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The original chocolate

Rs. 5/- upwards

The Island

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The Navy's Offshore Patrol Vessel SLNS Sagara leaving for the Maldives from Colombo yesterday to participate in a four-day Coast Guard exercise tomorrow. Sri Lanka, India and the Maldives will take part in the exercise.

New Cases 742 Total : 562,520	Active Cases Total : 18,553	Recovered 422 Total : 529,662	Deaths 27 Total : 14,305
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COVID-19 Daily Death Count: 27

Sirisena, other SLFP MPs asked to leave govt.

By SHAMINDRA FERDINANDO

Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) heavyweight and Tourism Minister Prasanna Ranatunga has asked the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) to leave the government as the SLPP could do without its support.

Addressing the media on Saturday (27), Minister Ranatunga asked former President and SLFP leader Maithripala Sirisena, MP, and members of his parliamentary group to quit the government.



Prasanna the government though there were instances where the ruling party couldn't do without such a majority such as the introduction of a constitutional amendment.

Maithripala Minister Ranatunga urged the SLFP to stop making pronouncements pertaining to the government's position in Parliament. The Minister said that anyone could leave the government.

Minister Ranatunga recalled how he had urged the electorate in the run-up to the last parliamentary election in August 2020 not to vote for anyone connected to Maithripala Sirisena.

The SLPP Gampaha District leader emphasised that the SLFP contested the last general election on the SLPP ticket. Of the 14 MP, 13 including one on the National List (Dr. Suren Raghavan) represent the SLPP. The remaining MP entered Parliament from Jaffna on the SLFP ticket.

Responding to a media query, Minister Ranatunga pointed out that a two-thirds was not required to sustain

Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) into the 2019 Easter Sunday carnage. Minister Ranatunga declared that even if all those causing issues quit, the government could go ahead.

Relations between the SLPP and the SLFP have deteriorated as a dissident group including SLFP MPs has opposed a controversial agreement the government has entered into with New Fortress Energy. The SLFP and several other smaller groups including the National Freedom Front (NFF) with six MPs have pledged to oppose the US energy deal. The rebel group consists of over 25 MPs.

Meanwhile, the crisis within the ruling parliamentary group was mentioned as one of the major issues undermining the incumbent government at a workshop conducted for Media Secretaries of ministers and State Ministers conducted at Sri Lanka Foundation on Saturday (27).

The meeting was told how continuing internal strife within the government parliamentary group as well as constituents weakened

Torrential rains wreak havoc in 15 districts

By IFHAM NIZAM

Torrential rains have affected 15 districts, and one death has been reported from the Kandy District, according to the Disaster Management Centre (DMC). DMC Deputy Director Pradeep Kodippili yesterday said that three houses had been destroyed and 81 others damaged. Thirty-seven families were sheltered at welfare centres in Kandy and Kurunegala. The Meteorological Department yesterday said that showers or thundershowers would occur countrywide after 1.00 p.m. today. Heavy showers above 100 mm may occur at some places in Western, Sabaragamuwa, Central, Northwestern and Uva provinces and in the Galle and Matara districts. Showers may occur in the Northern, Eastern and Southern Provinces during the morning as well. The Met Department has urged the public to take precautions to minimise



damages caused by temporary localised strong winds and lightning during thunderstorms.

The National Building Research Organisation (NBRO) has issued a 'LEVEL 3' Landslide Early Warning for the several areas in Kandy, Kegalle and Kurunegala districts.

The warning has been issued for Ududumbara DS Division in the Kandy District, Mawathagama and Polgahawela DS Divisions in Kurunegala District and Deraniyagala, Dehiowita, Mawanella, Warakapola, Ruwanwella, Kegalle, Galigamuwa, Yatiyanthota, Aranayake, Bulathkohupitiya and Rambukkana DS Divisions in Kegalle District.

The level Three warning (Colour Code Red) is meant to urge the people living in the aforementioned

UNP unsurprised SL not invited to US summit on democracy

The UNP yesterday said that it was not surprising that Sri Lanka had not been invited to the virtual summit on democracy hosted by the United States of America. The UNP has said in a

media statement: "The United National Party condemns the recent allegations levelled by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in regards the Easter Sunday attacks



Ranil

SJB demands PSC to probe gas explosions

By SAMAN INDRAJITH



Sajith

The main opposition party, SJB, said in Parliament on Saturday that an increase in gas cylinder explosions were a threat to national security. Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa said that the gov-

ernment must take steps to ensure national security. Premadasa said the government should not try to play down the issue by claiming that gas cylinders did not pose a threat to the public.

Jacky's mirror selfie with Indian conman goes viral



Jacqueline with Suresh Chandrasekhar

The photos of Lanka-born Bollywood actress Jacqueline Fernandez with Suresh Chandrasekhar has surfaced weeks after the actress denied dating the conman, who is the prime accused in a INRs. 200 crore extortion case, says a report published online by Bollywood Hungama News Network. According to India Today, the pictures were taken in April-June of this year, when the millionaire con man was out on interim bail. Suresh Chandrasekhar had met Jacqueline Fernandez about four times in Chennai and even arranged a private jet for her for these meetings, ED sources said.

China reportedly takes over Uganda's airport on account of loan default

In what is yet another move to acquire foreign assets on account of default of loans China allegedly has taken over the Ugandan Entebbe International Airport and other assets in the Eastern African country, said a report published online by Times of India yesterday. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has sent a delegation to Beijing for a renegotiation with the Chinese government. Earlier the Museveni-led government signed an agreement with China's Exim Bank to borrow \$207 million to expand Entebbe International Airport. The loan has a maturity period of 20 years including

JEFF & NUT

- Prasanna Ranatunga has asked Sirisena and the SLFP to leave the govt.
- He is talking as if he owned the government.

Govt. asked to quarantine tourists from Africa

By RATHINDRA KURUWITA

The government must make 10-day quarantine mandatory for those who had arrived in Sri Lanka from Africa or transited via Africa since 10 November, to prevent the spread of newly identified coronavirus variant, Omicron, Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Management Consultant Dr. Sanjaya Perera told *The Island* yesterday.

Dr. Perera added a travel ban on South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Swaziland alone would not help delay the arrival of Omicron here. Dr. Perera was recently appointed the resource person for John Hopkins University and the Gates Foundation for COVID in Sri Lanka, Thailand and

Vietnam. He said the first known case of Omicron had been detected in Botswana on 11 November. First cases detected from South Africa were found on 14 November. On 16 November, a case had been found in Hong Kong, he said. Dr. Perera added that given that cases had been detected in India, the spread

No arrivals from Omicron-hit countries – Tourism Minister

Minister of Tourism, Prasanna Ranatunga says there have been no tourist arrivals here from South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Swaziland affected by the coronavirus variant Omicron. Addressing the media on Saturday (27) Minister Ranatunga said that the relevant officials had informed airlines that passengers

from the above six countries would not be admitted in Sri Lanka. The Minister said that officials were trying to find out whether others who are not tourists had arrived in Sri Lanka from the above-mentioned six countries. Tourists from other nations could arrive in Sri Lanka, he said, adding that officials would look at whether any tourist had travelled to those

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Suspension of raw material imports: Half a million jobs at stake in footwear industry

Minister official accused of conspiring to bankrupt local manufacturers

By CHAMINDA SILVA

Jobs of around 500,000 locals involved in the footwear and leather products industry were at stake owing to a decision by ministry officials to suspend imports of essential raw materials, warns Sri Lanka Footwear and Leather Products Manufacturers Association.

Addressing the media, in Colombo yesterday, the Association's Vice President Neville Priyanka said that the country's political leadership was keen to promote the industry but some officials were determined to ruin the industry and have the country flooded with cheap, substandard imports.



"Ours is a labour intensive industry. We have been hard hit by the pandemic. The importation of raw materials, we

need, has been suspended. The President, the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister and the Industries Minister have promised to help us achieve our goal of meeting 80 per cent of local footwear needs in the next two years. But some ministry officials are working against us. They are blocking the import of some essential raw materials. Soon around 500,000 people working in this industry would lose their jobs," Priyanka said.

Executive Committee members, Sanath Witharana and Ajith Perera, also addressed the media conference.

Chief Govt. Whip urges Catholic priests to beware of Opposition's sinister plans



Highway Minister and Chief Government Whip Johnston Fernando arriving to launch of the Road Development authority's premix plant at Andigamawattte in Katugampola on Saturday.

Highway Minister and Chief Government Whip Johnston Fernando says some Opposition politicians have misled the Catholic Church. "I call on all reverend fathers and other members of the clergy not to fall for the opposition conspirators' tactics and thereby become their cat's paws. We have seen that they capitalise on the summoning of Rev Fr Cyril Gamini to the CID to spread hate against this government. Fr Cyril Gamini's visit to CID was to record a statement. He made public statements and the CID wants an official record from him, Minister Fernando said.

He said so addressing a ceremony to mark the launch of the Road Development authority's premix plant at Andigamawattte in Katugampola on

Saturday. "Rev Cyril Gamini had made statements on the Easter Sunday incidents. The CID is the investigating the Easter Sunday terror attacks and it is natural it has recorded a statement from the Reverend father. Suppose the CID did not do so, then the very same Opposition would have claimed we had prevented the CID from recording his statement. "During the past two years we had never heard on any occasion the Opposition speaking of anything beneficial to the country. They never helped us reopen the country to enable foreign tourists so that the country would receive foreign exchange. They never spoke of promoting agriculture or industries to help the economy. They never

spoke of assisting the government to overcome the challenges of the pandemic. Opposition parties in other countries have extended their support to the governments to face the pandemic and its challenges. We too had such oppositions in this country in the past. In the 1971 insurgency, the then opposition leader JR Jayewardene supported Sirimavo Bandaranaike's government.

Minister Fernando said that he was thankful to the Chairman and staff members of the RDA for commencing operations at the new premix asphalt plant. "When I visited the premix asphalt plant at Ganepola in January this year, there were heaps of machinery to be auctioned as scrap iron. They had been lying abandoned for years. After inquiries I found that those parts of equipment and machinery left at the mercy of the elements, could be repaired and put back to use. Some workers said that they could repair them. They did so within a couple of months. They spent Rs 28 million to build a premix asphalt plant worth Rs 152 million. Today we opened this new plant with equipment put back to use by our workers. This plant has the capacity to turn out 4,000 metric tons of premix asphalt per month. That means it could supply 48,000 metric tons of premix asphalt per year to our projects in order to complete the 100,000 km road development project envisaged by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in his Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour manifesto," the Minister said.

Also present on the occasion were Secretary to the Ministry of Highways RWR Prensiri, RDA Working Director Chaminda Basnayake and Executive Director Mohomad Zakir.



Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Colombo Tanja Gonggrijp handing over the "Orange the World" banner to Foreign Minister Prof. G. L. Peiris

Dutch Ambassador presents 'Orange the World' Banner to Foreign Minister

To mark the annual "Orange the World: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence" international campaign, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Colombo, Tanja Gonggrijp, handed over the "Orange the World" banner to Foreign Minister Prof. G. L. Peiris at the Foreign Ministry on Friday (26).

Accepting the banner, Minister Prof. G.L Peiris reiterated Sri Lanka's commitment to combat Gender-Based Violence and briefed on initiatives taken by the Government of Sri Lanka in this area. He recognised that prevention and addressing sexual violence is an integral part of achieving Sustainable Goal 5 on Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering All Women and Girls. He remarked that the government's national policy framework *Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour* has given priority to gender equality, empowerment of women and minimisation of gender-based

violence. The 'Orange the World: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence' international campaign was initiated in 1991. Every year the event commences on Nov 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and ends on Dec 10, Human Rights Day. The colour orange is meant to represent a brighter future and a world free from violence against women and girls. According to the United Nations, globally, an estimated 736 million women—almost one in three—have been subjected to intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at least once in their lifetime. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the risk factors of violence against women. State Minister of Women and Child Development Piyal Nishantha de Silva and Secretary to the State Ministry Kumari Jayasekara were also associated with the event.

Car plunges into Mahaweli Ganga: Two escape, one dead

By CYRIL WIMALASURENDRE

KANDY - A car carrying three persons including its driver plunged into the Mahaweli Ganga near Ilukmodara near Gurudeniya on Kandy Hanguranketha road on Saturday (27) night.

Two of the occupants of the ill-fated vehicle escaped swimming out of the water.

They were admitted to the Kandy General Hospital. They left the hospital on Sunday (28). The other victim of the tragedy was found yesterday when the car was salvaged. He was a 39-year-old resident of Gurudeniya. Kandy police are conducting further investigations.

Proscribed Muslim organisation: SC grants leave to proceed in FR petition



The Supreme Court has granted leave to proceed in the fundamental rights petition filed by All Ceylon Jam - E - Athul Ansaris Sunnathuili Mohammedia against the proscription of their organisation. Eleven Muslim establishments were proscribed by Gazette Notification No. 2223/3 following the Easter Sunday Bomb Attacks, including the petitioner.

Dr. K. Kanag-Isvaran, PC, appearing for the petitioner argued that the proscription of the petitioner was arbitrary, capricious, unreasonable, unjustifiable and in total violation of the rule of law and called upon the Attorney General to show even one instance where the conduct of the Petitioner had been against national interest or public order or against the rule of law. Additional Solicitor General Nerin Pulle,

PC, appearing for Attorney General, told the court that the petitioner was named in the final report of the Commission of Inquiry to investigate and inquire

into the Easter Sunday Bomb Attacks as promoting Wahhabism and objected to leave to proceed being granted.

Dr. K. Kanag-Isvaran, PC, stressed that there was no charge sheet against the petitioner and none of its representatives or Directors or members were called to give evidence before the said commission and there was no allegation levelled against it in the report issued by the said commission of Inquiry and its name could not have been in the said report.

Justice E. A. G. R. Amarasekara, Justice Achala Wengappuli and Justice Arjuna Obeyesekere, having heard extensive submissions, granted leave to proceed in terms of Article 12(1) of the Constitution and fixed the matter for argument on 05th May, 2022.

Waste released into Kelani Ganga from 1,700 places

By IFHAM NIZAM

The latest research by the Central Environmental Authority (CEA) reveals that waste is released to the Kelani Ganga from 1,700 sites.

Environment Minister Mahinda Amaraweera yesterday said that the study had revealed that all those 1700 sites were located on either side of the Kelani Ganga from Avissawella to Peliyagoda.

The Kelani River, which is considered the most polluted of the 103 rivers in the country;

Most of the sites at issue are located in the Seethawaka Investment Zone. The study was conducted by the Central Environmental Authority (CEA) on 103 rivers in the country and identified 11,000 rivers as polluting sites. Minister Amaraweera has assured that necessary action will be taken to clean all the other rivers and Rs. 2000 million has been allocated from Budget 2022 for this purpose.



Kelani Ganga

New Surveyor General A. Dissanayake



Dissanayake

A. Dissanayake officially assumed duties recently as the 52nd SG of the Survey Department of Sri Lanka. He received his primary education from Sri Sumangala Maha Vidyalaya, Weligama and after completing his degree in Physical science from the University of Ruhuna, obtained his first appointment in the Public Service in 1985 as an Assistant Superintendent Surveys.

After successfully completing the Higher Diploma in Surveying from the Institute of Surveying and Mapping, Diyatalawa, he has been involved in the development chain of the country since 1988 by supervising surveyors across the country.

He received a scholarship under the United Nations Program in 1991.

After successfully completing his Master's Degree (MSc.) in Geodetic Science and Surveying from the Ohio State University in the United States. The new Surveyor General has contributed to various development activities in the country by directing the Department for the Geodetic surveying work, and has been working for a long period as a Senior Lecturer in Geodesy for the Institute of Surveying and Mapping, Diyatalawa. The Geodetic Survey Control

Network which was established in the year of 1800 was improved to adapt to the accuracy required for modern surveying. For this, he is a pioneer in establishing the new geodetic control network using modern technology. He later served as the Director of Institute of Surveying and Mapping, Diyatalawa and has been contributing to the development of the institute. Dissanayake held various posts in the department. He has demonstrated outstanding leadership through his skills and expertise in various aspects by introducing modern technology. Dissanayake has climbed to the top post having served in various parts of the island during a career spanning 36 years.

Hoteliers call for state assistance

By HARISCHANDRA GUNARATNA

Newly elected President of the Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) M. Shanthikumar says Budget 2022 has not addressed their problems.

Addressing THASL's 56th anniversary celebrations at Taj Samudra, Colombo, recently, Shanthikumar said: "We are disappointed that Budget 2022 has ignored tourism. It is an industry in distress needing state assistance for survival and revival."

"Hoteliers are already burdened with a series of topline taxes and levies. The topline social security contribution of 2.5% is definitely adding to their burden. We have been without revenues for nearly 18 months but continue to pay workers and maintain our hotels. The industry will lose its competitive edge in marketing the destination with such taxes and there is no doubt it will affect the anticipated tourist arrival growth into the country."

"Being an industry with dollar earnings we need the government to consider exempting the tourism sector from the social security tax of 2.5% on the total revenue at least until such time we see the tourist arrivals stabilising the country's economy. This is absolutely critical."



Shanthikumar

"Due to the nonpayment of the loan capital and interest during the moratorium, the loan balances increased by 40% thereby increasing the liability. The lack of funds is posing a challenge for hoteliers to continue to maintain the staff, the plant and to carry out even the smallest of refurbishment to welcome tourists."

"Seeing a virtual collapse of hotels, we requested for a long-term debt restructuring from the government as revenues and profits began to slide post the Easter Sunday attack. These were requested ONLY for businesses that had settled their dues until the Easter Sunday attack. It was very clearly stated in all THASL letters to the Government. We have no issue in this being brought in as a criteria. The most important thing is for the government to act as soon as possible. We therefore request the Govt to provide such a relief which will be very helpful to sustain this industry where over 3 million of our population depend upon."

"A long-term request to relieve the hotel industry of the burden of an unfair topline tax of 1% Municipality and by Local Government authorities has still not been settled. It is totally discriminatory to charge millions of rupees from hotels by local Government authorities

when they only charge without an exception a measly sum of Rs. 6000 annually as license fees from every other industry. Why do hoteliers have to pay so much more when the industry is struggling to survive? We seek immediate attention from the Government again to resolve this issue and abolish this tax."

"So is the case with Electricity. The tariff rate for the hotel industry is higher than all the other sectors. Our request is for the Government to bring the Hotel Sector on par with the other industry tariffs and not to discriminate against the hotel sector with higher tariffs."

"Further, with the onset of the pandemic in early 2020, closed borders and vacant hotel rooms, the hoteliers could not settle their electricity bills. We requested a temporary installment settlement structure over a period of 12 month from March 2020 to September 2021 (for 18 months)."

"Unfortunately, we have not received a positive response to any one of these critical requests," Shanthikumar said.

HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC

Applications have been made to the Directors of this Bank by the under mentioned shareholders for the issue of Duplicate Certificate of shares in the Bank, or other Certificate or certificates in lieu thereof upon statements that the Original Certificates have been lost misplaced or destroyed.

NAME OF SHAREHOLDER	CERTIFICATE NO.	NO. OF SHARES
Mr. Paraniurasingam Varatharajasingam & Ms. Varatharajasingam Vasantharany	069290	23,100

Notice is hereby given that if within 14 days from the date hereof no claims or representations in respect of such Original Certificates are made to the Directors, they will then proceed to deal with such applications for Duplicates or other new certificates.

HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC
By Order of the Board

479, T B Jayah Mawatha
Colombo 10.
25th November 2021

Thushari Ranaweera (Mrs.)
DGM(LEGAL)/BOARD SECRETARY

HC Moragoda meets India's Deputy NSA Shri Pankaj Saran



Moragoda with Pankaj Saran

Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to India Milinda Moragoda met with the Deputy National Security Advisor of India Shri Pankaj Saran, at the National Security Council office in New Delhi.

Deputy National Security Advisor Saran cordially welcomed High Commissioner Moragoda and had an extensive discussion with him. The discussion between the Deputy National Security Advisor of India and the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka focused on a range of issues pertaining to mutual

strategic interests, including those that are related to economic cooperation.

High Commissioner Moragoda also presented a copy of his policy road map, "Integrated Country Strategy for Sri Lanka Diplomatic Missions in India 2021/2023" to Saran.

A member of the Indian Foreign Service, Shri Pankaj Saran had served as India's Ambassador to Russia and High Commissioner to Bangladesh prior to being appointed as the Deputy National Security Advisor in May 2018.

Kovil trustee asks devotees not to gather in large numbers

By PRADEEP PRASANNA SAMARAKOON



Trustee of the Wellawatte Mayurapathy Sri Bathrakali Amman Kovil, B Suntharalingam, called on devotees not to gather in large amounts in the kovil in view of the prevailing pandemic situation in the country. He said that an increase in the number of devotees attending the three daily poojas had been witnessed during the past few

days and some of them had been warned to adhere to health guidelines issued by the authorities.

"We conduct poojas usually from 5.30 am to 12.30 noon and from 5.30 pm to 8.30 pm every day. Yet we still do not permit devotees to throng the kovil. We call on the devotees to understand the prevailing situation and follow the guidelines for the safety of themselves and others," Suntharalingam said.

Suntharalingam said that a separate unit had been set up to instruct the devotees to stick to the health guidelines issued by the government. "We sometimes have to issue masks for some devotees who come to the kovil without them," he said.

Bread prices jacked up

The Bakery Owners' Association yesterday said that the price of a 450g loaf of bread would be increased by Rs. 10 with effect from midnight yesterday in view of the increases in the wheat flour prices.



School bus service introduced to prevent children from using dilapidated bridge

By CYRIL WIMALASURENDRE

KANDY - A school bus service will commence from Kumbukkadura to Kandy to prevent children from using a dilapidated suspension bridge across the Mahaweli Ganga.

The condition of the suspension bridge was taken up for discussion by the Kandy District Coordinating Committee following an inspection tour by Central Province Governor Lalith U. Gamage.

The Governor ordered that everyone be made to wear life-saving jackets in case of a ferry service being introduced.

NOTICE OF REDUCTION OF STATED CAPITAL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the General Public that in terms of Section 59 of the Companies Act No. 7 of 2007 ROYALI POWER (PRIVATE) LIMITED a Company duly incorporated in Sri Lanka bearing the Registration No. PV 16110 and having its Registered Office at No.261/1, Pamunuwa Road, Maharagama shall reduce its stated capital as set out hereunder in accordance with the provisions of this Act by passing the following Special Resolution at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Shareholders of the Company which will be held on 01st February, 2022 at No.261/1, Pamunuwa Road, Maharagama at 10.00 a.m.:-

"It is hereby resolved to reduce the stated capital of the Company from Rupees Forty Million and Thirty (Rs.40,000,030.00) to Rupees Ten Million and Thirty (Rs.10,000,030.00) by the Company, by purchasing Three Million (3,000,000) Ordinary Shares of the Company in consideration of Rupees Thirty Million (Rs. 30,000,000.00) (at Rs. 10.00 per Share)"

By Order of the Board
Asian Corporate Secretaries (Pvt) Ltd
Secretaries

MUSAEUS COLLEGE
COLOMBO 7
ADMISSIONS - 2022
LOWER NURSERY
INTERVIEWS

An e-mail announcing interviews for Lower Nursery has been sent to all applicants with respective date and time.

The Interviews have been scheduled as follows:-

4th December 2021 (Saturday)
5th December 2021 (Sunday)
6th December 2021 (Monday)

(Please note the above dates are subject to change at the discretion of the management depending on any prevailing situation in the country.)

In the event you do not receive an automated email with your interview date & time, please contact the Registrar's Office (email: registrar@musaeus.lk)

Registrar,
Musaeus College
Colombo 07

SRI LANKA MEDICAL COUNCIL ACCREDITATION UNIT

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO BE A REVIEWER OF THE ACCREDITATION UNIT OF THE SLMC

Introduction
The Sri Lanka Medical Council Established the Accreditation Unit (AU) early this year for the purpose of accrediting all medical schools in Sri Lanka. It is proposed to review and evaluate all medical schools during 2022 to 2023. The AU is developing a panel of reviewers and invites applications from academics and specialists having qualifications, eligibility criteria and experience listed below to be appointed as reviewers to support the accreditation process.

Required Qualifications
A minimum postgraduate qualification of MD/MS & Board Certification or PhD.

Eligibility Criteria

- Full-time academic staff attached to or retired within five years from a medical faculty at Associate Professor grade or above, in the specialties listed below.

OR

- Medical specialists employed or retired within 5 years from the Ministry of Health, in the specialties listed below.
- At least 5 years' experience in teaching and examination of medical students and postgraduate students.

Required Specialties
Anatomy, Radiology, Biochemistry, Physiology, Microbiology, Parasitology, Forensic Medicine, Family Medicine/ General Practice, Pathology, Pharmacology, Community Medicine / Public Health, Medicine and related subspecialties, Surgery and related subspecialties, Obstetrics & Gynaecology and related subspecialties, Paediatrics and related subspecialties, Psychiatry, Anesthesiology and Medical Education.

Obligations of the Reviewers

- Participation in the training programmes and other official meetings.
- Evaluation of "Self-Evaluation Report (ESR)" of the medical school.
- "Review Visit" (Site visit) to the medical school with other members of the Review Team.

d. Submission of the "Review Report" with other members of the Review Team to the AU.

e. Display a high degree of professionalism and integrity, including commitment to act as an effective member of the Review Team.

Remuneration and facilitation

- An attractive allowance will be provided.
- Transport for "Review visit" and Accommodation during "Review visit" will be provided.

Closing Date for Applications
20th December 2021.

Please post the application under registered cover, along with a **brief curriculum vitae** with details of past relevant experience in teaching, examinations, training in curricular development, programme review of UGC etc. (details of research and publications not required) to the address below or email a soft copy of same to the email address below.

The Head
Accreditation Unit
Sri Lanka Medical Council
No 31, Norris Canal Road
Colombo 10.
Email - accreditation@mc.lk

WHO asks countries in South-East Asia to be vigilant as cases surge globally and new variant of concern is detected

New Delhi, 27 November 2021 – In view of the surge in COVID-19 cases elsewhere globally and detection of new variant of concern Omicron, the World Health Organization today appealed to countries in the South-East Asia Region to scale up surveillance, strengthen public health and social measures, and enhance vaccination coverage.

“Though COVID-19 cases have been declining in most countries of our Region, the surge in cases elsewhere in the world and confirmation of a new Variant of Concern, is a reminder of the persisting risk and the need for us to continue to do our best to protect against the virus and prevent its spread. At no cost should we let our guards down,” said Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia Region.

Countries must enhance surveillance and sequencing. They should assess the risk of importation through international travel based on updated information on circulating variants and

response capacities, and take measures accordingly.

“Comprehensive and tailored public health and social measures to prevent transmission must continue. The earlier the protective measures are implemented, the less restrictive they would need to be in order to be effective. The more COVID-19 circulates, the more opportunities the virus will have to change and mutate, and the pandemic will last longer,” the Regional Director said.

The most important thing people must do is reduce their risk of exposure to the virus – wear a mask and wear it properly covering nose and mouth; keep distance; avoid poorly ventilated or crowded spaces; keep hands clean; cover cough and sneeze; and get vaccinated.

“As of today 31% of the Region’s population is fully vaccinated, 21% partially vaccinated while nearly 48%, or about a billion people are yet to receive even a single dose of the COVID-19 vaccine,” she said, adding that they contin-

ue to be at risk of contracting severe disease due to the virus and spreading it further.

Even after getting vaccinated, everyone must continue to take precautions to prevent becoming infected and to infect someone else who may get severely affected by the virus.

WHO’s Technical Advisory Group on Virus Evolution met yesterday and designated B.1.1.529 as a variant of concern and named it Omicron.

Researchers are working to understand how transmissible or virulent this variant is, and how it will impact diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines.

“We must not forget that the pandemic is far from over. As societies open up, we should not get complacent. Festivities and celebrations must include all precautionary measures. Crowds and large gatherings must be avoided. The current situation warrants further stepping up efforts on all fronts,” the Regional Director said



British envoy Sarah Hulton met SLMC Leader, Parliamentarian Rauff Hakeem and held a friendly discussion with him at the British High Commission, on Friday (26).

India - Lanka- Maldives- Focused Operations commenced

The Tri Lateral Focused Operations among India- Sri Lanka- Maldives commenced at Sea from 27-28 November 2021. The exercise under the aegis of Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) is a pioneering effort to collaborate efforts towards the Pillar of Maritime Security, Foreign Ministry said yesterday.

It said: The CSC Focused Operations are aimed at streamlining Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and enhanced interoperability amongst the three navies. The Indian Navy is represented by INS Subhadra Offshore Patrol Vessel and P8I Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft, whilst SLNS Samudura and MNDF Maritime Reconnaissance Aircraft Dornier are participating from Sri Lanka Navy and Maldives National Defence Forces respectively. The two-day engagement will have the platforms engage in coordinated maritime surveillance in respective EEZ for counter narcotics, Search and Rescue at Sea, air tracking and establish effective Communication.

It may be recalled that the CSC was

institutionalised during the 4th National Security Adviser Tri Lateral meeting in November last year and the Secretariat was established in Colombo in March 2021. Further, the CSC Deputy

NSA’s meeting in August 2021, evolved actionable engagements to achieve greater interoperability and understanding towards tackling common Security Challenges in the region.

Company Estate Reforms, Tea and Rubber Estates Related Crops Cultivation and Factories Modernization and Tea and Rubber Export Promotion State Minister Kanaka Herath inspecting the progress of upgrading infrastructure facilities of Pinnawala elephant orphanage in Rambukkana



Public Security Minister Rear Admiral (Retd) Sarath Weerasekera presenting TOP 100 Award to veteran journalist Norman Palihawadane yesterday at the Sri Lanka Foundation in Colombo. Pic by Dharmasena Welipitiya

UNP... From page 1

while declaring open the elevated highway which was a project initiated by the previous government.

“The UNP would like to point out that neither the Presidential Commission of Inquiry report nor the Select Committee of Parliament report has stated that the former Prime Minister or any former Minister of the Cabinet is responsible for the attacks.

“What the President is suggesting is that persons not responsible for the Easter Sunday Attacks, and against whom there are no judicial decisions to that effect, be deprived of their Civic Rights.

“This is contrary to the fundamental principles of democracy. This brings into conflict the judicial and legislative process. Therefore, this also violates article 3 and 4 of the Constitution of Sri Lanka. This statement is also a violation of the President’s oath to uphold the Constitution.

“Against this background, it is not surprising that Sri Lanka, under this current government, has not been invited to the virtual summit on Democracy hosted by the United States of America.”

SJB demands...

From page 1

Opposition Leader Premadasa said that there had been a number of explosions caused by gas leaks in the recent past, the most recent being reported from two restaurants in Weligama, one from Ratnapura and another from Colombo 07.

It had been confirmed by the Government Analyst that the explosion at a restaurant at the Race Course building in Colombo 7 had been caused by a gas leak, Premadasa said.

A young woman who was receiving treatment at the Colombo National Hospital following a recent gas cylinder

explosion, succumbed to her injuries on Friday. The 19-year-old woman was a resident of Welikanda.

Another gas leak caused an explosion in a house in Kottawa where a domestic gas had exploded while the occupants were fast asleep. The explosion caused extensive damage to the house but there were no fatalities.

The Opposition Leader demanded that standards specified by the Sri Lanka Standards Institute (SLSI) with regard to gas cylinders be updated and to the Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) notified.

The former Executive Director of the CAA Thushan Gunawardena has alleged that the gas leak had resulted from a change in the mix of butane and propane.

Citing three reports which were compiled with regard to the gas composition in 12.5kg and 18kg gas cylinders, Opposition Leader Premadasa said that the reports mentioned that the propane-butane ratio, which was supposed to be 70:30, has been made 50:50.

However, Litro Gas Lanka Limited insisted that it had not released standard gas cylinders to the market.

No arrivals..

From page 1

countries recently.” Anyone who will travel here to watch the coming cricket matches can do so if he or she is fully vaccinated. Many countries are organis-

ing such events despite COVID-19. More than 90% of Sri Lankans have been vaccinated now,” the Minister insisted.

(RK)

China reportedly...

From page 1

a seven-year grace period, but it has now appeared that the transaction signed with China’s EXIM meant Uganda “surrendered” its only international airport, according to a Sahara Reporters.com, a news portal that focuses on Africa.

Uganda, however, sought to renegotiate the deal but without success. Uganda in March 2021 sent a delegation to Beijing hoping to renegotiate the clauses of the deal.

“The revelation that Uganda government signed an agreement and, among others, waived immunity for its sover-

eign assets has raised questions about the level of scrutiny and due diligence that bureaucrats conduct before committing the country internationally,” according to a report in allAfrica.com

Entebbe International Airport is Uganda’s only international airport and handles over 1.9 million passengers per year.

A number of countries, some in Africa, have had to forfeit national assets for direct control by China after failing to repay commercial loans signed with haste or without proper scrutiny.

Govt. asked...

From page 1

of the new variants to other countries in the regions was only a matter of time.

“We have to trace everyone who have arrived in Sri Lanka from Africa or travelled through Africa since 10 November,” he said.

Sri Lanka must do everything in its power to delay the arrival of the variant, Dr. Perera said.

“The variant is new and we don’t know the best way to deal with it, but scientists will study it and come up with strategies to reduce its impact,” he said.

Sri Lanka must introduce a systematic tracing, testing and isolating (TTI) method, he said. While Sri Lankan authorities pretended that they were following TTI, their approach was unscientific, Dr. Perera said.

Sirisena..

From page 1

the administration. Media Secretaries questioned the failure on the part of the government at least to brief them properly of contentious matters as various groups pulled in different directions.

Political sources pointed out that the Chief Government Whip Dinesh Gunawardena last week assured

Parliament that there was absolutely no issue between the government and the SLPP. The MEP leader made the declaration in the wake of heavy exchanges between the SLFP and Agriculture Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage over the latter’s criticism of Maithripala Sirisena during the budget debate on presidential expenditure.

Torrential...

From page 1

at-risk areas to evacuate to a safe location if rains continue.

The Irrigation Department yesterday issued minor flood warnings for several low-lying areas in the Maha Oya River Basin and Deduru Oya basin due to rising river water levels due to heavy rains. Owing to the rainfall situation that occurred in Maha Oya River Basin within the last 36 hours, the river water levels at the upstream areas have been rising considerably.

There is the possibility of minor floods in low-lying areas in the river basin especially in Marandagolla, Nalla, Diwuldeniya and Welihinda villages in Giriulla DS division areas within the next few hours. The Negombo-Kurunegala road faces the threat of inundation near the Giriulla town.

Besides, there is the possibility of a minor flood situation in low-lying areas

of the Maha Oya River Basin situated in Alawwa, Mirigama, Pannala, Wennappuwa, Negombo, Katana and Dankotuwa DS divisions.

Those living in these areas and motorists traveling through these areas are requested to remain alert.

The Irrigation Department has also said that as per the rainfall and river water levels observed in upstream areas of the Deduru Oya Basin, there is a possibility of minor floods occurring depending on the upcoming rainfall, the spilling discharge may have to be increased. There is a possibility of floods in low-lying areas of Deduru Oya valley situated in Wariyapola, Nikaweratiya, Mahawa, Kobeigane, Bingiriya, Pallama, Chilaw, Arachchikattuwa and Rasnayakapura D/S Divisions within next few hours up to 24 hours.

Jacky's...

From page 1

The most recent photo shows Suresh Chandrasekhar kissing the actress on her cheek while he takes a selfie facing a mirror. According to India Today, the iPhone 12 Pro that is being seen in the conman’s hands is the same with which Suresh Chandrasekhar carried out the scam using an Israeli SIM card.

Suresh was reportedly using the same mobile phone while he was inside the jail

too. Last month, Jacqueline Fernandez was questioned for seven hours by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the INRs 200 crore extortion case involving conman Suresh Chandrasekhar and his wife, actor Leena Maria Paul.

In its chargesheet, the Delhi Police has accused Suresh Chandrasekhar and 13 others of duping the wife of the former

promoter of Ranbaxy to the tune of Rs 200 crore. Officials believe Chandrasekhar extorted Rs 200 crore from the complainant by claiming that he would facilitate her husband’s release from prison. Anant Malik, the lawyer representing Suresh Chandrasekhar, had told the media, “Jacqueline and Suresh were dating, these are my instructions, this is straight from the horse’s mouth.”

Responding to the claims, a spokesperson for actress Jacqueline Fernandez had issued a statement saying, “Jacqueline Fernandez is being called to testify as a witness by the ED. She has duly recorded her statements and in future will also be completely co-operating with the agency in the investigations.”

“Jacqueline also categorically denies alleged slanderous statements made

about her relationship with the involved couple,” the statement added.

On the work front, Jacqueline was last seen playing the titular role of the film Mrs. Serial Killer which was released on Netflix on 1 May, coinciding with May Day. She is set to feature with Akshay Kumar for the fourth time in a gangster drama Bachchan Pandey. The film will theatrically release on 4 March 2022.

Fake Indian rupees from Pakistan to India via Colombo: Bangladesh a stopover

DMP investigation finds a syndicate prints the notes in Lahore, sends those to SL and then to Chattogram

BY MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN
A transnational currency forgery syndicate has been smuggling fake Indian rupees into India from Pakistan for a couple of years using Sri Lanka and Bangladesh as transit.

The syndicate prints fake Indian currency notes in Pakistan's Lahore and then sends those to Sri Lanka by sea in containers loaded with marble stones. From Sri Lanka, the containers are shipped to Chattogram port in Bangladesh.

The consignments are then sent to Dhaka by trucks with other goods.

In Bangladesh, the fake notes are stashed in "special chambers" at homes of syndicate members before smuggling those into India in small portions using land routes.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) officials involved in the investigation into fake currency smuggling yesterday disclosed this to The Daily Star, a day after the arrest of the syndicate's two Bangladeshi members - Fatema Akter Opy and Sheik Md Abu Taleb.

Police also recovered fake Indian rupees worth around Rs 7.30 crore from Fatema's home in the capital's Dakshinkhan.

A high official of DMP (Gulshan Division) said Fatema married Pakistan national Danesh over a decade ago.

Danesh was arrested in 2010 over his involvement in note forgery, the official told this newspaper yesterday.

Fatema was also arrested before in a note forgery case filed with Motijheel Police Station.

"After coming out of jail, Danesh suffered a heart attack and became bedridden. Fatema then took over the illegal business and started controlling the syndicate's Bangladesh operations," said the DMP official, requesting anonymity.

Briefing reporters around noon yesterday, Md Asaduzzaman,



deputy commissioner (Gulshan Division) of DMP, said police raided Khilkhet area on Friday night on information that a woman with fake Indian rupees was roaming around the main gate to Bonorupa residential area. Police arrested the woman from there and recovered fake Indian rupees worth Rs 50,000 from her.

Gleaning information from the arrestee, police later recovered fake Indian rupees from her home and picked up the syndicate's another member Taleb from Demra that same night, the DMP DC said.

Investigators said Fatema built a "special chamber" in her house to store the fake notes. Police recovered 95 sacks of fake rupees stored with 500 more sacks of marbles imported from Pakistan. This was done to dodge law enforcers.

A high official of DMP (Gulshan Division) involved in the investigation said Pakistani national Sultan is the mastermind of the syndicate and he is controlling its operations from Lahore.

His father Md Safi is also involved in the syndicate, the official added.

"Fatema visited Sultan's home in Pakistan several times. She used to call Safi her father," the DMP official said, quoting Fatema.

He said the syndicate used a "cutout system" for smuggling fake notes into India. This would allow the syndicate to keep one party in the dark about the other.

"The syndicate would just give a serial number of a fake note or a portion of a fake note to a second party. The consignment would be delivered to one party from another only if the serial number of the fake note matched," the DMP official said.

The syndicate use different border points of Bangladesh to smuggle the currency, said police.

Asked about payments for syndicate members, the DMP official said they would have an idea about it after interrogating the arrestees.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka Court yesterday placed the two arrestees

on two-day remand each in a case filed by police with Khilkhet Police Station over the recovery of the fake Indian rupees.

Iftekhairul Islam, additional deputy commissioner (Gulshan Division) of DMP, said they had some information about the syndicate's activities, but it would take some time to have details on its members as they use the "cutout system". "We are carrying out the investigating with the information available. We hope to trace the whereabouts of the absconding members of the syndicate soon," he told The Daily Star. (The Daily Star/ANN)

Modi hails start-up culture that's churning out billion-dollar company every 10 days, says India now a nation of job creators, not job seekers

BY S VENKAT NARAYAN OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, November 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that the turning point in India's growth story is that it has now become a nation of job creators rather than of job seekers. He was referring to the recent surge in start-up companies many of which are becoming unicorns that are attracting investors pouring funds and making them billion-dollar firms at a fast pace.

Addressing the nation through his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' (Straight from the Heart) radio programme, Modi noted that till 2015, the country had only nine or 10 unicorns, the name given to start-ups whose valuation has crossed a billion dollars. "You will be very happy to know that now India is flying high even in the world of unicorns."

"According to a report, a big change has come this year. In just 10 months, a unicorn is being raised in India every 10 days. This is also a big thing because our youth have achieved this success in the midst of the pandemic. Today there are more than 70 unicorns in India," he said.

Start-ups being launched by Indian youth are solving global problems, Modi said. He interacted with a young man named Mayur Patil, who had developed air filter technology to reduce emissions while improving mileage in vehicles. After installing his air filters in 10 buses of the regional transport corporation in 2017-18, it was found



Narendra Modi during his Mann Ki Baat broadcast on Sunday.

that fuel efficiency had increased 10%, while emissions were reduced by 40%.

The patent for Patil's air filter was granted this year. When he and three of his friends participated in NITI Aayog's Atal New India Challenge, they received a nine-million-rupee grant, which enabled them to start a factory to mass produce the air filters.

Modi offered Patil's experience as an example of a societal mindset change in favour of entrepreneurs. "This is the turning point of India's growth story, where people are now not only dreaming of becoming job seekers but also becoming job creators. This will further strengthen India's stature on the global stage," he said.

The prime minister also hailed community efforts to safeguard the environment, from river rejuvenation to support farmers in Uttar Pradesh's Jalaun to palmyra-planting in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi to prevent soil erosion, and the submersion of coastal islands during cyclones. "Nature poses a threat to us only when we disturb her balance or destroy her sanctity," said Modi.

China protests comments by Indian General Rawat on 'security threat'

BY S VENKAT NARAYAN OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, November 26: China's military has lodged "solemn representations" with India and expressed its "firm opposition" to Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat's comments earlier this month on China being the biggest security threat to India and mutual suspicion rising between the two sides.

Speaking at the Ministry's monthly press conference in Beijing on Thursday, People's Liberation Army (PLA) spokesperson Senior Colonel Wu Qian described Gen Rawat's comments as "irresponsible and dangerous."

"Indian officials speculate on the so-called 'Chinese military threat' for no reason, which is a serious violation of the strategic guidance of the leaders of the two countries that China and India do not constitute a threat to each other," he said. The remarks "incite geopolitical confrontation" and are "irresponsible and dangerous," he added.

He did not say where and how China had "made solemn representations" over the remarks.

While the Chinese military's spokesperson termed the comments a "violation" and "inciting confrontation", Indian officials have said on many occasions over the past few months that the Chinese military's actions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) starting last summer — mobilisation of two divisions, deployment of troops in forward areas and multiple transgressions to unilaterally



India's Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat

redraw the LAC — had not only violated bilateral understandings but also brought ties to their lowest point in years.

Last week, diplomats from the two sides agreed to restart talks between military commanders "at an early date." The 13th round of talks in October ended with an acrimonious exchange with each side blaming the other for the stalemate. At last week's meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs, both agreed to also "ensure a stable ground situation and avoid any untoward incident" until the situation is resolved.

At an event earlier this month, Gen Rawat had said that, while disengagement had taken place in some areas and was in progress in others, de-escalation remained a far-off possibility given a lack of trust and mutual suspicion, not to mention the Chinese side's construction of infrastructure in forward areas. Indian officials have said

China has so far not offered "a credible explanation" of its deployments last year that sparked the crisis.

The PLA spokesperson said China's position on the border issue was "clear and unambiguous". "The Chinese frontier defence forces are determined to safeguard national sovereignty and security, and are also committed to maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas, and are making great efforts to promote the de-escalation of the situation," he said.

"There is an old Chinese saying: if you use bronze as a mirror, you can correct your appearance. If you use history as a mirror, you can understand the rise and fall of a state. If you use good people as a mirror, you can understand right from wrong. As neighbouring countries, we hope India and China will meet each other halfway and work together to jointly maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas and jointly maintain the healthy development of relations."

WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS

2021

The Celebration Ceremony to Mark the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, declared by the United Nations In 2005 and falling on Sunday, November 21st, 2021.

Will be held on 01st of December, 2021 from 10.00 am to 11.30 am
At the Makumbura Multimodal Center
Under the patronage of Attorney-at-law Hon. (Mrs.) Pavithra Wanniarachchi, Minister of Transport
And With the participation of Hon. Dilum Amunugama State Minister of Vehicle Regulation, Bus Transport Services And Train Compartments and Motor car Industry.

ACT FOR LOW SPEEDS

ACT for LOW SPEEDS / ACT for LOW SPEED STREETS

National Council for Road Safety

Ministry of Transport

Some Strengths and Weaknesses of the Budget Speech 2022

By DR LAKSIRI FERNANDO

The budget speech that the Minister of Finance Basil Rajapaksa delivered in Parliament on 12 November 2021 was fairly structured with the following sections. That is a positive.

1. Preface.
2. 'Global Challenges.'
3. Our Strengths.
4. The Challenges Before Us.
5. Policy Synopsis.
6. Development of the National Economy.
7. Revenue Proposals.
8. Macro-Economic Vision for Revival.
9. Conclusion.

But its content was the question owing to boasting, half-truths, contradictions, and unachievable pronouncements. If the Opposition was serious about countering the wrong policies, weaknesses, errors, etc., of the Budget, it could have possibly used the same format. Democratic politics is not about a 'gang war' between the government and the Opposition as appears to be the case in today's Parliament. Debates should be more critical on the flawed policies with alternative perspectives being offered.

In parliamentary democracies, there are 'shadow cabinets' and 'shadow ministers.' There should be a 'Shadow Minister for Finance.' It is mainly his/her role to present counter arguments, expose false data, and criticise misleading policies. The Opposition also should have a 'official website' where they could publish counterarguments or counter budgetary policies. Of course, it is also the duty of the media (as it is fairly done), academics and journalists to do the same critically and objectively.

A Family Preface?

The Preface correctly says, "We are passing through perhaps the most painful period of human civilisation." This should mean the environmental disasters, Covid-19 pandemic and deaths, increasing poverty in poor countries, and evolving economic crises worldwide and others. Of course, these are challenges even in Sri Lanka. As a solution, he says:

"I first come to learn the concept of 'Challenging the Challenges' for the betterment of the public in my ancestral home in Madamulana. The Rajapaksas have a history of never being daunted by challenges. Mr. D. M. Rajapaksa, who is known as the "the Lion of Ruhuna", who represented the second State Council in 1936, is known by the entire country. He is my father's elder brother (loku thaththa)."

If the Minister was serious about the



Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa presenting Budget 2022

public nature of the challenges, he should not have given purely a family perspective on the subject. His phrase 'Challenging the Challenges' is a common phrase in many languages and in quotations of many authors. Tracing it to Madamulana may be suitable to a D.M. Rajapaksa oration, but not to a preface of a Budget speech.

He does not stop there. In the remaining eight paragraphs of the Preface (1.4 to 1.11) he boasts of his family, loku thatha, thatha, aiyaa, malli, thama, and their achievements. This is undoubtedly a record in Budget speeches in the world. He places Mahinda Rajapaksa at the center of this legacy who, in fact, got disgracefully defeated in 2015. This is what the Minister says: "The Hon. Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse, who is today in this House, is at the centre of the Rajapaksa Political Legacy."

There is no mention of other Ministers, the Cabinet, or its collective responsibility. Not a word about other parties or its leaders other than what he has created as Podu Jana Peramuna.

Challenging the Global Challenges

The Finance Minister is correct in briefly outlining five global challenges: (1) increasing global social and economic disparities between the rich and the poor, (2) the slow progress in achieving the (UN) sustainable goals, (3) increasing

environmental catastrophes, (4) limited assistance from bi-lateral and multilateral institutions, and (5) challenges in adopting to the post-pandemic 'new normal.'

The degeneration of moral and ethical standards worldwide, particularly among political leaders with corruption, deals, misdeeds, and authoritarianism, is not mentioned at all.

However, without much relevance, he states, "The impact is worse on countries with trade focused economies such as ours compared to those economies dominated by the manufacturing sector."

Even if his 'vision' of turning the present economy of Sri Lanka from 'trade focused' to 'manufacture dominated,' is commendable, the global challenges that he has outlined have nothing much to do with the difference. To my knowledge of economics, trade and manufacture are complimentary. While Sri Lanka undoubtedly should promote manufacture, a balanced approach might be the best without promoting one against the other as he has done. It is in the same section that he has arrived at a figure of Rs. 500 billion.

"The opportunity to provide such services, both domestically and externally has been curtailed, resulting in a loss of income. As a result, the loss of revenue to the country and the Treasury has been unlike any other year before. The

loss to the Treasury, according to our estimates, is over Rs. 500 billion."

The nature of local productions and nature of exports undoubtedly are reasons for our economic predicaments and underdevelopment. Therefore, it will be commendable if the government makes genuine efforts to change the situation. But the claim that this year's loss to the Treasury of Rs. 500 billion is purely a result of this economic imbalance is unbelievable unless the government supplies concrete evidence for the claim. This loss or a major part of it appears to be a result of mismanagement of imports and exports, and the enormous tax concessions given to the rich by the last Budget. Without direct import controls, higher taxes could have been imposed on unnecessary or luxury imports. Dialogues with importers could have been another measure.

Bloated 'Our Strengths'

It is quite superficial to talk about 'our strengths' just after talking about global challenges as if Sri Lanka were at the forefront of changing the world! At the beginning of this talk is the boast about Rajapaksa family and its leadership again. Both the President and the Prime Minister are praised. If the Budget speech was following a kind of SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, with the strengths, the weaknesses also could have been discussed. That is the way to go about economic change.

Among the strengths, there is only one paragraph with four sentences on Infrastructure: "Our infrastructure facilities are of high standard. The quality of our ports, airports, telecommunications, highways, roads, and electricity supply are very good." Of course, there are certain aspects to be 'proud' about, but some are still in preparation (ports). What about railways? They are still in the colonial heritage.

The Minister suddenly says: "Also, through the 100,000-kilometre road project and the 5,000 bridges programme, the byroad network will be strengthened further, and the entire country will become a single network." This 100,000 km roads programme was there even in the last budget, the only addition being the 5,000 bridges. Perhaps, there is a new determination to go ahead because, as alleged by many people, these road constructions are beneficial to political supporters.

The third strength is named "Non-aligned, friendly international relations." Nine international organisations are particularly mentioned like 'the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Union, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Kuwait

Fund, the French Development Agency, the KfD, Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) the OPEC for International Development, and the UN.'

There is no mentioning of the IMF under friendly organisations.

It is also surprising and intriguing that China or Chinese organisations are not mentioned as friendly countries or organisations. Mahinda Rajapaksa's budget speech last year had much emphasis on China. It might be too early, however, to speculate whether this shows a shift of alliances in the international context and relations.

Question of IMF?

However, under the next section on 'the challenges before us,' the IMF is mentioned with some negativity. Basil Rajapaksa refers to Dr N. M. Perera's budget speech of 1970/71 ostensibly to prove his argument.

"In that he [N. M. Perera] states that instead of building foreign exchange reserves, we have used it for the importation of goods creating a foreign reserve crisis and, thereby, seeking the support of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). From the first IMF facility in 1961, successive governments have resorted to short term assistance from the IMF, and our leaders and financial sector experts have failed in introducing a sustainable long-term programme to manage our foreign reserves."

There is no question that a country should try to manage its foreign exchange reserves without going to the IMF, if possible. I believe that is what Dr. N. M. Perera said and tried to do it. Of course, there were others who went to the IMF as an easy escape.

However, during recent administrations (Rajapaksa and Wickremesinghe) there has been a tendency to go for various dubious sources to seek foreign exchange loans and assistance when facing depleted reserves. Although no direct conditions are attached from these sources, these loans and deals have been a major reason for Sri Lanka's deteriorating foreign exchange conditions throughout the years. There is no proper solution proposed in the Budget 2022 to this paradoxical situation.

Sri Lanka should not hesitate to go to the IMF. That is the most reliable and resourceful multilateral organisation, almost like a UN agency to deal with foreign exchange crises and reserves of member countries. It is up to the government to deal with the IMF properly, and negotiate any conditions attached when seeking foreign exchange or other assistance.

Higher coffee intake prevents development of Alzheimer's disease – study

Higher coffee intake also seemed to be linked to slowing the accumulation of the amyloid protein in the brain, a key factor in the development of Alzheimer's disease.

ANI: If you are one of those people who can't start their day without a cup of hot coffee, we have some good news for you. New research has found that drinking higher amounts of coffee can make you less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease.

The findings of this research were published in the 'Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience Journal'. As part of the Australian Imaging, Biomarkers and Lifestyle Study of Ageing, researchers from Edith Cowan University (ECU) investigated whether coffee intake affected the rate of cognitive decline of more than 200 Australians over a decade.

Lead investigator Dr Samantha Gardener said that the results showed an association between coffee and several important markers related to Alzheimer's disease.

"We found participants with no memory impairments and with higher coffee consumption at the start of the study had a lower risk of transitioning to mild

cognitive impairment – which often precedes Alzheimer's disease – or developing Alzheimer's disease over the course of the study," she said. Drinking more coffee gave positive results in relation to certain domains of cognitive function, specifically executive function which includes planning, self-control, and attention.

Higher coffee intake also seemed to be linked to slowing the accumulation of the amyloid protein in the brain, a key factor in the development of Alzheimer's disease.

Dr Gardener said that although further research was needed, the study was encouraging as it indicated drinking coffee could be an easy way to help delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease.

"It's a simple thing that people can change," she said.

It could be particularly useful for people who are at risk of cognitive decline but haven't developed any symptoms.

"We might be able to develop some clear guidelines people can follow in middle age and hopefully it could then have a lasting effect," she said.

If you only have allowed yourself

one cup of coffee a day, the study indicated you might be better off treating yourself to an extra cup, although a maximum number of cups per day that provided a beneficial effect was not able to be established from the current study.

"If the average cup of coffee made at home is 240g, increasing to two cups a day could potentially lower cognitive decline by eight percent after 18 months," Dr Gardener said.

"It could also see a five percent decrease in amyloid accumulation in the brain over the same time period," she added.

In Alzheimer's disease, the amyloid clump together forming plaques that are toxic to the brain.

The study was unable to differentiate between caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee, nor the benefits or consequences of how it was prepared (brewing method, the presence of milk and/or sugar etc).

Dr Gardener said that the relationship between coffee and brain function was worth pursuing.

"We need to evaluate whether coffee intake could one day be recommended as a lifestyle factor aimed at delaying the

onset of Alzheimer's disease," she said.

Researchers are yet to determine precisely which constituents of coffee are behind its seemingly positive effects on brain health.

Though caffeine has been linked to the results, preliminary research showed that it may not be the sole contributor to potentially delaying Alzheimer's disease.

"Crude caffeine" is the by-product of de-caffeinating coffee and has been shown to be as effective in partially preventing memory impairment in mice, while other coffee components

such as cafestol, kahweol and Eicosanoyl-5-hydroxytryptamide have also been seen to affect cognitive impair-

ment in animals in various studies," she said.





Jerusha Crossette-Thambiah,

seem more progressive.

Having two personal laws that have a mutual consent as a ground for divorce, why is the general law not accommodating it?

This is because personal laws are based on our culture and our culture was quite progressive in the sense that they don't want to trap someone in a relationship anymore. Whereas the general law is based on British principals and the English law is based on the Bible. In it there is an area that believes that divorce is hated by God.

At present, the English law has progressed and they have mutual consent.

What is the procedure of application for a divorce?

You meet a lawyer and file a plaint and attach any proof mainly your marriage certificate, children's birth certificate and other proof.

Do you get compensated after the divorce?

What we pray for is alimony, which is seen as compensation for a divorce. The party who has been wronged is proving their case and

spousal maintenance. You can ask for transfer of properties if you are taking care of the children. There can be financial monthly settlements that can be lump sum payments. You can ask for maintenance for your children.

At the end of the divorce, the main things to be decided are things like custody. Who gets legal rights and physical rights based on the best interest for the child.

What are the legal consequences of a divorce?

One is the order on what you get to do with your custody and the other is about redistribution of your property. Your alimony.

What are the grounds for judicial separation?

There are two grounds – 1) the other person has become too intolerable to live with or dangerous to live with and two) the other person is acting in an unlawful manner and they should not be allowed to live together.

Does a judicial separation automatically become the dissolution of marriage after a certain period of time?

No, it is not automatic. After two years the Court will give you an option to file for divorce. When a person goes through a divorce, they are called a divorcee. What is a person called after a judicial separation?

You will be called a judicially separated person not a divorcee.

Nullity

What is Nullity of marriage?

This is a declaration sought from Court that your marriage was never legal to begin with. A nullity is saying that your marriage is so legally wrong or defective that it was never legal in the first place.

What qualifies a marriage as being null and void?

Law is Light is a trilingual legal project to shed light on the law. The Latin maxim "ignorantia legis neminem excusat" translates to ignorance of the law is not an excuse. The Pro Bono Committee of the Law Students' Association of Sri Lanka strives to educate the general public by simplifying the laws in our country. In the seventh discussion, the programme focused on "Divorce laws".

The discussion featured Attorney-at-Law, Jerusha Crossette-Thambiah, Legal Advisor to the Mayor of Colombo Municipal Council, a Legal Consultant and Gender Practitioner and a lecturer at Cfps Law School

Before we go into the questions, can we address the negative connotation in society on divorce?

Having a stigma is not beneficial to you. Marriage is a contract people willingly get into it, you should be able to willingly get out of it as well. Marriage at its best is a great partnership and a support system but at its worst it is very similar to an abuser and victim dynamic or sometimes even murderer and victim because we see intimate partner violence is one of the highest rates of female murder in Sri Lanka. Divorce is a simple decision to exit a contract.

What is divorce?

Under the General Marriage Ordinance (GMO), divorce is seen as a dissolution of marriage by a competent Court, a contract entered into by a man and a woman.

The grounds for divorce?

There are three grounds upon which divorce can be filed

a) Adultery – is a hard ground to prove as the burden rests on the plaintiff to show that sexual intercourse took place outside marriage.

b) Incurable impotency – It is not about whether you can have children or not, it is about whether you can perform sexually or not and you need to prove that you have taken steps medically and that you are unable to perform sexually. If the other party did not know this at the time of marriage

c) Malicious desertion – leaving the consortium of marriage without just cause. This can happen in two ways: when a spouse leaves the marriage with no intention to return and the other is when the other partner is forced to leave the home due to intolerable behaviour.

Can a couple get divorced on mutual consent?

Even though international law provided for it, we don't have a written law for it. It was proposed in the Matrimonial Causes Act, which is still at a Bill stage. That has not been passed yet.

We have a faster way "non-contested divorce" where one party files once you have agreed that you no longer want to be together and the other person doesn't contest it.

But in our personal laws, the KMDA and MMDA

saying – "for living with you for so many years and now you have wronged me matrimonially I want this alimony". Aside from that there are maintenance orders, financial orders, and property transfer orders. All of these can be received as an order from a Court.

Are these gender neutral?

Yes. Anybody who earns more cannot leave the other destitute. If you can show that one person has a need and the other person is capable of paying it and there is sufficient reason, any gender will be subject to payment.

Do we have the concept of a prenup in Sri Lanka?

We don't have the exact concept but any contract two people have entered into is accepted. Court will allow it to be followed.

So this is a general contract where you state your terms and conditions by both parties and you'll agree to abide by it?

Correct Can you give us a few examples of these terms?

If one person has a lot of money or owns a business, that family may want to protect their assets away from this marriage. They will agree on not including that money for the settlement. This is done to safeguard your family wealth. In Tiger Wood's prenup, his wife had a clause saying, if he cheats on her, she will get a very high payout. And she did.

What are the rights of the parties after a divorce? And during a divorce?

The rights that a party has is, they can ask for

the month).

Successful migraine treatment is defined as a halving in the frequency and length of attacks, or as an improvement in symptoms.

While drugs can help prevent and

sensitivity to light and sound, nausea and vomiting. On a scale of 0-10, he scored the pain severity as 10-12 out of 10.

Blood tests revealed that he didn't have high levels of systemic inflamma-

mation and oxidative stress are implicated in migraine.

The report authors advised the man to adopt the Low Inflammatory Foods Everyday (LIFE) diet, a nutrient-dense, whole-food, plant-based diet.

Adopting plant-based diet relieves migraine symptoms: Study

The recommendation comes after they treated a man who had endured severe migraine headaches without aura for more than 12 years.

ANI: Adopting a plant-based diet that is rich in dark green leafy vegetables, could relieve symptoms of chronic migraine, according to a recent study. This study was published online in the 'BMJ Case Reports Journal'.

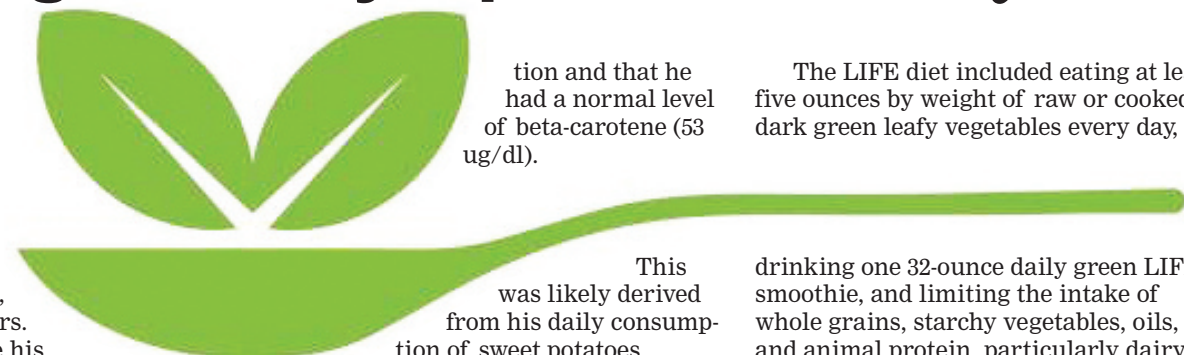
The recommendation comes after they treated a man who had endured severe migraine headaches without aura for more than 12 years. He had tried prescribed medicines (Zolmitriptan and Topiramate); cutting out potential 'trigger' foods, including chocolate, cheese, nuts, caffeine, and dried fruit; and yoga and meditation in a bid to blunt the severity and frequency of his headaches. Nothing had worked.

Over one billion people worldwide have migraines, characterized as one-sided, pulsating headaches lasting 4-72 hours, and often accompanied by sensitivity to noise and light and sometimes prodromal auras.

Migraines are either episodic (fewer than 15 days a month) or chronic (15 or more migraine days a month plus migraine features on at least 8 days of

treat the condition, a growing body of evidence suggested that diet may also offer an effective alternative without any of the side effects associated with some medicines, said the report authors.

Six months before his clinic referral, the man's migraines had become chronic, occurring on 18-24 days of every month. He described the pain as starting suddenly and intensely in the forehead and temple on the left side of his head. The pain was throbbing in nature and usually lasted 72 hours. His headaches were accompanied by



tion and that he had a normal level of beta-carotene (53 ug/dl).

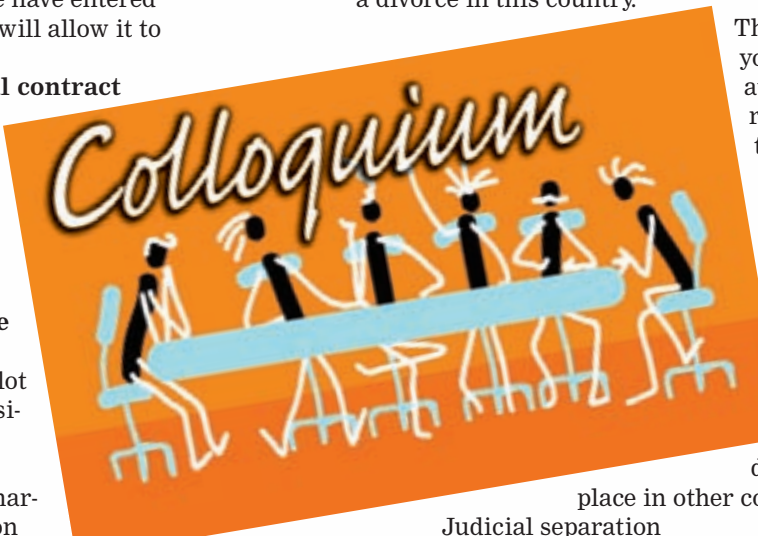
This was likely derived from his daily consumption of sweet potatoes, which, although high in beta-carotene, are relatively low in the nutrients responsible for the anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties of carotenoids, pointed out the report authors.

These are instead found in dark green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, kale, and watercress. Systemic inflam-

The LIFE diet included eating at least five ounces by weight of raw or cooked dark green leafy vegetables every day,

drinking one 32-ounce daily green LIFE smoothie, and limiting the intake of whole grains, starchy vegetables, oils, and animal protein, particularly dairy and red meat.

After two months on the LIFE diet, the man said that the frequency of his migraine attacks had fallen to just one day a month; the length and severity of the attacks had also lessened. Blood tests showed a substantial rise in beta-carotene levels, from 53 ug/dl to 92 ug/dl. He had stopped taking all his



How does the general law apply in the case of a foreign national?

If you are living here you come within the jurisdiction of local Courts and you are able to apply for a divorce in this country.

The only thing you need to look at is if your marriage registration was done in another country, will this divorce that you get in Sri Lanka be applicable under that law. Sri Lanka does not accept divorces taken place in other countries.

Judicial separation

What is judicial separation?

This a ground that is allowed so that people don't separate or divorce due to the normal stressors of day-to-day life and they are given an opportunity to go their separate ways and rethink. They can come back together. You are asking for a right not to cohabit for 2 years. You cannot remarry during this time

There are two sets of principles:

Void reasons – Minimum age, prohibited degrees (where you marry your relatives or incestual relationships), bigamy (when you get to another person before getting a divorce from your spouse), defects in formality.

Voidable reasons – duress (where you are forced to marry the person), incurable impotence, mistake, illicit sexual relations (where you have sexual relations out of your marriage but unlike adultery, if the marriage was never consummated with the partner but there is relations outside the marriage), pregnant by a third party (this is a ground for a woman's current husband)

Can you remarry after the nullity of marriage?

A divorce accepts that you are released from the marriage. A nullity states that your marriage never legally happened. Therefore you are a single person and you have the right to remarry.

(Compiled by Zeenath Zakir, Pro bono Secretary 2020-2021

The complete discussion is available on our YouTube channel 'Law Students Association of Sri Lanka', in all three languages.

These are laws that are subject to change with future developments by the Legislature)

migraine meds. Even when he tried certain 'challenge' foods, such as egg whites, salmon, or iced tea, which triggered headache attacks, these were much less painful and much shorter in duration than before.

After three months, his migraines stopped completely and they haven't returned in 7.5 years.

The man was allergic, and previously published research suggests that better control of allergies may lead to fewer migraine headaches. In this case, the man's allergy symptoms improved to the point that he no longer needed to use seasonal medication.

He was also HIV positive, and HIV has been linked to a heightened risk of migraines, so it is certainly possible that the man's HIV status and antiretroviral drugs had contributed to his symptoms, said the authors of the report.

But it wasn't possible to study this further without stopping the antiretroviral treatment, which is a limitation of the study, they acknowledged.

However, they concluded, "This report suggests that a whole food plant-based diet may offer a safe, effective and permanent treatment for reversing chronic migraine."

"While this report describes one very adherent patient who had a remarkable response, the LIFE diet has reduced migraine frequency within three months in several additional patients (personal communication)."

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Monday 29th November, 2021

Zorro back to zero

Maithripala Sirisena did not want to remain a Cabinet minister in the UPFA government, which he left in November 2014 mainly because the Rajapaksas were riding roughshod over him. He ran for President and became Zorro, as it were, in Sri Lankan politics by defeating President Mahinda Rajapaksa. But, a little over six years on, he has chosen to stomach many indignities at the hands of the Rajapaksas and remain an ordinary MP in the current SLPP administration. Zorro is back to zero.

Senior Vice President of the SLFP Prof. Rohana Lakshman Piyadasa has gone on record as saying the incumbent dispensation has not done anything good for the people, and Budget 2022 is absolutely worthless. He has dubbed the government an *edawela-tours* administration—an outfit given to living from day to day. This is the general perception ament the government and its poor performance. Prof. Piyadasa has also said the SLPP MPs and ministers who are slandering SLFP leader Sirisena would not have done so without the blessings of the SLPP leaders, who, he says, could easily rein them in if they so desire. He seems to have read the situation accurately. Minister Prasanna Ranatunga has also asked the SLFP to leave the government, according to a report we publish today.

The SLPP's popularity is on the wane, and the SLFP is trying to make the most of the situation to shore up its image and support base by criticising the government while being a part of it. The SLPP leaders have seen through the SLFP's strategy, and it is obvious that their minions are carrying out a vilification campaign against the SLFP leader at their behest. The question is why the SLFP continues to be in the SLPP government?

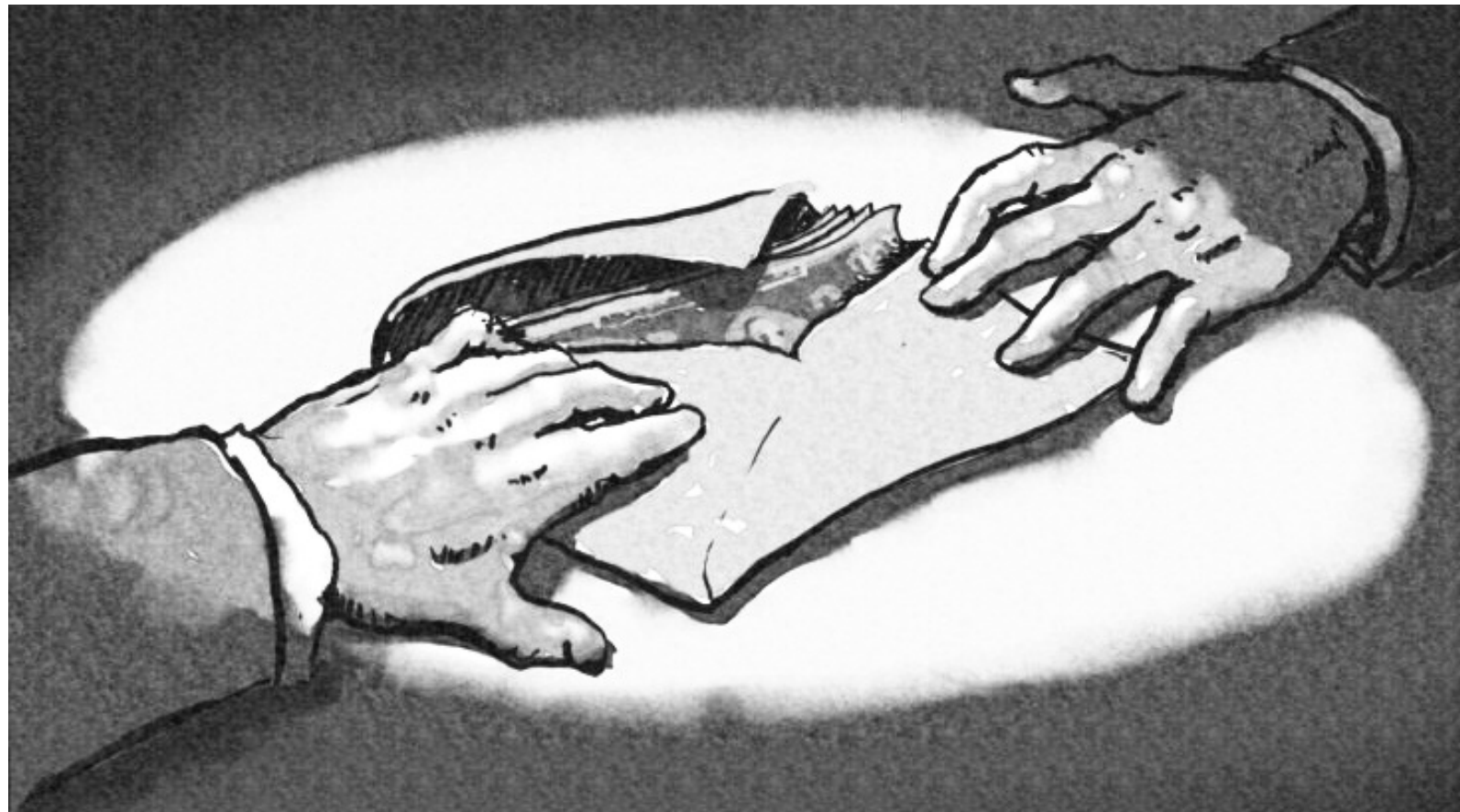
Sirisena never misses an opportunity to boast that he had the executive powers of the presidency pruned down through the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, and received international recognition for his contribution to strengthening Sri Lankan democracy. He says he is the only leader in the world to have let go of some executive powers. But he unflinchingly allowed the SLFP to vote for the 20th Amendment, which nullified the much-flaunted 19th Amendment.

The main reason Sirisena publicly adduced in justification of his defection from the UPFA in November 2014 to run for President in January 2015 was his abhorrence of the dictatorial rule of the Rajapaksa family, which, he said, had become a metaphor for corruption as well as abuse of power. Paradoxically, he also claimed that he, as the SLFP General Secretary at the time, advised the then President Mahinda Rajapaksa not to advance the presidential election because conditions on the political front were not favourable to the UPFA at the time. If Rajapaksa had heeded his advice, the UPFA government would have completed its full term, and Sirisena would have remained in it for another year or so despite its 'corruption and abuse of power'!

When Sirisena was asked in a recent television interview whether he had joined forces with the Rajapaksas again because the factors that had led him to break ranks with them were no longer there, he said the situation remained the same. If so, why did he close ranks with the Rajapaksas? He claimed he did not tell the SLFP what to do, and had allowed the party's Central Committee (CC) and parliamentary group to make decisions, and they had decided to back the SLPP. This, however, is not true; he does not allow his MPs or the SLFP CC that kind of leeway. After winning the presidency and taking over as the SLFP leader in January 2015, he forced the party to opt for a political cohabitation with the UNP so as to consolidate his position in the new government. The UNP had only 47 seats as opposed to the SLFP-led UPFA's 142. Having done so, how can he expect the people to buy into his claim that he does not force his decisions on the SLFP?

The SLFP has today become as politically promiscuous as the SLMC and the Ceylon Workers' Congress; it gets enticed by political kerb crawlers. In 2015, it offered its services to the UNP, and about five years later it opted for living together with the SLPP. It seems to be looking for a new partner? This is the fate that awaits any party whose leaders act out of expediency rather than principle.

S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike would turn in his grave if he knew what has befallen his beloved party.



By RAFIA ZAKARIA

'POWER tends to corrupt", the saying goes "and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Such words are easy to toss around in Pakistan, whose citizens have seen the process first-hand and numerous times in the existence of their still-young country.

Each day is an exercise in navigating the corruption and power nexus, with even some petty overlords or government functionaries of a middling and insignificant sort demanding their palms be greased for doing what is essentially their job. When the bottom feeders are this way, the top naturally excel at the job; one constant in Pakistan's story has been the rotating cast of scions of powerful (and corrupt) families seen to be looting the country's coffers.

Things change but not this. Is it the system that makes these erstwhile leaders, generations of them, corrupt, that is does their survival and rising to the top require the misuse of power? Or is the proclivity for corruption determined more by individual character?

In his new book *Corruptible: Who Gets Power and How It Changes Us* researcher Brian Klaas presents some interesting theses on this question. One study that Klaas writes about looked at whether people will follow the rules due to a commitment to doing the right thing. In this study, researchers looked at parking violations in New York City.

In particular, the study looked at the period between 1997 and 2002 during which time United Nations diplomats stationed in NYC could get away with parking illegally because they had diplomatic immunity. When a car with a diplomatic licence plate was found to be illegally parked, a parking ticket would be issued, but it did not have to be paid because the diplomat could not be prosecuted owing to immunity.

At one point, there was so much illegal parking by diplomats of various countries that the city was losing up to \$18 million a day. Sadly, one of the 10 worst offenders was none other than Pakistan while diplomats from countries including Sweden and Norway rarely abused their power.

This would suggest that those who came from countries where corruption is common were more likely to abuse their power because the only way they may have got their position was by being unethical; using connections rather than rising on the basis of merit. Culture and context, Klaas concluded, had a "drastic" effect on how individuals behaved.

In 2002, Michael Bloomberg was elected Mayor of NYC and he put an end to diplomatic immunity for parking tickets. As soon

Systems that encourage corruption

Things change but not this. Is it the system that makes these erstwhile leaders, generations of them, corrupt, that is does their survival and rising to the top require the misuse of power? Or is the proclivity for corruption determined more by individual character?

as this new directive was issued, the worst offender countries immediately started to follow the rules; countries like Kuwait, for instance, went down to almost no violations. This suggests that when the corrupt are held accountable for their abuse of power then they are less likely to engage in violations.

In this case, countries like Kuwait and Pakistan that had been among the top 10 offenders dropped almost to the bottom of the list. This indicates that while the abuse of power is common among the corrupt, the threat or actual prevalence of accountability can drastically reduce the abuse of power.

Of course, accountability is far easier to prescribe and far harder to enforce, particularly in places such as Pakistan where it is more or less endorsed and even encouraged by the prevailing culture. The difficult question here is how to change a system that encourages, even requires corruption in order to succeed.

As the example about parking tickets and diplomatic immunity illustrates, effective policing or enforcement is required to get everybody to get in line and follow the rules. Making enforcement an expectation such that bad actors know that their chances of

getting caught are very high is difficult if not impossible in a corrupt system which is based on the opposite assumption.

So, if Pakistan had a mythical leader who tried to end corruption, he/she would find his/her efforts stymied because the local elite that wants the corrupt status quo and hence their own largesse to persist will ensure that this leader would not be successful.

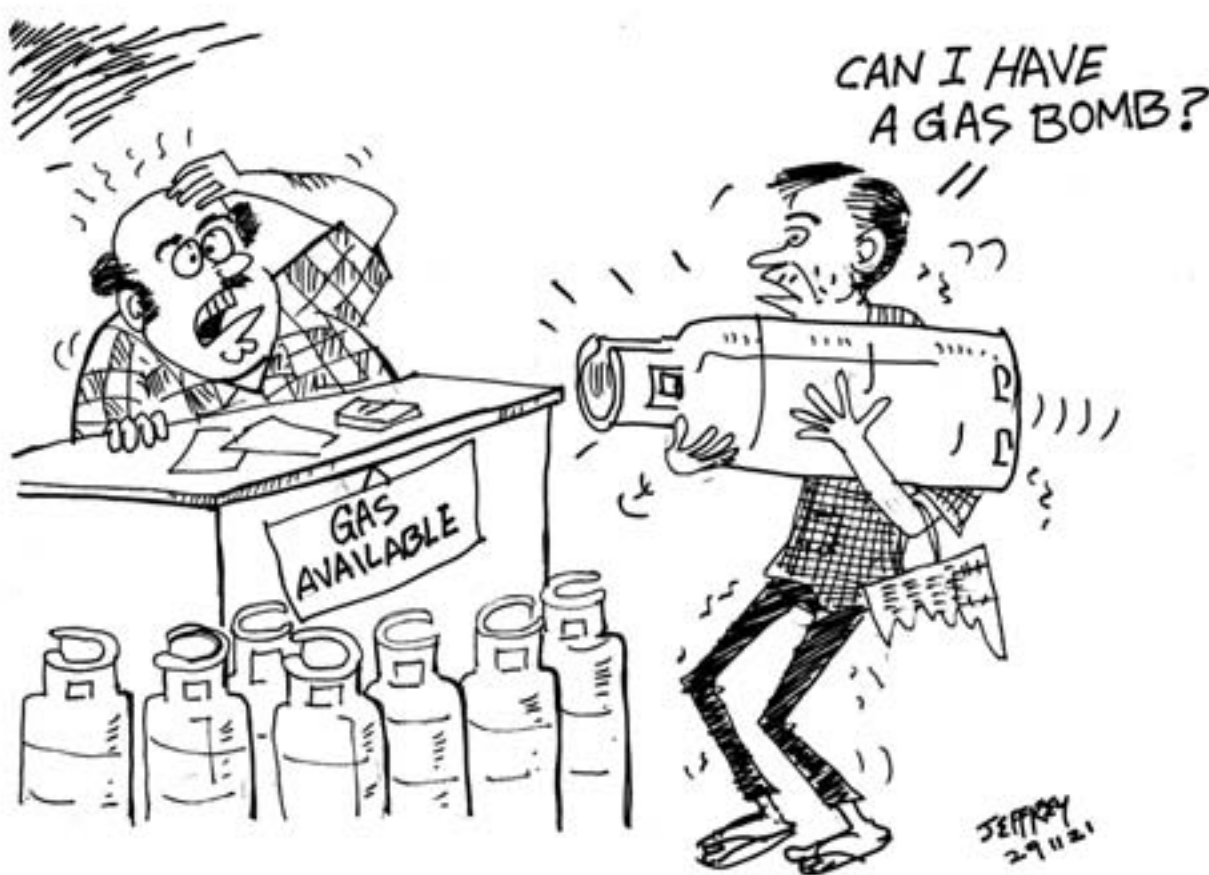
Once the 'good' leader realises this, his/her choices are revealed not as being good versus bad but rather the degree to which he/she capitulates to the demands of this elite that feeds off corruption. When the people in a system are used to corruption and even expect and welcome it, a good leader is useless, because the system requires corrupt behaviour.

A corrupt system, and in Pakistan we have just that, makes it difficult for good people to survive within it. Their choices are to become complicit with the system, do as others do, and forget about being a good moral actor or to exist outside the system to the extent that is possible. This is particularly true where politics are concerned; good people who do not want their conscience to be ravaged simply cannot enter this realm of the compromised.

The consequence is that the progeny of powerful families, who have a genealogical history of upholding corruption, are the ones that are most eager to grab power and then to hold on to their 'entitlement'. As in the parking example, Pakistan needs someone to announce that the rules will be enforced so that the abuse of power can stop.

Sadly, what is happening instead is that the longer any leader is in power, the more the system encourages them to be corrupt or condone corruption. As a result, everyone from the least powerful to the most powerful have no expectation that the abuse of power will be checked or curbed. The impetus for survival in such a system is to get as much power as possible, for the very purpose of abusing it.

(Dawn/ANN)





The ship carrying contaminated organic fertiliser from China

More shipments of 'organic manure' from China

It has been reported that the Minister of Agriculture is trying to resolve the dispute over the Chinese organic fertiliser shipment by paying 75 % of the claim amounting to USD 6.7 million in respect of the rejected shipment and buying fresh stocks from the same company.

Enough has been discussed about why organic fertiliser should not be imported to this country as it is against the law to do so, and the best way is to prepare organic fertiliser on farms as far as possible, since transport of the large quantities needed will be too expensive and also cumbersome and a hassle to the farmer.

It was surprising to hear about the decision to buy fresh stocks of fertilisers from the same Chinese company whose first shipment was not allowed entry by the Plant Quarantine officials of the Department of Agriculture on the grounds that the samples were found to be contaminated with harmful microorganisms.

In the first instance, as an officer who worked in the Ministry of Agriculture for more than 23 years, I am pretty certain that organic materials cannot be imported on a commercial scale as per provisions and regulations under the Plant Protection Act of 1981 and also the subsequent Plant Protection Act no.35 of 1999. Only small samples of such materials can be allowed by the Director General of Agriculture who is the implementing

authority for the Plant Protection Act, and such samples can be used only for laboratory research work and cannot be added to the land. I am also aware that no amendments have since been made to the Plant Protection Act to change the provisions referred to above and the regulations thereon. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether such amendments can ever be brought in since plant quarantine is an issue that cannot be compromised according to the whims and fancies of governments, and is subject to international covenants/agreements.

Hence, it is pretty certain that importation of tons and tons of this "organic fertiliser" is illegal, the irony here being the direct involvement, as a facilitator or promoter in this instance, of the Ministry of Agriculture, which should actually be the guardian of issues pertaining to plant quarantine. Had it been a private company, one could understand.

Besides, if the government decides to buy fresh stocks from the same company, whose first shipment was rejected due to contamination, what guarantee is there that the so called 'fresh stock' will not be contaminated. On the other hand, if this imported material happens to be sterile by some chance, it ceases to be organic fertiliser any more, for organic manure must necessarily have microorganisms. If microbial activity is not there, it will be some inert matter only.

Specifications laid down regarding

the material to be purchased when an agreement was entered into between the buyer and the seller in this case are not known. If the material is organic fertiliser as the authorities keep referring to, it should necessarily have microorganisms. Then it follows that the samples will fail the test this time, too, and the shipment will have the same fate as the earlier one. This is what I could foresee, what we are buying is not organic manure or 'organic fertiliser' but some inert matter.

I sincerely hope and pray that those in charge of Plant Quarantine will abide by the regulations, and stand their ground as one cannot afford to play around with microorganisms especially when they come in bulk from foreign lands to a totally new environment here and right now, the whole world has been brought to its knees by just a virus. Hence there cannot be any compromise especially in dealing with microorganisms. Let us hope for the best any way, as this importation remains an ill-advised and illegal venture, if it goes through and it will be the first time ever that Sri Lanka effected a bulk importation of organic manure or "organic fertiliser", in contravention of its own Plant Protection Act.

A. Bedgar Perera
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Retired Director/Agricultural Development
Ministry of Agriculture

In defence of health authorities

In many letters and articles that appeared in *The Island*, people criticised the conditions at the vaccination centres managed by the Health Department authorities and highly praised the SL Army for the excellent functioning at its centres. Though both these judgments are correct, one should not ignore the facilities and manpower

these two organisations do have. The Army has thousands of personnel and enough paraphernalia (with large allocations from the national Budget) to handle its centres while the department of health has to manage its affairs with meagre resources specially at its area MOH Offices which run those centres.

S K Muthukumara

Why continue to flog dead horse?



The causal factors of the kidney disease are now known and do not need any speculation or any divine intervention. Research has conclusively established that hard water in dug wells rich in fluorides and magnesium along with inadequate consumption of water are the reasons for it. Since the etiology is known, it is inappropriate to call the disease, is of unknown origin any longer. This being so, it is indeed disappointing and utterly disconcerting to hear the politicians unfailingly and relentlessly flog the "wasa wisa" "dead horse still."

Do they not understand simple research findings or deliberately ignore what they do not wish to hear? May be the findings cross roads with their wishful thinking to justify the disastrous decision to ban synthetic fertilisers. The results of the ban are now showing up in good measure. Vegetable prices have gone through the roof, partly due to bad weather and mostly due to the ban. However, it is heartening to note that lives will not be lost due to nonavailability or unaffordability of vegetables, but when it comes to rice it is a different cup of tea, the effect of which is just round the corner.

If they were bold enough to take this step why not go the whole hog and ban the cultivation of all improved varieties

of rice which are fertiliser responsive, meaning that they need relatively large amounts of fertilizer to perform to their potential, which need can never be met with compost or the new fad the nano nitrogen, mistakenly called so, meaning nano urea. Replace the new varieties of rice with their native counterparts which do not require so much fertiliser and in fact they are counterproductive. You will perhaps end up with more straw than grain, which will even be a blessing in disguise. Just looking around it appears that there is a growing demand for straw in the country.

Our Dr Pubilis Silva should be able to prepare a delectable dish of straw. You can even give it a tinge of Chinese, flavour. After all we embrace with glee anything that is Chinese from harbours to organic fertiliser to fried rice!

The nano nitrogen is going to be another fiasco. Introducing it, it was said that it was like exploding a bomb in the field. True both figuratively and literally. Original philosophy of banning synthetic fertiliser was to save people particularly from kidney disease, the nano nitrogen can bury them as victims of respiratory disease.

A Hobson's choice at best!
Gamini Peiris
Panadura

Don't deride Sri Lankan scientists

I have been watching with interest the exchange of views among several parties that commenced with the Article written by Prof. Chandre Dharmawardana to which Mr. Chris Dharmakeerti responded. My name and some of my research publications have been quoted in these exchanges. I myself responded to Prof. Dharmawardana stating that I don't belong to the 'Natha Deviyo Group' and he has kindly said that he never did so. I'm sorry for my mistake. Yes, Prof. Dharmawardana, Dr. Waidyanatha and myself have known each other for over 50 years. Both of them were a couple years senior to me and were serving as junior temporary staff members at the University of Ceylon, Colombo (at that time) when I was a final year undergrad student following a special degree. Immediately after my graduation I was appointed to the academic staff of the University of Ceylon

Peradeniya (later University of Peradeniya) and continued to serve the University for 40 years until my retirement in 2006. During this period, I was the Head of the Dept of Botany (five times), Dean, Graduate Studies, Dean Faculty of Science and acting Vice Chancellor during the most difficult period of 1989/90. While attached to the UoP, I made use of sabbatical and vacation leave to work at the International Rice Research Institute Philippines, the International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, the Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel, and at the Washington State University and the San Jose State University in the USA. I'm not trying to brag, but writing all this to educate people like Bodhi Dhanapala who write derogatory, baseless insinuations in his emails as if we are petty thieves.

I share the patent on Prof. Gamini Seneviratne's innovation Biofilm Biofertiliser (BFBF) on invitation because I was the supervisor for his PhD research studies during which he learnt a lot on soil microbiology and also gave him useful advice at the time he was venturing to study rhizosphere microorganisms and develop multi-microbial inoculants. I have not participated in the large-scale field trials he conducted with BFBFs. I think he has effectively replied to his critics, subsequently sup-

ported by Prof. Ben Basnayake.

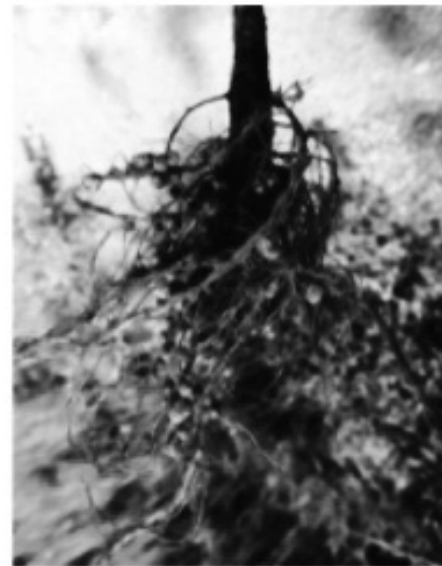
Now I will focus on my own work which also has come under scrutiny. Prof. Dharmawardana quotes some of my publications of 2012 and 2016 where he claims that I have written only of 'a potential or encouraging results' but not for large scale application by farmers. I fully agree. Those are publica-



Inoculated soybean

tions on cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) and Azolla. Even today my position is they only have a potential which has yet to be realised and not yet ready to be recommended for the farmers. What I wrote about applying N₂-fixing biofertilisers refer to Rhizobial inoculants which form symbiotic root nodules with leguminous crops. Please read my write up carefully and you will find a statement that 'out of all N₂-fixing organisms and systems application of rhizobial inoculants was the most successful. This technology is nothing new. In fact, it is more than 125 years old! The first rhizobial inoculant with the commercial name Nitragin was

patented in the USA in 1896 by Nobbe and Hiltner. Afterwards, this technology was adopted worldwide. Howeson and Herridge (2005) reported that Australia is annually saving 3 billion dollars by the judicious use of rhizobial inoculants. Sri Lanka imports 40% of our mung bean requirements from Australia.



Profuse nodulation

We adopted the technology of using rhizobia native to Sri Lanka and embedding them in a local carrier material (modified coir dust) which enabled us to field test and eventually recommend it for large scale application. In adopting this technology for Sri Lanka, we have gone through several years of study. Commencing with basic studies of isolation, purification, characterisation and identification of rhizobia from local legumes (crop and wild) we have built up a germplasm of rhizobial isolates.

These have been authenticated and screened under greenhouse conditions to select the best strains for different crops, field tested in small plots

in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture at HORDI and other research stations. In the final stages of transfer of technology, the most promising strains were used in large-scale field trials, some of which were conducted with the participation of farmers under our strict supervision and those of the field officers of the Plenty Foods company. It is after more than 20 years of painstaking research studies that we were able to get a breakthrough and transfer rhizobial inoculant technology to Sri Lankan farmers.

The Department of Agriculture got confidence in our products in 2017. That year they used our inoculants for extensive field cultivation of soybean. Their trials were successful and we were presented with a CD containing 100 photos of their cultivations with our inoculants. Two such photos are reproduced with this article.

Today, the best customers for our inoculants are the Central and Provincial Departments of Agriculture. Our team at the NIFS, which produces and market these inoculants (with the approval of the NIFS Board of Management) was felicitated a few months back by the Governor of the Central Province for the services rendered to the bean farmers from Hanguranketha to Welimada for low cost, eco-friendly bean cultivation. It is not easy to get a new technology accepted by farmers. By August this year we have supplied inoculants for more than 15,000 acres and more orders are coming. All these results of our work with rhizobial inoculants were presented at the Post-Covid international symposium of the NSF and eventually published in its Proceedings. This is the Kulasooriya et al (2021) publication I have quoted in my write up.

I believe I have provided enough evidence to show that our efforts are to provide as much as possible some technologies based upon local resources for low cost, eco-friendly crop production and not a scam as some expatriates seem to think. They must not make baseless insinuations against genuine local scientists.

Prof. S. A. Kulasooriya

The Tightrope Walk on Decentralised Finance and Cryptocurrencies

has taken many by surprise. What caused the market to embrace them, spearheaded by its most popular type, Bitcoin's spiralling 600%+ rally? According to crypto proponents, the value stems primarily from its design that can self-sustain as an alternative decentralised system to the traditional systems. In other words, the market is ready to pay the price for its ability to function as an asset over which no centralised person or authority has control. So, the claim, as the pandemic engulfed global economies, is that

Ethereum blockchain, the second most popular currency after Bitcoin. DeFi has rapidly evolved in recent years, and, for example, Aave, Maker, and Curve Finance are the biggest lending systems in this space, with the sum of all assets deposited in DeFi closer to 45 billion USD [2].

Without banks or lawyers, as in the traditional financial system, DeFi is built with smart contracts, a self-executing contract built on the blockchain when predetermined conditions are met, and allows economic agents such as the general public and firms to engage in banking activities.

Because this architecture differs fundamentally from bringing the same traditional banking into the digital space, as happens in online banking, many can see that it will benefit developing countries when traditional financial systems fall apart. Nevertheless, it comes at a cost, where the country needs to overcome challenges to harness its potential.

Why exploring DeFi is pronounced in emerging and developing markets

It is not a secret that the lack of financial intermediation in the developing world under the conventional system hinders their economic potential. Although Sri Lanka's unbanked population (26%) is somewhat lower than the global average (31%), it is unclear how certain groups' failure to conform to formal regulations and paperwork around these institutions distances them from the entire expected services they desire (Data Source Findex 2017). On the other hand, economic agents have fewer investment opportunities to invest their wealth for a better return in economies with underdeveloped markets. DeFi seems to have better answers to those questions.

For example, a UNICEF project shows that DeFi can uplift those lives [3]. The project, Satchel, a Blockchain-based DeFi service created by a research group from Berkeley, helps fulfil the financial needs of those underprivileged communities by allowing them to pool their funds together and earn interest. The concept could be extended to pool their money and lend it out to small businesses; in this way, the community can use the interest earned for their purposes while the local small businesses fulfil their funding needs. So, DeFi can thus give an alternative, if not more than that, to regular banking, for small businesses and communities in rural regions, even if they are unable to satisfy the criteria of traditional banking.

Apart from improving financial inclusion among rural communities, DeFi clearly has other benefits with proper education, such as an efficient cross-border fund transfer for businesses and remittances. Sending remittance through cryptocurrency can gain more attention in the future as a low-cost solution for ordinary remittance transfers and currency conversions that can eat up as much as 7% of those flows. Also, DeFi can be easily integrated with the Universal Basic Income (UBI) programmes discussed in a previous article that empower low-income communities to lead the economy [4].

Most importantly, decentralisation allows the market to gain alternative power over the ability of traditional institutions to control the market by devaluing or increasing the money supply or by imposing unhealthy regulations on certain sectors. This balance could be healthy for the economy as it brings competition to the market over the conventional institutions.

What are the key challenges to be solved?

Although DeFi has the potential to boost economic activities, proper integration with society needs much more effort, including the development of digital infrastructure and literacy. A recent Daily FT editorial highlighted this challenge, citing that digitisation efforts will not be fruitful unless the underlying foundation is strengthened [5].

In addition, the emergence of an alternate banking system via DeFi can cause unprecedented challenges

to economies. Of course, it can create "systemic risks" and propagate instabilities in conventional financial systems, depending on how interlaced they are. Having dominated the conventional monetary system, they can also lessen the effectiveness of the monetary tools and power of the institutions such as central banks. Although these discussions are still rudimentary, given that economics related to DeFi have not been tested at scale, they will be more hot topics as the technology grows.

On the other hand, DeFi regulation is one of the most daunting tasks, as exemplified by the experiences of many countries that are currently trying to combat it. At the moment, bringing capital gain income from crypto assets under the tax net, regulating crypto exchanges to avoid the misuse of technology, and curbing phoney cryptocurrency schemes, are the most popular topics in this space. Meanwhile, a Forbes article, citing an expert report by Chainalysis, shows that crypto in criminal activities is not as large as commonly believed [6]. While this fraction was deficient, 2.1% in 2019 and 0.34% in 2020 out of the total transaction volume, the article shows that the traditional non-crypto methods may still facilitate illicit activities much more frequently than these methods. Although this is a positive indication for authorities to welcome the technology, there is no guarantee that they would be exacerbated in the developing nations with relatively weaker institutions once popularised. With that being said, the overregulation approach may not be the best answer, but the easiest and costliest approach that wipes out complete benefits in the dash for DeFi.

The Way Forward

Despite the debate around cryptocurrency, the decentralised currency together with DeFi, the alternate decentralised financial system, undoubtedly can cause a significant impact on the developing world to increase the productivity of those economies. In particular, it is more pronounced to allow financial intermediation for those who found refuge under the conventional system for various reasons. It has gone mainstream now on Wall Street while top-level universities and researchers are involved in the development, despite all chaos surrounding cryptocurrency. More importantly, the underlying technology, blockchain, is considered one of the most promising emerging technologies at the moment.

From the Sri Lankan perspective, now it seems the government insists on looking deeply at the crypto and blockchain space [7]. This initiative is a positive sign and, if successful, will be a good foundation for exploring the ecosystem. DeFi, more broadly and carefully for better policies.

Not to mention, diving down the rabbit hole of DeFi requires a cohesive approach strengthening the digital infrastructure, facilitating a healthy Conventional-DeFi integrated ecosystem, hunting for policy instruments to combat the knock-on effects, and establishing a healthy and supportive regulatory framework. So, it will help the country shape the landscape to stay on par with the peer trading partners trying to reap the full potential of the technology under a controlled environment, and, of course, without blindly embracing it nor throwing out the baby with the bathwater.

The writer, a former Senior Assistant Director of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, is a PhD candidate attached to the Monash University, Australia. He pursued his undergraduate studies in Engineering from the University of Moratuwa and graduate studies in Finance/Economics from the University of California, Berkeley, USA and the University of New Mexico, USA. He would like to thank Abigail Goldstein (Lobo Friends Program at UNM) for commenting on the article and helpful suggestions. The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer, and he could be reached via charith.gamage@monash.edu



investors may have lost faith in central bank policies and their pursuit for an alternate asset that has resulted in this price movement.

DeFi, on the other hand, extends this concept and allows cryptocurrencies to function in a decentralised banking environment that may even have immense benefits to developing countries. As the debate continues, it is worth finding out more on the recent emergence of DeFi; how could it unlock the potential of Emerging/Frontier markets, and at what cost? What are the key hurdles to pull the meat from the bone moving forward?

What is DeFi, and how does it work?

The idea of DeFi is more broad-based than one of its workhorses, cryptocurrencies, which most are familiar with as a medium of exchange or store of value, and it builds on a fundamental structure known as the blockchain. The system allows it to operate without the need for intermediaries, such as traditional financial institutions like conventional commercial banks, brokerages, and of course, authorities such as central banks. However, it has its own ecosystem that recreates the traditional financial system. So, it is logical to say that DeFi refers to the decentralised banking and financial system that the technology is based on and includes components such as lending and borrowing services for cryptocurrencies (and many more). To put it simply, it is an alternative banking system in the digital space with digital currencies that has no middlemen (such as commercial or central banks who have controlling power) and with rules that are already written into it. Today, it mostly runs on the

By CHARITH GAMAGE

Cryptocurrencies together with Decentralised Finance (DeFi), the finance ecosystem that extends cryptocurrencies into banking territory, can positively impact developing countries. But it is not quite so straightforward and is still a double-edged sword for developing markets like Sri Lanka. So, how should the country position itself to face the key challenges ahead?

Since its inception following the Global Financial Crisis in 2007-2008, as an alternate digital asset, cryptocurrency has always been a two-edged sword, abundantly subjected to scepticism.

Some of this scepticism has a rationale behind it. Cryptocurrencies do not have an underlying cash flow, such as that for stocks of firms, nor do they have an inherent material value, such as for assets like gold. Being located inches away from the regulatory radar, they can also be equally prone to criminal activities. If that is not enough, bitcoin mining, the process by which new transactions are validated on the network, consumes a lot of energy. So, despite being a crypto enthusiast, even billionaire Elon Musk once stated, it has an environmental impact, too [1].

In the face of these challenges, the recent cryptocurrency price surge with the Covid-19 Pandemic

Spine Health important at Thanksgiving Dinner

Maintain good posture the entire time. Proper digestion only occurs when we are sitting up straight. Good posture is defined as ears aligned with the shoulders and the "angel wings," or the shoulder blades, retracted. In proper alignment, spinal stress is diminished. Recent studies show that gastric emptying is significantly delayed in the supine position when compared to a sitting position.

Furthermore, "If you're slouched over your plate, food cannot travel to the stomach in time for your body to tell your brain it's getting full; it can take twice as long; thus, causing you to eat twice as much leaving you full and tired.

A brief family meditation for peace and happiness. Coming back together as a family means leaving many personal worlds of happiness, sadness and development behind. Take time out to honor and recognize this transition. Sit quietly together, hold hands and briefly recognize the personal worlds. Then state an intention to have a great family get together.

Dr. Ken says: Meditation is the process of calming the body and mind while allowing a connection with the universe. We are all so busy with our day-to-day activities and thoughts that we lose track of our goals, our vision, and our life plan. This non-stop grind prevents us from being thoughtful and performing the tasks necessary for our well-being and body maintenance.

Deep Belly Breathing: Deep belly breathing helps with digestion of food by enhancing motion of the belly and its food contents. Deeper yet though it serves to improve the motion of the spinal segments, spinal cord and nerve roots, and it increases the cerebrospinal fluid motion and distribution. Deep breathing might also decrease the swelling of the deranged spine joints and the nerve roots caus-

ing less pain. Deep belly breathing in itself will help you to feel better.

Dr. Ken Says, "A deep breath of clean fresh air is as soothing to the body as a large glass of cool water on a hot summer day" so place your hands on your belly and breathe deeply to feel your belly move. Repeat this all day.

Small bites and small breaks will allow you to



enjoy a steady-paced meal without needing to slow down or stop eating entirely. Take small bites of the highly caloric sides like mashed potatoes, stuffing and cheesy casseroles, but load up your fork with Turkey and string beans. Take a 5-minute break between each helping to allow your stomach to catch up with your eyes.

Chat, "Take time out to engage in and enjoy the conversations around the table. When you are actively engaged and fully involved in a fulfilling

conversation then you spend less time eating and more time feeling externally better. The craving for food and internal satisfaction diminishes" Ask each person how they are doing. Find out about their little inner workings in life. Your family will manifest happiness, and then you become happier leaving you with less of a desire to binge.

Savor your desserts. Use a demitasse spoon to eat.

meal that can last 3-4 hours takes some purposeful technique. On average, it takes between 12-14 minutes for our bodies to recognize we're full. Keeping this in mind, begin your dinner with small thoughtful fork-full and pay attention to your body's signals. It will tell you when to take a break, so you can save room for dessert!

7. Mini Chair Exercises (bends and twists) help you keep your blood pumping and metabolism working. Bending to the right or left (as if you were picking up a fork you dropped) and sideways twists (like you're greeting a guest behind you) are two small, but effective ways to help your body digest.

Dr. Ken says, "Small range-of-motion exercises help ensure your body's digestive functions keep up with your food in-take and your blood pressure remains stable. This will help ward off headaches, cramps and gas at the dinner table.

After Dinner Walk. Schedule a family walk after dinner. Walking helps digestion of food and builds a togetherness of the tribe. It is a great family routine to build. People start to feel better because the spine joints and the spinal nerves start moving with walking. One of the fastest ways to develop back or neck pain is to remain stagnant. When the spine joints and the spinal nerves do not move, then they can cause pain.

About Dr. Ken Hansraj:

Dr. Ken Hansraj is a New York based spinal surgeon who has dedicated more than 20 years of his life to helping people in every country improve their spinal health. Dr. Ken's LIFT: Meditations to Boost Back Health releases January 1, 2022 wherever songs are sold.

His next book Watch Your Back releases in August 2022.

This spoon is diminutive, smaller than a teaspoon. Allow the dessert to sit on your tongue for a minute. Allow the two to 8 thousand taste buds on your tongue to delight in the vanilla or chocolate, cinnamon, and other contents. Feel the texture and temperature of each bite. Train your taste buds to enjoy and delight in the taste and textures. Otherwise you become involved in volume consumption. This is where you eat so much to feel that your belly is full.

Dr. Ken says, "Evening out the trajectory of a

Sri Lanka urgently needs 'National Consensus' on deepening economic crisis, policy analysts and politicians say

- The longer reforms are postponed, the worse the problem becomes which makes remedies even more difficult to implement
- The reforms are so difficult that no party will want to even contemplate let alone implement them fearing loss of popularity
- The only path out is for all parties, the government and the opposition to work together on a common minimum programme of reforms
- Sri Lanka is already in one of the worst economic crises in its history

BY SANATH NANAYAKKARE

We are no longer talking about a crisis that is about to engulf us. We are now in its midst, though not its depths. The hope that the 2022 Budget would give the right signals, has evaporated, Prof. Rohan Samarajiva, a leading policy analyst and an advisor of the Advocata Institute said, last week.

He made these comments at Advocata's latest event, "A National Consensus for Economic Reforms or 'ආර්ථිකයට ජාතික සමමුඛියක්?'"

Professor Samarajiva provided a breakdown of severe economic and social challenges facing the country. His keynote speech stressed on the importance of building a national consensus to implement immediate reforms to tackle a wide range of issues ranging from unsustainable debt to shortages of essential items in the country.

The present macroeconomic instability lies in the failure of the state to implement deep structural reforms to the economy for nearly twenty years. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed Sri Lanka's fundamental weaknesses that have plagued the economy for a long period of time. The event brought

together politicians representing the main political parties to discuss the importance of a united course of action, to drive Sri Lanka's economy towards a path of growth.

Prof. Rohan Samarajiva, explained the seriousness of the crisis. "We cannot get out of the crisis without taking some bitter medicine. It is increasingly becoming clear that debt restructuring in the context of an IMF (International Monetary Fund) programme is essential. Unlike in previous IMF programmes, we cannot afford to abandon discipline at the earliest opportunity. Unless we own the reforms, we will keep falling back". He said, stressing that what we need is a common

minimum program of reform agreed by many. "We need an attention-grabbing action that will credibly communicate the intentions of the national government. Divesting Sri Lankan Airlines on the same lines as Air India is a good candidate. The objective is to protect the taxpayers of this country from having to continually cover the losses of this technically bankrupt state-owned company". He said, highlighting the importance of immediate measures to improve public finances. The national



Prof. Rohan Samarajiva



From left: Dhananath Fernando COO Advocata Institute, Prof. Ranjith Bandara, MP SLPP, Dr.Suren Ragavan, MP SLPP/SLFP, Patali Champika Ranawaka, MP SJB, Dr. Harsha de Silva, MP SJB, Vijitha Herath, MP JVP and Sathya Karunaratna, Research Analyst - Advocata Institute. (Pix by Thushara Athapaththu)

carrier Sri Lankan makes a daily loss of LKR 129.03 Million rupees. In the last four years of operation it has cost the economy 137 billion in the form of accumulated losses.

MP Vijitha Herath of the JJB, reflected on the need for a national consensus. He remarked that "the Sri Lankan economy is in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit). We are right now using minor reforms to push back certain death. But we need surgery to help the patient", highlighting the need for deep structural reforms. He further commented that there is space for all parties to come together and agree on such a programme of action for the benefit of the nation. However, he laid out conditions for this including the President shedding his executive powers

for a collectively agreed upon period of time.

Prof. Ranjith Bandara, MP, SLPP commented that "We need to prioritise the issues we need to solve. We need to be policy consistent in the long term". Highlighting another key aspect of policy reform to achieve long term stabilisation.

Trade reform is another area to boost productivity and achieve growth. Dr. Harsha De Silva elaborated on this aspect. "Import substitution mentality should be abandoned. We need to face and compete in the competitive international economy. We have been excluded from the global value chain because of our narrow mindset of import substitution and complete self sufficiency".

Patali Champika Ranawaka- MP, SJB, commented on the importance of energy sector reforms to address the present crisis. "The power issue is the next crisis. If the rain dries out for 6 weeks then we are certainly headed to a big power crisis. Substitutes to generating electricity (kerosene) are also scarce. This crisis could lead to a rift in society" highlighting the urgency of reforming the energy sector. Dr. Suren Ragavan- MP, SLPP, was of the opinion that " We need national consensus which capitalises on the unique competencies and skills of the different communities" further emphasising on the need for national reconciliation to come out of the present economic crisis as one country shedding communal differences.

Gulf Oil lubricants officially launched in Sri Lanka by Ideal First Choice



The launch of Gulf Lubricants in Sri Lanka at JAIC Hilton Colombo Residencies. From left: Sanjeeva Kasthuriratne, Head of Business, Ideal First Choice, Danushka Walpola, Deputy General Manager, Ideal First Choice, Nalin Welgama, Founder and chairman, Ideal group, Chaminda Wanigaratne, Director, Ideal Motors, Ideal First Choice, Gagan Mathur, Head - Business Development-Cluster Markets, Gulf Lubricants India and Vipin Ohri, Deputy General Manager, Lanka Ashok Leyland. Pic by Thushara Athapaththu

Ideal First Choice (Pvt) Ltd, a fully owned subsidiary of the Ideal Group, one of country's leading business conglomerates, has introduced Gulf Oil lubricants to the Sri Lankan market.

Chaminda Wanigaratne, Director Ideal First Choice and Ideal Motors, commenting on the partnership said, "We are pleased to announce the appointment of Ideal First Choice as Sri Lanka's national distributor for Gulf Oil. As a part of our association with Gulf Oil, we look forward to providing a unique lubricant brand to all of our clients."

"In 2008, the government in order to introduce lubricants to the local market, liberalised the market place giving opportunities to the private sector to introduce various lubricant brands to Sri Lanka. Subsequently in 2010, the automotive industry was re-energised and the availability of hybrid vehicles in the market also attracted a large number of customers. Due to this, over the years, the demand for lubricants increased and accordingly we have introduced Gulf Oil which can provide high quality performance to customers at an affordable

price." "We have also begun the process of appointing local dealers for Gulf lubricants covering all districts across the country. Moreover, arrangements have been made to provide technical knowledge and awareness about the brand and its products to all our dealers and sales teams. This initiative ensures that we are able to provide customers the highest quality product at an affordable price," Wanigaratne added.

Ravi Chawla, President - APAC, Gulf Oil and MD & CEO, Gulf Oil Lubricants India Ltd said, "Sri Lanka consumes about 64,000 kilo liters of lubricants annually. 68% of this is used for automobiles and the remainder for industrial lubricants and greases. We aim to provide consumers with high quality lubricants for the automotive and industrial sectors. I am sure this partnership will grow to benefit the industry."

Gagan Mathur, Head - Business Development-Cluster Markets, Gulf Oil Lubricants India Ltd, commented on the new collaboration, " We are certain that the Gulf Oil brand will achieve new

heights under the expert guidance and leadership of Nalin Welgama, one of Sri Lanka's leading entrepreneur. With the support of Ideal Group, we will provide a great choice that will allow consumers to edge ahead with high performance oriented products," he said.

The strategic partnership with the Gulf Oil Lubricants India is the latest addition to Ideal First Choice's expansion of its global brand offerings and thereby, continue to provide a world-class service experience.

Gulf Oil is a well-established player in the global lubricant industry with a strong presence in over 100 countries.

A celebratory event marking this momentous milestone was held at the JAIC Hilton, Colombo recently.

Gulf Oil is a part of the Hinduja Group, one of the largest diversified groups in the world spanning across continents. Gulf Oil enjoys a respectable market share in Asian countries given its strong distribution network across the SAARC region including Bangladesh and Nepal.

Nestlé Lanka wins four Best Corporate Citizen Sustainability Awards

Nestlé Lanka took home four awards at the Best Corporate Citizen Sustainability Awards 2021. Recognizing its strong efforts towards doing good for the planet, the company won in the categories of Corporate Environmental Commitment, Environment Beyond Business and the Triple Bottom Line Award on Environmental Sustainability for the best performance in the planet pillar. Nestlé Lanka was also awarded as one of the Top 10 Corporate Citizens of Sri Lanka for 2021. Organized annually by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, this prestigious annual event recognizes corporate sustainability champions for their efforts in achieving triple bottom line performance, with a focus on people, planet, and profit.

"It is an honour and privilege to be recognized for our contribution to do good for our planet, while doing good for our consumers and community. We have accelerated our journey towards net zero while striving to advance regenerative food systems at scale. Working from farm to table, we have actioned several initiatives which include tackling plastic pollution by moving to recyclable or reusable packaging and helping to create a circular economy. This year we switched to

paper straws for our Ready-to-Drink products and helped establish a collection infrastructure and recycling facility for aseptic beverage cartons in Sri Lanka. We continue to work with government and private institutions to galvanize behavioural change towards caring for our planet. Further, we are proud to say that, while we increase our production capacity every year, we take every effort to continuously reduce the use of resources such as energy and water and the emission of harmful gases, by investing in the latest technologies and innovations. Being recognized for our efforts is truly motivating. This is just the beginning of a long journey. Working together with stakeholders across our value chain, we will continue to be a force for good in contributing towards a greener Sri Lanka" said Jason Avanceña, Managing Director of Nestlé Lanka.

The Best Corporate Citizen Sustainability Awards are widely considered Sri Lanka's highest corporate honour. It recognises the best contributors to the local economy and community, as well the best performers in corporate sustainability. Submissions are evaluated by a highly respected panel of local experts, academics and thought leaders.



From left : Isuri Alahakoon, Assistant Manager, Corporate Communications, Bandula Egodage, Vice President, Corporate and Regulatory Affairs, Jason Avanceña, Managing Director, and Radhini De Costa, Assistant Vice President, Communications.

ComBank partners with PayHere to offer Q+ users a unique eCommerce experience

The Commercial Bank of Ceylon has partnered with PayHere, Sri Lanka's largest Aggregated Internet Payment Gateway Service, to offer users of its Q+ Payment App a unique, user-friendly and secure eCommerce experience.

Commercial Bank customers can now conveniently pay for their purchases via the Q+ app to over 3300 registered PayHere Online Payment Service enabled merchants. The Bank's Credit, Debit and Prepaid Card holders who pay through Q+, the fastest-growing QR app in the country, will not be required to tap in their card details as this infor-

mation is already stored on the app, the Bank said.

Payments to PayHere merchants via the Q+ Online Pay facility will enhance customer convenience as the transaction will only require the entering of users' mobile numbers registered with the app. Disbursements via Q+ require authentication using a static PIN which ensures the safety and security of transactions, making the Q+ App more



Commercial Bank's Group Chief Marketing Officer Hasrath Munasinghe (2nd from right) and PayHere Founder/CEO, Dhanika Perera (2nd from left) exchange the agreement in the presence of PayHere Head of Developments, Karvin Mendis (extreme left) and the Bank's Senior Manager - Card Centre Sevali Wickramasinghe.

secure than a normal card as the customers' sensitive data is not transmitted to merchant websites.

The partnership also presents PayHere enabled merchants another conduit to collect payments, the Bank said. PayHere merchants can now add the Q+ Online Pay facility to their websites and offer customers another option to settle their payments, in addition to the acceptance all major credit cards, mobile wallets, and

internet banking systems. Notably, Commercial Bank processes the highest number of card transactions in the country.

To pay through Q+, Commercial Bank Card holders simply have to select the 'Q+' payment option in the checkout page of the merchant's website or application, enter the registered mobile number, click on the alert that will pop up and complete the transaction by entering a four-digit transaction PIN in the Q+ Online Pay tab to which they will be directed. Once the transaction is complete, customers will receive a confirmation notification via SMS or email.

JICA to strengthen weather forecasting and warning issuance in Sri Lanka

JICA Sri Lanka and Department of Meteorology have launched a project called "Project for Capacity Building of Meteorological Observation, Weather Forecasting and Warning Issuance by Utilization of Weather Radars" to streamline the current weather forecasting system in more user friendly manner.

Under this project, JICA is providing technical expertise such as dispatching Japanese experts with necessary equipment to streamline the current typical weather forecast dissemination mode in Sri Lanka, whereas, general public of Sri Lanka will be able to receive the real time weather information with geographical map into the smart phones through a simple Mobile Application.

This is an exciting experience for the general public to observe the real time weather information, which will help them carry out day to day life and understand the risk of any possible weather hazards due to bad weather conditions.

This advanced system will be available for Sri Lankan people with the establishment of proposed two Weather Radars which will be setup at Puttalam and Pothuvil under JICA grant aid project, that costs approx. LKR 4,412 billion (2.503 billion yen). The Weather Radar is the latest technology to gather very



Left: Kiyofumi Takashima-Senior Representative, Tetsuya Yamada-Chief Representative of JICA (centre) and Athula Karunanayake-Director General of Dept of Meteorology Sri Lanka (right)

accurate weather information to be disseminated on real time weather forecasting.

The project also aims to support capacity building of meteorological staff in the department by providing technical training in Japan especially for operation and maintenance of Weather Radar technology and state of the art technology for weather forecasting.

Record of discussion for the four year (2022 ~2025) project was signed on 24 Nov 2021 by Yamada Tetsuya, Chief Representative of JICA Sri Lanka and Athula Karunanayake, the Director General of Dept. of Meteorology in Colombo.

"Our prime objective and expectation of this project is to strengthen the weather forecasting facility of the Dept of Meteorology in order to minimise the loss of economic damages in the country and eliminate loss of human life due to natural disasters", said Yamada at the launching of the project. Further, he emphasizes that, "no one can stop the natural disasters, but proper management practices and taking necessary mitigation measures for disaster risk reduction such as disseminating real weather information at the right time is the most appropriate way of preventing damages by natural disasters".

InQube wins first-ever presidential award as 'Emerging Exporter of the Year'

InQube Global, Sri Lanka's newest entrant in the apparel industry, has made giant strides in a short span of 5 years. A joint venture partnership with Brandix, the company's global manufacturing capabilities and strategic supply chain partnerships, coupled with their drive for innovation, provide customers with speed, agility, scale and competitiveness. InQube's most recent accolade was to be recognised as the Emerging Exporter of the Year for 2019/20 at the 24th Presidential Export Awards ceremony, which was held on the 26th of November under the patronage of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

Based on their performance during the last financial year, the criteria for this prestigious award include export turnover, number of employment opportunities created, market diversification, growth rate, value addition and the efforts made in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Organised by the Sri Lanka



InQube Global recognised as Emerging Exporter of the Year. From left: Preeneth Rupesinghe, Chief Operating Officer; Lakmal Fernando, Chief Executive Officer; Dilan Gooneratne, Founder and Managing Director and Shivantha Meepage, Chief Financial Officer.

Export Development Board, this prestigious award recognises InQube's outstanding contribution to the export sector and the country's economic development.

"As always, we remained agile and pivoted towards emerging market needs and powered through the pandemic. By attracting the right talent, providing them with opportunities and focusing on strategic challenges rapidly, we were

able to grow in this competitive sector. This award is a testament to the courage and dedication of our people and the resilience of the company," stated Dilan Gooneratne, Founder and Managing Director of InQube, commenting on the win.

InQube's goal is to create and scale human and planet-centric clothing solutions by fusing future tech with innovative design. Using emerging technologies, advanced material research, and biomechanics for in-depth performance testing, they aim to disrupt the world of apparel and its value chains through a strong stakeholder push towards sustainability.

With the recent acquisition of Hong Kong-based intimate apparel giant Clover, the Group's footprint spans across Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Cambodia, China, Haiti and the United Kingdom. InQube is creating a paradigm shift in the apparel industry and continues to evolve as it expands its footprint globally.

Baby Cheramy joins hands to provide the best care for Sri Lanka's first sextuplets



From left: Chevvin Mandawala, Assistant Brand Manager of Baby Cheramy; Janakie Karunarathne, Lead - Corporate Affairs of Hemas Consumer Brands; Danushka Silva, Marketing Manager of Baby Cheramy; Udayanga Maravanagoda, father of the sextuplets and Ms. Pushpa Walpita, District Officer - ECCD

On the 21st of October 2021, Sri Lanka's first sextuplets were born. To celebrate this occasion Baby Cheramy came forward with a commitment of providing its complete range of baby care products to the parents of the sextuplets, for an entire year.

As a brand that firmly understands the pulse of the parents, Baby Cheramy pledged to provide the family with essential baby care products including diapers, shampoo, soap, cream, cologne, oil and laundry care items. The first set of items was recently handed over to Udayanga Maravanagoda, the father of the sextuplets.

"We are truly grateful for Baby Cheramy's pledge of its vast range of high-quality baby care products. We really appreciate all who have supported us and have pledged support for the years to come", Udayanga said.

Danushka Silva, Marketing Manager of Baby Cheramy stated, "The birth of these sextuplets brought great joy to us, especially as a brand committed to offering baby care products of the highest quality. While ensuring utmost comfort and care to the little ones, our brand purpose also focuses on creating awareness on inclusive parenting where we believe that both parents play an important role in the life of a child. It was so encouraging to see Udayanga's commitment to be a fully involved father as both him and his wife looked forward to meeting every challenge together. We thank the National Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) division who works closely with us and gave valuable advice to the young father. We are truly honoured to be able to join hands with the parents to assure the best for their children."

Harpic continues its efforts to develop public sanitation facilities

Harpic disinfectant toilet cleaner, a brand of globally renowned consumer goods conglomerate Reckitt, recently marked the world toilet day by renovating & upgrading the sanitation infrastructure of Meerigama Base Hospital. As a Base Hospital this serves a large catchment area of the public that sees 750 to 1000 people a day. The official handing over of the renovated facilities coincided with the world toilet day 2021 which fell on November 19 under the theme of "Harpic: Mission Wellbeing".

Reckitt Sri Lanka, the distributor for Harpic locally, has partnered with local health authorities throughout the years to deliver similar support to empower the local healthcare sector. Since 2017 they have worked to refurbish toilets in peoples' homes, helping about 150 families per annum and a total of 600+ families over the last 4 years. They also started a mobile bathroom initiative in 2015, which affects approximately 800,000 people a year. Their commitment towards public sanitary facilities does not end there. For the last 3 years they have conducted a sanitation program for the public bathrooms at Sri Pada which has provided facilities for 600,000 pilgrims.

Commenting on this initiative, Head of Marketing at Reckitt Sri Lanka Shaminda Perera noted: "As a brand in the hygiene space, we're committed to ensuring health & wellbeing of all citizens; as such, aligning with this year's theme & our organiza-



Chanuka Perera - Brand manager - Harpic, Reckitt Sri Lanka hands-over a consignment of Harpic to the Regional Director Health Services - Gampaha

tional ethos, we are glad to have been part of this renovation project. We look forward to partaking in similar initiatives in the future collaborating with the Ministry of Healthcare and Indigenous Medical Services."

Last year, Harpic renovated toilets at the Minuwangoda Base Hospital. They also donated mobile sanitation units to the Anuradhapura Base Hospital which was a Covid19 testing center; another benefit for the public.

Harpic is a global brand with a wide-spread presence in six continents. Inspired by a vision to create a world where people are healthier and live better, Reckitt, the parent company produces a popular range of health and hygiene products including Dettol, Lysol apart from Harpic.

Twin wins for Teejay Lanka at Presidential Export Awards

Teejay Lanka PLC, Sri Lanka's leading fabric manufacturer, won twin awards as the 'Best Textile Exporter' in Sri Lanka at the combined 2019-20 and 2020-21 Presidential Export Awards ceremony hosted by the Export Development Board (EDB).

These are Teejay Lanka's second and third consecutive 'Best Exporter' awards in the Knitted Fabric Sector. The Company won this title for the first time on its debut at the Presidential Export Awards in 2019. The combined awards ceremony marks the 24th edition of this awards programme and was necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic which prevented the conduct of last year's ceremony.

The Best Textile Exporter awards were presented to Teejay in recognition of its

outstanding contribution to the export sector and to the economic development of Sri Lanka. Teejay Lanka which has been on a steady growth trajectory over the years reported a total revenue of US\$ 112.9 million for 2020-21 and US\$ 109.2 million for 2019-20. Of this, 11 per cent (about Rs 2.4 billion at current exchange rates) was generated by exports to customers in Bangladesh, Italy, India, and Haiti in 2020-21, while in 2019-20, exports of approximately Rs 5 billion represented 23 per cent of revenue.

"These awards are a testament to our resilience and adaptability in turbulent times," Teejay Lanka CEO Mr Pubudu De Silva commented. "Despite the disruptions created by the pandemic and the increase in prices of cotton and other



Teejay Lanka General Manager - European Brands, Corporate Communication & CSR, Lanka's milestone Ms Samadhi Weerakoon receives one of the Presidential Export Awards from Trade Minister Bandula Gunawardena.

inputs, we have maintained our growth trajectory and retained our status as Sri

too has been recognised for its outstanding services to the textile industry. For the

Lanka's top knit fabric exporter for three years in a row. The Group is now focused on catering to our customers' next phase of fabric requirements with synthetic and niche fabric offerings that are high in quality and value."

Matching Teejay Lanka's milestone accomplishments, its wholly-owned subsidiary Teejay India

financial years 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21, the Company won Best Exporter Awards in the Visakhapatnam Special Economic Zone (VSEZ) at the Export Excellence Awards presented by the Export promotion Council for Export Oriented Units (EOU) and Special Economic Zones (SEZ).

Teejay has invested \$ 26 million to increase the India plant's daily output by 20 tons, which is aligned with the Group's focus on building its synthetic fabric manufacturing capacity in Teejay India and would contribute to the Group's target of becoming a US\$ 300 million business by 2023. The first phase of expansion under this project is expected to come on line in January 2022, adding five tons a day to production capacity.

HNB focused on remittances as an engine for development

'The Bank is ideally positioned to take the lead in streamlining inflows to Sri Lanka'

Underpinning the power of remittances to drive development and in support of Central Bank of Sri Lanka's (CBSL) efforts to optimise inward remittances to Sri Lanka, leading private sector bank HNB PLC, recognized and rewarded their top achieving customers, at a special ceremony at their premises.

The event featured CBSL Governor, Ajith Nivard Cabraal as Chief Guest, and CBSL Assistant Governor, Dharmasiri Kumarathunga, who together with HNB MD/CEO, Jonathan Alles and senior officers, handed cash prizes of LKR 100,000 to the awardees.

Speaking on the occasion, CBSL Governor, Ajith Nivard Cabraal said "We express our gratitude to every Sri Lankan working overseas who is able to send a portion of their hard-earned earnings back home. Remittances are not only a benefit for those who send and receive money, but also an immensely valuable benefit for our nation. In acknowledging these factors, we understood that it is important to offer as many privileges as we can for those who use official channels for their remittances.

These will include immediate measures from the CBSL such as offering Rs. 2 on every US dollar remitted, as well as



CBSL Governor, Ajith Nivard Cabraal (fourth from right) with HNB MD/CEO, Jonathan Alles (fifth from left), CBSL Assistant Governor, Dharmasiri Kumarathunga (fourth from left) and HNB DGM- Retail and SME Banking, Sanjay Wijemanne (third from left) with the winners.

additional tax benefits. Similarly, if they were to use these funds to start a business, additional concessions will also be provided. Every Sri Lankan who works overseas should be treated as a VIP. We are grateful for their service, and we hope that they will make maximum use of this opportunity. I also wish to thank HNB for immediately stepping forward to support our vital efforts to raise remittances, which are essential to Sri Lanka's future development."

Among other initiatives aimed at increasing remittance inflows, from US\$ 7 billion to \$ 9 billion, CBSL in collaboration with the banking sector, plans to introduce SL-Remit, a mobile app to enable migrant workers to send their earnings via a safe and secure, official channel.

At a national level, worker remittances have been on the decline in recent months with September inflows halving to US\$ 353 million as compared with US\$

703 million a year ago. Remittances in the first nine months reduced by 9% YoY to US \$ 4.5 billion from the corresponding period of last year.

"Migrant workers who opt to send their foreign currency through formal banking channels, will be treated to new privileges, at a national level as well as at bank level. Given HNB's rich 40 year heritage in the remittance industry, we are ideally positioned to take the lead in streamlining inflows to Sri Lanka, while

ensuring that the interests and well-being of migrant workers during their tenor as a migrant, and upon their return to the motherland," HNB MD/CEO Jonathan Alles stated.

With over four decades of remittance experience, HNB has deployed officers in select locations as a regular point of contact to provide solutions and advice customers on their banking expectations.

HNB Remittance services offer customers convenience and security to transfer funds through the bank's worldwide network of partners in every populated continent. HNB's global network consists of more than 130 tie-ups with renowned exchange houses and banks across the world, where deposits could be made in 13 designated foreign currencies, along with LKR.

Notably, HNB recorded a significant 15% YoY increase in digital remittances in the first half of 2020 alone, following the introduction of cardless withdrawals for Lankan expatriates and the launch of the HNB RippleNet blockchain facility for enterprises, which helped ease the difficulties faced by customers. By the end of its last financial year, HNB had facilitated inward remittances in excess of LKR 203 billion inward remittances.

Thailand PM meets Huawei CEO to promote collaboration on digital transformation and talent development

General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of Thailand, attended a virtual executive meeting with Ren Zhengfei, CEO of Huawei Technologies on 25th November 2021.

Gen Prayut expressed appreciation for Huawei's continued support of Thailand's digital transformation and post-pandemic recovery, and his eagerness to further strengthen cooperation with Huawei to promote the Thailand 4.0 strategy and digital talent cultivation.

During the virtual meeting, Gen Prayut and Ren exchanged views on how to consolidate digital competitiveness and build a strong foundation for ICT talent in Thailand.

Gen Prayut also stressed the important role that advanced ICT technologies and digital innovation would play in supporting

Thailand's economic resilience and sustainability, stating that "Huawei has provided profound contributions to Thailand's fight against the pandemic and digital transformation. I am deeply impressed by Huawei history and dedication culture. In the future, Thailand is eager to cooperating with Huawei in various areas, including digital economy, 5G smart hospital, cloud and computing, digital power, smart logistics and data center."

Ren expressed his gratitude for Thai government's trust in Huawei and congratulated Thailand on its achievements in 5G rollout. He emphasized that "Huawei and Thailand have been working together to build a strong digital infrastructure foundation. In the future, we look forward to accelerating the integration of digital technologies in Thailand's



From Left: General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of Thailand and Ren Zhengfei, CEO of Huawei Technologies at the Virtual Executive Meeting

key industries, especially in port and airport scenarios."

Towards Thailand's digital blueprint to become the ASEAN digital hub, Huawei and Thailand have been closely cooperating in two key areas.

First, in line with the Thailand 4.0 strategy, Huawei has worked with its customers to accelerate Thailand's digital transformation and ICT infra-

structure innovation. Through the adoption of 5G, Cloud, and AI, Huawei and its industry partners are enabling Thailand's key sectors and creating exciting opportunities across multiple areas, including healthcare, education, transportation, e-government, and smart city, to bolster Thailand's long-term socio-economic development and digital ecosystem.

'Healthcare heroes' felicitated at 'Deepavali Upahara' ceremony

The 'Deepavali Upahara' ceremony organised by Wellawatta Nithyakalyani Jewellery, together with the Rotary Colombo East was held on Deepavali Day at the Nithyakalyani premises, adhering to COVID19 health guidelines.

The ceremony was held to pay tribute to some of the heroes who bolstered the well-being of the country during this pandemic period. Accordingly, healthcare heroes such as the Medical Officer of Health - Wellawatta Dr. Shree Prathapan and his team, Former OIC at Wellawatta Police Kapila Priyanka Wijemanne and many hygiene related workers who ensure that the city was clean were honoured at this ceremony.

Among the attendees were CEO of Wellawatta Nithyakalyani Jewellery and the current President of Rotary Colombo East A. P. Jayarajah, Managing Partners P Sivakumar and Dhivakar Balasubramaniam, Rotarian and Former MD/CEO of Hatton National Bank and Cargills Bank Rajendra Theagarajah, Secretary of Rotary Colombo East Saifu Adamally, Clean Tech team responsible for Wellawatta area,

OIC of Community Police Unit of Wellawatta Police Sub Inspector Y. N. Heshan accompanied by other police officers and the team from



Banking veteran, technologist and business transformation specialist, Rajendra Theagarajah felicitates one of the 'healthcare heroes' at the Deepavali Upahara, organised by Wellawatta Nithyakalyani Jewellery together with the Rotary Colombo East, on Deepavali day.

Wellawatta Nithyakalyani Jewellery.

Paying tribute to these healthcare heroes who have been on the frontline during COVID 19 to ensure health and hygiene in Wellawatta, A. P. Jayarajah stressed on the importance of all those heroes who have served tirelessly during the pandemic period and reiterated that Wellawatta Nithyakalyani Jewellery annually engages in several social welfare activities such as blood donation, beach cleaning, tree maintenance, development of schools and places of worship and that he hopes to carry out a number of similar social service projects in the future in association with the Rotary Colombo East.

Airtel's network expansion to amplify islandwide 4G coverage



Airtel Lanka, a subsidiary of international telecom giant Bharti Airtel Limited, recently revealed its plans to strategically expand its new 4G network across the island.

Over 400 new 4G sites are being commissioned across the country, which is in addition to the 2,000 plus 4G sites Airtel added during the launch of its 4G.

The new 4G sites are mapped out to ensure enhanced capacity in highly populated areas and coverage penetration into rural regions. Airtel's 4G network is built on a triple layer network, which gives it a solid combination of coverage and capacity to deliver a superior experience with drastically improved indoor coverage with stronger signal penetration.

Having already completed

over a third of the newly planned 4G sites, the finished sites are estimated to cover over an additional one million of the population. A prominent cause for the company to expedite its expansion

drive was the two-fold increase in data usage since the pandemic brought along a new normal.

"I am certain that our rapid expansion strategy will directly

benefit our consumers across the island, giving them a refreshed and enhanced network experience through our world-class 4G capabilities. Until adequate or even excess coverage is obtained, we will continue our 4G expansion drive, with every location also being 5G-ready to seamlessly accommodate the next generation of network when the time comes," commented Airtel Lanka CEO/MD Ashish Chandra.

Through this drive, Airtel users will be given the opportunity to enjoy a network experience unlike ever before. As Airtel is also equipped with a refreshed prepaid and postpaid model with the recent launch of 'Freedom Packs', the launch of Airtel 4G is the telco's single largest investment in Sri Lanka since its entry into the island in 2009.

GHR pledges to plant five trees per apartment constructed



Dasun Wickramaratne, Chairman and Managing Director of Global Group of Companies at a tree planting event at the 'The Kingdom Sigiriya'

Global Housing and Real Estate (Pvt) Ltd (GHR), a leading hotel residency developer in Sri Lanka, has renewed its sustainable pledge to help preserve the environment through their "GHR Green Pledge" to facilitate a sustainable lifestyle at the location.

GHR has pledged to plant five trees per apartment constructed, further strengthening the company's commitment to its ethos of 'People, Planet and Profit'.

With this new initiative focus-

ing on combating environment pollution, we look forward to transforming ourselves further, into a 'Triple Bottom Line' principled organisation," Dasun Wickramaratne, Chairman and Managing Director of Global Group of Companies stated.

"The Kingdom-Sigiriya", consists of 108 units to cater to those who appreciate the finer things in life and we offer prospective holidaymakers a unique approach to having a holiday home or to gen-

erating revenue by getting GHR to manage the property on behalf of our clients," he said.

The Kingdom Sigiriya offers a lush landscape, with unobstructed views of the spectacular countryside and a direct view of the ancient rock fortress.

'The project offers one the opportunity as an investment to own his or her own apartment as a weekend getaway or own it as an asset to generate revenue from the country's most visited tourist

destination," he added.

GHR, was incorporated in 2003 and it is a fully owned subsidiary of Global Leasing Ltd and a member of the Global Group of companies/ It has grown over the years venturing into various verticals of the property development industry. At present, GHR has focused on its luxury hotel/residential apartment projects in Negombo, Nuwaraeliya and Hikkaduwa in addition to Sigiriya.

Sudoku No. 4935

	8		7	4	9			
	7		1					
3			4			8		7
	6				7			
		7					3	
8	1						4	9
			2				1	
	2	4		6				8
6		9			4			5

Solution to No. 4934

6	8	4	3	7	9	1	5	2
1	3	9	2	4	5	7	6	8
2	5	7	6	8	1	9	4	3
9	2	3	4	6	8	5	1	7
4	6	8	5	1	7	3	2	9
7	1	5	9	3	2	6	8	4
8	7	2	1	9	6	4	3	5
5	4	1	7	2	3	8	9	6
3	9	6	8	5	4	2	7	1

No knowledge of arithmetic is required to enjoy this. All you need is a logical mind, a pencil and an eraser. Try it. Suffer its torture. Discover its ecstasy. It's a mind game you will solve with reasoning and logic. The rules are very simple. Fill in the grid with numbers so that every row, every column and every small 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9. Each number has its allotted place if you look hard enough. No number should be repeated in any row, column or 3x3 box. Here's an easy one to try - See tomorrow's Island for solution.

KAKURO 4172

	16	11			7	17		
9					3			
	17			30			13	12
		20						23
			3				7	
			23					
	16						4	
9					10	4		
					17			
15				3				

Solution 4171

	8	10		24	9			
3	1	2	14	9	8	1		15
24	7	8	9	10	17	9	8	10
		10		2	1	7	3	6
12	1	6	3	2	8	7	2	1
16	9	7	15	4	7	1	3	
		16		8	4	3	1	
		16		9	7			

How to play: Fill in the blank squares, using 1 to 9, without repeating any number in any line. The lines must be filled in with numbers that add up to the total in the shaded box at the top or beginning of each line. A number in the bottom half of the shaded box is the downward total; in the top half, it's the horizontal total.

Alia Bhatt shares sweetest throwback pic with sister Shaheen on her birthday

Alia Bhatt an Indian born British actress and singer has wished sister, Shaheen Bhatt on her birthday. She penned a note and shared it along with a happy picture of them together.



Alia Bhatt with sister Shaheen Bhatt.

The monochrome picture is from the recent wedding of Anushka Ranjan and Aditya Seal in Mumbai. Alia had attended the wedding with Shaheen and is seen planting a kiss on her head.

Alia wrote, "Happy birthday my sweetie. My happy place. My safe place. My mother. My best friend. My child. I don't

think there's a word in the dictionary to aptly express the gratitude I feel for your existence in my life. I don't know a world or a life without your love! I wish you all the love and joy in the world and when the weathers not great I'll be there holding up an umbrella! I love you my melon."

Calvin and Hobbes



Andy Capp

By Reg Henry Scargelli



Wizard of Id

By Parker and Hart



Mother Goose & Grimm

By Mike



Mutt & Jeff



Pickles



Daily Island Crossword No. 3841

	1	2	3	4	5	6			
7									
9			10						
11	12					13			
15		16			17			18	
20							21		22
23									
							24		

Daily Island Crossword No. 3841

- Across**
- 7 Doctor (6)
 - 8 Container for boiling water (6)
 - 9 The act of discovering something (4)
 - 10 Particles and flakes of gold (4,4)
 - 11 Showing a lack of intelligence or thought (7)
 - 13 Small vascular growth (5)
 - 15 Legume (5)
 - 17 Bearing in mind; attentive to (7)
 - 20 Type of bush (8)
 - 21 Die (4)
 - 23 Martial art (6)
 - 24 Yearly (6)
- Down**
- 1 Shop selling delicatessen (as salads or cooked meats) (4)
 - 2 Concealed (6)
 - 3 Trotting (7)
 - 4 Accomplishment (5)
 - 5 Artist's workroom (6)
 - 6 Gesundheit (5,3)

- 12 Hasten (4,2,2)
- 14 Main road (7)
- 16 Person of subnormal intelligence (6)
- 18 Pour out (6)
- 19 Keep going (3-2)
- 22 About (4)

Crossword No. 3840

B	V	W	T	D	B
G	A	L	E	N	A
A	B	R	C	G	R
A	B	U	T	G	A
A	P	O	I	S	L
T	R	A	H	M	A
T	R	A	H	H	A
P	L	A	N	T	A
S	E	L	E	C	T
L	R	A	O	N	E



Date: 29-11-2021

ARIES: An auspicious day. A day where you will be extremely busy. Opportunities arise to attend receptions and mutual meetings. New friendship is built up. Likely to start new creations. Sudden financial awards possible. Lucky Colour: Violet, Lucky Number: 01.

TAURUS: A day with good results. An active day. You'll launch your business with new spirit. A good day for those self-employed. You'll succeed in agricultural projects. Lucky Colour: Cream, Lucky Number: 08.

GEMINI: An auspicious day. You'll work with new spirit. You'll be employed. Old friendships develop. You'll achieve your goals at some extent. Sudden wealth due. Lucky Colour: Green, Lucky Number: 04.

CANCER: A day with mixed results. You'll attend religious rituals and almsgiving. Cordial meetings likely. Connections with relations develop. Lucky Colour: Rose, Lucky Number: 07.

LEO: A day with mixed results; Distant travelling likely. You'll enjoy at receptions. New creations will be started. Acts following religious precepts. You'll take part in offering and poojas. Lucky Colour: Light Rose, Lucky Number: 01.

VIRGO: An auspicious day. You'll travel far. Likely to attend picnic and pilgrimages. Cordial meetings possible. New friendships built up. Religious minded. Lucky Colour: Green, Lucky Number: 06.

LIBRA: An auspicious day. You'll achieve your goals to a very great extent. Opportunity to attend happy events-acts keeping to religious precepts. Lucky Colour: White, Lucky Number: 08.

SCORPIO: An auspicious day. You may attend picnics and pilgrimages. You may take part in religious ceremonies, participate in offerings and poojas. New friendship built up. Lucky Colour: Red, Lucky Number: 03.

SAGITTARIUS: An auspicious day. You are likely to take part in enjoyable activities. Mutual connection and new friendship built up. Take part in religious activities and poojas. Lucky Colour: Yellow, Lucky Number: 02.

CAPRICORN: A day with mixed results. You may attend distant pilgrimages-Acts following religious teachings. Take part in public welfare activities. Lucky Colour: Brown, Lucky Number: 03.

AQUARIUS: An auspicious day. Take part in activities in unity with relations, and friends. Cordial meetings may occur. Distant connections develop. Relegious minded. Lucky Colour: Light Violet, Lucky Number: 05.

PISCES: A day with mixed results. You will take part in public welfare and community service activities. Religious minded and indulge in promoting intellectual virtues. Lucky Colour: Orange, Lucky Number: 09.

Iyer, Saha give India control

Shreyas Iyer (65) and Wriddhiman Saha (61n.o.) composed crucial fifties to put India in pole position at stumps on day four of the opening Test versus New Zealand yesterday. After India set a substantial target of 284, the visitors lost the wicket of Will Young to end the day at 4 for 1.

When Ravi Jadeja was trapped in front by a delivery that darted back from Tim Southee, India were precariously placed at 51 for 5. At that juncture, it seemed as if the hosts would struggle to eke out a lead in excess of 200. However, Iyer in the company of R Ashwin and then Saha shut New Zealand's window of opportunity to bowl India out for a modest score. Initially, Ashwin and Iyer went about doing the repair job. Ashwin in particular played with a sense of purpose to negate the threat of Southee.

The hallmark of the partnership was every single time the New Zealand bowlers dished out an ordinary delivery, the pair took advantage of it. Just when the pair seemed set to take India to a position of strength, Kyle Jamieson breathed life into New Zealand's efforts by forcing Ashwin to inside edge one onto the stumps. Saha then joined hands with Iyer to share another timely association. The duo also looked to up the ante with Iyer cracking a few well-timed lofts and Saha bringing out the slog-sweep.

In between, New Zealand also had an opportunity to break the stand but the fielder stationed at midwicket put down a tough chance to give Saha the reprieve. Eventually, Iyer gloved a short ball down the leg-side, but by then the middle order batter had helped India take the lead past the 200-run mark. This Test could turn out to be defining moment in Iyer's career as he had also notched up a superlative hundred in the first essay.

After the Tea break, Saha found an able ally in Axar as India cemented their good position. Once again New Zealand had an opportunity to dismiss Saha but Tom Blundell grassed it. On both occasions, Will Somerville was the unlucky bowler.

Towards the end of day's play, Axar made his intentions clear by smacking Ajaz across the line for a six. With Saha also reaching his fifty, India decided to declare at 234 for 7. Ashwin then made it a near-perfect day for the home side by winning an LBW decision against Will Young.

To the naked eye, the ball seemed to be going down leg but Young decided to avail for the review only after the timer ticked and it was rightly denied. Replays too suggested that it was sliding down leg. On the other hand, it has been a forgettable Test match for the on-field umpires, with a slew of decisions being overturned via the DRS.

New Zealand may look back at the day's play as an opportunity lost. In the morning session, Southee generated appreciable swing and in the company of Jamieson had ripped through the cream of the batting order. In particular, the delivery to Mayank Agarwal which swung considerably was one of the highlights of the day's play. Unfortunately for the tourists, their spinners couldn't make much of an impression and now they have to perhaps play for survival on a wearing pitch on the final day.

Brief scores:

India 345 (Shreyas Iyer 105, Shubman Gill 52, Ravindra Jadeja 50; Tim Southee 5/69) and 234/7 decl. (Shreyas Iyer 65, W. Saha 61n.o.; Kyle Jamieson 3/40, Tim Southee 3/75)

New Zealand 296 (Tom Latham 95, Will Young 89; Axar Patel 5/62) and 4 for 1 (R. Ashwin 1/3)



Shreyas Iyer and Wriddhiman Saha scored half centuries for India to take control.

20th Asian Team Squash Championship

Sri Lanka national squash teams off to Malaysia



Teams pose with officials and Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa.

Sri Lankan senior national squash teams took wing to Malaysia to participate in the 20th Asian Squash Team Championships to be held from November 30 to December 4.

The women's event will be taken part by eight teams while 13 teams will compete in the men's event. The country's men's team will be represented by Ravindu Laksiri, Shamil Wakeel, Methmal Wood and Sheriff Hakeem while Fathoum Issadeen, Yeheni Kuruppu, Chanithma Sinaly and Dewmini Gallage form the women's team.

Much is expected from current national champion Ravindu Laksiri and number two Shamil Wakeel. Ravindu Laksiri, current national champion and holder of the title for eight consecutive years is the most experienced

campaigner along with Shamil Wakeel. Methmal Wood is making his debut in the senior national team.

Ravindu first excelled at international level when he was placed fifth at the Youth Asian Games while being a junior. Shamil Wakeel won a bronze medal under at an Asian Junior Championship. The men's team will have to battle it out against Malaysia, Hong Kong, Iran, Korea and Singapore in the league stage.

Women's national champion Fathoum Issadeen and Junior National champion Yeheni Kuruppu will hold the keys to success in the women's competition, while Chanithma Sinaly and Dewmini Gallage are also expected to chip in with their experience.

The women's team will have to battle it out with Hong Kong, Japan and Korea in the league stage.

Eranga Alwis, the secretary of Sri Lanka Squash will take up the responsibility as the team manager.

Gihan Suwaris, and Naduni Gunawardena will be in charge as coaches. Both Gihan and Naduni are former number one ranked national players and World Squash Federation level two qualified coaches. Gihan is currently working at Nations Trust Bank while Naduni is currently serving as a lecturer at University of Sri Jayawardenapura.

Although not on tour Ashan Gamlath a renowned physical fitness expert is the trainer of the team.

Daniil Medvedev powered the Russian Tennis Federation to victory over Ecuador in the Davis Cup Finals with a 57-minute thrashing of Emilio Gomez in Madrid.

The US Open champion dismantled world number 147 Gomez 6-0 6-2 putting Russia 2-0 up.

Gomez did not win a game until 3-0 down in the second set,

Andrey Rublev overcame a second-set wobble to beat Robert Quiroz 6-3 4-6 6-1.

Rublev later partnered Aslan Karatsev in the doubles against Gonzalo Escobar and Diego Hidalgo winning 6-4 4-6 6-4.

World number one Novak Djokovic and his Serbia team lost their Group F tie with Germany 2-1.

A doubles defeat for Djokovic

Daniel Gallan 7-5 6-0.

That meant the doubles rubber did not start until after midnight at local time in Turin, with Colombian pair Juan Sebastian Cabal and Robert Farah beating Sinner and Fabio Fognini 6-2 5-7 7-6 (8-6) in a match finishing shortly before 3am.

There were wins for Kazakhstan and Australia on the third day, after Great Britain beat

Medvedev powers Russian team to victory in Davis Cup Finals

an achievement met with loud cheers from the crowd.

Russia later completed a 3-0 win thanks to victory in the doubles.

Medvedev dropped just 13 points on serve and only made six unforced errors as he outclassed Gomez.

"What is good about Davis Cup is that every match counts," said Medvedev, competing under the Russian Tennis Federation banner because of the global ban on Russia at major sporting events.

In their first match Russia's

and his partner Nikola Cacic against Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz 7-6 (7-5) 3-6 7-6 (7-5) secured the win for Germany.

Earlier in the singles Djokovic beat Jan-Lennard Struff 6-2 6-4 after Filip Krajinovic lost 7-6 (7-4) 6-4 to Dominik Koepfer in the first rubber.

Italy became the first team to qualify for the quarter-finals thanks to a 2-1 victory in their tie against Colombia.

Lorenzo Sonogo took more than two and a half hours to defeat Nicolas Mejia 6-7 (5-7) 6-4 6-2 before Jannik Sinner beat

France 2-1 earlier on Saturday.

Kazakhstan fought back from losing the first rubber to beat Sweden 2-1 in their Group B tie.

Elias Ymer began the tie strongly with a 6-4 7-6 (7-4) victory over Kazakh stalwart Mikhail Kukushkin in Madrid.

However, Alexander Bublik beat Ymer's younger brother Mikael 3-6 6-4 6-0, before Andrey Golubev and Aleksandr Nedovyesov beat Andre Goransson and veteran Robert Lindstedt 6-3 6-3.

Alex de Minaur came through a gruelling singles rubber to put



The US Open champion dismantled world number 147 Gomez 6-0 6-2 putting Russia 2-0 up.

help Australia recover to a 2-1 win over Hungary.

Australia, 28-time champions at the Davis Cup, lost their opener to Croatia and started poorly in Turin.

John Millman suffered a surprising 4-6 6-4 6-3 loss to world number 282 Zsombor Piros, but Australia were given hope as De

Minaur gritted his way past Hungarian number one Marton Fucsovics 7-5 2-6 7-6 (7-2).

Alex Bolt and John Peers clinched the decisive doubles rubber 6-3 6-7 (11-13) 6-3 over Piros and Fabian Marozsan in a match that lasted just over two hours.

The Davis Cup Finals are being held across three cities,

with the semi-finals and final being held in Madrid from 3 to 5 December.

Teams play two round-robin ties, each featuring two singles and one doubles rubber all played over best of three sets.

The top teams from each group and the two best runners-up qualify for the quarter-finals.

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Monday 29th November, 2021

World's lowest paid captain on the verge of equalling World Record

REX CLEMENTINE IN GALLE

Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Karunaratne has hit a purple patch this year and if his run fest continues, he will be equalling a World Record when the second Test match against West Indies gets underway today here in Galle. Dimuth has notched up six consecutive half-centuries in his last six innings and that is one fifty short of equalling the World Record.

Despite the form, it's been a tough 2021 for Dimuth. It all started off well when he became the first Sri Lankan to score a hundred at the Wanderers. The South African venue popularly known as the Bull Ring for its intimidating nature is considered world's quickest wicket now that WACA is gone. Asian batsmen have a horrendous record at the Wanderers but Dimuth took on the South African quicks to hit a marvelous hundred.

However, that knock ended with Dimuth suffering a fractured finger and he was ruled out of the home series against India. Then he had to undergo a salary cut as his annual retainer was reduced by US\$ 30,000. At US\$ 70,000 a year, he must be world's lowest paid Test captain. To add insult to injury, he was unceremoniously dumped as Sri Lanka's ODI skipper in May. But that has not stopped him from scoring big runs in Test match cricket. His last six Test innings are; 83, 147, 66, 118, 244 and 75.

Having won the first Test by 187 runs, Sri Lanka have retained the Sobers-Tissera Trophy and if the second Test is

drawn, they will move up in the ICC Test rankings as well to number seven. But a draw is the last thing they want. They are guaranteed of 12 points for a win in the World Test Championship and they'd be looking to end off the year on a high note.

Sri Lanka have decided to give Dushmantha Chameera a break. The injury prone quick has been overworked this year and not many expected him to feature in the Test series. It's hard to comprehend the reason why he featured in the opening Test as this was going to be a trial by spin for Windies. Chameera sent down just 12 overs in the entire first Test and picked up no wickets. His new ball partner Suranga Lakmal sent down only six overs for a solitary wicket.

There's been talk of Chamika Karunaratne coming in for Chameera and while that may have been justifiable at P. Sara Oval or Pallekele, in Galle where it turns square, Sri Lanka would be better off beefing up their batting department since they have already got four spin options. The rational thing to do would be to back Charith Asalanka to make his Test debut but common sense is an expensive commodity these days.

It remains to be seen what the Windies would do. The tourists made a big call to leave out Kemar Roach from the first Test and missed him. Roach is the eighth highest wicket taker for West Indies in the history and should make a comeback.

Jeremy Solozano, who made his debut last week but played no more than a ses-

sion of Test cricket when he had to be rushed to the hospital after receiving blow on his helmet was substituted for concussion. He is unlikely to play the game.

The opening Test was heavily affected by rain and Sri Lanka won just in time. The second Test too most likely will be affected by inclement weather with rain expected for the first three days. However, you've got to take our weather predictions with a pinch of salt. Nobody takes Cabral's rosy predictions about our economy seriously. So should you with weather predictions.

Teams:

West Indies (From) Kraigg Brathwaite (Captain), Jermaine Blackwood, Nkrumah Bonner, Roston Chase, Rahkeem Cornwall, Joshua Da Silva, Shannon Gabriel, Jason Holder, Shai Hope, Kyle Mayers, Veerasammy Permaul, Kemar Roach, Jayden Seales, Jeremy Solozano and Jomel Warrican.

Sri Lanka (From) Dimuth Karunaratne (Captain), Oshada Fernando, Angelo Mathews, Dinesh Chandimal, Dhananjaya de Silva, Pathum Nissanka, Charith Asalanka, Ramesh Mendis, Praveen Jayawickrama, Lasith Embuldeniya, Vishwa Fernando, Suranga Lakmal, Chamika Karunaratne and Lahiru Kumara.

Umpires: Kumar Dharmasena (SL) and Ruchira Palliyaguruge (SL)

Third Umpire: Lyndon Hannibal (SL)

Match Referee: Ranjan Madugalle (SL)



Dimuth Karunaratne has scored 83, 147, 66, 118, 244 and 75 in his last six Test innings.

Under 19 Division Three Tier 'A' Cricket

Vidyaloka College, Galle will meet Jaffna Central in the final of the Under 19 Division III Tier 'A' tournament after the two teams won their semi-finals played over the weekend at Campbell Place.

The team from Galle registered four wickets victory over Methodist High School, Moratuwa after restricting the latter to 120 runs yesterday. Chasing the target Sonal Ransara scored unbeaten 35 runs to lead the team to victory. Umanga Imanjana with three wickets and Sonal

Jaffna Central, Vidyaloka Galle reach final

Ransara and Sasindu Lakshan with two wickets each took bowling honours for them.

Jaffna Central beat Rajasinghe Central, Hanwella by seven wickets on Saturday with S. Sarangan scoring a half century to seal the victory with many overs to spare.

Jaffna Central rattled Rajasinghe for

104 runs as R. Newton, T. Gowtham and B. Inthujan took bowling honours.

Match Results
Jaffna Central beat Rajasinghe Cebtral by seven wickets

Brief Scores:
Scores:
Rajasinghe Central 104 all out

(Isuru Udeshe 35, Praveen Maneesha 29, Rashmitha Dasith 10; R. Newton 3/16, T. Gowtham 2/14, B. Inthujan 2/25)

Jaffna Central 105 for 3 (S.
Sarangan 50, J. Vithusan 18, V. Viyaskanth 14 n.o.; Praveen Maneesha 3/31)
Vidyaloka College beat Methodist High School by four wickets

Brief Scores:

Methodist High School 120 all out in 49.2 overs (Kavin Fernando 31, Thisara Jayanga 20, Akash Nimsara 15, K. Sulakshana 10; Umanga Imanjana 3/30, Sonal Ransara 2/24, Sasindu Lakshan 2/28)

Vidyaloka College 121 for 6 in 31.2 overs (Sonal Ransara 35 n.o., Kavinda Bsnayake 23; Akash Nimsara 2/21, Kavin Fernando 2/24)

106th Colombo Championship Tennis

Chathurya, Thehan, Anjalika advance to singles finals



Thehan Wijemanne

Chathurya Nilaweera

Chathurya Nilaweera of Stafford International School is set to meet top seed Thehan Wijemanne of Royal College in the men's singles tennis final of the 106th Colombo Championships today after they won their respective semi-final matches at the Sri Lanka Tennis Association courts.

Both Nilaweera and Wijemanne could not proceed to the final at the 2020 edition of this championship. While Nilaweera was edged out by Wijemanne in the quarter-finals the latter suffered defeat at the hands of Vibuda Wijebandara in the semis.

Yesterday both cleared their final hurdles with straight sets wins.

Nilaweera beat Meshal Sinnan 4-2, 4-1 in the quarter-final before registering 6-1, 6-2 win against last year finalist Vibuda Wijebandara in his semi-final yesterday.

In the second semi-final Wijemanne beat Archana Lokuge 6-2, 6-2. His quarter-final victory was against Kiran Vairavanathan.

In the women's singles final, Anjalika Kurera will meet the winner

of the match between Savini Jayasuriya and Neyara Weerawansa. She will know her opponent today after the top semi-final was interrupted by rain yesterday.

Weerawansa won the first set 6-1 and was also leading the tiebreaker 5-

1 before rain interruption forced the remainder to be played today.

Kurera was the winner of her semi-final against Tuvini de Alwis. The Ave Maria Convent, Negombo player recorded a 6-1, 6-1 win against de Alwis.



Anjalika Kurera. (pix by Kamal Wanniarachchi)

