidacy. The Left Party has also said it would back her.

While these parties were unable to agree a Budget, they are united in the goal of keeping the Sweden Democrats, a populist, anti-immigration party, from having a role in government.

"The Centre Party will open the door for her (Andersson) to be Prime Minister," its leader, Annie Loof, said on Twitter.

"We will make sure, again, that Sweden can have a government that is not dependent on the Sweden Democrats."

The Opposition right-wing Moderates and Christian Democrats are backed by the Sweden Democrats, but cannot command a majority in Parliament.

(Reuters)



# Central Bank Maintains Policy Interest Rates at Current Levels

By **RAJIESE SEETHARAM**

The Monetary Board of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, at its meeting held on 24 November 2021, decided to maintain the Standing Deposit Facility Rate (SDFR) and the Standing Lending Facility Rate (SLFR) of the Central Bank at their current levels of 5.00 per cent and 6.00 per cent, respectively. Bank rate would remain at 9%, and Statutory Reserve Ratio (SRR) would remain at 4%.

"Supply side disruptions, removal of domestic price controls

and upward adjustments to several administratively determined prices to reflect the rising global energy and other commodity prices along with the gradual firming of aggregate demand conditions, have pushed inflation above the targeted levels recently. A further acceleration of headline inflation is possible in the immediate future, although such movements are expected to be transitory. The monetary policy measures already taken by the Central Bank will help curbing excessive demand

pressures and preventing the buildup of adverse inflation expectations. Under these circumstances, the Monetary Board decided to keep the interest rates unchanged," a CBSL statement said.

CBSL Director Economic Research Dr. Chandranath Amarasekera noted that Sri Lanka recorded a growth of 8% in the first half of the year. Most of the Economic activities have returned to pre pandemic level. Real GDP growth for 2021 is expected as 5%, however he

claimed there are risk factors with COVID-19 cases increasing globally.

Gross official reserves were estimated at US dollars 2.3 billion by end October 2021. This, however, does not include the bilateral currency swap facility with the People's Bank of China (PBoC) of CNY 10 billion (approximately USD 1.5 billion).

With measures taken by the Government and CBSL to attract forex inflows, Amarasekera noted that CBSL expects to end the year with USD 3.5 billion in reserves.

## ASPI hits new high

By **MARIO ANDREE**

Despite of a minor setback during the previous market day, the Colombo Stock Exchange recovered on Thursday (25) to hit a new all-time high as the benchmark index rose on a higher turnover despite continued foreign exits from the Bourse.

The benchmark All Share Price Index (ASPI), which started the day at 10,910.06 points, gained 115.67 points (1.06 per cent) to close at 11,025.73 points, a new all-time high.

Browns Investment, Expolanka Holdings, Vallibel One, Browns and Royal Ceramic Lanka pushed the index up despite attempts by LOLC Holdings, Richard Pieris and Company, John Keells Holdings, Commercial Leasing & Finance and Lanka Realty Investment.

The S&P SL20 index, which represents the top 20 companies, listed, which started the day at 3,751.06 points, gained 16.35 points (0.44 per cent) to close at 3,767.41 points.

The day's turnover reached Rs 9.9 billion, higher than Rs 7.5 billion recorded the previous market day.

More than 459 million shares changed hands during 62,221 trades that took place.

Shares of 254 companies were traded during the day, of which 106 emerged as winners ahead of 99 losers.

Foreigners were net sellers for the tenth consecutive session during the day. The net foreign outflow on Thursday (25) stood at Rs 934 million as foreigners sold shares worth Rs 1,022 million as against purchases worth Rs 88 million.

Top ten gainers during the day were: Blue Diamonds (non-voting), Unisyst, DIMO, Tess Agro (non-voting), Tess Agro, Bogala Graphite, SMB Leasing, Orient Finance, Lanka Aluminum and Nation Lanka Finance.

The top ten losers were: Industrial Asphalt, Lanka Realty, Malwatte Plantations, Bansei Resorts, Richard Pieris, Anilana Hotels, Mullers and Phipps, Eastern Merchant, Hotels Corporation and Sinhaputhra Finance.

## US to release oil reserves in attempt to lower prices

The US has said it is releasing 50 million barrels of oil from its reserves in an attempt to bring down soaring energy and petrol prices.

The move is being taken in parallel with other major oil-consuming nations, including China, India, Japan, South Korea and the UK.

US President Joe Biden has repeatedly asked the Opec group of oil-producing nations to boost output more rapidly.

But OPEC has stuck to an agreement to only increase production gradually.

It says it is concerned that a resurgence of coronavirus cases could drive down demand, as happened at the height of the pandemic.

Crude oil prices recently touched seven-year highs, amid a sharp uptick in global demand as economies recover from the coronavirus crisis.

It's driven up petrol prices and energy bills in many countries.

In a statement the White House said: "American consumers are feeling the impact of elevated gas prices at the pump and in their home heating bills, and American businesses are, too, because oil supply has not kept up with demand."

"That's why President Biden is using every tool available to him to work to lower prices and address the lack of supply."

As part of the coordinated effort, the UK government will allow firms to voluntarily release 1.5 million barrels of oil from privately-held reserves.

It said the action would support the global economic recovery but "any benefit for UK drivers is likely to be limited and short in nature".

India will release five million barrels, while South Korea, Japan and China will announce the amount and timing of their releases in due course.

(BBC)



Finance Minister along with other dignitaries at Cinnamon Life Office Inauguration

### Lankan Arm of HCL Technologies Opens at Cinnamon Life

## Sri Lanka is one of HCL's key global delivery hubs - HCL CFO

The Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa said yesterday that India's HCL Technologies (HCL) presence in Sri Lanka, is a reflective of the long-term business resilience of Colombo's ascent as a commercial hub in South Asia.

"As a nation, we are thankful for the opportunities HCL continues to offer our youth and make them global IT professionals," he said at the opening ceremony of HCL's new facility at the state-of-the-art Cinnamon Life complex in Colombo.

HCL continues to expand and grow in Sri Lanka and this new facility will be its largest in the country, accommodating 4,000 employees.

HCL entered Sri Lanka in 2020 with the aim of making it a global technology and IT services delivery hub for some of the largest corporations in the world.

In continuation with its commitment to build first class capabilities and create local employment, HCL intends to occupy 80% of Cinnamon Life, a project by John Keells, with plans of taking up 10 floors now and 10 floors at a later stage.

From this new development HCL will provide IT services to global clients in the areas of digital applications and system integration services, product

development and support, and infrastructure management services including digital workplace solutions.

Gopal Baglay, High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka said, "Since the time HCL entered into Sri Lanka, it has been on a growth path."

It is extremely heartening to see how HCL is not only building a talent pool in the country but also working to create thousands of jobs for Sri Lankan youth and bringing global opportunities to Sri Lanka."

Prateek Aggarwal, Chief Financial Officer, HCL Technologies stated, "Sri Lanka is one of HCL's key global delivery hubs and we are very excited to continue expanding our operations in the country with the opening of our new office here."

In Sri Lanka, HCL Technologies recently surpassed a milestone of recruiting more than 1,000 local employees, including recent graduates and seasoned industry professionals.

"With Cinnamon Life's strategic location at the heart of Colombo, this iconic signature structure reflects of HCL as a next-generation global technology company that constantly reimagines business for a digital age," Corporate Vice President, HCL Technologies, Srimathi Shivashankar said. (IG)

## Sarvodaya Development Finance IPO oversubscribed on opening day

Sarvodaya Development Finance's (SDF) Rs 1 billion Initial Public Offering (IPO) was oversubscribed on the opening day, stated the Company Secretary of SDF.

Underwritten by NDB Bank and Sampath Bank, the IPO

was aimed at raising Rs 1 billion, through 45 million ordinary voting shares at a price of Rs 22.00 per share. The stake offered was 30.38%. There was active interest from a range of investors from both individuals and institutions.

## Selling pressure on treasuries

By **PANEETHA AMERSEKERE**

Government of Sri Lanka's (GoSL's) at least theoretical money printing borrowing costs (MPBCs) sharply increased by 6.06 per cent (Rs 2,955.34 million) to Rs 51,740.90 million due to selling pressure of Treasury T-Bonds and T-Bills in secondary market trading, to reinvest in Monday's T-Bond auction with expectations of better returns.

Money market was short for the 54th consecutive market day to yesterday, thereby causing persistent rate pressure, though market shortfall fell by 0.79 per cent (Rs2, 412 million) to Rs 301,187 million.

Money market liquidity during yesterday's trading increased by Rs 4,292 million (US\$ 21.20 million) due to the possible settlement/s of GoSL's sales of US dollars to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) at Tuesday's administered, albeit discounted 'spot' price of Rs 202.42 to the dollar and/or CBSL's swaps with the market.

GoSL's face value (FV) MP debt decreased by Rs 1,880 million (0.10 per cent) to Rs 1,807,444.43 million (Rs 1.8074 trillion) yesterday, thereby marginally defraying demand pull inflationary pressure as well. GoSL's FVMP debt has been over one trillion

rupees for a record 86 consecutive market days to yesterday due to a lack of revenue.

The interbank foreign exchange (FX) market was 'dead' for the 141st consecutive market day to yesterday with no outright transactions taking place, coupled with all trades in the FX market, including bank-client trades too, since midnight 6 September, mandated to be executed under a controlled exchange rate (ER) regime of between Rs 202-203 to the dollar, aiding in the spawning of a black market.

Non-commercial consumer credit card trades such as for education and health may be executed at a premium of five per cent over the administered ER of Rs 203 to the dollar, leading to such trades being executed at the Rs 213-214 levels to the dollar.

Commercial trades with approvals, which may involve the passing of speed money have to be executed at the administered and discounted price of Rs 203 to the dollar, after, apparently dipping into the country's Spartan foreign reserves, to meet such commitments.

At the controlled ER of Rs 203, the ER will have had depreciated by 7.69 per cent (Rs 14.50) in the calendar year to yesterday and year on year by between 9.61-9.26 per cent (Rs 17.80-17.20) to the dollar.



Rohan Senewiratne, Managing Director - Atarah Capital Partners, Nalin Perera, Managing Director - Myland Developments Limited, Chandana Wijesundara, Vice President-Investment Banking, Atarah Capital Partners, W. D. Premachandra, Chairman-Myland Developments Limited, Iresha Dissanayake, Executive Director-Myland Developments Limited, Ajith Alahakoon, Independent Director-Myland Developments Limited are seen at the headtable

## Myland Developments Ltd announces IPO to raise Rs 75 Mn

Real Estate Developer, Myland Developments Limited (MDL) has announced an Initial Public Offering (IPO), via offering a 17.24% stake of the Company and will be listed on the Diri Savi Board of the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE). Through the IPO, the Company plans to raise Rs 75 million via offering 6,250,000 ordinary voting shares at a price of Rs. 12/= per share.

The Offer is managed by Atarah Capital Partners, and will open on 8 December while the prospectus and application forms will be available from 25 November. The funds raised through the IPO, will be utilised for expansion through the acquisition of three new lands for development.

MDL recorded a Revenue of Rs 168 million and Profit After Tax (PAT) of Rs 26 million in the 2020/21 Financial Year (FY). This was a significant improvement from Rs 121 million Revenue and PAT of Rs 3 million recorded in the previous financial year, in which negative sentiments stemming from the 'Easter Attacks' adversely impacted the Company's financials. The Company has further strengthened its performance in the first six months (1H) of the current 2021/22 financial year, recording revenue of Rs 119 million, a 381% increase from the corresponding period year-on-year (YoY). The PBT for 1H 2021/22 stood at Rs 38.6 million.

## In line with digital journey

# Richard Pieris Finance to Drive Rapid Expansion

Richard Pieris Finance Ltd, a fully owned subsidiary of the renowned Richard Pieris Group, and the sole financing arm under the renowned Arpico brand, recently revealed its plans to drive its network expansion in line with its digital journey.

The company's digital journey was propelled following its inclusion as a member of the exclusive CEFT club, where only 26 banks and 14 finance companies have been authorised.

"We have shown a strong performance and increased growth trajectory in our financials, and made a profit before tax of Rs 200 million, for the first half of the financial year 2021/22. With our branch expansion plan, we aim to open up three more branches islandwide. We currently operate with 15 fully-fledged branches, and we see much more potential for more locations," said Richard Pieris Finance CEO Lohika Fonseka.

He further said the company's plans have been strategically aligned with its main objective of amplifying customer convenience, and



Lohika Fonseka

its current offerings which include Fixed Deposits and Savings, Leasing, Islamic Finance and Business Loans to name a few. Richard Pieris Finance will be implementing gold loan facilities through a new pawning service, which will be followed by a wider array of customer-centric products and services throughout the company's digital journey, according to Fonseka.

The company boasts of a deposit base worth Rs 9 billion, and an asset base worth Rs 17 billion. Fitch Ratings Lanka has also

revised the ratings of RPF's National Long-Term Rating from A-(lka) to AA-(lka) with a stable outlook, but this was mainly due to the recalibration of the corporate parent's National Rating.

Headed by a seasoned group of experts, Richard Pieris Finance's Board of Directors comprise of former C-suite professionals from the finance industry, as well as veteran bankers and legal professionals.

Richard Pieris Group is a diversified business conglomerate with a rich history of 90 years. Its flagship brand 'Arpico Supercentres' is one of the most powerful local household brands in Sri Lanka for over 50 years, serving the community with a diverse range of products across many sectors such as manufacturing, plantations, financial services, exports, FMCG, construction, logistics and retail. A melting pot of talent, comprising a workforce of over 27,000, Richard Pieris and Company PLC is one of the largest employers in the private sector in Sri Lanka.

## Aitken Spence Logistics to build an additional 100,000 sq.ft. Container Freight Station

Aitken Spence Logistics recently embarked on commissioning a state-of-the-art, 100,000 square foot container freight station at its main logistics complex in Mabole, Wattala. The proposed warehouse is strategically located in close proximity to the Port of Colombo and the Bandaranaike International Airport, with easy access to the main highways and expressways in the country. Designed to cater to a wide range of export consolidation and supply chain management needs of diverse industry verticals, the facility consists of 27 loading docks and 11,000 pallet positions with a storage capacity of 15,000 cubic metres (CBM).

Aitken Spence Logistics entered into an agreement with Mihindu Keerthiratne Associates (Pvt) Ltd on 29 October 2021 to set up the proposed Container Freight Station which is set to be operational by the end of 2022.



Janaka Gunawardena - Vice President/ Chief Operating Officer of Aitken Spence Logistics and Mihindu Keerthiratne - Managing Director of Mihindu Keerthiratne Associates (Pvt) Ltd exchanging the agreements on behalf of the two companies

The new container freight station is part of the company's long-term strategic capacity expansion

plan that focuses on operational excellence, supply chain value creation, and service delivery.

## BMICH- SLAPCEO implement safety guidelines for Expos

BMICH with the Sri Lanka Association of Professional Conference, Exhibition & Event Organisers (SLAPCEO) announced that they have implemented all safety guidelines recommended by the health authorities to ensure a safe environment for all stakeholders in restarting the regular expositions.

"The procedures and processes that have been implemented with the cooperation and guidance of

the health authorities and with the total commitment of all stakeholders makes BMICH a safe venue to visit. Our spacious facilities enable us to ensure that personal distancing is strictly implemented," said Chief Executive, BMICH, Sunil Dissanayake, adding that all staff are fully vaccinated.

"We are confident with these procedures and processes in place and with the commitment of all

stakeholders, BMICH looks forward to hosting many Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) in the near future," he added.

Regular meetings have been scheduled with the participation of exhibitors, suppliers, and service providers to review compliance and ensure strict COVID Appropriate Behaviour (CAB) is adhered to by all stakeholders.



## RICHARD PIERIS FINANCE LIMITED

### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

#### Key Financial Data for the Period Ended 30.09.2021 (Unaudited)

In Rupees Million	Current Period From 1-Apr-2021 To 30-Sep-2021	Previous Period From 1-Apr-2020 To 30-Sep-2020
Interest Income	1,108.38	895.75
Interest Expenses	(609.91)	(874.41)
<b>Net Interest Income</b>	<b>498.47</b>	<b>21.34</b>
Gains/(losses) from trading activities	0.89	1.19
Other Income	72.58	46.68
Operating Expenses (excluding impairment)	(288.61)	(269.96)
Impairment	(81.20)	(36.21)
<b>Profit/(Loss) Before Tax</b>	<b>202.14</b>	<b>(236.96)</b>
Taxes	(73.01)	-
<b>Profit/(Loss) After Tax</b>	<b>129.13</b>	<b>(236.96)</b>

#### Key Financial Data as at 30.09.2021 (Unaudited)

In Rupees Million	As at 30-Sept-2021	As at 30-Sept-2020
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and Bank Balances	692.52	818.79
Government Securities	668.38	444.32
Due from Related Parties	14.13	23.29
Loans (excluding due from related parties)	12,238.39	12,569.38
Investments in Equity	16.53	10.92
Investment Properties and Real Estate	68.96	71.10
Property, Plant and Equipment	206.45	233.26
Other Assets	3,086.82	3,408.08
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>16,992.20</b>	<b>17,579.14</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Due to Banks	4,161.87	5,684.51
Due to Related Parties	616.52	628.31
Deposits from Customers	9,395.28	8,933.67
Other Borrowings	-	-
Other Liabilities	437.77	512.42
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>14,611.44</b>	<b>15,758.92</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Stated Capital	1,610.83	1,260.83
Statutory Reserve Fund	76.76	76.76
Retained Earnings	693.76	482.99
Other Reserves	(0.59)	(0.36)
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>2,380.76</b>	<b>1,820.22</b>
<b>Net Assets Value Per Share</b>	<b>17.09</b>	<b>14.93</b>

#### Selected Key Performance Indicators

Item	As at 30-Sept-2021		As at 30-Sept-2020	
	Actual	Required	Actual	Required
<b>Regulatory Capital Adequacy (%)</b>				
Tier 1 Capital Adequacy Ratio	7.73%	7.00%	5.30%	6.50%
Total Capital Adequacy Ratio	12.28%	11.00%	9.70%	10.50%
Capital Fund to Deposit Liabilities Ratio	25.34%	10.00%	20.34%	10.00%
<b>Quality of Loan Portfolio (%)</b>				
Gross Non-Performing Loans Ratio		27.76%		26.12%
Net Non-Performing Loans Ratio		14.05%		13.74%
Net-Non-Performing Loans to Core Capital Ratio		95.66%		116.16%
Provision Coverage Ratio		31.18%		34.86%
<b>Profitability (%)</b>				
Net Interest Margin	41.88%			2.34%
Return on Assets	16.98%			-26.04%
Return on Equity	12.45%			-27.67%
Cost to Income Ratio	50.54%			396.86%
<b>Liquidity (%)</b>				
Available Liquid Assets to Required Liquid Assets (Minimum 100%)	123.98%			209.73%
Liquid Assets to External Funds	8.31%			7.48%
<b>Memorandum information</b>				
Number of Branch	15		12	
External Credit Rating	AA- (lka) Stable		A- (lka) Stable	
<b>Regulatory Deposit Restrictions</b>				
Cap on total Deposits (Rs. mn)	-		8,600	
Downsizing of Deposits-per month/quarter/year (Rs. mn)	-		-	
Freezing of Deposits	-		-	
<b>Regulatory Lending Restrictions</b>				
Cap on total Lending portfolio (Rs. mn)	-		15,500	
Downsizing of Lending portfolio - per month/quarter/year (Rs. mn)	-		-	
Restrictions on granting new credit facilities and/or extending the terms of existing credit facilities	-		-	

#### CERTIFICATION:

We, the undersigned, being the Chief Executive Officer, the Financial Controller and the Compliance Officer of Richard Pieris Finance Limited certify jointly that:

(a) the above statements have been prepared in compliance with the format and definitions prescribed by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL);

(b) the information contained in these statements has been extracted from the unaudited financial statements of the Licensed Finance Company unless indicated as audited.

(Sgd.)  
W L S Fonseka  
Chief Executive Officer  
Date: 28/10/2021

(Sgd.)  
G A A Ranasinghe  
Financial Controller  
Date: 28/10/2021

(Sgd.)  
J K D S Thungasena  
Compliance Officer  
Date: 28/10/2021

The Board of Directors is responsible for the preparation and presentation of these Financial Statements.

Signed for and on behalf of the Board of Directors by,

(Sgd.)  
K B Wanigasekara  
Chairman  
Date: 28/10/2021

(Sgd.)  
K B Wijeratne  
Director  
Date: 28/10/2021

# DHL Express Ranked World's Best Workplace

DHL Express, the world's leading international express service provider, has been named the number one best workplace worldwide in the annual list published by Great Place to Work™ (GPTW) in collaboration with Fortune Magazine. The achievement rewards over ten years of continuous improvement and investment in its people, advancing from 8th in 2017 to 1st place in 2021.

"Since 2009, DHL Express experienced an era of transformation guided by its strategy Focus. Within this strategy, we made it our purpose to motivate people working with us and to become the employer of choice," says John Pearson, CEO, DHL Express. "For a company of 111,000 colleagues operating across 220 countries and different modes, this was a brave move. What drives me every day is our belief in people and their ability to deliver excellence for our customers and each other. Congratulations to all colleagues who



made this possible, and thanks to those who participated in this year's survey, I have never been prouder to be part of this company." DHL Express attaches great importance to valuing the work of its

employees. The transformational Focus strategy was one of many innovative DHL programmes that the award has recognised. DHL Express' Focus strategy is geared towards Deutsche Post DHL Group's goal of

becoming the employer, investment, and provider of choice for the world. Key to its success is a programme called Certified International Specialist (CIS). This programme was introduced to accelerate the cultural

and developmental DNA based on customer focus and trust. It includes inspiring training and engagement content delivered by senior leaders with the business encouraging, recognising, and rewarding vital behaviours.

During the global pandemic, the pressure on logistics people was intense. The recognition as World's Best Workplace™ 2021 is a testament to the strength of the DHL Express culture. The confidential survey assesses employee experience across fairness, credibility, respect, pride and camaraderie. Initiatives and programmes that reinforce company culture are also audited for the survey. The GPTW survey recorded increased staff motivation and engagement levels, surpassing the company's 93% score in 2020. DHL Express focused on job security and staff well-being throughout this challenging period, ensuring employees remained safe, connected, and supported.

## Union Assurance recognised as Great Place to Work for 9th year



Union Assurance PLC was recognised as a Great Place to Work for the 9th year, as well as a Best Place to Work in Asia for 2021. The newest feather in its cap is achieving the Bronze Award in the Large Enterprise Category at the GPTW Awards ceremony held on 16 November 2021, making Union Assurance the only insurance company in Sri Lanka to be recognised among the top three in this category.

Commenting on the recognition, Jude Gomes, Chief Executive Officer of Union Assurance said, "Staff engagement has been a challenge since the outbreak began, especially as we continued to work remotely. This exacerbated the need to maintain an environment in which employees feel safe, grow their careers, and make a difference every day for our customers. Among our key initiatives was the free, mental wellness hotline for employees to seek support with confidentiality through qualified professionals and consultants as a timely initiative in the height of the third lockdown, alongside special services to obtain support for COVID testing, consultation, and hospitalisation. Unprecedented times call for unprecedented solutions, and we went the extra mile to support our team members in a particularly stressful period. We are humbled and

excited to be recognised in the Large Enterprise Category. This achievement is dedicated to our employees and their families."

The Company's success is pivoted on a strong employee value proposition that aligns policies and practices to create a work environment that is engaging and allows for innovation. With career development being a key value driver, the Company took an innovative approach through STEP (Strive Toward Excellence Programme) offering high performers the opportunity to accelerate towards future leadership roles through exposure and interaction with the corporate management, partake in live business projects, and role-modelling opportunities.

Despite remote working, Union Assurance continued to keep teams motivated and engaged, striking a balance between work and play with digital town-halls for quarterly updates, and happy hour sessions to promote camaraderie, complete with fun and games for employees.

While customer-centricity, innovation, and learning are at the core of the Company's culture, Union Assurance ensures alignment to its vision, mission, and values to make a positive impact on its people and thus becoming a great place to work.

## SL's first-ever 'Women-Friendly Workplace Awards 2021' Seylan Bank among Top Ten

Seylan Bank was recently honoured at Sri Lanka's first-ever Women-Friendly Workplace Awards 2021 (WFWP), pioneered jointly by the Satyn Magazine and Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) Sri Lanka. Seylan Bank was named one of the Top Ten Places to Work for Women at the award ceremony that took place on 2 November 2021, at the Cinnamon Grand. The bank was assessed based on how supportive and empowering they were to women at work.

The WFWP Awards are widely recognised as strengthening women's roles in the workplace in Sri Lanka and reinforcing Sri Lanka's commitment to the United Nations SDG 5, which targets gender equality and opportunity. "We are really grateful for the opportunity provided by Satyn Magazine and CIMA to showcase our commitment to equality. Seylan Bank has always pushed for equal opportunities and a diverse workforce. We are happy that 46 per cent of the employee base at Seylan are women and many board



Jayantha Amarasinghe - Deputy General Manager - Human Resources and Sharon Fonseka-Assistant General Manager - Corporate Credit at Seylan Bank PLC receiving the 'Women Friendly Workplace Awards 2021'

committees within the organisation are led by female Directors. 20 per cent of the company's Senior Management and 34 per cent of the management team is made up of women. 20 per cent of the entire employee cadre at Seylan is managed and led by women. Seylan has been a safe and welcoming

environment for women to work, and the company has provided equal opportunities for women to advance in their careers. Seylan is also actively working on ensuring more female representation at the Bank in the future," said Amanthi Motha, Chief Manager-Human Resources at Seylan Bank PLC.

## SLIC partners BOC to provide QR payment solution for Life Insurance

Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation (SLIC) joined hands with the Bank of Ceylon (BOC) to provide convenience of paying Life Insurance premiums via Bank of Ceylon cashless QR payment solution- BOC SmartPay.

Understanding the importance of ensuring uninterrupted insurance service to customers amidst the prevailing pandemic situation of the country, BOC partnered to empower customers of SLIC to offer convenient and safe payment option.

The BOC QR payment solution will enable SLIC Life Insurance policyholders to make faster and secure payments digitally while enjoying the seamless payment experience.

SLIC is striving to enhance the service experience of customers through innovative technological solutions and extending the effort further, the insurance giant brings insurance closer to customers by providing them diverse channels for the ease of access and reach. During the pandemic, SLIC's

foremost concern is protection; safety and well-being of Sri Lankans, hence customers are encouraged to use their array of payment channels to make payments safely.

With the strength of its financial and operational capacity to enhance the digital banking experience of the entire Sri Lankan community, BOC has extended its digital payment gateways partnering with a broad spectrum of trustworthy and reliable service providers.

### Through an improved Corporate Website

## Siyapatha Finance enters into a renewed Digital Phase

Siyapatha Finance PLC, a fully owned subsidiary of Sampath Bank PLC, with an accumulation of over 15 years of experience in the non-bank financial service industry, continues to vigorously lead through timely innovation and evolution of products and services, with the objective to offer optimum services to its customers. Assessing the current pressures within an environment that is continuously transitioning into the digital sphere, Siyapatha Finance has recognised the need for customers to gain access through digital services and obtain required information. Consequently, Siyapatha Finance

launched the newly improved corporate website in view of being ahead and providing the customers an epitome of accessibility while accessing required information digitally.

This mobile-responsive digital platform is compatible with all modern browsers, ensuring convenient access to necessary information through an effortless user-friendly experience. A view of the complete product portfolio offered by Siyapatha Finance is simply accessible by the customer through the improved navigational options and in addition, the reintroduced website offers several more features that will aid

immensely in the convenient access of the user.

Further focusing on customer requirements, several of these beneficial features include quick access to inquiry submission, vehicle sales information, calculators, branch contact details and other customer beneficial information. Moreover, the intelligent solution offered via the 'Live Chat' option ensures that customers are guided through the website effortlessly.

Sharing his sentiments regarding the digital website upgrade, Ananda Seneviratne, Managing Director of Siyapatha Finance stated, "We are extremely

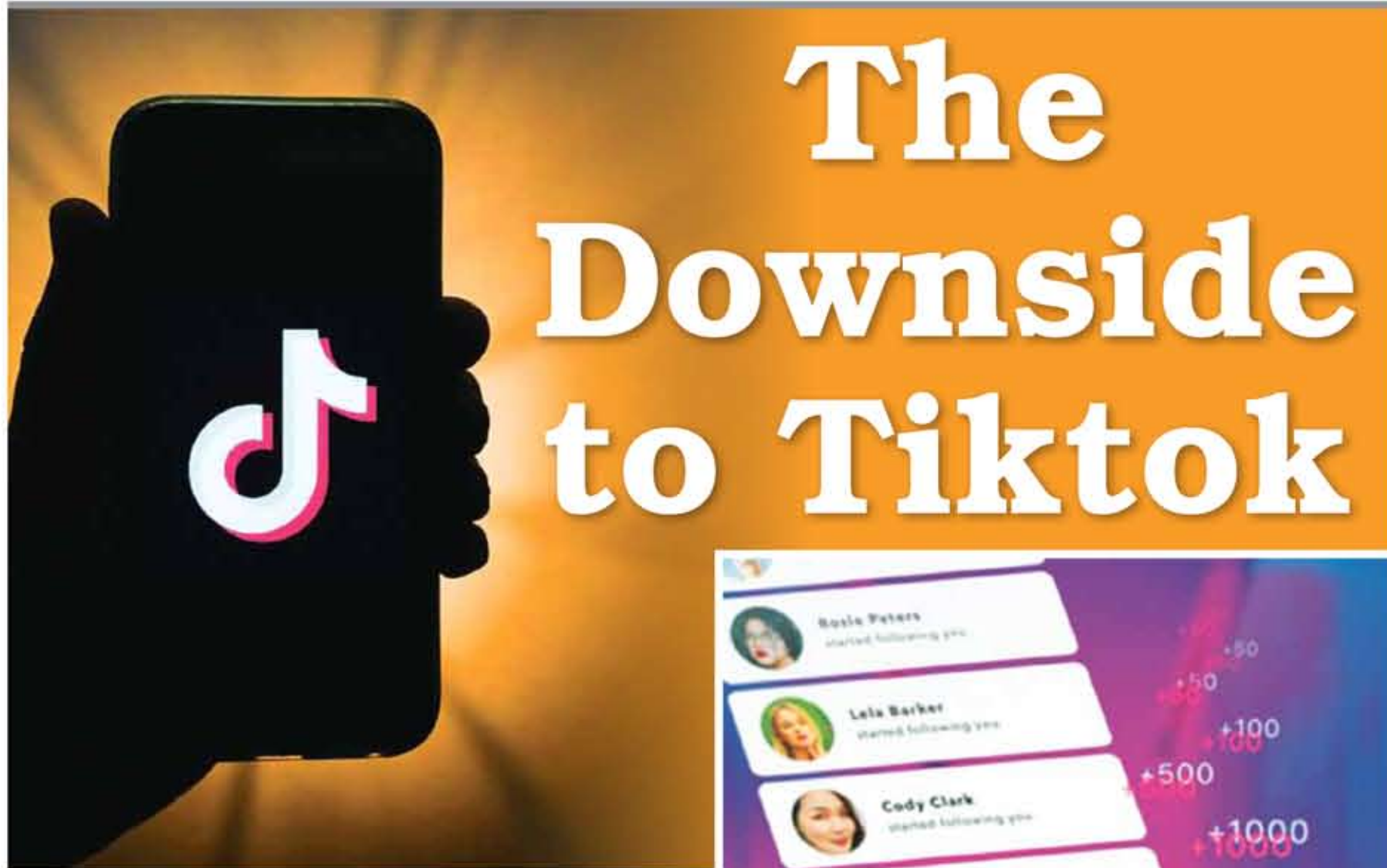
mindful of the exasperating circumstances our customers face due to irregular restrictions in movement, and its impacts on their day to day tasks. As such having access to relevant information in a digital form is one of the most convenient techniques in which we can offer our services promptly. Our main aim behind redesigning and improving our website is to prioritise convenience and provide ease of access to relevant information. As Siyapatha Finance continues with a 'client first' mindset, we will also continue to provide what is best for our customers as times evolve".



The website was launched by Managing Director of Siyapatha Finance, Ananda Seneviratne in the presence of the Senior Management

# LOOK

www.ceylontoday.lk



## The Downside to Tiktok

By **KHALIDHA NAUSHAD**  
CEYLON TODAY FEATURES

Tiktok, formerly known as musical.ly, was launched in 2017, making its availability in more than 40 languages. According to Sensor Tower, the app has been downloaded more than two billion times worldwide since its introduction (which does not always reflect active users). During the pandemic, Tiktok's popularity skyrocketed, making it the most downloaded app in the globe in the first quarter of 2020. Tiktok, on the other hand, announced in September that it had surpassed one billion monthly users. Around 900,000 people in Sri Lanka have signed up for it. In Sri Lanka, the bulk of Tiktok users are between the ages of 18 and 35. Tiktok's popularity in Sri Lanka has soared in comparison to other social media apps, owing to the fact that it is also utilised for marketing.

### What is Tiktok?

Memes, lip-synced tunes, and comedy videos are just a few of the trends that have emerged on Tiktok. The app is popular among teenagers these days, and it has a devoted, young user base. The minimum age to join the platform is 13 years old, however in Ireland, the Digital Age of Consent has been set at 16 years. Users of Tiktok also like competing in many challenges that can be entered using the app's trending hashtags. While collecting likes, followers, and being highlighted on the app are important to many of these users, for the rest, it is just a way to pass the time.

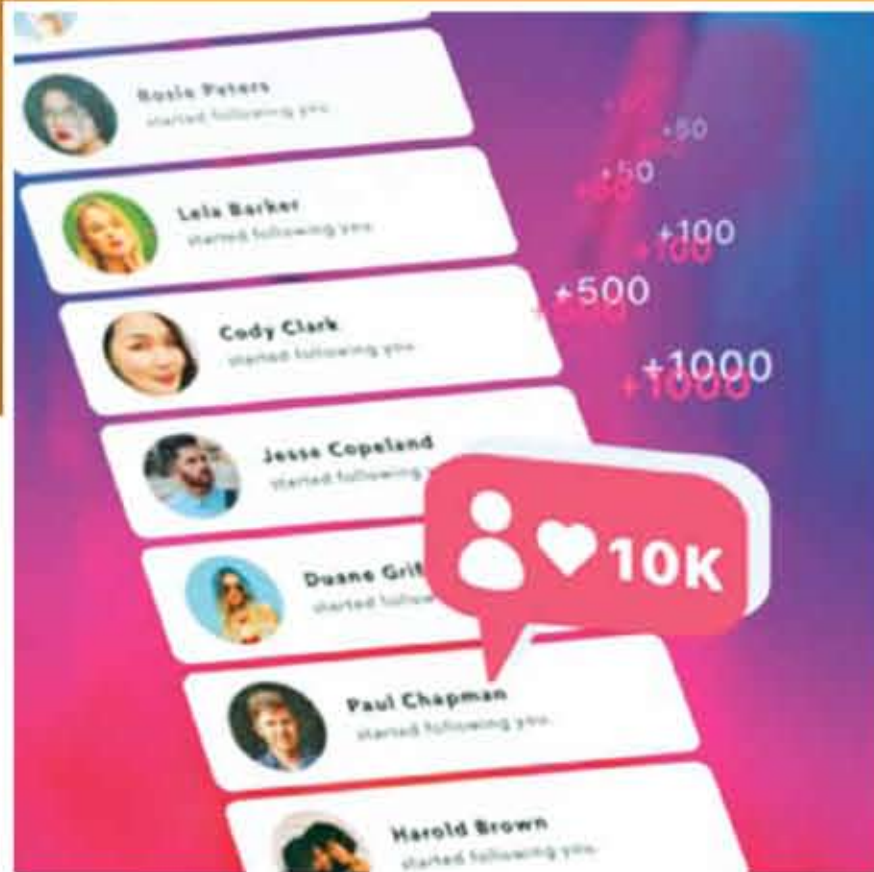
### Teens and Tiktok

Tiktok is something that Gen Z can't get enough of. This app allows users to record themselves singing, lip-syncing, dancing, attempting viral challenges, or doing anything else for three to 15 seconds. Teens are gradually transitioning from being just audiences to active creators of content. The app may be

This app has faced a lot of threats including temporary bans from many countries including India, Indonesia, and Bangladesh. With all of Tiktok's strange and disgusting trends, it's no surprise that it is facing such threats

a fun way for users to express themselves while also creating social content. Teens increasingly spend a significant amount of time online creating and sharing their own content. The hashtags that are available inspire users to participate in numerous challenges, giving them the chance to become a viral sensation.

Tiktok, however has made news headlines for allegedly being a 'bad influence' for kids. Common Sense Media reads a comment of a parent whose kid has been badly influenced by the app. "...when left to her own devices, I found my 10-year-old lip syncing to suggestive lyrics she didn't even understand. And dancing and gesturing the way a rock diva



does. What is worse is that the rating system becomes addictive. She and her friends kept pushing the envelope to see how many 'likes' they could get. What originally was supposed to be a private account became public for the thrill of getting the approval of strangers. Definitely started off sweet and innocent, and then due to these unsavoury lyrics, went down a bad path when I wasn't watching."

### Dangerous yet viral challenges

This app has faced a lot of threats including temporary bans from many countries including India, Indonesia, and Bangladesh. With all of Tiktok's strange and disgusting trends, it's no surprise that it is facing such threats. Trends are usually shown on Tiktok's explore page with the relevant hashtags such as #getupchallenge, #perfectmatch and many more. Tiktok was, and continues to be, a top five app for dangerous online trends that result in deaths. #blackoutchallenge, #dryscoopchallenge are some of the dangerous trends that are attempted by many users for 'fun'. Many Tiktok users are reported to have faced severe injuries when attempting such challenges. According to Newsweek, many young people had died as a result of the choking game that comes under the hashtag, #blackoutchallenge. There is evidence that children died from games involving chokes as early as 1995, according to US's Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study. However, this trend is making a deadly comeback with some young Tiktok users and it has already claimed lives of many kids. Some are hospitalised and in critical condition.

The #dryscoopchallenge, is where Tiktokers try gulping a spoon of pre-workout powder completely dry. Now you may wonder what's wrong in having pre-workout supplements. In this case, the pre-workout powder must be dissolved in water in order to consume it. Among the Tiktokers who experienced a serious condition

attempting this challenge was Briatney Portillo. This 22-year-old dancer had a heart attack and ended up in the hospital as a consequence of trying the #dryscoopchallenge to energise her workout. Many who attempted this challenge end up nearly choking.

Following up with these trends is the back cracking challenge, another one that has Tiktokers endangering their bodies. The challenge involves two participants. First, one person kneels on the floor and puts their hands on the back of their head. Next, a second person faced away from the camera, interlocks arms with the first person and lifts them, resulting in an audible 'crack' sound. According to Healthline, while cracking one's back is not inherently dangerous, it does carry certain risks. For example, using too much force or cracking too often could lead to joint strain, swelling, or breakdown. In recent times, there is another shocking challenge where youngsters go missing on purpose for 48 hours. Such trends must be addressed in order to educate the parents about the downside of letting children use Tiktok or any other social media. Parents should closely monitor the kids' social media use.

### Keep your kid safe

No parent will be happy with their child publishing videos on the internet. As a solution, they can collaborate with their teenagers to create videos for the app. Teens are obviously not receptive, but if they are, it can become a fun family pastime that allows the elders to see what the kids are up to on the app. Whether or not you were aware that Tiktok accounts can be turned to private, it's better if parents make sure that their children's accounts are set to private to safeguard them from unpleasant information and inappropriate communication with other users. Only those they accept can follow them, comment on their videos, and place hearts on their videos as a result of this. The parents can also set up the Tiktok accounts in a way the teens can watch others' videos without owning an account.



The dry protein powder challenge



Sparkle Head to Toe

JoJo Siwa rocks a sparkly blue jumpsuit at *The View* in New York City



Red Hot

Michelle Young stuns in red at *Jimmy Kimmel*



Stepping Out

Hailee Steinfeld rocks a casual chic outfit in New York City



No. 1 Fan

Bebe Rexha cheers for the Jets while wearing polka dots in East Rutherford, New Jersey

# Revamped, Refurbished, and Ready

Crescat reopens in time for the Christmas season



John Keells Holdings Chairman Krishan Balendra lights the oil lamp

Crescat Boulevard re-opened its doors on 19 November after an extensive refurbishment in time for seasonal shopping. The newly revamped mall features sleek, enhanced interiors and fresh shopping and dining experiences within the well-loved and familiar venue in the heart of the city.

"As one of the pioneering shopping malls in the city, Crescat Boulevard holds fond memories for its loyal customers over the past 24 years. With its refurbishment, Crescat returns to offer a revitalised, upmarket shopping and dining experience for Colombo's shoppers whilst still maintaining nostalgic familiarities. The refurbishment was completed despite challenging conditions within the

pandemic, and we are now ready to take on the season. We are grateful for the trust our tenants have placed in us - some have been a part of Crescat Boulevard for the past 20 years and are a part of this new journey. Crescat Boulevard has been a familiar fixture among Colombo's shopping destinations and we are excited to embark on this new chapter amidst a changing city," commented Sector Head of John Keells Properties and Executive Vice President - JKH, Nayana Mawilmada.

Crescat's new look, feel and ambience positions the mall comfortably within Colombo's leading commercial centres and its evolving landscape. Its uniqueness lies in its convenience, variety of

choice and intimate and warm shopping experience in comparison to conventional malls. To date, Crescat also has the most easily accessible supermarket out of the other malls in Colombo, convenient parking and well-equipped amenities and grocery options.

"Crescat's layout is carefully designed so that shoppers can easily avail a host of options with little hassle. Whether it is stationary, cosmetics, footwear, tourist souvenirs, a haircut, grocery shopping or even to get a car wash or a meal or quick snack - Crescat Boulevard offers a vibrant one-stop shopping and dining experience for everyone through a carefully curated selection of establishments and options," said Assistant Vice President

and Head of Asset Management - John Keells Properties, Theekshana Jayarathna.

John Keells Properties has been at the forefront of shaping Colombo's new landscape, building, and nurturing new spaces and experiences. Crescat Boulevard's re-launch and refurbishment reflects the conglomerate's vision for the city and commitment to its growth. With Christmas season and the holidays approaching, Crescat Boulevard is poised for the season, while adhering to COVID-19 protocols. It welcomes back visitors to immerse themselves in upgraded shopping and dining experiences, along with a host of seasonal activities, promotions, and sales to entice shoppers.



## Making a Difference

Media Metrics Amuthu Iskole, a special school project that was founded by Ramith Dheersekara, aims to educate underprivileged children by giving them an experience of a lifetime through their workshops.

In the recently held workshop through this project, there were four teachers, namely; Asith Muthukumara (Project Head, Drama teacher and best teacher of Asia award winner), Kosala Priyan Kumara (Art teacher - Muppets), Prageeth Manohansa (world

renowned assemble artist) and Ramith Dheersekara who conducted the session on subjects such as drama, Muppet art and English for 24 kids. After the session, the kids were taken around the village in a bus and each kid was given a printed photograph with a frame.

Owner of Samudra Publishers and Bookshops, Samudrika de Silva sponsored all books that were given to these children while Owner - The Chance Sport Borella, Lasantha Amarasinghe provided all of them with sports goods.



### Pet Appeal

# Need Forever Homes



I WANT TO BE FREE OF CHAINS



These little cuties are urgently in need of homes. If I do not find homes soon, I will have to drop them back on the streets as I cannot afford to keep boarding them like this. It's been weeks and nothing has worked out for them. All three were tied 24/7 at Colombo 10 and lived in a terrible state until I rescued them. They have been sterilised and vaccinated for distemper, Parvo and rabies. They have suffered so much it's time they run free and end up in loving homes. As I just cannot cope anymore with rescue work I hope someone wished to adopt them. To adopt please call Sahana on 0777567122.



These kittens are looking for forever homes. They are males and females around six to eight weeks old, they were rescued off the streets. Vaccinated and de-wormed. Sterilisations can be arranged if owner can't afford. To adopt please call Sahana on 0777567122.

# Real seal last-16 berth

Real Madrid booked a berth in the Champions League knockout stages with a match to spare after strolling to a 3-0 win at Moldovan rivals Sheriff Tiraspol in their lop-sided Group D clash on Wednesday.

Real top the group on 12 points from five games, two more than second-placed Inter Milan with the result also sending the Italian champions through after they beat Shakhtar Donetsk 2-0.

Third-placed Sheriff, who stunned Real 2-1 in the reverse fixture in September, are third on six points and assured of carrying on in the Europa League after the winter break. Fourth-placed Shakhtar have one point.

David Alaba fired Real ahead with a deflected free kick in the 30th minute and Toni Kroos doubled their lead on the stroke of halftime with a fine shot which cannoned in off the underside of the crossbar.

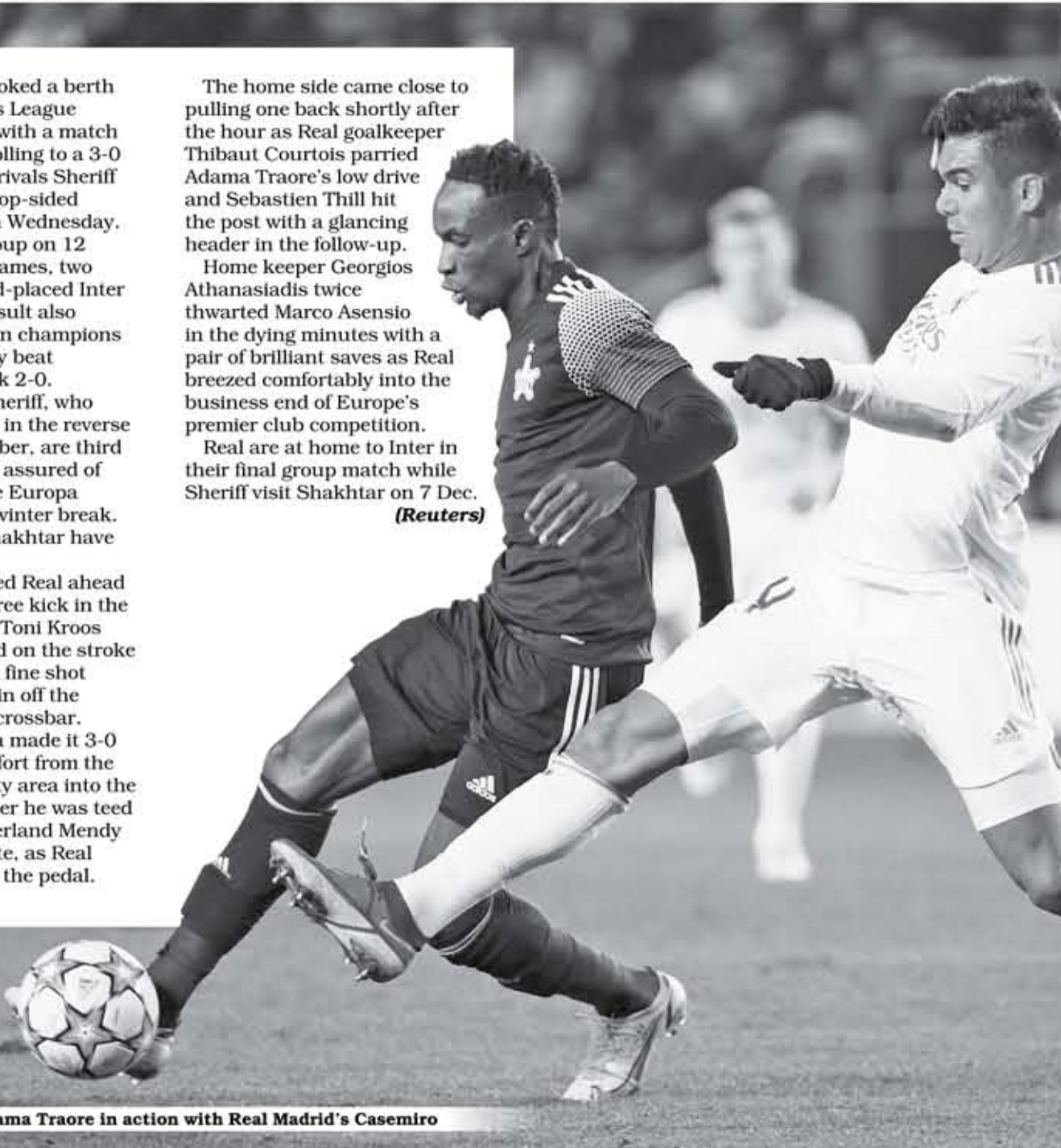
Karim Benzema made it 3-0 with a sublime effort from the edge of the penalty area into the bottom corner after he was teed up by left back Ferland Mendy in the 55th minute, as Real kept their foot on the pedal.

The home side came close to pulling one back shortly after the hour as Real goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois parried Adama Traore's low drive and Sebastien Thill hit the post with a glancing header in the follow-up.

Home keeper Georgios Athanasiadis twice thwarted Marco Asensio in the dying minutes with a pair of brilliant saves as Real breezed comfortably into the business end of Europe's premier club competition.

Real are at home to Inter in their final group match while Sheriff visit Shakhtar on 7 Dec.

(Reuters)



Sheriff Tiraspol's Adama Traore in action with Real Madrid's Casemiro

## Prima Sunrise Breads sponsors 13th Sri Lanka Junior Open Golf



(From left) Sudath Getawakanda - Sri Lanka Golf Treasurer, Lal Wickramatunga - Sri Lanka Golf Secretary, Niloo Jayatilake - Sri Lanka Golf Chairperson Junior Development, Lawrence Chan - Group General Manager - Prima Group Sri Lanka, Shun Tien Shing - General Manager - Ceylon Agro Industries - Prima Group Sri Lanka, and Sajith Gunaratne - Deputy General Manager - Ceylon Agro Industries - Prima Group Sri Lanka

Pic by Sarath Kumara

For the 13th year, Prime Sunrise Bread has committed to sponsor the most prestigious event in the Junior Golf Calendar, the Sri Lanka Junior Open Golf tournament. With more than a decade of the magnanimous sponsorship this generous support by Prima Group Sri Lanka, is ample testimony to its continued commitment to promoting Junior golf in the country in partnership with the national body Sri Lanka Golf Union.

Resuming after a lapse on one year due to the inability to host the event during the pandemic, the tournament is scheduled to be played between 15 to 17 December at the RCGC. It remains the decisive test for Juniors, who are also requested to make it through the gruelling Regional Junior Opens - also sponsored by Prima Group Sri Lanka - as well as a number of club level tournaments throughout the year. The Junior open is thus the established benchmark for national rankings of junior golf. The winner of the Junior open will be crowned the National Junior Champion (both boys' and girls' categories).

The committed sponsorship of junior golf by Prima Group Sri Lanka and Prima sunrise Bread has been invaluable to the Sri Lanka Golf Union in promoting the sport island wide. The popularity

of the sport is seen to be growing mainly due to the focused outreach programmes carried out by Sri Lanka golf to propagate the sport at the grassroots. This initiative was the brainchild of the junior subcommittee of Sri Lanka Golf to identify the nations and international representation. This year we have slowly started the rollout of junior training starting from Anuradhapura golf academy," said Niloo Jayatilake, Chairperson of the junior Development - Sri Lanka Golf.

This event will once again be conducted according to four age group categories as follows; 15-18 years (Gold Division), 12-14 years (Silver Division), 10-11 years (Bronze Division) and 9 years and under (Copper Division). A quartet of young golfing talent like Haroon Aslam, Nirekh Tejwani, Yannik Kumara, Reshan Algama from the boys' division, and sisters Taniya and Sherin Balasuriya, Devinka Kanag-Isvaran, Kayla Daluwatta and Kayla Perera are to compete in the girls' division.

In the more Junior categories K. Danushan, Shanal Binuksha, Keshav Algama, Thejas Kanth and Kavahn Tejwani are recognized as the emerging talent, and this event should provide them with a golden opportunity to showcase their skills, and it is hoped the youngsters play to their fullest potential.

## Mahmudullah retires from test cricket

Bangladesh all-rounder Mahmudullah has announced his retirement from test cricket at the age of 35 but will continue to play one-day internationals and Twenty20s, the country's cricket board (BCB) said in a statement on Wednesday.

Mahmudullah's last test was against Zimbabwe in Harare in July, where he scored an unbeaten 150 in his final innings and led the side to victory. In all, he played 50 matches and scored 2,914 runs at an average of 33.49.

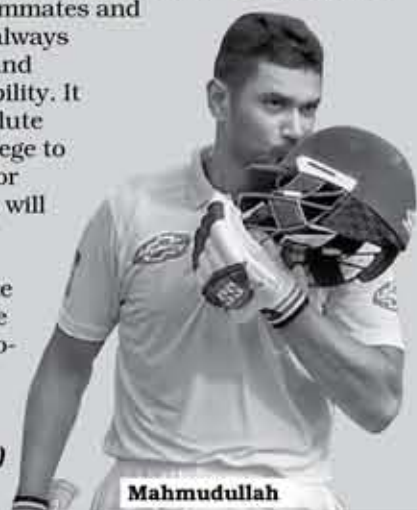
"Leaving a format of which I have been a part of for such a long time is not easy. I had always thought of going on a high and I believe this is the right time to end my test career," Mahmudullah said.

He also picked up 43 wickets in a 12-year career.

"I thank my teammates and support staff for always encouraging me and believing in my ability. It has been an absolute honour and privilege to play test cricket for Bangladesh and I will cherish the many memories."

Bangladesh take on Pakistan in the first game of a two-test series in Chittagong from Friday.

(Reuters)



Mahmudullah

## Daraz becomes Exclusive Digital Streaming Partner for LPL 2021

Continuing the excitement of cricket and taking local cricket to the next level, Daraz steps up as Exclusive Digital Streaming Partner for Lanka Premier League 2021. Through this partnership Daraz brings the excitement of cricket to the palm of its users, giving an opportunity to all to watch the LPL matches live and for free. Daraz also announced its partnership as the Associate Sponsor for the Lanka Premier League, which will be played from the 5 to 23 December 2021.

The largest online shopping platform in the country, Daraz launched Daraz Live in September this year; Sri Lanka's first in-app shoppable livestream feature, introducing the concept of shoppertainment to its users. The LPL will be streamed via Daraz Live, creating one online platform for all cricket fans to watch the tournament.

Commenting on the partnership, Heshan Perera, Head of Marketing for Daraz Sri Lanka stated, "Sri Lanka is a cricket nation, revered and followed by those from all walks of lives. Our partnership with the Lanka Premier League enables us to enhance the experience of Daraz users by bringing entertainment in the form of live sports on an OTT platform. This partnership also strengthens our commitment to our customers, as we give them an opportunity to watch the game they love in a medium that is closer to them, as well as our commitment towards Sri Lanka cricket."

"We are pleased to share the Digital streaming rights of Lanka Premier League with Daraz. As the official rights holder for the LPL including global media rights, the IPG Group continues to innovate and push towards sports excellence in the way that it is presented to the world. With over 350,000 daily users on Daraz, we are confident that this partnership will give LPL a high reach of viewership across Sri Lanka," added Anil Mohan, Chief Executive Officer of IPG Group.

The partnership with LPL is part of Daraz's marketing strategy to accelerate the growth of the brand through association with high-profile sports and a continuation of Daraz's sponsorship as overseas tour partner to the Sri Lanka national cricket team. With the huge following that cricket has in Sri Lanka, it presents an effective platform for Daraz to engage with the nation's passionate fans and drive the brand to the next level, while giving Daraz users a new platform to enjoy the game they love.

Brands in Sri Lanka will be able to advertise on Daraz during the live stream of LPL 2021. With an ever growing digital audience base in the country, this will be a great opportunity for all brands to be part of LPL and build strong customer sentiment with millions of viewers.

## TT Junior Nationals 2020 on 27 and 28 Nov



Senura Silva



Bemandee Bandara

The Table Tennis Association of Sri Lanka will be conducting the 2020 Junior National Championships on the 27 and 28 November at the Bandaragama Indoor Stadium.

The 2020 National championships could not be held during 2020 as the country was on lockdown several times and sports activities could not be held. The TTASL attempted on several occasions to conduct the tournament whenever these lockdowns ended but were unable due to health and safety concerns as the events are for school children.

Due to the pandemic, the tournament committee of the TTASL till now has been struggling to complete the tournaments of year 2020 and will commence the 2021 tournaments only after this.

The age group events that will be conducted are Boys and Girls Under 10, 12, 15 and 18. The Under 10 and Under 12 events will be held after a lapse of two years as these age group events were not held during the year. Two Under 15 and Under 18 tournaments were held since the players were of matured age and can understand the safety rules that they were to abide.

A total number of 270 players comprising of 145 boys and 135 girls, will compete to be crowned the National Champion in their respective age group.

The following are the seedings of the players as per the data available since competitions were not held in certain age group categories as mentioned.

The TTASL and its tournament committee have taken several measures to ensure the safety of the players, coaches and all officials. Parents and spectators will not be permitted inside the hall in order to minimise the crowd inside the tournament hall. Players and coaches will be required to maintain a distance of 1 meter and wear their masks whenever not in competition.

## Yeti Electrolyte powers SLS for Asian Squash Meet

Sri Lanka Squash (SLS) has teamed up with renowned isotonic energy drink sponsor Yeti for the Asian Squash Team Championships to be held from November 27 to December 5 in Malaysia.

Yeti is scientifically formulated to help meet the hydration and fueling needs of sportsmen and sportswomen, which help them get the most out of their performances.

"In our quest to support the Sri Lanka National Squash Team we will be providing Yeti Electrolyte powders for the upcoming Asian Squash Championship," Managing Director of Yeti Dr. Dilshan Balasuriya revealed during a media briefing in Colombo yesterday.

As of the ongoing partnership between Yeti and SLS, the national squash team will have access to the elite Yeti portfolio of sports isotonic products.



CEO of Yeti Malik Perera (centre) handing over a pack of Yeti Electrolyte to Naduni Gunawardena, SLS Development Team Coach

# West Indies flunk trial by spin, Sri Lanka grab lead



Joshua Da Silva (L) and Nkrumah Bonner (R)



Lasith Embuldeniya

West Indies, who were 18/6 at one point on day four, showed tremendous grit but could not avoid defeat as Sri Lanka wrapped up the innings in the second session of day five to take a 1-0 series lead.

Starting from an overnight score of 52/6, Joshua Da Silva and Nkrumah Bonner continued their resistance against the Sri Lankan spinners.

Both the batters were extremely cautious in their approach, not scoring a single boundary in the first 16 overs of play, after which they decided to take the attack to the bowlers, scoring four boundaries in the next six overs. They soon brought up the team hundred, which yesterday looked like a distant possibility when they were at 18/6.

Though the bowlers did manage to create chances frequently, Da Silva and Bonner found ways to survive. Bonner was given a reprieve by Pathum Nissanka, who spilt a diving catch at cover. Da Silva brought up his third Test half-century, but as soon as they got to the 100-run partnership, Lasith Embuldeniya crucially struck for Sri Lanka a few overs before lunch. He got the ball to spin away from the right-hander,

who edged it to the safe hands of Dhananjaya de Silva at slips. Rahkeem Cornwall joined Bonner in the middle and the two took West Indies safely to lunch at 125/7.

After the break, Bonner continued to live dangerously, surviving a DRS appeal for an LBW and then was given another lifeline through a dropped catch, with skipper

Dimuth Karunaratne the culprit this time.

Cornwall eventually became a victim of his instincts as he was lured into a big shot by a flighted delivery by Praveen Jayawickrama. Suranga Lakmal completed a good catch at long-on to take Sri Lanka within touching distance of a win. Embuldeniya wrapped up the

game with wickets in consecutive overs to complete his five-for. Bonner could only watch from the other end as he was left stranded on 68\* off 220 balls. The win by 187 runs gave Sri Lanka a 1-0 lead in the two-match Test series, and takes them to the top of the ICC World Test Championship 2021-23 table.

## SCORE

**Sri Lanka 1st innings 386**  
**Sri Lanka 2nd innings**

P. Nissanka	c S. Hope b R. Cornwall	03
D. Karunaratne	c J. Blackwood b R. Cornwall	83
O. Fernando	lbw Jemel Warrican	14
Angelo Mathews	Not Out	69
D. de Silva	c&b Jemel Warrican	01
Dinesh Chandimal	Not Out	10
Extras:	8b 2lb 1nb Open Ow	11
<b>Total:</b>	(40.5 overs) decl	191

**Fall of Wickets:** 1-4 Nissanka, 2-39 Fernando, 3-162 Karunaratne, 4-163 de Silva  
**Bowling:** Rahkeem Cornwall 15.5-0-60-2, Jason Holder 5-0-19-0, Roston Chase 6-1-28-0, Jemel Warrican 9-1-42-2, Shannon Gabriel 4-0-23-0, Kraigg Brathwaite 1-0-9-0

## SCORE

**West Indies 1st innings 230**  
**West Indies 2nd innings**

K. Brathwaite	lbw R. Mendis	00
J. Blackwood	c A. Mathews b L. Embuldeniya	09
Nkrumah Bonner	Not Out	68
Shai Hope	b Ramesh Mendis	03
Roston Chase	b Lasith Embuldeniya	01
Kyle Mayers	lbw Ramesh Mendis	02
Jason Holder	b Ramesh Mendis	00
J. Da Silva	c D. de Silva b L. Embuldeniya	54
R. Cornwall	c S. Lakmal b P. Jayawickrama	13
J. Warrican	c O. Fernando b L. Embuldeniya	01
S. Gabriel	c D. de Silva b L. Embuldeniya	00
Extras:	0b 5lb 2nb Open 2w	09
<b>Total:</b>	(79.0 overs) all out	160

**Fall of Wickets:** 1-3 Brathwaite, 2-11 Blackwood, 3-14 Hope, 4-15 Chase, 5-18 Mayers, 6-18 Holder, 7-118 Da Silva, 8-149 Cornwall, 9-156 Warrican, 10-160 Gabriel  
**Bowling:** Lasith Embuldeniya 29-12-46-5, Ramesh Mendis 31-5-64-4, Praveen Jayawickrama 14-6-28-1, Dhananjaya de Silva 1-0-5-0, Dushmantha Chameera 4-0-12-0

## Army Athletics Championship 2021

# Sanjaya rolls back years with Triple Jump win

Aruna Darshana stretched off after an injury during 400m semis

By ANJANA KALUARACHCHI

Former Sri Lanka record holder Sanjaya Jayasinghe, who is 39-years-old, showed that he is still going strong with another win in the men's triple jump final with a leap of 15.71m at the 57th Army Athletics Championship continued at Sugathadasa Stadium yesterday.

In doing so, Jayasinghe beat present Sri Lanka record holder Sreshan Dhananjaya, who could not register a legal mark, where L.C. Kumarasiri (15.68m) finished second with N.S Ahamed (15.6m) finishing third.

Jayasinghe trained under Cuban coach Luis Miranda, and later begged from the authorities to extend the contract of his coach at least until next April, as the Sports Ministry is all set to send him back after a coup by a group of incompetent coaches and officials who supported these coaches.

Meanwhile, Aruna Darshana sealed the gold medal of the 200m with ease clocking 21.03 seconds, but his heavy schedule came to bite him later on as he fell down with an injury during the 400m semi-finals just after the first 100m. Darshana had to run several rounds of relays on Monday followed by 200m heats, semi-finals, finals then 400m heats and semi-finals within these four



Sanjaya Jayasinghe (Pic by Venura Chandramalitha)

days, where the former Asian junior champion was finding it hard to recover between events, though he gave his best effort to earn points for his Regiment. Amasha de Silva won the women's 200m with a personal best and new

meet record of 24.05 seconds. Harsha Karunaratne won the 800m clocking 1:51.06 seconds, while Dilshi Kumarasinghe returned to the 800m after last May to win it with ease clocking 2:06.73 secs.

## SLSRFA lays ground work for 7s

All ground work has been set to kick-off the much awaited inter schools' rugby seven-a-side tournament from next month.

The tournament will be conducted under health guidelines in five Provinces - Western, Central, North Western, Sabaragamuwa and Southern Province.

Out of 24 schools in the Western Province, 21 schools have confirmed their participation. Rugby Advisory Committee along with the Sri Lanka Schools Rugby Football Association (SLSRFA) will be organizing two online workshops in preparation for the scheduled schools' rugby sevens competitions. The first workshop will be on awareness of 'Post Covid Getting back to rugby with precautions' and will be held on Friday 26 November from 6.00 to 7.00 p.m. The programme will be conducted by Dr. Lal Ekanayake, DG, Institute of Sports Medicine, Ministry of Sports.

The second workshop on World Rugby will focus on areas of sevens rugby, and will be held on Monday 29 November from 6.00 to 7.30 p.m. The workshop will be conducted by Dilroy Fernando, Chairman T&E/Development of SLSRFA.

Following schools have confirmed their participation. (AG)

### Western Province - 11/12 December 2021

- Royal College
- St. Peter's College
- St. Joseph's College
- Wesley College
- St. Thomas College
- Isipathana College
- Science College
- Zahira College
- D.S. Senanayaka College
- Thustern College
- P.O.W. College
- Ananda College
- Mahanama College
- St. Benedict's College
- Piliyandala Central College
- Moratu M.V
- Nalanda College
- Carey College
- Sumangala College
- C.W.W. Kannangara College

### Central Province - 18 December 2021

- Trinity College
- Kingswood College
- Vidyartha College
- St. Anthony's College
- Dharmaraja College
- Sri Sumangala College
- St. Sylvester's College
- Sri Rahula College

### North Western Province - 19 December 2021

- Maliyadewa College
- St Annes College
- Ibbagamuwa C College
- Welagedara College
- Sir John's Kothalawala College
- Lakdasa De Mel College
- Kulyapitiya Central College

### Sabaragamuwa Province - 1 January 2022

- Thalduwa College
- Kegalu Vidyalaya
- Dehiowita C College
- Mawanella Zahira

### Southern Province - 2 January 2022

- St. Aloysius' College
- Dewapathiraja College
- Richmond College
- Mahinda College
- Vidyaloka College
- Debarawewa C College
- Rahula College

# Sri Lanka Rugby thanks Sponsors

THANK YOU!

To our Official Sponsors of the Sri Lanka Men's & Women's Rugby Teams for the Asian Sevens Series in Dubai which was held on 19th / 20th November 2021



We would like to say a huge thank you to our sponsors, as it is their sponsorships and partnerships that go such a long way in helping to empower young people to succeed through the values of rugby and to build a positive and supportive community.

As a non-profit organisation, the support of our sponsors is vital when it comes to helping to improve young lives in the Sri Lanka Rugby Community.

We believe all children and young people deserve the same opportunity in life and it is thanks to the generous support of our sponsors and partners that we are able to carry out our participation in Sri Lanka National Rugby tournaments.

SLR sponsorship programme goes beyond the game of rugby. We partner with organisations who share our values on diversity and inclusion. Our purpose and values inspire and guide us to care for our sponsors, communities and each other. We will partner with CSR initiatives that help to build resilience and support diversity and inclusion in our communities.

SLR signs off with a huge thank you also to Ministry of Sports, Ministry of Health and Institute of Sports Medicine, with our sponsors for helping us in the Asian Sevens Series Tournament in Dubai, for it would not have been possible without you.