

CEBEU begins 'level two' of work-to-rule strike

By FAADHILA THASSIM

The Ceylon Electricity Board Engineers' Union (CEBEU) will escalate the on-going work-to-rule campaign that commenced as a trade union action until demands including terminating the Yugadanavi Power Plant deal are met, Secretary of CEBEU, Dhammika Wimalaratne said adding that thereby a level two work-to-rule campaign will commence today (1).

He said when the level one work-to-rule campaign commenced on 25 November....

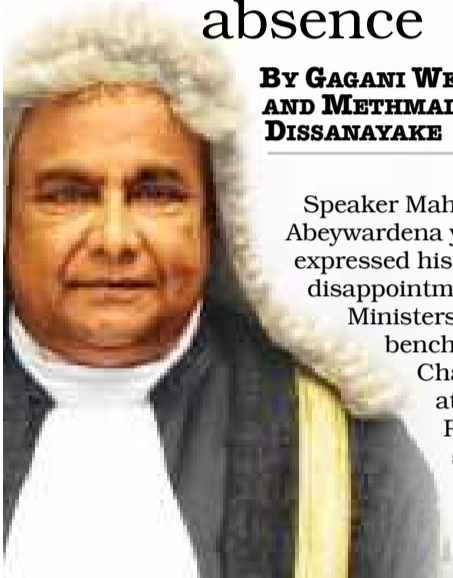


Story Continued on **PAGE 2** ▶

Speaker disappointed over front-benchers' absence

By GAGANI WEERAKOON AND METHMALIE DISSANAYAKE

Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena yesterday (30) expressed his disappointment over Ministers of front benches in the Chamber not attending Parliamentary sittings. The Speaker who addressed...

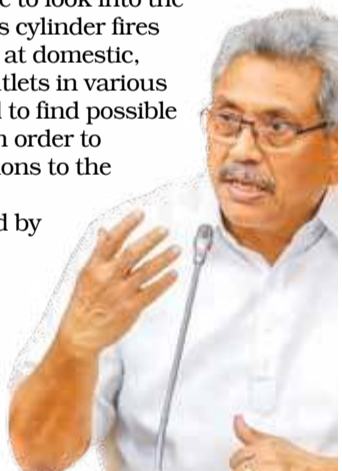


Story Continued on **PAGE 2** ▶

Committee to look into LP gas explosions

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has appointed an eight-member Committee to look into the recent incidents of LP gas cylinder fires and explosions occurred at domestic, commercial and sales outlets in various parts of the country, and to find possible causes for the problem in order to provide immediate solutions to the issue.

The Committee chaired by Moratuwa University's (MU's) Prof. Shantha Walpola includes Senior DIG Deshabandu Tennakoon, Prof. Ajith de Alwis (MU), Prof. W.D.W. Jayathilaka (Sri Jayawardanapura...)



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Global Fund to withdraw from malaria funding

By DILANTHI JAYAMANNE

With the Global Fund withdrawing its support to keep malaria at bay, Sri Lanka would have to fend for itself from next year onwards, Anti Malaria Campaign (AMC) Director Dr. Prasad Ranaweera said.

Ranaweera said yesterday, though having overcome malaria, the Global Fund continued to support the AMC to prevent and control a second happening. In 2019 it provided a total one million US dollars, while in 2020 and 2021 it provided US\$ 750,000 each.

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Editors' Guild mourns M.V. Kanamailnathan

The Editors' Guild has expressed its profound condolences on the demise of one of the country's senior most journalists and a leading journalist in the Tamil print media, M.V. Kanamailnathan.

Editors' Guild issuing a Press communiqué said the late journalist was the Editor of the Uthayan Newspaper, which is published in the Jaffna District, at the time of his death.

Kanamailnathan had served uninterrupted with the Uthayan Newspaper for 36 years since its inception while being a resident of Vaddukkoddai in Jaffna.

The late Editor had also worked with the Dinapathi Newspaper published by the...

Story Continued on **PAGE 2** ▶

CEYLON TODAY



In Sports Permaul's five-for headlines brilliant day for visitors

Veerasammy Permaul starred with a brilliant five-wicket haul for the West Indies as they skittled out Sri Lanka for 204 and ended the day on 69/1 before rain curtailed play in Galle.

A16

Sabotage behind recent blackout?

CEB Chair Lodges Police Complaint

By THAMEENAH RAZEEM

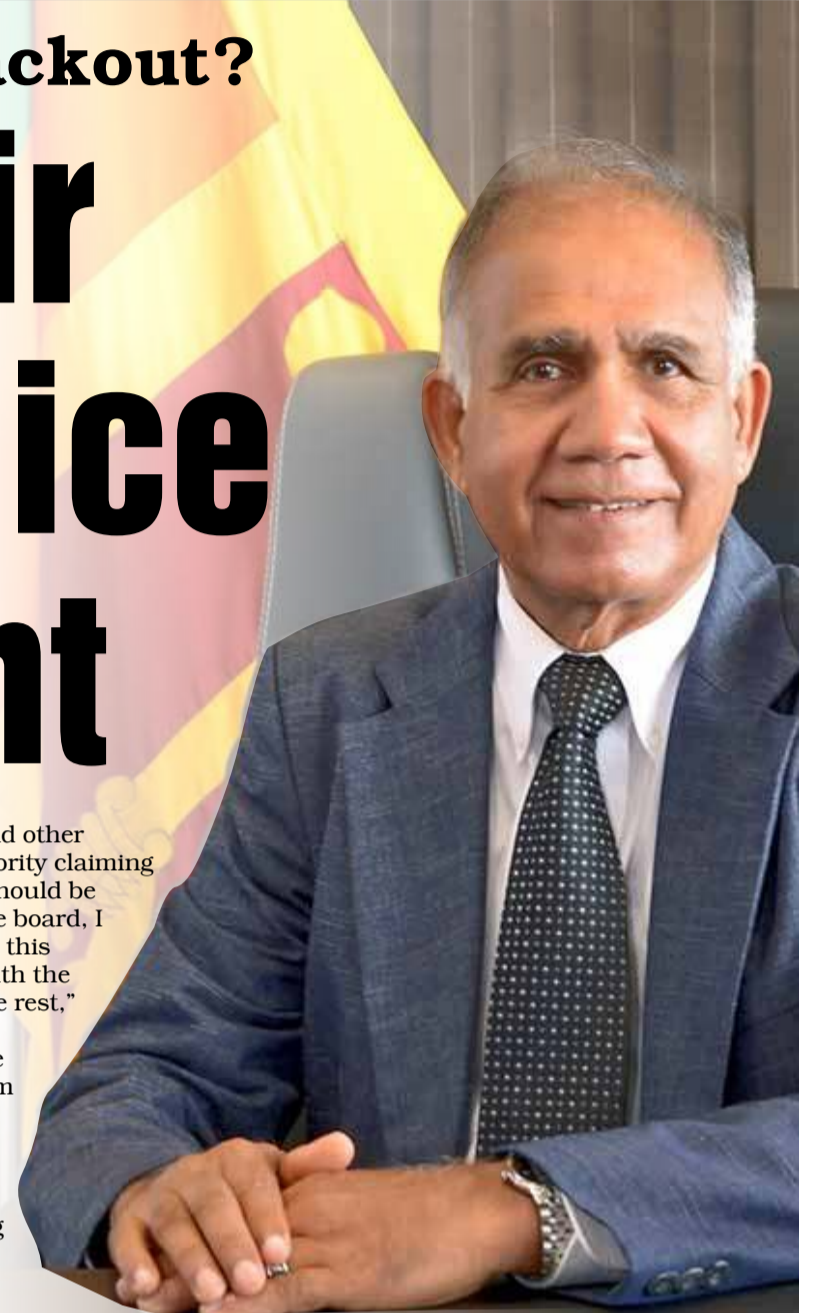
Chairman of the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) M.M.C. Ferdinando has lodged a complaint with the Police in connection with the 29 November power outage caused by a technical malfunction on a transmission line.

He said the complaint has been filed while the on-going investigation is trying to establish whether this was an act of sabotage, and that many people both inside and outside the CEB are concerned about the breakdown. He noted that some are complaining to him that the breakdown was caused by some CEB employees, while others claimed that this was not a normal breakdown.

"I received numerous complaints from

members of the public, staff, and other individuals in positions of authority claiming that this is a major issue that should be investigated. As chairman of the board, I have no authority to investigate this matter. So I filed a complaint with the Police and they will look into the rest," he explained.

Meanwhile, the removal of the Electricity Superintendents from the CEB Systems Control Division, according to the Electrical Engineers and Superintendents, was the reason for the delay in repairing the power outage that occurred on 29 November.



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Patali's case to be heard tomorrow

By HANSI NANAYAKKARA

Colombo High Court (CHC) Judge Damith Thotawatta yesterday fixed hearing of the case filed against SJB MP Patali Champika Ranawaka and two others accused on charges of causing a grievous injury to youth Sandeep Sampath at Rajagiriya five years ago, to start from tomorrow (2).

The ex-Minister and two others have been charged with causing a grievous injury to the said youth, compilation of fake



evidence, fleeing after causing a traffic accident, etc., among other charges. When the case was taken

up Thotawatta advised two out of four witnesses who were present in Court at the previous...

Story Continued on **PAGE 2** ▶

TID grilling cop imposters

Suspects tried defrauding family of 21/4 suspects

By HANSI NANAYAKKARA

The TID yesterday (30 November) informed Colombo Additional Magistrate Chandima Liyanage that the two suspects arrested on charges of fleeing relatives of suspects behind the 2019 Easter Sunday carnage to the tune of millions of rupees while masquerading as police officers attached to the CID, are presently being interrogated by the TID on detention orders.

They stated that the two suspects identified as D. Don Saman Buddhika, a resident of Gopallawa and Mohammad Rizwan, a resident of Hettipola are...

Story Continued on **PAGE 2** ▶

Warnakumara to fill vacant SLPP MP seat

By FAADHILA THASSIM

Name of Manju Lalith Warnakumara has been gazetted to fill Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna's (SLPP) Parliamentary seat that fell vacant following the resignation of former SLPP Kalutara District MP Mahinda Samarasinghe.



Story Continued on **PAGE 2** ▶

GMOA sabotaging hospital administration

- JJB

By GAGANI WEERAKOON AND METHMALIE DISSANAYAKE

Jathika Jana Balawegaya (JJB) MP Vjitha Herath yesterday (30) alleged the Government Medical Officers' Association (GMOA) is pressuring the Health Ministry not to appoint medical administrator grade doctors to hospitals, in order to carry out its own agenda in the Health Ministry and State hospitals.

Participating in the Committee Stage Debate on the Expenditure Head of the Health Ministry, Herath said there is an administrative crisis in the country's health service.



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Inflation at 154 month high of 9.9%

By PANEETHA AMERESSEKERE

Inflation accelerated to a 154-month high of 9.9 per cent last month, driven by food inflation which hit a 157-month high of 17.5 per cent and non-food inflation, a 30-month high of 6.4 per cent, year on year (YoY), respectively, Census and Statistics Department (CSD) data released yesterday (30 November) showed.

Story Continued on **PAGE 2** ▶

Bills to be tabled to permit medical cannabis export

State Minister of Promotion of Indigenous Medicine, Development of Rural and Ayurvedic Hospitals Sisira Jayakody said that necessary Bills will be tabled in Parliament within the next 90-day period aimed at exporting of medicinal cannabis.



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Veteran politician Sirisena Cooray passes away

By UPATISSA PERERA



Ex-Minister Sirisena Cooray passed away while receiving treatment at a private hospital in Colombo, family sources said yesterday. He served as the Mayor of Colombo from 1979 to 1989 and was elected to Parliament in the ninth parliamentary election in...

Story Continued on **PAGE 2** ▶

Illegal lunch sheet factory raided in Homagama

By Eunice Ruth

The Central Environmental Authority (CEA) along with Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) and Police conducted raids in several areas of the Homagama Divisional Secretariat Division and seized 5,100 kg (5.1 tonnes) of

illegally manufactured lunch sheet rolls. The contraband was seized in a factory which was producing lunch sheets and other polythene related products. The seized lunch sheets are worth more than Rs. 1.5 Million. The CEA's media officer, Sriyanjani Lokuliyana said that

lunch sheets are still being produced despite the Gazette banning their manufacture and the CEA will be taking steps to file legal action against the factory. The CEA is conducting raids islandwide to seize illegally made polythene products and arrest manufacturers, she said.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

CEB Chair...

President of the Electricity Board Joint Trade Union Alliance Ranjan Jayalal said an investigation should be conducted to determine whether the breakdown was caused by natural causes or by sabotage. He stated that they cannot assist in matters or issues such as this since they are in a work-to-rule campaign. Following a technical malfunction at a transmission line, Sri Lanka experienced a partial power outage on 29 November, causing several areas of the country to go dark and

interrupting various services and enterprises. When quarried, Ministry of Power Spokesman Sulakshana Jayawardena stated the high voltage transmission line from Kotmale to Biyagama had failed, causing power outages in several sections of the island. He stated that the transmission failure occurred about 7.35 p.m. and that the demand for electricity was strong at the time, resulting in the shutdown of Mahaweli power generation.

Inflation at 154...

The last time Colombo inflation hit a figure higher than 9.9 per cent was in January 2009 at 10.9 per cent, the last time food inflation recorded a figure higher than 17.5 per cent was in October 2008 at 22 per cent and the last time non-food inflation registered a figure higher than 6.4 per cent was in May 2019 at 6.8 per cent, respectively. When examining the higher October 2008, January 2009 and May 2019 inflationary numbers, October 2008 and January 2009 coincided with the eve of the end of Sri Lanka's 26-year-old LTTE war which was at its height during that period before it was successfully prosecuted to a finish on 18 May 2009. Further, October 2008 and January 2009 were also the periods

when the global financial crisis followed by the Great Recession. Meanwhile, May 2019 was the aftermath of Easter Sunday attacks which took place on 21 April 2019 when religious extremists launched a successful attack on some churches in Colombo and elsewhere in the country and also on some five star hotels in Colombo. Meanwhile, among the main drivers of food inflation last month were rice, vegetables, coconut, chicken, egg, green chillies, big onion and sugar and the main drivers of non-food inflation were high LP gas prices. Islandwide inflation as at last month according to the CSD calendar should be released on 21 December.

CEBEU begins...

... CEB engineers only worked during normal office hours but attended emergencies and breakdowns even after normal working hours. He added, however, that under the level two work-to-rule campaign, CEB engineers will not attend emergencies and breakdowns after normal work hours and in the event of power outages after working hours, restoration will not take place until the following morning. Commenting on the power outages reported in several areas on 29 Monday, Wimalaratne said CEB engineers managed to restore power within a reasonable period of time, adding, however, that there will be delay in restoring power following breakdowns from today (1) due to the escalated trade union actions.

He remarked that the main demand is to ensure the discontinuation of the Yugadanavi Power Plant deal claiming it to be an illegal agreement with an American Company, New Fortress Energy which is a bankrupt company and does not in any way merit the selection criteria of an international tender. The CEBEU's demands also include that of permitting the on-going transparent Tender Procedure by the CEB for continuous LNG development, to stop attempts to unbundle the CEB, to cease proposed amendments to the Board Act No. 17 of 1969, to stop interference and politicisation by the appointment of a new General Manager to the CEB and to stop abrupt and arbitrary transfers of the senior management.

Warnakumara to...

The relevant Gazette Notification was issued yesterday (30) while the Election Commission stated that Warnakumara is expected to be sworn in as an MP today (1). Former SLPP Parliamentarian Samarasinghe was elected from the Kalutara District resigned from his

seat to take up a new post as the Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the United States and Mexico. Thereby Warnakumara who polled 46,361 preferential votes at the 2020 General Election and was next to take up the parliamentary seat has been appointed.

Committee to...

... University) Prof. Pradeep Jayaweera, Sri Lanka Inventors' Commission Commissioner Prof. Narayan Sirimuthu, Technical Services Additional Director General Dr. Sudarshana Somasiri and Sri Lanka Standards Institution Senior Deputy Director Sujewa Mahagama. The President has instructed the committee to submit the report to him within two weeks.

'Global Fund'...

He noted that the future of the AMC looked somewhat bleak with the Global Fund withdrawing its support from 2022 to prevent the disease. This year up to September, there was a total 15 cases. In October 2021 another two cases with Malaria were detected while a total four cases was detected during last month. In 2020 a total 30 cases were identified from amongst the returnees from malaria endemic countries. A majority of imported cases have been from African countries where the *Plasmodium falciparum* and *Plasmodium ovale* were predominant. Ranaweera said that of the 21 cases detected this year, 20 were from those who had visited African countries. Last year of the 30 cases, five had been from Africa, while others had been from those who had toured India where the malaria parasite *Plasmodium vivax* found.

Veteran politician...

... February 1989 from Colombo District under the UNP ticket. He was appointed Minister of Housing and Construction in the R. Premadasa Cabinet and had also served as General Secretary of the UNP under Premadasa. The late Sirisena Cooray had also played a pivotal role in the election triumph of the former President at the 1989 Presidential Poll. Bulathsinghalage Sirisena Cooray who was a father of four children was 90 years old at the time of his demise.

Speaker disappointed...

... Chief Government Whip Johnston Fernando told the latter to inform the ministers not to avoid attending the sittings. The Speaker: "I am highly disappointed to see empty seats in the front benches. None of the ministers who are sitting beside the Chief Government Whip are present. I request the Chief Government Whip to advise them to attend the sittings frequently as it is a collective responsibility of the House." Furthermore, the Speaker said that all the ministers never miss sittings where the President participates. "It seems that we might have to request the President to attend every sitting at this scale, to have ministers in the Chamber," he stressed.

Bills to be...

He stated that medicinal cannabis has been proved to be a cure for diseases such as cancer, nerve related ailments as well as mental illnesses. Jayakody added that within the next three months the Government will look to submit the relevant laws and Bills to Parliament ahead of its ratification.

Patali's case to...

... hearing to appear before him when noticed to do so at a future hearing. Anuja Premaratne (PC) appearing for the first accused Ranawaka and Anil Silva (PC) representing the third accused ASP Sudath Asmadala then raised initial objections regarding the filing of the case before the HC. The two PCs told the Judge that the AG had indicted their clients on 16 counts and explained that they had been indicted before the HC when the second accused in the trial had pleaded guilty to his offence before the Magistrate's Court and despite him being penalized and despite that penalty still being effective. They pointed out that without invalidating the order issued by the Magistrate's Court, their clients had been charged and accused before the HC by the AG, which they said was contrary to the law and hence should be deemed as unlawful. Afterwards, the lawyer appearing for the second accused Dilum Thusitha Kumara who had posed off as the driver of the vehicle which was involved in the accident said that his client had provided a statement before the Magistrate's Court on 29 January last year as per provisions contained in Section 127 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Hence he mentioned that no initial objections

will be raised in this regard by his client. Taking the submissions into perusal the HC Judge informed that though the second accused had accepted before the Magistrate's Court that he had been at the wheel of the vehicle at the time of the accident, someone else could have driven the vehicle. The Judge said that similar incidents had taken place aplenty. DSG Dileepa Peiris appearing for the prosecution on behalf of the AG said that the response from the prosecution concerning the objections raised by the defence will be delivered tomorrow. Thotawatta said that he will not issue an order for the withdrawal of the case and after the response is submitted by the prosecution he will issue an order and advised both parties to come prepared for the trial tomorrow. The fourth witness in the case the injured youth Sandeep Sampath who is wheelchair bound was also present in Court. The second, third, fourth and fifth witnesses in the case were also present in Court after being noticed. The CCD told Court that the first witness in the case who had been noticed to be present was currently employed abroad and added that they had not been able to locate the address of the sixth witness.

TID grilling...

... being questioned by the TID based on detention orders obtained from the Ministry of Defence. The TID having produced Rizwan before Court yesterday, informed the Magistrate that the suspect

wished to make a statement before the Court. Afterwards the Court advised the suspect to think deeply before making his statement and ordered him to do so at the next hearing.

Editors' Guild...

... Independent Newspapers Private Limited while also being attached to the Veerakesari Newspaper for a short period. During the war, Kanamailnathan worked bravely from the Jaffna Peninsula while being an elderly journalist who had proffered valuable advice to budding journalists in the Northern Province. The former editor, despite

numerous challenges faced by him had served his people tirelessly and he was also feted by the Editors' Guild for his services to the profession of journalism 12 years ago. Furthermore, the Uthayan Newspaper had won the Sepala Gunasena Award for Safeguarding Freedom of Journalists under the stewardship of late Kanamailnathan.

NOTICE	NOTICE	NOTICE	NOTICE
<p>Notice is hereby given under section 9(2) of the Companies Act, No. 07 of 2007 of the change in name of the below mentioned Company w.e.f 11th August 2021:</p> <p>Former Name: Iconic Property Twenty Five (Private) Limited</p> <p>Registration No: PV 00232531</p> <p>Registered Address: No.790, Havelock Road, Colombo 06</p> <p>New Name: Iconic Trust (Private) Limited</p> <p>Company Secretaries</p>	<p>Notice is hereby given under section 9(2) of the Companies Act, No. 07 of 2007 of the change in name of the below mentioned Company w.e.f 12th August 2021:</p> <p>Former Name: Iconic Property Twenty Six (Private) Limited</p> <p>Registration No: PV 00232532</p> <p>Registered Address: 100/1, Sri Jayawardenapura Mawatha, Rajagiriya</p> <p>New Name: L O L C Fincorp (Private) Limited</p> <p>Company Secretaries</p>	<p>Notice is hereby given under section 9(2) of the Companies Act, No. 07 of 2007 of the change in name of the below mentioned Company w.e.f 09th October 2021:</p> <p>Former Name: Iconic Property Twenty Three (Private) Limited</p> <p>Registration No: PV 00232529</p> <p>Registered Address: 100/1, Sri Jayawardenapura Mawatha, Rajagiriya</p> <p>New Name: L O L C Investment Holdings One (Private) Limited</p> <p>Company Secretaries</p>	<p>Notice is hereby given under section 9(2) of the Companies Act, No. 07 of 2007 of the change in name of the below mentioned Company w.e.f 28th July 2021:</p> <p>Former Name: Singhe Property Thirteen (Private) Limited</p> <p>Registration No: PV 00229969</p> <p>Registered Address: 100/1, Sri Jayawardenapura Mawatha, Rajagiriya</p> <p>New Name: Iconic Property Twenty Eight (Private) Limited</p> <p>Company Secretaries</p>

GMOA sabotaging ...

"The success of any institute depends on its administration. There is an administration crisis in State hospitals. Main reason for this is not appointing chief administrative officers to hospitals. A mechanism was introduced years ago to recruit medical administrator grade doctors. To provide education and training to a medical officer to become a medical administrator grade doctor, the Government spends about Rs. 20 million. However, they are not recruited to hospitals. They have been neglected by the Health Ministry. Medical administrator grade doctors went to

Court and the Health Ministry Secretary agreed to recruit them within three weeks. Although the gazette notification was issued, no recruitment was made. When the gazette was discussed at Cabinet meetings, both the former and current Health Minister tried to cancel the gazette," he claimed. The reason behind this is the influence of the GMOA. They pressure ministers not to recruit medical administrator grade doctors. Several GMOA members try to make the Health Ministry to dance to their tunes. They want to carry out their agendas in the Ministry and

hospitals. Herath alleged and added. "That is why Muruththettuwa Ananada Thera said that a GMOA member requested him to influence the authorities to appoint the latter as the Health Ministry Secretary. Therefore, the situation is very clear. Ministers believe that medical administrator grade doctors should be appointed. But they are scared of the GMOA. That is why the administration of hospitals is in a sorry state. The GMOA wants to control the Health Ministry and the doctors. That is why they pressure the ministers not to appoint medical administrator grade doctors."



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

➤ Litro Gas Lanka Ltd, the national LPG provider, reiterates that the LPG brought into Sri Lanka meets internationally ratified compositions of propane and butane, certified and tested twice at the point of loading and unloading by **GEO-CHEM LANKA (PVT) LTD.**

➤ GEO-CHEM Reports



LPG Quality Cert. September to November 2021

Month	Date	Vessel Name	Total C1 %Weight	Total C4 % Weight	Wobbe Pressure (Bar)	
September	03.09.2021	Perikula	37.21	62.48	6.03	
			37.49	62.88	6.04	
	08.09.2021	Bermuda	36.43	63.21	6.03	
			36.89	63.81	6.03	
	09.09.2021	Sea	34.16	63.01	6.42	
			34.89	63.13	6.39	
	16.09.2021	Bulwar	35.16	66.94	6.07	
			35.27	67.27	6.14	
	17.09.2021	Palmas	35.27	74.33	6.24	
			35.72	74.01	6.03	
	18.09.2021	Bermuda	36.38	66.14	6.03	
			37.46	62.16	6.04	
October	19.09.2021	Sea	37.71	61.82	6.71	
			37.46	62.16	6.03	
	24.09.2021	Perikula	36.94	61.39	6.03	
			36.89	62.01	6.07	
	25.09.2021	Sea	35.66	66.91	6.07	
			35.71	75.89	6.03	
	28.09.2021	Bulwar	33.43	66.88	6.16	
			34.46	66.66	6.34	
	November	02.10.2021	Sea	35.36	66.01	6.04
				36.79	61.16	6.06
		08.10.2021	Perikula	36.89	62.71	6.72
				36.79	62.69	6.71
15.10.2021		Bulwar	32.69	66.97	6.04	
		32.14	65.46	6.06		
19.10.2021	Palmas	35.46	65.06	6.07		
		35.17	64.26	6.34		

GEO - CHEM LANKA (PVT) LTD.					
	04.10.2021	Perikula	36.02	64.23	7.07
			37.36	62.41	6.84
	11.10.2021	Bulwar	36.16	63.04	6.03
			34.58	63.07	6.41
November	02.11.2021	Sea	36.10	62.31	6.07
			34.87	62.78	6.45
	04.11.2021	Bulwar	32.09	65.75	6.23
			31.60	65.44	6.23
	08.11.2021	Palmas	32.27	65.26	6.21
			32.47	65.89	6.04
	09.11.2021	Sea	34.07	65.19	6.28
			32.84	67.02	6.71
	11.11.2021	Bulwar	34.54	66.30	6.07
			34.46	66.42	6.03
	16.11.2021	Palmas	34.62	67.26	6.26
			32.67	66.13	6.03
18.11.2021	Sea	32.14	63.87	6.34	
		32.37	64.62	6.46	
22.11.2021	Palmas	35.46	67.19	6.71	
		36.19	67.09	6.07	
24.11.2021	Sea	35.76	64.02	6.42	
		32.87	66.62	6.03	
26.11.2021	Bulwar	34.79	67.02	6.07	
		37.54	62.31	6.07	
29.11.2021	Palmas	33.64	66.26	6.07	
		33.94	62.77	6.04	
Average Values			35.26	63.79	6.33



➤ Specification of current signed contract for 2019-2021

Property	Unit	Test Method	Result
Vapor Pressure @ 37.8 Deg.C	kPa	ASTM D-1387 or ASTM D-2598	420 - 620 max
Density	-	ASTM D-1571 or ASTM D-2299	Report
Total Sulphur (Mercuric)	PPM	ASTM D-2294 or ASTM D-2294	50 max
Corrosion, Copper Strip 1 hour at 37.8 Deg.C	-	ASTM D-3020	1 min.
Free Water	-	Visual Inspection	None
Olefin (Oxylene) (if needed only)	L/1000MT	* Inert Test	26
Odor (required only then comply refinery sources)	% Mole	ASTM D-2163	1 min.
Cl hydrocarbon	% Weight	ASTM D-2263	Report
Cl propane	% Weight	ASTM D-2163	Total Cl sources 25 - 40
Cl Propane	% Weight	ASTM D-2163	Total Cl sources 25 - 40
Cl n-butane	% Weight	ASTM D-2163	Total Cl sources 75 - 60
Cl n-butane	% Weight	ASTM D-2163	Total Cl sources 75 - 60
Cl Isobutane	% Weight	ASTM D-2163	Total Cl sources 75 - 60
Cl and higher hydrocarbons	% mole	ASTM D-2163	1 max (per source 1.5 Max)
Residue Test	kg/100kg	ASTM D-2159	0.05max.
Odor Test	-	ASTM D-2159	Pass
Dewpoint control at 1.3 bar (when required only then comply refinery sources)	% Mole	ASTM D-2161	0.05max.
MSD (Water Content max)	-	ASTM D-2292	50 min.

Odor should be distinctive, unpleasant and non-persistent at a dilution 1:250 with air. Source: shall control (MS and Residue to internal production tests.

- The LPG procured is explicitly based on the tender document submitted and once retrieved is checked by **GEO-CHEM LANKA (PVT) LTD.** As such, the consumer will only receive the same product that was shipped from the source without any other adulteration or alternation of the composition during the process.
- The recent incidents and confusion that have occurred have been caused by the use of inferior quality regulators, hoses, cookers, and user negligence.
- For any emergency or issues, consumers must contact the hotline on **1311** for assistance and guidance. Consumers must refrain from tampering or mishandling the production of their own accord.



litrogas.com

Exploding LP gas cylinders investigated by experts

Govt will Provide Explanation in 24 Hours – Dullas

By THAMEENAH RAZEEM

The Government, along with all relevant authorities will be able to give an explanation on the recent domestic LP gas cylinder explosions within the next 24 hours, Cabinet Spokesman Minister Dullas Alahapperuma said.

He said that despite the fact that a committee was formed to investigate the matter, they do not know when the report will be made public.

During the cabinet media briefing at the Department of Government Information yesterday (30), Alahapperuma said the explosions has created a fear psychosis among the

public who expect the Government to come up with a good solution to the problem.

Alahapperuma also voiced his disappointment with the recent disclosure made in Parliament that there is no regulating authority to monitor the composition of an operating LP gas cylinder and that this issue should not be politicised for the sake of the people.

"We are all having a hard time in this predicament. Even my wife, who is at home, is usually worried because of the various explanations for LP gas-related incidents that are circulating. However, the Moratuwa University,

Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC), Government Analyst and other relevant ministries are expected to provide a proper explanation on what happened within the next 48 hours," he stated.

Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) MP Nalin Bandara recently told Parliament that the CPC's laboratory test report proved that the gas composition has been manipulated. Minister of Energy Udaya Gammanpila in response to a request from the MP to table the report soon indicated that Bandara had no right to publish the report because it was done at the request of the Consumer Affairs Authority.

We uphold global standards, industry specifications – Litro

Litro Gas Lanka reiterated that the LP gas brought into Sri Lanka meets internationally ratified compositions of propane and butane, certified at point of loading and unloading.

Issuing a Press release Litro Gas said: "The Company assures that the LP gas that is loaded on to the ship at supplier point is unloaded at Kerawalapitiya and stored in storage spheres after which point cylinders of varied sizes are filled in the factory. The entire process which is done under strictest safety standards, does not involve any tampering in Sri Lanka while LP gas is stored and filled into cylinders with the same specifications they have been shipped with".

"The LPG shipped by Litro Gas Lanka undergoes vigorous testing at point of loading and unloading in Kerawalapitiya; additionally, we obtain independently verified and certified reports on the LPG composition from Geochem, an independent energy and LPG verification agency," says Pushpakumara Edirisinghe Director Operations - Litro Gas Terminals. "These standards have been internationally accepted and further approved by the Cabinet of Ministers through a tender process. For over five years, these standards have been maintained for every shipment of LP gas to Litro Gas Lanka."

Litro says that the Company possesses 8,000 metric tonnes of LP gas capacity requiring a new stock every six to seven days to meet the market demand with new shipments of LPG arriving at the Kerawalapitiya filling plant every three to four days to ensure

customers are given a seamless supply. Although the Company introduced the 18 litre cylinder earlier this year, it was soon taken off the market by a Government directive and is no longer available in the market since June 2021.

Concerning safety which forms a vital component in handling LP gas, Hemachandra Gunathilake, Channel Safety Advisor of Litro Gas Lanka, states that the globally accepted best practices should be deployed at all times when handling LP gas for cooking or for any other purpose. This means checking the hose, the regulator, the cooker and the connecting system which includes the safety clip of the cylinder. "If there are any gas leaks, it is detectable with the smell and visibility – additionally, the only correct method of checking for leaks is when the entire system is connected and observed."

While advising consumers to refrain from resorting to unverified methods such as a soap test to determine leaks, Litro points out that the correct safety protocols must be followed at all times and urged customers to call the 1311 hotline if there is indeed an emergency.

The Company points out that in all instances where customers have complained about possible gas leaks, the compromising of safety has taken place as a result of broken or damaged hose, regulator or cooker. "All of these devices must be checked and replaced regularly to ensure best possible safety performance," he advised and added that the hose must be changed on or before every two years and the regulator on or before every five years.

Army urges public to distinguish facts from fiction

The Sri Lanka Army and its Military Police on being informed of an alleged attack by soldiers on freelance journalist, Vishwalingam Vishwachandran of Mullaivittu initiated a comprehensive investigation within hours of the said incident including 682 Brigade troops who were on duty at this specific location on 27 November 2021 following instructions given by the Commander of the Army.

Issuing a Press communiqué the Army said:

Various social media platforms, largely with vested interests, along with some print media in the country published unverified, exaggerated and factually incorrect accounts of the said incident, in which the soldier in question had queried from the 'aggrieved' journalist as to why he was filming the location with troops on duty including the Mullivaikkal name board on the roadside.

As the soldier began reaching the said journalist, he had begun walking backwards while filming, but suddenly tripped against his own motorbike that was parked a few meters away from the name board, falling over some barbed wire fence bordering a land. He picked himself up by the side of a muddy spot and found his hands

'bruised'.

Within seconds of his accident, the carefully-orchestrated and maliciously planned plot came to light as several alert groups who had apparently been awaiting his mobile phone message arrived at the scene with video cameras and mobile phones, asking the injured man to pretentiously lie on the ground and pose for visuals for the stage-managed filming, purporting that he had been 'brutally' attacked and injured by Army personnel at the location while filming the roadside name board. They also promptly informed the Mullaivittu Police Station and managed to get the man in question admitted to the Mullaivittu District Hospital for treatment on the same morning (27).

On prima facie evidence, the Police took the three soldiers on duty at the location into custody and bailed them afterwards pending further investigations. In the meantime, the Medico-Legal Examination Report of the Mullaivittu District Hospital, issued on Sunday (28), hours before the hospital discharge of the said journalist, confirmed that he had been treated only for 'abrasion' and 'contusion' during his hospital stay, quite contrary to the alleged "barbaric

attack with a palm stick wrapped in barbed wire" as concocted stories that went on viral alleged and called for international investigations.

It is also pertinent to mention here that those 'so-called journalists', some of who have already sought asylum in greener pastures, particularly in the aftermath of the culmination of the humanitarian operation in 2009, are well poised to tarnish the image of the Security Forces in the North and East since gestures of healthy reconciliation and sound goodwill spirits between the people and the Security Forces in the past couple of years have impressively grown in a positive manner without being duped by opportunistic and communal-minded elements whose agendas are meant to appease their overseas and local critics of the Security Forces.

The Army while reiterating its genuine and full commitment to the best interests of all Sri Lankans whom it serves, be it in the North or elsewhere, earnestly appeals all rational-minded and peace loving people, not to be misled by such planted incidents and malicious attempts, and instead, join hands together to usher a new era of reconciliation and development.

Money Printing Increases by Rs 47.73 Bn to Record Rs 1.8349 T

By PANEETHA AMERESEKERE

Government of Sri Lanka's (GoSL's) face value money printing (FVMP) debt hit a new record, increasing by Rs 47,726 million (2.67 per cent/Rs 47.73 billion) to Rs 1,834,887.88 million (Rs 1.8349 trillion) due to a lack of revenue at yesterday's (30 November) trading.

GoSL's FVMP debt has been over Rs one trillion for a record 89 consecutive market days to yesterday. In related developments, GoSL's highest to the sixty second

highest FVMP debt has been registered in the 62 consecutive market days to yesterday, though not necessarily in a particular order.

GoSL's FVMP debt is equivalent to the FV of Central Bank of Sri Lanka's (CBSL's) Treasury T-Bill and T Bond holdings. The only mandated authorized body to print money is CBSL. Yesterday's Rs 47,726 million increase was however non-demand pull inflationary causing as it was used to meet an external and not a domestic commitment.

Govt undecided on December travel curbs

By THAMEENAH RAZEEM

The Government has yet to reach a consensus on imposing travel restrictions during the festival season, which begins this month or on imposing weekend travel restrictions.

Co-Cabinet Spokesman Dr. Ramesh Pathirana acknowledged this at the cabinet media conference at the Department of Government Information yesterday (30), advising the public to wash their hands and maintain safe distance.

Despite the fact that the majority of Sri Lankans are already completely vaccinated, he said that he cannot affirm that Sri Lanka is in a safe zone due to new developments throughout the world. According to him, the Omicron coronavirus strain has forced certain countries to block their borders, causing new fears and anxieties among the public.

"As a result, we warn people to take precautions and not to believe that successful immunisation makes Sri Lanka a secure place," he said.

20,000 MT rice to be bought from Myanmar

By THAMEENAH RAZEEM

On the basis of a Government to Government Agreement, the Cabinet approved the import of 20,000 metric tonnes of rice from Myanmar.

This is a contract between the Governments of Sri Lanka and Myanmar, with the Government of Sri Lanka paying USD 460 per metric ton through the State Various Corporation Limited.

Co-Cabinet Spokesman Dr. Ramesh Pathirana told the cabinet

media briefing yesterday (30) at the Department of Government Information that the Cabinet meeting on 24 September 2021 approved the import of 100,000 metric tonnes of rice, allowing for sufficient buffer stocks of rice without any shortages and a safe stock of rice.

He said that there is no acute rice shortage in the country, but rising rice prices have been a source of concern for the past three months and that the Government has opted

to import rice to establish a price-setting system.

"There was a controlling mechanism in place once we started importing rice and distributing it through Sathosa channels. Because Sathosa was able to sell rice for Rs. 98 per kg, there is a balancing mechanism in place. As a responsible government, we must investigate those possibilities. This is why, despite the foreign exchange, we decided to import rice," he explained.

NFOs Pass Rs 50Bn for 2nd time in CSE's 125 Year History

By PANEETHA AMERESEKERE

Net foreign outflows (NFOs) from the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) passed Rs 50 billion for a calendar year in only the second time in its 125 year old history, when it suffered a Rs 414.26 million (USD 2.05 million) NFO at yesterday's (30 November) trading due to persistent uncertainty.

Consequently, NFOs in the calendar year to yesterday increased to Rs 50.22 billion yesterday. The only other time that NFOs passed Rs 50 billion was last year, where it registered a record high NFO figure of Rs 51.04 billion due to similar uncertainty. Further, yesterday was the 13th consecutive market day that the stock market has suffered NFOs, which is the third highest number of days that the stock market has suffered NFOs in the calendar year

to date.

Also, yesterday was the 188th market day the stock market has suffered NFOs, equalling the record highest number of NFOs that the stock market has suffered in its 125 year history which was last year. In the 217 market days that have transpired in the calendar year to yesterday, the stock market has suffered NFOs in 86.64 per cent of those days, which is also the second highest ever NFOs the stock market has suffered in a calendar year, with the highest being last year where it suffered NFOs in 90.82 per cent of the market days (207) that transpired that year. Yesterday's NFOs which are equivalent to USD 2.05 million will be met from the country's Spartan foreign reserves at the administered, albeit discounted 'spot' price which was Rs 202.05 to the U.S. dollar yesterday.

USD 19 M Grant for renewable energy



The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) announced its new USD 19 Mn, five-year Sri Lanka Energy Programme (SLEP) on 17 November, the US Embassy in Sri Lanka said recently.

Once finalised, this grant will support Government of Sri Lanka's vision to increase the generation of renewable energy (RE) to 70 per cent by the year 2030 and will contribute to the transformation of Sri Lanka's power sector into a market-based, secure, dependable,

and long-term system, the Embassy said.

"Government coordination, community engagement, and private sector participation are key to expanding the generation of RE," said USAID Mission Director Reed Aeschliman. "We are excited to partner with Sri Lanka as it prioritizes RE to fuel its economic and social development."

SLEP's local and international experts and partners will accelerate RE adoption through promoting energy efficiency, strengthening the

grid to accommodate increased RE and catalysing private sector investment in the energy sector, the Embassy said. They will identify low-cost, competitive options for RE and support start-ups in the sector to encourage the development and deployment of innovative technologies. Further, the initiative will work to safely and reliably deliver affordable electricity to all citizens to help power a competitive, 21st century economy in Sri Lanka, it further said.

(PA)



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Hayleys Energy Services Lanka (Pvt) Ltd
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- 2020/21



HJS Condiments Ltd
Best Exporter - Processed Fruits, Nuts
and Vegetables Sector - 2020/21

HJS Condiments Ltd
Best Exporter - Processed Fruits, Nuts
and Vegetables Sector - 2019/20

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LPG Terror

'National security' and 'public safety' are two different phrases, yet, having one and the same meaning.

This Government waxes eloquent about 'national security,' one of the key pillars which pivoted it to power two years ago in November 2019, but if life, limb and property are unsafe or are being threatened due to a plethora of LPG (cooking gas) related accidents that have taken place during the past few days, in the backdrop where this selfsame Government is taking little or no action to avert further such accidents, phrases like 'national security' and/or 'public safety,' ring hollow.

Terrorism is not restricted to two-legged terrorism only, but is also linked to threats caused to life, limb and property even by LPG related accidents, like what is taking place today and particularly so, when taken together, where there is an elected Government which is not taking immediate remedial action to mitigate the ordinary public against such threats.

These have to be looked at in the context that at least 17 LPG related accidents having had been reported islandwide, causing one death, three injuries and damages to houses, hotels, restaurants and similar properties in the 27 days to 12 Noon yesterday.

Opposition and SJB MP Nalin Bandara Jayamaha speaking in Parliament on Monday said that tests carried out by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) in relation to these accidents showed that they were due to the change in composition of the LPG.

Jayamaha therefore requested the Government to make the contents of this CPC report public.

Energy Minister Udaya Gammanpila under whose purview the CPC comes, in reply, however said that such a report cannot be made public as the report had been compiled at the behest of the Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA).

Complementing these developments, Cabinet spokesman Dullas Alahapperuma yesterday said that there is a report on recent LP gas accidents out and that its contents, together with other reports such as that which is being compiled by Moratuwa University will be made public, tomorrow.

He however didn't say who the author of this particular report, currently out is, nor the reasons for the delay in releasing its contents to the public immediately and when this report was originally out.

State Consumer Protection Minister Lasantha Alagiyawanna told Parliament yesterday that President Gotabaya Rajapaksa 'has decided to appoint a committee, probably by Friday, to resolve the prevailing issues surrounding domestic LP gas cylinders and gas leak explosions.'

Amidst these developments, the question this newspaper likes to ask the Government and its agents such as Alahapperuma and Gammanpila, is why cannot the contents of the CPC report and the 'other report,' i.e. the report referred to by Alahapperuma, presuming it's different to the aforesaid CPC report and which is/are already out, be made available immediately for public consumption?

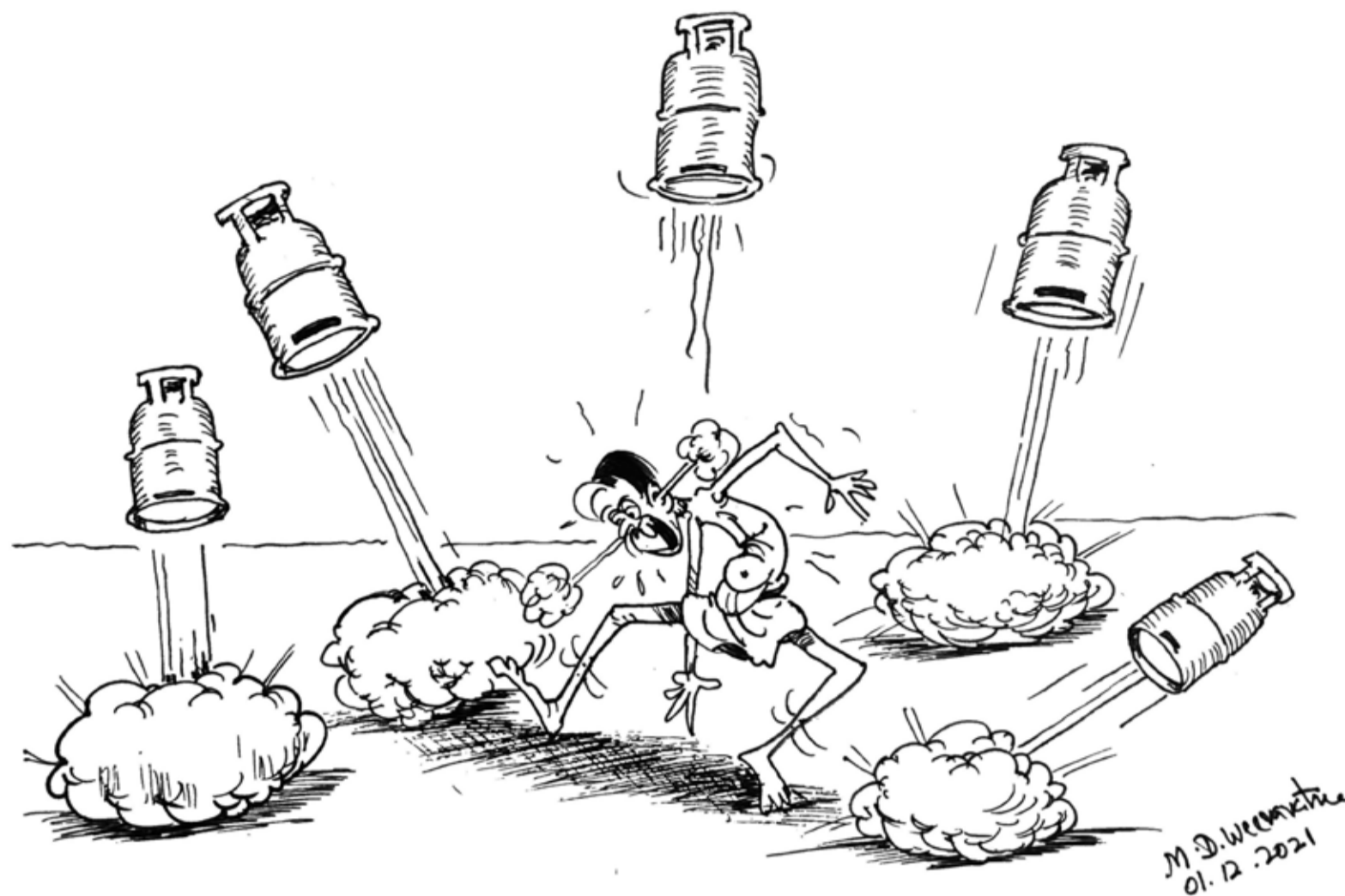
Is the reason for delaying in making these reports public till tomorrow due to it being a threat to national security/public safety, if made earlier, or rather at least 'as late as' two days ago by Monday, i.e. the day Jayamaha made public, at least part of the CPC report in question, in Parliament?

Further, is the CAA functioning with taxpayers' money, or is it a private company and thereby not being a State owned institution, the reason why the contents of the CPC report cannot be made known immediately to the public, without at least first having had to be channelled to the CAA, presuming that CAA is not a Government institution and hence not beholden to the public, as indicated by Gammanpila's and even Alahapperuma's actions?

Or, do the Government and Ministers Gamanpilla and Alahapperuma specifically, consider the LPG accidents reported up to now minor enough, despite a total of as much as 11 such accidents having had been reported islandwide in the 36 hours ended up to 12 Noon yesterday alone, causing damages to private houses and restaurants, coinciding with the prior day Monday when 10 of those 11 accidents took place and where Opposition MP Jayamaha made these revelations in Parliament, that Gammanpila feels that it's not necessary to make the contents of CPC's finding public, but instead directing the report to the CAA, an institution, maintained with taxpayers' money?

By not making the contents of the CPC report public, immediately, it may also be inferred that the Government and Gammanpila have something to hide.

It may further be interpreted that despite the threat to life and property that these LPG accidents may cause, the Government and Gammanpila, for reasons best known to them, do not want to make the contents of the CPC report immediately made public, even though, if immediately public, the public would then possibly be able to take prompt, remedial action to prevent possible future LPG related accidents.



By **MELVYN B. KRAUSS**

Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi and French President Emmanuel Macron are on track to sign a bilateral accord – the so-called Quirinale Treaty named after the Roman palace – designed to boost their countries' industrial and strategic cooperation. But this new Paris-Rome power axis may do much more than that as it may very well alter the leadership dynamic within the entire European Union.

This emerging Draghi/Macron alliance may seem like an odd pairing, because some French look down their noses at Italians. I personally witnessed quite a lot of this when I lived in Aix-en-Provence, a place where French and Italian culture often compete and clash. But judging the Italians harshly for their politics is much harder to do now that the supremely competent and experienced Draghi is in charge.

A mere ten months after taking office, Draghi has emerged as one of Europe's most highly regarded and influential politicians. Just before last month's G20 summit in Rome, he held a private meeting with US President Joe Biden – a tête-à-tête that testifies to his elevated standing in the transatlantic alliance. According to the New York Times, Biden made clear that "Italy and the United States needed to show that democracies can function successfully and that Prime Minister Draghi was doing that."

But Draghi is not only showing the world that Italy can function like other rich, modern countries. The staunchly pro-European, pro-American, and pro-NATO Prime Minister has also made savvy political moves that could change the face of Europe and the EU.

For starters, he has forged a deep bond with Macron. Working together, the two leaders have an excellent opportunity to wield more influence over EU policy – from the economy to defence – now that Angela Merkel is stepping down as German Chancellor after 16 years in power. The Quirinale Treaty is a concrete result of their new cooperation to fill the gap created by Merkel's departure.

Greater European integration

If they succeed, the locus of influence in the EU will shift southward – and toward greater European

The New Franco-Italian Alliance in Europe



integration. Here, Draghi and Macron see eye to eye, including on the critical issue of European defence.

Both are confident in the EU's ability to act independently as a military force while still maintaining its full commitment to NATO. Biden himself appears to accept this view. According to the Times, "President Joe Biden told Prime Minister Draghi [during their October meeting] that he viewed a strong European Union – even one with a unified military defence – as in the interest of the United States." Given America's growing focus on the Asia-Pacific theatre, a unified European defence capability is exactly what the US needs.

With China becoming increasingly belligerent under President Xi Jinping, a European defence force could fill in the strategic gaps created by NATO's own efforts to reorient itself toward Asia.

It is wrong to argue that America is turning its back on Europe with its pivot to Asia. Supporting greater military independence for Europe means that NATO will be freed up to focus on China, which poses as much

of a military threat to Europe as it does to the US.

In any case, the Biden administration's tacit support for a unified European defence force will give Draghi and Macron additional ammunition to promote the idea. Given the possibility of strong opposition from Germany and some Central European countries, it is hardly a fait accompli.

Adding to the potential of the Draghi-Macron alignment is the fact that the incoming German Government may be far more sympathetic to their worldview than Merkel ever was. Instead of "Frau Nein" objecting to most initiatives designed to deepen EU integration, they will likely encounter a genial "Herr Maybe" in her successor. Although Olaf Scholz of the Social Democrats (almost certainly the next Chancellor) will need to be convinced of the benefits of change, particularly deeper integration, he will not immediately reject new ideas out of hand, as has mostly been the case for the past 16 years under Merkel. Moreover, Scholz will be working with coalition partners who are much more

open to integration (though the Free Democrats remain sceptical of greater financial integration).

A three-party German Coalition Government comprising the Social Democrats, the Greens, and the Free Democrats could turn out to be a boon for the European project, and not only with respect to defence policy.

On issues ranging from fiscal and monetary union to eurobonds, China, and Russia, Draghi and Macron will no longer be banging their heads against a closed door.

A significant acceleration of European integration may well be in the cards. Such a development could not come soon enough, given Donald Trump's possible return to the White House in 2025. Just the thought of that prospect should scare the daylights out of most Europeans, impelling ever-faster integration, whatever the obstacles. Who could blame them?

Melvyn B. Krauss is Professor Emeritus of Economics at New York University.

(Courtesy-www.project-syndicate.org)

Revised COVID Guidelines Issued for Next 15 Days

By DILANTHI JAYAMANNE

The Health Ministry yesterday (30) revised guidelines for the next 15 days noting that although significant control of COVID 19 had been achieved, there is still a risk of escalation in transmission due to cluster formation.

The Acting Director General Health Services (DGHS), Dr. S. Sridharan issuing a Press release noted that the new guidelines would be effective from today (1) till the 15 December. Thereby restrictions on attending weddings have been further relaxed to 1/3rd of

the usual capacity of the venue not exceeding 200 persons. Also a maximum 250 persons will be permitted in an outdoor function. "No liquor will be served at weddings," he stressed.

A maximum 20 persons could be present at a given time at a funeral which should be held within 24 hours of releasing the body.

Dr. Sridharan urged the public to avoid leaving home unnecessarily to minimise the risk of the virus transmitting to household members and colleagues. Official corporate or professional meetings events

can be held with 1/3rd of the usual capacity of the venue not exceeding 100 persons. While a maximum of 10 persons are permitted in private houses. "Outdoor private gatherings are not permitted," he noted.

Economic centres are open for wholesale business under strict supervision of local authorities and area Medical Officer of Health (MoH).

Restaurants (in-dining) would be permitted 1/3rd of usual capacity not exceeding 100 persons. 150 persons will be permitted if outdoor arrangements are available. Individual worship is

permitted at religious places while special festivals, occasions and prayer services should be conducted as per guidelines issued by the Health Ministry.

Tuition classes could be held with 50 per cent capacity only for G.C.E. Ordinary and Advance level students.

He noted that legal action will be taken against a person or institution which fails to comply with the guidelines. The Acting DG said the situation will be reviewed by 15 December with guidelines issued for the period thereafter according to the prevailing situation, he added.

ACBOA suggests lowering bread weight to keep prices fair

By NABIYA VAFFOOR

All Ceylon Bakery Owners' Association (ACBOA) is planning to lobby the Government to reduce the permitted weight of a loaf of bread in a bid to reduce prices.

Speaking to *Ceylon Today* yesterday (30) ACBOA President N.K. Jayawardane said if the weight of a loaf of bread is reduced by 5g, the price could also be lowered by Rs. 5. The permitted weight of a loaf of bread is 450g.

"Only large-scale bakery owners produce and sell bread as per the permitted weight and stick to the permitted price. Most bakery owners in rural areas bake and sell underweight bread at lower prices," he said.

Jayawardane expressed these views after wheat flour prices were increased by Rs. 17.50 by the main flour companies, prompting bakery owners to increase the price of a loaf of bread by Rs. 10 on 29 November.

Devananda elaborates repatriation plan for Lankan refugees in India

By NAALIR JAMALDEEN

Fisheries Minister Douglas Devananda yesterday (30) stated that Sri Lankan refugees, currently living in refugee camps in Tamil Nadu, India can repatriate to their motherland at any moment and can live in their native places with dignity and respect.

This matter as well as illegal poaching by Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters was discussed with Sri Lankan Deputy High Commissioner D. K. Venkateshvaran (Chennai) during a meeting with Devananda at the Fisheries Ministry.

The minister clarified that the existing peace following the end of the war is ideal for the repatriation and resettlement of Sri Lankan refugees who have taken asylum in Tamil Nadu.

Minister Devananda said Venkateshvaran has brought to his attention that transport facilities including goods transportation will be provided free of charge to those who are

to repatriate to the country. Under the first phase, each family will be given Rs. 30,000 and next year 7,000 families are expected to be repatriated.

In addition, houses are planned to be built for the repatriated families in their native places with the help of international and private organisations, according to the Fisheries Minister.

Devananda said all assistance to resettle in their own places and resume ordinary life will be provided by the Government to those willing to repatriate. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa are extending fullest support regarding this matter, he added.

He said that attention must be focused on Sri Lankan nationals detained in India for various causes and added that during his recent visit to Mullaitivu he met relatives of a few persons currently serving prison sentences in India and discussed possible means of releasing them.

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

In pursuance of Section 34 of the Companies Act No.07 of 2007 an application has been made to the Registrar General of Companies for all license that a Society be formed under the name and style of "INTERNATIONAL CHRISTMAS CHARITY BAZAAR" to be registered with limited liability without the addition of the word LIMITED at the end of its name.

The general objects for which the Society is incorporated are hereby declared to be:

- To aid and promote economic development activities across a broad range of areas such as commerce, art, science, religion, sport, agriculture, manufacturing, education, health, grass root innovation and technologies, human capital development, environment resources utilization and peace building in Sri Lanka (provided however that the Society does not engage in primary or secondary education);
- To support charitable causes for:
 - The relief of poverty & rural development.
 - Protection of women & children.
 - Empowerment of persons with disabilities.
 - Disaster management.
 - Medical relief.
 - Advancement of culture and tradition.
 - Other purposes beneficial or of interest to mankind which are ancillary and incidental to the above objects.

c. To organise events to raise funds for the said charitable causes.

d. To undertake any venture under its own name or in joint venture with any individual or institution in Sri Lanka or overseas to carry out the above objects.

e. To solicit from credible donors, governments, institutions, agencies donations to assist the said charitable causes.

f. To invest the monies or funds of the Company not immediately required for its purposes in or on such investments, securities and/or property as may be thought fit subject nevertheless to such conditions as may from time to time be imposed by law.

Provided however:

- The Institute shall not support with its funds or otherwise any object of partisan political nature;
- The Institute shall not support with its funds any object or endeavour to impose on its members or other any regulation, restriction or condition which if an object of the Institute would make it a trade union.

A Copy of the Articles of Association may be inspected at the office of the company secretary of "INTERNATIONAL CHRISTMAS CHARITY BAZAAR", No 73/2, Kandy Road, Dalugama, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.

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

Company Secretary

The first of December marks a hallmark in the history of Raffles Consolidated. Starting from humble beginnings with an ambition and a dream, Raffles has grown to become one of Sri Lanka's premier names in the hospitality industry, serving to the country's premier clientele in locations throughout the country. Creating culinary masterpieces en masse is no easy feat, let alone building a thriving enterprise that has stood the test of time. However, that is exactly what Founder, Chairman and Managing Director Tony Bohoran has achieved in the past 22 years with Raffles.

Today, Raffles is renowned throughout the country for its tantalising flavours, star-class service, reliability, integrity and especially its unwavering commitment to quality.

Gifted with an entrepreneurial spirit, Tony saw the vacuum in star-class catering services twenty two years ago. Seizing the opportunity, Tony founded Raffles with his trusted colleague now Director of Raffles Consolidated, Shan Nawaz.

Although a new entry into the industry at the time, Raffles was trusted by a number of Sri Lanka's biggest industrial clients to provide meals for their workers. This included notable clients such as Hirdarmani, MAS Holdings and Omega Line, one of Europe's largest providers of lingerie wear - all who have remained trusted clients of Raffles throughout its years, and remain its clients even today.

Part of the reason behind this continued trust lies behind the strict adherence to international standards of quality and good business practices that Tony has instilled within Raffles and its culture. Internationally trained, Tony understood the importance of quality service, which has reflected within Raffles which has earned both GMP and ISO certifications for its operations. "We are very particular about the quality and standards. That's where we score," said Tony, explaining how much he values quality.

Tony also expressed that another element behind Raffles' continual success is its employees, many of whom were trained by Tony himself as they entered through Raffles' doors as novices. Through providing proper training and guidance, a high priority for the company, Raffles has been able to train, groom and produce talented chefs and culinary talent who have remained loyal to the company for many years, growing with the company and even passing down the experience and knowledge they have gained to younger generations.

"There are many who came to Raffles with no proper training or experience, but now continue to work for us as talented individuals," Tony shared.

A firm believer in instilling values and a sense of responsibility in each employee, Tony believes that having the proper mindset is key to the success of an employee and an enterprise.

"Many businesses fail when they don't



Tony Bohoran
Founder

Raffles

BANQUETS & CATERING

Celebrates 22 Years

address the minds of the workers," Tony shared, explaining that by providing both skills training and human development, Raffles has been able to remain a leader of the pack, on-par with some of Sri Lanka's biggest names in hospitality and service.

Raffles' culture is centered on trust and responsibility which has helped them to find not only a loyal customer base, but also a team of dedicated and loyal employees. This has been achieved through building relationships of trust and mutual respect. This included giving due respect for the efforts of Raffles' employees by continuing to pay full

salaries to employees even during trying times such as the pandemic and valuing their contribution towards building Raffles to what it is today.

"Loyalty should come from the top," he opined. "If you don't recognise people for their efforts, they'll leave, searching for a better job, start their own company or even change careers. They'll leave in search of a place that appreciates them."

He also expressed the importance of trusting one's own employees to 'get the job done' at the end of the day. Trust, responsibility, understanding and seeing the good over the bad in people are values nurtured within Raffles' work culture.



"Everyone has weaknesses. We need to weigh if someone's weaknesses outweigh their good points. Then try to help them to grow and become better people. Everyone has weaknesses, including myself," Tony shared.

The importance of building relationships of trust extends beyond the walls of Raffles. It extends to all of Raffles' clients, from longstanding organisations such as Omega line, and even comparatively newer clients such as HSBC, NDB Bank and Standard Chartered Bank, who have also experienced firsthand Raffles' unparalleled service through work-of-mouth and reputation.

Looking towards the future, Tony shared a glimpse of Raffles' plans for the future, moving forward which include welcoming more investors into the company through private placement and finally going public in 2023 with an IPO

for more Sri Lankans to invest in Raffles' future.

On the 22nd anniversary of the birth of Raffles, Tony wishes to extend his deepest gratitude to all who were part of Raffles' journey to success, including its employees and longstanding clients, including Directors Shan Nawaz and Oscar Wanigasekera, Deputy Managing Director Mohan de Silva, all of Raffles' employees who've worked hard and been part of the company's current success.

Tony also extended warm feelings of gratitude to the lasting relationship between Raffles' clientele, including MAS Holdings and also Omega line, fondly mentioning its Chairman, Vincenzo Joppolo as well as Felix Fernando and Kapila Wanniarachchi. He also shared warm sentiments to now CEO of Raffles Consolidated, Tan Bohoran and all who have been part of Raffles' 22 years of success.

'One Country, One Law' Task Force Received Positive Responses From North – Gnanasara Thera

By JATILA KARAWITA

Bodu Bala Sena (BBS) General Secretary Ven. Galagodaththe Gnanasara Thera says if he gets an opportunity to enter Parliament he will look to unmask the lawmakers who hoodwink the country with regard to threats faced by the people concerning spread of extremist Islamist views, forced conversions of people etc.

The Thera who took part in a private TV political talk show aired on 29

November said it was not his intention to enter the Legislature as a Buddhist monk.

But he stressed it was important to be in the House to reveal nothing but the truth to the nation on the aforesaid matters from where laws are enacted.

The Thera said presently three types of jihadist ideologies were being propagated in the country such as economic, political and Islamic by extremists.

However, the monk was quick to

point out that it would be difficult to repeat terror attacks of the scale of the Easter Sunday blasts of 2019 due to intelligence units being strengthened by the incumbent President.

He also urged the intelligence units not to drop their guard with regard to Islamic extremists who are working round the clock to set off carnages of the mould of the Easter Sunday mayhem two years ago.

The BBS General Secretary remarked the Presidential Taskforce set up for the formulation of the 'One

Country, One Law' concept under his stewardship had visited the Northern Province to seek views from various people with regard to the drafting of a set of proposals.

He mentioned a monthly report on the concept compiled by the Taskforce which was formed early last month, has been submitted to the President on 29 November and expressed hope they will be able to hand over its final report to the President before the 22 February deadline next year.

When asked for salient points

contained in the report, the outspoken monk refused to reveal contents explaining that it could be distorted by parties with vested interests who could then give a warped image of it to the country.

But, he maintained that there was a strong and overwhelming desire from people in the North for the establishment of the 'One Country, One Law' concept.

He added the Taskforce will shortly be visiting the Eastern Province as well for a similar undertaking.

Spate of household explosions Special House Committee to hear Gas company reps

By GAGANI WEERAKOON AND METHMALIE DISSANAYAKE

Representatives of LP gas companies will be summoned before the Special Consultative Committee in Parliament, scheduled to meet today (1) to discuss the recent chain of explosions related to gas leaks reported islandwide.

Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena yesterday (30) informed the House that the committee will meet at 9.00 a.m. today (1).

The Speaker made this order following requests by MPs of both the Government and Opposition. He said that everyone including the Committee members, MPs, ministers and gas companies representatives should be presented at the meeting.

The MPs from both the Government and the Opposition raised concerns regarding the recent gas explosions for the second consecutive day this week.

Leader of the House Dinesh

Gunawardena requested the Speaker to order an emergency meeting of the committee as the recent explosions reportedly due to gas leaks have become a national concern.

"This is about the safety of the people. Everyone agrees that this situation is unusual. Therefore, I request the Speaker to summon a meeting of the Special Consultative Committee to discuss this matter," Gunawardena said.

Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa, however, requested Gunawardena to propose to appoint a Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) on the explosions.

Premadasa: "You can propose it now and I will second it."

Gunawardena: "I proposed the meeting of the Special Consultative Committee as the first step to solve the current issue. We can appoint a PSC as well. The consultative committee meeting can be considered as the immediate measure. I will submit the proposal regarding appointing a PSC."

Polls spend to be regulated

By THAMEENAH RAZEEM

The Cabinet will instruct the Legal Draftsman to prepare amendments such as regulating election finance to current election laws based on recommendations made by the Parliamentary Select Committee to identify appropriate reforms to election laws and the electoral system and to recommend necessary amendments.

Addressing the weekly Cabinet media briefing yesterday (30) at the Government Information Department, Cabinet Spokesman Dullas Alahapperuma said that universal suffrage is a principle of sovereignty and that concept should be applied freely and fairly during elections to

represent the true will of the citizenry.

"It can have a huge impact on the people's will if a candidate, party or group spends too much money without any controls. Many countries, including India, have enacted legislation to limit election spending.

The need to restrict the expenses of candidates or political parties during election times has been considered when preparing these amendments," he said.

Approval was granted to amend the Election Ordinance in order to include provisions to reduce the illegal activities during elections at the Cabinet Meeting on 17 October, 2017.

Moonshine main cause of Ill Health

By GAGANI WEERAKOON AND METHMALIE DISSANAYAKE

The reason why Sri Lanka is performing poorly in many global health indexes is due to the increase in the consumption of moonshine, SJB MP Gayantha Karunatileka said in Parliament yesterday (30).

Participating in the Committee Stage Debate on the Expenditure Head of the Health Ministry,

Karunatileka pointed out that consumption of moonshine has increased by 300 per cent in Sri Lanka recently.

"According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), total alcohol consumption in Sri Lanka has increased by 95 per cent. This is alarming because alcohol consumption in other countries in the World has only increased by 55 per cent. We should immediately look into this,"

Karunatileka noted.

As a result of moonshine, people become victims of many diseases. Also, the State loses tax income owing to moonshine. The National Authority on Tobacco and Alcohol (NATA) was established in 2006 to regulate this and prepare a national policy. But it is sad that such thing has not happened so far. NATA has failed to even conduct a national level census so far, he stressed.

Electric Buses to be Introduced

By THAMEENAH RAZEEM

The Government plans to launch shuttle bus service in urban areas beginning next year, using electric buses.

Environment Minister Mahinda Amaraweera said that due to heavy traffic the speed limit in Colombo has been reduced to 6 kmph during peak hours.

He said this at the 14th Session of the Ministry of Environment's National Environment Council, which was held at the Central Environmental Authority (CEA) auditorium. The Minister said that 71 per cent of the fuel imported is used by motor vehicles.

All 25 members of the Environment Council, including Wedda Chief Uruwarige Wannila

Aththo, were present.

CEA was directed to purchase new equipment to measure the carbon content in the atmosphere. It's expected to be implemented next year. The atmosphere is particularly polluted in Kandy, he said.

The Government has decided to prioritise the promotion of electric vehicles in vehicle importation in the future.

Sirisena seeks to squash case against him

By HANSI NANAYAKKARA

Colombo Additional District Judge (ADJ) Chathurika Silva said that her decision concerning the motion filed by ex-President Maithripala Sirisena who had moved Court to issue an order for the quashing of all cases filed by 128 people including those that had suffered injuries due to the 2019 Easter Sunday terror attacks as well as those who had been rendered permanently disabled and by the aggrieved parties without taking them up for hearing, will be announced on 7 January next year.

Faizer Mustapha (PC) appeared for Sirisena. He told Court that each of the cases had been filed sans any legal foundation or base and as per the Civil Ordinance Procedure.

Mustapha mentioned that at the time of the filing of the cases his

client was not President and observed that no case or cases could be filed under the proviso that details of the carnage had been known beforehand.

He further informed Court that if such cases are to be filed, then such an undertaking ought to have taken place concerning several ex-Presidents as well as of other terror blasts that had taken place in the past.

Shamil Perera (PC) instructed by lawyer Sandun Nagahawatta appeared for the aggrieved parties.

Perera said that the request made on behalf of the former President cannot be accepted and is false as per the Civil Ordinance Procedure.

He said that before submitting initial objections via a motion, the defence has to file its submissions to the case and urged Court to reject

the request of the defence as it is contrary to law.

Taking the submissions into consideration the AD Judge informed that her order on whether to quash the case or not will be delivered on the said date.

The petitioners have named the former President, ex-PM Ranil Wickremasinghe, former Defence Secretary Hemasiri Fernando, ex-IGP Pujith Jayasundera, former head of SIS Nilantha Jayawardene and the AG as the respondents.

They have urged the Court to issue an order for the respondents to pay them compensation above Rs. 10 million to the injuries suffered by them due to the dereliction of duty despite being forewarned of the blasts by the respondents paving the way for the Easter Sunday carnage to take place two years ago.

Health authorities looking out for Omicron variant – Dr. Fernandopulle

By GAGANI WEERAKOON AND METHMALIE DISSANAYAKE

State Minister of COVID Control Dr. Sudarshini Fernandopulle yesterday (30) informed Parliament that health authorities are investigating if any person or a party from countries where the new Omicron Coronavirus variant was found has visited Sri Lanka.

Speaking during the Committee

Stage Debate on Expenditure Head of Health Ministry, Dr. Fernandopulle said that steps have been taken to restrict visitors from 15 countries in which the new variant is spreading since 28 November.

"We have already established surveillance and gene sequencing methods to detect the new variant.

However, the World Health

Organisation (WHO) is yet to determine the scale of danger of the spread of this new variant. The mortality rate is also to be determined.

At the moment, we are advised to follow health guidelines against COVID-19 such as maintaining social distance and wearing facemasks.

Getting vaccinated is highly encouraged too," she noted.

Namal's Gowers Case Postponed

By HANSI NANAYAKKARA

Colombo High Court (CHC) Judge Mohammad Irshadeen yesterday deferred further hearing of the witness testimony in the case filed against Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa and five other accused,

to 1 February next year.

The Minister and five others, namely Gowers Corporate, its directors Indika Karunajeewa, Sujani Bogollagama, Iresha Silva and Nithya Samaranyake have been accused before the HC by the AG of illegally investing a sum of

Rs. 30 million in a private firm from 1 October 2013 to 31 August 2014, which had been accrued while serving as an MP and for having flouted provisions contained in Sections of the Money Laundering Act (MLA) through their actions.

Extended retirement age hinders youth from being employed

By EUNICE RUTH

Sri Lanka Audit Service Association (SLASA) has written to the President requesting him to extend the retirement age of public sector employees in four stages to allow for new recruits to enter the service.

The Association's Secretary R. M. P. A. Janaka said that recently a decision was made by the Finance Minister in 'Budget 2022' regarding extending the retirement age to 65 years.

However, it is important to think about the consequences which might arise owing to that.

SLASA has however suggested the retirement age in four stages.

Accordingly, public sector employees who are 58 years and above currently should be retired at 62, between 57 and 58 at 63, between 56 and 57 at 64 and the persons below 56 at 65.

At present, there is 1.5 million public sector employees and annually 30,000 people who are above 60-years retire, while an equal number of new employees are enrolled. However, due to the decision taken of extending the

retirement age, existing public servants will be on duty for the next five years from 2022, which will affect employment opportunities to about 30,000 prospective new employees.

Meanwhile, the maximum age for applying for open recruitment in most public services is 28 years.

According to the Sri Lankan education system, graduates will pass out between the ages of 22 and 25.

But with the new decision to extend the retirement age, many graduates will be deprived of employments due to exceeding the 'maximum' age.

Therefore, it is important to protect the right of students studying in universities to enter the public service under an open stream enrollment. In addition, the people with new updated technological skills will not enter into the public service sector for five years and it will affect the quality improvement of the public services.

Also, public servants will not be able to get promotions as the already promoted officers will serve for another five years.

Chicago, United States

Actor Jussie Smollett hatched 'secret plan' for hate hoax

Jussie Smollett hatched a "secret plan" to concoct a hoax hate crime against himself, a Court has heard on the opening day of the U.S. TV actor's trial.

Smollett, 39, told Police in January 2019 that he was attacked by two men who shouted pro-Trump slogans and tied a noose around his neck. But his defence lawyers told the trial their client was "a real victim".

Smollett has denied wrongdoing. Fifteen jurors were chosen earlier on Monday (29) to hear the case.

Authorities allege that Smollett paid two Nigerian-born brothers USD 3,500 to carry out the attack to promote his career because he was "dissatisfied with his salary" on the TV show Empire, which is about a hip hop dynasty.

Smollett has claimed the payment was for one of the brothers to work as a personal trainer. The actor - who was written out of Empire amid the fall-out from the alleged hate crime hoax - was indicted by a special prosecutor in Illinois last year on six counts of lying to Police. During opening arguments on Monday, special prosecutor Dan Webb argued that the actor had "developed a secret plan that would make it appear that there was actually a hate crime that actually occurred against him by supporters of Donald Trump". He said he conducted a "dress rehearsal" with the two brothers, and directed them to shout racist and homophobic slurs at him, the Chicago Tribune reported.

"He told them to use a rope to make it look like a hate crime," Webb told the Court.

The two brothers accused of carrying out the attack - Abimbola and Olabinjo

Osundairo - are both expected to take the witness stand. Both men had worked as extras on Empire.

Smollett's defence lawyer, Neny Uche, denied the prosecutor's arguments, saying that his client "is a real victim" of a "real crime", according to AP News.

In court, Smollett's lawyer argued that the brothers attacked the actor because they did not like him. He also suggested that a third attacker was involved. Smollett arrived in Court flanked by supporters and wearing a black face mask. Previous disorderly conduct charges against him had been dropped following an emergency Court appearance in March 2019, prompting Chicago police and the city's mayor to accuse Courts of letting Smollett "off scot-free".

Webb was later assigned to investigate how the case was handled. He announced that his office had obtained "sufficient factual evidence" to argue that the case should not have been dropped.

In a statement before the trial began, Webb said that prosecuting the case was "in the interest of justice", partly due to the "extensive nature of Smollett's false Police reports" and the resources expended by Chicago Police to investigate. If convicted, Smollett faces a prison sentence of up to three years. Given Smollett's lack of previous convictions, however, legal experts have said a lighter sentence or probation is more likely. It remains unclear if Smollett will testify during the trial, which is expected to last a week. Ever since authorities cast doubt on his claims, Smollett has repeatedly maintained his innocence.

(BBC)



Smollett was embraced by supporters as he entered court on Monday (BBC)

Khartoum, Sudan

Activists call for more protests

Sudanese activists have called for more protests across the country on Tuesday (30) to denounce the 21 November political deal that reinstated Abdalla Hamdok as Prime Minister, despite a meeting between Hamdok and members of Resistance Committees on 28 November.

"If the creation of fictitious bodies could protect the authority, then [ousted president Omar] al-Bashir would still be in power," Khartoum State Resistance Committees reportedly said in response to Prime Minister

Hamdok's meeting with alleged representatives of Resistance Committees, according to privately-owned Al-Sudani newspaper website.

On Monday (29) Hamdok reiterated that the "political atmosphere does not allow for the beating of protesters".

In recent demonstrations held before his deal with the military, at least 42 people were killed after security forces fired live bullets at the protesters, according to the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors.

(BBC)



The Prime Minister is under pressure from activists and parties who reject his deal with the military (BBC)



The British monarch's Royal Standard flag was taken down and replaced to mark the official change of status (BBC)



Prince Charles travelled to Bridgetown as a guest of honour at the ceremony (BBC)

Barbados Becomes a Republic and Parts Ways With the Queen

Barbados has officially removed Queen Elizabeth II as its Head of State and become the world's newest republic.

In an overnight ceremony in the capital, Bridgetown, Dame Sandra Mason was sworn in as President.

The Prince of Wales and Barbadian singer Rihanna attended the event, which coincided with the country's 55th anniversary of independence.

In a speech, Prince Charles acknowledged the "appalling atrocity of slavery" the Caribbean island suffered.

The new era for Barbados ends Britain's centuries of influence, including more than 200 years when the island was a hub for the transatlantic slave trade.

To signify the official change of power, a final salute was made to the British monarchy and the Royal Standard flag was lowered and replaced.

Speaking as the guest of honour at the event, Prince Charles reiterated the continuing ties between the two nations despite the constitutional status change.

He described the moment as a new beginning before being awarded the prestigious Order of Freedom of Barbados by the new president.

The Queen sent the country her "warmest good wishes" for "happiness,

peace and prosperity in the future" and said the nation holds a "special place" in her heart.

Dame Sandra Mason, 72, the Island's Governor-General since 2018, was named as President-Elect of the nation following a vote in Parliament last month. She now replaces the Queen as the Head of State.

"Vessel Republic Barbados has set sail on her maiden voyage. May she weather all storms and land our country and citizens safely on the horizons and shores which are ahead of us," she said after being sworn in.

Barbados announced its plan to become a republic last year, but it will remain within the Commonwealth.

Leading national figures, including Prime Minister Mia Mottley, swore allegiance to Barbados in front of the new president at the ceremony, which lasted for several hours.

She later announced that pop star Rihanna would be named a national hero by President Mason. The artist and businesswoman, whose full name is Robyn Rihanna Fenty, was previously named an ambassador by her home country in 2018.

"May you continue to shine like a diamond and bring honour to your

nation," Mottley said, in reference to one of Rihanna's songs.

The country's Prime Minister has described the move to a republic as a "seminal moment" which will see Barbados fully leave its colonial past behind. It was one of England's first slave colonies. English settlers first occupied the island in 1627 and, under British control, it became a sugar plantation economy using enslaved people brought in from Africa.

Slavery was abolished in Barbados in 1834 and the country became fully independent in 1966.

In his speech on Tuesday (30 November), Prince Charles spoke of the "appalling atrocity of slavery" which he said "forever stains our history".

Before Barbados, the last nation to remove the Queen as Head of State was Mauritius in 1992.

With a population of about 285,000 people, Barbados is one of the more populous and prosperous Caribbean islands. Once heavily dependent on sugar exports, its economy has diversified but has been hit hard by COVID-19 hurting tourism and rising prices caused by supply chain disruptions.

(BBC)

London, United Kingdom

MI6 spy chief warns: the race is on for mastery of AI

The chief of Britain's foreign spy service warned on Tuesday (30 November) that the West's adversaries such as China and Russia were racing to master artificial intelligence in a way which could revolutionise geopolitics over the next decade.

The world's spies, from Langley and London to Moscow and Beijing, are trying to grapple with seismic advances in technology that are challenging traditional human-led spying operations which dominated for thousands of years. Richard Moore, chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, known as MI6, said quantum engineering, engineered biology, vast troves of data and advances in computer power posed a threat that needed to be addressed by the West. "Our adversaries are pouring money and ambition into mastering artificial intelligence, quantum computing and synthetic biology, because they know that mastering these technologies will give them leverage," Moore, who rarely surfaces for speeches, will say on Tuesday. Moore, a former diplomat who became MI6 chief in 2020, said technological progress over the next decade could outstrip all tech progress over the past century. "As a society, we have yet to internalise this stark fact and its potential impact on global geopolitics. But it is a white-hot focus for MI6," he said.

Of particular concern to the West's spies are Russian and Chinese intelligence agencies which have rushed to harness the power of a range of sophisticated technologies, sometimes at a faster pace than in the West.


Western intelligence agencies fear Beijing could within decades dominate all of the key emerging technologies,

particularly artificial intelligence, synthetic biology and genetics. China's economic and

military rise over the past 40 years is considered to be one of the most significant geopolitical events of recent times,

alongside the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union which ended the Cold War.

(Reuters)



SRI LANKA CRICKET
TERRESTRIAL TV BROADCASTING RIGHTS
ZIMBABWE TOUR OF SRI LANKA 2022

CALLING FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI)

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), being the Governing Body of Cricket in Sri Lanka hereby invites and seeks "Expressions of Interest" from reputed Local Broadcasters who are interested in acquiring Terrestrial TV Broadcasting Rights of Sri Lanka Cricket for the Zimbabwe Tour of Sri Lanka scheduled to be held on 10th January to 23rd January 2022 which consist of 3 ODI Matches.

DETAILS OF THE RIGHTS:
A document detailing the Rights for which SLC will be floating an Invitation to Tender indicating SLC's Requirements and Guidelines in relation to the submission of Bids will be notified to the firms / organisations that show interest.

EOI SUBMISSION PROCEDURE:
Interested firms/organisations are called upon to submit their letters of Expression of Interest [EOI] together with a summary of credentials, and corporate profile of the firm/organisation via e-mail to SLC on sponsorship@srilankacricket.lk to reach on or before **12:00 Noon**. [Sri Lankan Time] on **13th December 2021**. If further information is required in relation to this EOI, please contact Manager Business Development - SLC via +94 779 429 035.

SLC reserves the right to cancel, amend or vary this EOI at any time at its sole discretion, without assigning any reason whatsoever.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
SRI LANKA CRICKET



Omicron Likely to Increase Growth Risks and Policymaking Challenges - Fitch

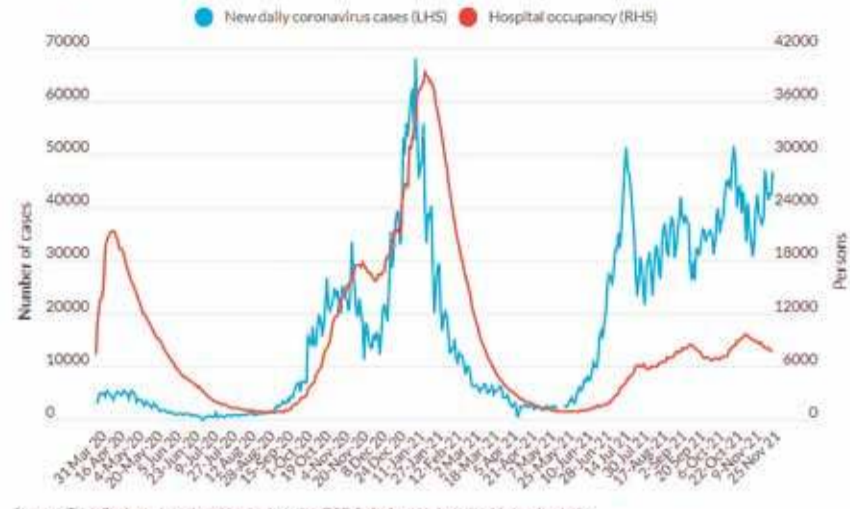
It is too soon to incorporate the effects of the Omicron coronavirus variant into our economic growth forecasts until more is known about its transmissibility and severity, global rating giant Fitch Ratings says.

"We currently believe that another large, synchronised global downturn, such as that seen in 1H20, is highly unlikely but the rise in inflation will complicate macroeconomic responses if the new variant takes hold," it stated.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) designated Omicron a variant of concern on 26 November due to the number of mutations that can affect how it spreads and its health effects. On 28 November the WHO said it was not yet clear whether Omicron is more transmissible than other variants, including Delta. Although there is 'currently no information to suggest' Omicron's symptoms are worse, understanding its severity 'will take days to several weeks'.

The possibility of a new variant that requires significant non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs), such as highly stringent nationwide lockdowns, to contain transmission is a continuing risk to the global economy. But the experience of most large countries suggests each successive wave of coronavirus infections has diminishing growth effects as

UK - New Covid-19 Cases and Hospitalizations



Source: Fitch Ratings, John Hopkins University, ECDC, Oxford University, Haver Analytics

economies adapt, for example, through changes in working and consumption patterns.

Moreover, vaccination programmes and improved scientific understanding of the virus reduced reliance on NPIs compared with the beginning of the pandemic. Meanwhile the political bar to reintroducing full lockdowns has risen.

These factors make a repeat of 1H20's unprecedented global GDP contraction unlikely. Nevertheless, the return to pre-pandemic levels of activity in the most exposed

sectors, such as tourism and international travel, will be disrupted, and the shift back to services from goods consumption may also slow down. Broader risks to growth have risen where restrictions on economic activity are likely to be more extensive.

In this respect, vaccination rates could be critical as evidence from Europe and the US shows vaccinations weaken the link between coronavirus infection and hospitalisation rates. Higher vaccination rates could, therefore, reduce the risk that public health



systems are over-burdened, which would necessitate harsher NPIs. The WHO said it is 'working with technical partners to understand the potential impact' of Omicron on vaccine effectiveness.

The scale of the policy support provided in response to the pandemic has limited supply-side scarring from the pandemic in developed markets, relative to our initial expectations.

"However, recent increases in inflation will complicate any policy response to Omicron, which could have an inflationary effect if new lockdowns or voluntary social distancing constrain labour supply recoveries or exacerbate global supply-chain shortages and bottlenecks," Fitch stated.

Hence, Fitch believe central banks could be wary of delaying the normalisation of monetary policy settings in response.

Tuesday Markets

Market Capitalisation passes record Rs 5T

By PANEETHA AMERESKERE

Market capitalisation in the bourse passed the pyrrhic Rs five trillion mark yesterday in the midst of continuous net foreign outflows (NFOs) due to sustained uncertainty.

Nonetheless, market capitalisation increased to Rs 5.11 trillion, while the bourse made gains for the fourth consecutive market day to yesterday, with the common or garden ASPI increasing by 2.13 per cent to 11,440.53 points and the so called sensitive S&P SL 20 Index by 1.21 per cent to 3,875.96 points on a Rs 10.05 billion turnover and on a 350.24 million share volume.

However, NFOs passed Rs 50 billion for a calendar year in only the second time in its 125 year old history, when the bourse suffered a Rs 414.26 million (US\$ 2.05 million) NFO at yesterday's trading.

Consequently, NFOs in the calendar year to yesterday increased to Rs 50.22 billion. The only other time that NFOs passed Rs 50 billion was last year, where it registered a record high NFO figure of Rs 51.04 billion due to similar uncertainty.

Further, yesterday was the 13th consecutive market day that the bourse suffered NFOs, which is the third highest number of days that the bourse has suffered NFOs in the calendar year to date.

Also, yesterday was the 188th market day the bourse has suffered NFOs, equalling the record highest number of NFOs that it has suffered in its 125 year history which was last year. In the 217 market days that have transpired in the calendar year to yesterday, the bourse has suffered NFOs in 86.64 per cent of those days, which is also the second highest ever NFOs the bourse has suffered NFOs in percentage terms, with the highest being last year where it suffered NFOs in 90.82 per cent of the market days (207) that transpired that year.

Yesterday's NFOs which are equivalent to \$ 2.05 million will be met from the country's Spartan foreign reserves at the administered, albeit discounted 'spot' price which was Rs 202.05 to the US dollar yesterday.

FVMP Debt Rs 1.83 Trillion

Government of Sri Lanka's (GoSL's) face value money printing (FVMP) debt, albeit non inflationary, increased by Rs 47,726 million (2.67 per cent) to Rs 1,834,887.88 million (Rs 1.8349 trillion) yesterday.

GoSL's FVMP debt has been over Rs one trillion for a record consecutive 89 market days to yesterday due to a lack of revenue.

GoSL's at least theoretical MP borrowing costs sharply decreased for the third consecutive market day to yesterday, this time by 0.97 per cent (Rs 452.15 million) to Rs 46,305.16 million due to market preference to invest in riskless, low returns Treasury (T) Bonds and T Bills in secondary market trading, rather than lend to the private sector, the engine of growth, due to uncertainty.

Money market was short for the 57th consecutive market day to yesterday, thereby causing persistent rate pressure, with market shortfall increasing by 15.03 per cent (Rs 39,496 million) to Rs 302,303 million.

Money market liquidity during yesterday's trading decreased by Rs 87,220 million (US\$ 433.49 million) due to the possible settlement/s of GoSL's foreign debt servicing commitments and/or due to the depreciation of the country's foreign reserves for the purchase of so called essential imported items such as petroleum at the discounted, albeit 'spot' price of Rs 201.21 to the US dollar at Friday and/or Central Bank of Sri Lanka's (CBSL's) dollar transactions with the GoSL and/or CBSL's swaps with the market.

CBSL's open market operations (OMO) data don't capture transactions between CBSL and other central banks, Asian Clearing Union and the IMF. Transactions between GoSL and CBSL are foreign reserves neutral. CBSL is not transparent in its OMO data.

Dead 144 days

The interbank foreign exchange (FX) market was 'dead' for the 144th consecutive market day to yesterday with no outright transactions taking place, coupled with all trades in the FX market, including bank-client trades too, since midnight 6 September, mandated to be executed under a controlled exchange rate (ER) regime of between Rs 202-203 to the dollar, aiding in the spawning of a black market.

Dr. C. Amarasekara nominated as Alternate Executive Director of IMF

By ISHARA GAMAGE



Dr. Chandranath Amarasekara

The Monetary Board of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) has nominated Director of Economic Research, Dr. Chandranath Amarasekara, as an Alternate Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), subject to approval of the Minister of Finance.

CBSL sources said. Meanwhile, a delegation from the IMF is scheduled to visit Sri Lanka this month for its second round of (routine) Article IV consultations on the Sri Lankan economy, in the light of previous online inquiries. Based on the findings, the delegation will submit a final report to the IMF Executive Board.

Setting up Odel Kandy Mall

Odel PLC via a Colombo Stock Exchange filing stated that its fully owned subsidiary Soflogic Brands (Pvt) Ltd has entered into an Operating Lease Agreement (OLA) with the Kandy Municipal Council on 1 October 2021, granting its rights to lease, operate and manage the 'Mahanuwara' Commercial Centre premises consisting of approximately 164,000 square feet which will be known as the 'ODEL KANDY MALL' for a period of 15 years with the option to renew for a further period of five years subject to the terms and conditions of the OLA.

Soflogic Brands (Pvt) Ltd intends to operate and manage the ODEL KANDY MALL as a distinguished and unique

shopping mall in the City of Kandy.

Early this March, the Company announced that it had entered into a Lease Agreement with the Urban Development Authority for the lease-hold operation and management of the Arcade Independence Square for a period of 10 years with a renewal option for a further 10 years and revealed its plans to convert the Arcade Independence Square as a 'luxury boutique experience' destination in the country.

The ODEL KANDY MALL is yet another significant milestone in pursuing Odel's objectives of designing the retail landscape in Sri Lanka as a high-end shopping destination in the region. (IG)

Government approves chemical fertiliser imports - Pathirana

Cabinet approves 20,000 MT of rice from Myanmar to address shortage and price stability

By RAJESH SEETHARAM

The Minister of Plantations Ramesh Pathirana stated the Government has granted approval to the Ministry of Agriculture to import chemical fertiliser. Addressing the media on weekly Cabinet decisions, he added that Chemical Fertilisers would be available at market rates whereas organic fertilisers would be provided at subsidised rates to encourage organic farming.

He said that on 27 September the Cabinet had granted approval to import one hundred thousand metric tonnes of rice from Myanmar at a cost of US\$ 460 per metric tonne," said Minister Pathirana.

The Minister expressed confidence that the Forex crises would normalise within three to four months. "With the COVID-19 pandemic, the entire global economy has suffered. The present Forex crises are due to various issues being accumulated over decades. We import more than what we export, leading to a wide trade deficit. In 2020 we had a trade deficit of US\$ 6 billion. To address the widening deficit, we imposed numerous import restrictions like the ban on vehicle

importation. However, with the rising global fuel prices, our deficit remains static despite the import restrictions. We have also spent substantially to import COVID-19 vaccines. We were also deprived of the projected US\$ 5 billion revenue from the Tourism sector for the past two years. Now with the successful vaccination drive, and also an imminent end to the pandemic globally, we expect the tourism industry to recover. Our exports have increased by 10% yoy. Thus, we expect the Forex crises to be resolved in the next four months," said Minister Pathirana. Elaborating further he remarked that the Government endeavours to maintain stable fuel prices despite the Forex shortage and rising crude oil prices at the international market, adding that no decision has yet been made to increase fuel prices at this juncture.

Upon inquiry with regard to delays in paying salaries to estate workers by certain Plantation Companies, the Minister responded stating that due to inappropriate decisions taken by the then 'Yahapalanya' Government, some Plantation Companies are running at a loss. However, unlike the previous government, the present Government had issued a Gazette, sanctioning the payment of Rs 1,000 as basic salary per day to estate workers and that the Government would also sort out other issues in due course.

Mark Surgenor appointed CEO for HSBC Sri Lanka and Maldives

Mark Surgenor has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer of HSBC Sri Lanka and the Maldives from 1 December, 2021. He succeeds Mark Prothero, who retired from HSBC at the end of August.

Prior to this new appointment, Mark Surgenor was HSBC's Group Head of Wealth Management, Wealth & Personal Banking. In that role, Mark was serving the wealth management needs of HSBC's clients up to the Private Bank across all markets in which HSBC operates.

Surendra Roshia, Group Managing

Director and Co-Chief Executive HSBC - Asia Pacific said, "Mark led our Global Wealth Management and also our Asian Wealth growth programme and we look forward to Mark bringing this depth of experience to his new role. We thank Mark Prothero for his 31-years of service to HSBC - a career that has seen him work across Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle-East and the US. His five years at the helm in Sri Lanka and Maldives have built a firm foundation for the future, thanks to his focus on resilience and developing our people."

Mark Surgenor joined HSBC in 2009

and has undertaken leadership roles in Europe, Latin America and Asia encompassing Group, Region and Country Head positions. Prior to HSBC, Mark was at the Lloyds Banking Group where he held a number of senior positions across International Corporate and Retail Banking in the UK, the Middle East and Asia.

Mark holds a bachelor's degree in Business & Finance and a master's degree in International Marketing. Mark is passionate about exploring the outdoors and a keen participant and follower of sport.



Mark Surgenor

By PANEETHA AMERESEKERE

This, the last of the feature series, comprising a total of four were all based on a Dutch study on the agro sector of Sri Lanka, released on 18 August, long before the ban on the import of chemical fertiliser, pesticides, herbicides and weedicides was lifted on Wednesday 24 November, by the Government.

Hence, this Dutch Embassy study, which also includes a box article as well as the earlier three articles were culled, is based on the assumption that the ban on chemical fertiliser, weedicides, herbicides and pesticides in the country is still in force. Though this article was scheduled to be published last Monday (29 November) it was not possible to do so, due to unavoidable circumstances.

'The balanced use of organic and inorganic products offers the best results, given the local conditions,' a study commissioned by the Dutch Embassy in Sri Lanka on the island's horticulture sector revealed.

The study titled 'Opportunities in the Horticulture Sector in Sri Lanka' and released on the Embassy's website on 18 August further indicated that the Department of Agriculture (DOA) has over the last two decades conducted research on the use of such organic products with varying results.

In addition to pests and diseases, weeds have posed a big threat for crop cultivation in Sri Lanka. Approximately 940 kilolitres and 140 tons of herbicides were imported by Sri Lanka in 2019 (DOA), the report states.

Recent need for solutions is the emergence of invasive weed species (Eg: *Kalanduru Cyperus Rotundus*) for which no effective solution has yet been found, the study cautioned.

Meanwhile, tea plantations amongst the larger tea farmers and tea small holders (accounting for 70 per cent of total tea plantations) require soil remediation and yield improvement solutions consequent to the ban on chemical fertiliser and crop protection products.

Nevertheless, Sri Lanka is taking a bold step to completely ban all chemical fertilisers and crop protection products whether for use in conventional agriculture or modern agriculture such as in greenhouses, it added.

As a result, huge opportunities present themselves for organic fertilisers and plant protection products, the study further revealed.

The application of poultry manure for reducing root-knot nematode attacks, polythene sleeves for fruit fly control, pheromone traps and the use of botanicals such as seed or leaf extracts of neem, garlic and many other plant species are some of the alternative pest control strategies used. However, these technologies need to be made commercially viable based on the feedback from horticulture companies and lead farmers, the report advised.

Meanwhile, farmers and horticultural companies are aware of the health and environmental hazards due to the excessive use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers, the report stated.

As a result, horticultural companies comment that availability of targeted and non-chemical crop protection products would provide clear advantages, particularly for export of horticultural products from Sri Lanka.

Study on Chemical Fertiliser Ban Funded by the Dutch Balancing Act on Organic and Inorganic Fertiliser Produces Best Results



Consequently, the recent banning of all chemical fertilisers and crop protection products provides opportunities for novel solutions for growing of crops in greenhouses and through protected agriculture, it emphasized.

With the recent immediate ban on chemical fertilisers and crop protection products, the Government's policies are being revamped to encourage imports of organic inputs, but this has not yet been formalised at the time of writing, the report.

'In Sri Lanka, issues have begun, due to the misuse of chemical fertilisers in major growing areas such as the mid country which has led to groundwater pollution, fixation of nutrients and increase of residues of nitrate, the study elaborated.

'Chronic kidney disease has spread in the North Central Province and adjacent farming areas due to heavy usage of phosphate fertiliser along with the pesticides (Glyphosate) which are the main source of arsenic in the affected areas,' the study reveals.

Quality, Quantities

It also points out that the main bottleneck in the local supply chain in the country's horticulture sector is constraints mainly due to agronomy practices and inconsistent quality and quantities.

The report added that nonetheless scope exists for improving both yields and farmgate prices for identified crops that have got demand in the domestic and export markets.

'Local markets such as supermarkets and exporters of fresh and processed

fruits estimate that purchase volumes can be significantly increased from farmers if targeted farmgate prices at reasonable cost levels can be obtained from them,' the report stated.

For example, in recent times farmgate prices of pineapple have been around Rs 100/kilo (EURO 0.42 /kg) while desired farmgate prices are Rs 45-50/kg (EUR 0.19-0.21/kg). 'If farmers can improve yields and reduce price units, significant volumes can be generated,' the report stated.

Based on data released by the Department of Agriculture in terms of import and export of horticultural produce, the majority of imports with regard to quantity, consist of apples, mandarin, orange, cauliflower while the major export items are banana, papaw, capsicum, bean and pumpkin, it noted.

The study also states that the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to a change in the agricultural eco systems where the demand for processed agricultural products, as opposed to fresh produce, is on the rise.

'Local demand for fruits and vegetables is growing substantially and in recent times is fuelled by demand for immunity boosting food caused by the global pandemic,' the report stated.

It said that based on market demand, both locally and globally, the emerging demand from Sri Lanka is for fruits in juice forms, dehydrated and innovative RTE/RTD (ready to eat/ready to drink) forms.

'Furthermore, an increasing demand is also visible heavily for horticultural products in the nutraceutical and dermatological sectors,' the report said.

Fruit varieties such as pineapple,

passion fruit, rambutan and selected vegetable varieties have achieved local and international quality standards which are major strengths for Sri Lankan products in entering the international markets, the study added.

Meanwhile, the most commonly grown fruits in Sri Lanka are banana, lime, mango, orange, papaya, passion fruit, rambutan, pineapple, durian, woodapple, watermelon, jack, guava, soursop, dragon fruit and avocado which are grown at an estimated extent of 112,676 hectares. The main types of

vegetables grown consist of tropical (dry zone) and temperate (wet zone) vegetables grown at an estimated extent of 84,191 hectares, the report revealed.

Based on the demand for fruits and vegetables for domestic and export markets, potential exists for rapidly increasing yields of agro produce. From the survey of Sri Lankan exporters of fruits and vegetables, the demand for good quality fruit crops such as mango, papaya, watermelon is expected to grow substantially, the study affirms.

(Concluded)

Govt. Ban on Agrochemicals

May lead to 42% crop loss this Maha

By PANEETHA AMERESEKERE

This box article revolves around a Dutch study on the agro sector of Sri Lanka released on 18 August, long before the ban on the import of chemical fertiliser, pesticides, herbicides and weedicides was lifted on Wednesday 24 November, 2021.

Hence, this article is based on the assumption that the ban on chemical fertiliser, weedicides, herbicides and pesticides in the country is still in force.

Current cumulative production of rice, vegetable and other field crops (OFC) including maize which was 6,046,768 metric tons (MTs) in the 2020/2021 Maha Season may fall sharply by 42 per cent (2,539,643 MTs) to 3,507,125 MT in the coming 2021/2022 Maha Season due to the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) ban on chemical fertiliser and related ancillaries such as fungicides and weedicides, Sri Lanka Agripreneurs' Forum (SLAF) in a recent webinar cautioned.

'In conventional agriculture, 14 per cent of yield loss is due to weeds, 15 per cent of yield loss is due to insect damage and 13 per cent of yield loss is due to fungal damages,' as per SLAF, in the webinar held on 2 September.

Therefore, the importance, and the need of activating the proposed, quota-based importation of specialty fertilisers and agrochemicals were discussed to remedy the forecast loss in yield, especially during the upcoming 2021/22 Maha season and also in the medium term, it stated.

Nonetheless, according to National Fertiliser Secretariat (NFS) calculations, importers will only be able to cater to 25-30 per cent of the total requirement of specialty fertiliser

and agrochemical demand in Sri Lanka by January/February 2022 for the upcoming Maha season through the quota system, said SLAF.

In hindsight, Sri Lanka should use the current situation as an opportunity to adapt and streamline the usage/importation of agrochemicals in a structured manner as instructed in the integrated pest management (IPM) and integrated plant nutrient management (IPNM) guidelines, SLAF stated.

The principles of using controlled amounts of synthetic fertiliser by combining with organic manure and only resorting to the use of agrochemicals to control pest/disease/weed incidents as the last resort itself can be highlighted as a direct reduction of volume-usage of agrochemicals by growers, it said.

SLGAP (Good Agricultural Practices certification for Sri Lanka) is one of the best available and feasible platforms to ease the expected behavioral change by the growers across the country due to these bans, SLAF stated.

Among the speakers at this event were CropLife Sri Lanka Chairman Ranjith Bandara, Department of Agriculture Agribusiness Development Unit Assistant Director A.S.M. Roshan and Export Development Board Chairman Suresh De Mel. The panelists in the discussion that followed were Lanka Fruit & Vegetable Producers Processors and Exporters Association Chairman Suresh Ellawala and SLAF Executive Committee Member Jayantha Rajapaksha. Over 140 participants from the Sri Lankan agricultural sector participated at this webinar, SLAF stated.

Confronting Economic Challenges

Chinese trade shows aim to promote win-win outcomes and mutual prosperity

By PARVEJ SIDDIQUE BHUIYAN

Sri Lanka, a South Asian developing country, is confronting challenges of economic vulnerability. A rising trend of trade protectionism with new hidden barriers and de-globalisation in the global market are impeding the economic and investment sectors to promote global trade sustainably. In this context, China's open door and cooperation policy offers a glimmer of hope for the region's prosperity and development, resuming economic growth at a faster rate. In order to fulfil President Xi Jinping's pledge to turn the Chinese market into a market for the world, a market shared by all, and a market accessible to all, China has taken a number of concrete steps in recent years, including an all-round opening-up of strategy that allows foreign enterprises greater access to the domestic market and a foreign investment law that ensures a business-friendly environment.

At the same time, China has taken new steps to strengthen bilateral, multilateral, and regional cooperation by joining trade blocs such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), hosting a series of mega trade exhibitions and

improving connectivity through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Among them, China Import and Export Exhibition (Canton Fair), China International Import Expo (CIIE), China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS), China-ASEAN expo, China-South Asia expo, Euro-Asia Economic Forum and Trade Cooperation Expo, Inter-textile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics, and China Yangling Agricultural High-tech Fair are all key exhibitions that will undoubtedly be of great significance to developing economies like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan. It is expected that participation in these forums would open new avenues of business opportunities and further enhance bilateral relations.

According to China Customs data, Sri Lanka's goods export to China grew by 111.2 per cent year-on-year in the first three quarters of 2021. Despite the fact that bilateral trade favours China heavily, Sri Lanka has enormous potential that has yet to be realised. It is worthy of mention that China imported goods worth \$2.4 trillion in the 2019-20 fiscal year. In the next ten years, China is expected to import a total of \$22 trillion worth of goods. Hence, China's Expo platform will provide a great opportunity for Bangladesh to explore the vast Chinese market and expand



exports to bridge the bilateral trade gap and increase revenue.

Sri Lanka exports mostly textiles and garments (52% of total exports) and tea (17%). Others include: spices, gems, coconut products, rubber and fish. Though its main export partners are the US, UK and Germany, China could be a new investment destination. The expos are important ways to learn about Chinese consumer preferences and to tap into vast China market. Participating in these expos, countries can display and popularise its flagship products and diversify its export destination

globally where a large number of buyers, entrepreneurs and Companies from Europe, America, Australia, Southeast Asia, Middle East, and Africa attend. For example, the China-ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO) could give Sri Lanka trilateral trade expansion opportunity to enter China and ASEAN market which has a combined population of two billion people and a GDP of \$18.5 trillion.

At these expos Sri Lanka can also highlight the investment potential and create confidence in a large number of foreign investors in the Port City and Hambantota Industrial Zone.

In short, the expos offer a platform to understand Chinese people and Chinese market as well as to make new linkage with Consumers, Companies, Experts and different Technologies which could lead to product specialisation and export value added products to China, a market with 1.4 billion people and over 400 million in the middle-income group. In this regard, China can provide technical assistance in framing policy decisions and export-development strategy to help Lankan products to reach the Chinese market.

Like Sri Lanka other South Asian countries, can also use the expos to promote their Brands, build new trade image and expand their business opportunities in China and the market worldwide. Along with economic and commercial gains, such platforms would forge stronger cultural cooperation which will further enhance the bilateral brotherly relations and promote win-win outcomes for mutual prosperity.

Parvej Siddique Bhuiyan, is a development worker as well as a writer in International Policy, Daily Star, Dhaka Tribune and other international media outlets on development issues, bilateral relations and current international affairs.

LOLC Al-Falaah Launches Wakalah Speed-Draft

LOLC Al-Falaah, the Alternate Financial Services Unit of LOLC Finance PLC, which is renowned for introducing many ground-breaking financial services has unveiled yet another innovative product option branded 'Wakalah Speed Draft'. This latest product addition is an alternate financial solution that complements the most popular conventional 'LOLC Speed-Draft' or permanent and temporary overdraft facilities offered by commercial banks. As the name denotes, LOLC Al-Falaah customers can now obtain a speedy cash-advance conveniently with the 'Wakalah Speed Draft' service from any of the LOLC Finance Branches located countrywide.

LOLC Al-Falaah 'Wakalah Speed Draft' is formed within the precepts of the 'Wakalah-bil-isthismar' concept. The Customer is appointed



Shiraz Refai, Deputy General Manager of LOLC Al-Falaah

as an agent of LOLC Al-Falaah, with an undertaking that the funds advanced are utilised for the purposes of trading transactions and



Yanik Fernando DGM, LOLC Finance East & Uva Region and Product Head of Speed Draft LOLC Finance PLC

working capital requirements for businesses.

LOLC Al-Falaah 'Wakalah Speed Draft' is most suitable for

businesses that are engaged in trading and manufacturing that requires short to mid-term working capital. It is a flexible option that caters to a multitude of financing needs such as asset purchases, trading stock & raw-material replenishments, factory renovations and expansions as part of business growth. One of its main features is its ability to draw-down funds in flexible quantum, based on the customer's cash-need and repayment capabilities. 'Wakalah Speed Draft' helps increase the liquidity of the business and facilitate a greater level of business activity allowing greater flexibility of usage and repayment as and when the Customer requires it.

Speaking about LOLC Al-Falaah's latest product addition, Shiraz Refai, Deputy General Manager of LOLC

Al-Falaah said, "Wakalah Speed Draft is an extremely flexible financial solution, and it is ideal for the Corporate and SME sector businesses that are in need of short to mid-term working capital solutions to meet dynamic requirements. In my view, it is a very useful and a versatile product, especially considering the competitive business climate as more and more businesses require pre-approved financial services that can be drawn-down easily on a need-basis and settled based on existing cash-flows, instead of long term commitments. We saw a gap in the market, and decided to step in with a solution, in keeping up with LOLC Al-Falaah's reputation for introducing financial solutions that are innovative as well as in line with the needs of the modern Customer".

HNB wins Daraz award for Card Base with Highest Growth



Daraz Managing Director Rakhil Fernando (fourth from left) handing over the award to HNB Head of Cards – Gauthami Niranjan. Also present (from left): Daraz Partnerships Nimesh Dasanayake, Daraz Senior Manager – Prepayments Sandamina Rajapaksha, Daraz Head of Partnerships Dulika Jayamanne, HNB Cards Business Development Executive – Ashokan Harishanna, HNB Assistant Manager - Cards Business Development and Portfolio Management - Imanka Keshini Hikkaduwa and HNB Cards Business Development Executive – Roshan Chaminda Perera

Hatton National Bank has been recognised by Daraz for exceptional contribution to its growth, in an independent endorsement of the Bank's commitment to expand e-commerce and digital payments throughout the country.

The award for the 'Card Base with Highest Overall Growth', was presented to HNB at the 'Daraz Payment Partner Performance Awards 2021'. HNB, which ranks among Daraz's best banking partners, recorded the highest growth on total payment volume, buyer engagement and total transactions month-on-month, for both credit and debit cards for the year 2020-2021.

"This award is an important validation how the local economy – both businesses and consumers – are benefiting from HNB's cohesive programme to drive greater adoption of e-commerce and digital payments."

HNB Head of Cards, Gauthami Niranjan said.

"These efforts are particularly significant at present, given how digital and contactless payments can assist in reducing the spread of the pandemic and support the Bank's and the country's vision to transform Sri Lanka into a cashless economy."

Currently, HNB Cardholders enjoy multiple offers on Daraz, Sri Lanka's leading online marketplace, a wholly-owned subsidiary of global e-commerce giant, the Alibaba Group. These include zero-interest instalment plans up to 48 months with attractive discounts for HNB Credit and Debit Cards and 10 per cent off site-wide on Daraz for all HNB Credit Cards on purchases made during Saturdays. In addition, HNB tied up with Daraz for its 11.11 and Black Friday sales, which provided HNB cardholders access to a range of offers and massive

discounts.

HNB has been a pioneer in Sri Lanka's banking industry in the digital banking and digital payments space. These include the launch of digital wallet and payment app, HNB SOLO and introducing Asia's first-ever fitness-linked savings product in the form of the HNB FIT Savings Account.

With 254 customer centres across the country, HNB is one of Sri Lanka's largest, most technologically-innovative banks, having won local and global recognition for its efforts to drive forward a new paradigm in digital banking. HNB has a national rating of AA- (Ika) by Fitch Ratings (Lanka) Ltd. The bank was also ranked among the World Top 1,000 Banks list compiled by the prestigious UK-based Banker Magazine for five consecutive years. HNB was also declared Best Sub-Custodian Bank in Sri Lanka at the Global Finance Awards 2020.

Sandun Hapugoda appointed Mastercard Country Manager for Sri Lanka & Maldives

Mastercard announced the appointment of Sandun Hapugoda as its new Country Manager for Sri Lanka and Maldives. Sandun succeeds Rajesh Mani who has transitioned to another role within Mastercard.

Sandun joined Mastercard in 2017 to lead the company's Digital and Value Added Services business in Sri Lanka and Maldives. Since then he has been instrumental in deepening the company's partnerships with banking and non-banking financial institutions, fintechs and merchants by enhancing and streamlining their digital payment journeys. Sandun was also actively involved in the launch of the first EMV mPOS solution, SoftPOS and Mastercard's cyber and intelligence solutions in the region.

Outside of Mastercard, Sandun is a member of the committee appointed by the Ministry of Technology, Government of Sri Lanka, to advise cabinet members on digital banking, blockchain related industries and cryptocurrency policy formulation. He is also a steering committee member for the National Science Foundation for technology research.

Sandun will report to to Vikas Varma, Chief Operating Officer, South Asia, Mastercard. Speaking about the appointment, Varma



Sandun Hapugoda, Country Manager, Sri Lanka and Maldives, Mastercard

said, "Sandun brings nearly two decades of experience and expertise across multiple areas of the banking and payments industry to his new position. Having already worked closely with many of our customers and partners in Sri Lanka and Maldives, Sandun will be instrumental in strengthening our existing partnerships and forging new ones as we continue to build and nurture a vibrant digital ecosystem across Sri Lanka and Maldives."

NDB Jayagamu Sri Lanka conducts exporter forum in Kurunegala

In an effort to address the country's foreign currency shortage by promoting exports in Sri Lanka, NDB Bank's Kurunegala branch recently organised an exporter's forum under the Bank's Jayagamu Sri Lanka scheme.

The event was held at the Bright Bravo Hotel Kurunegala with the participation of a panel of experts, novices, authorities, and approval seekers. The forum focused on recognising well-established leading exporters in the area. With an idea of sharing their expertise for the benefit of novices and less experienced exporters. To create opportunities to meet all stake holders relevant to exports by extending the panel list with authorised representatives from Export Development Board, Industrial Development Board, Agriculture experts, and financial sector experts. To assist prospective exporters who wish to walk a comfortable path to thrive in export businesses. To assist innovators who can ignite a rapid expansion of economy through novel ideas and concepts to manufacture new things and introducing import substitutes as well as process improvements and ensuring that all export stake holders and supplier

network is in a single location at the same time so as all participants would be benefitted immensely.

Accordingly, all participants left the symposium with an expectation to continue with their enhanced contribution to the Sri Lankan economy and to take the country's economy to the next level with improved foreign currency reserves while winning the international market by themselves, thanking NDB Bank for creating and organising a meaningful event to achieve overall objectives of all.

As a leading bank offering innovative and inspiring financial solutions to all its customers, NDB Jayagamu Sri Lanka is a timely solution that meets and exceeds the needs of its customers and the local economy. With a vision to build a financially empowered nation with booming businesses and dynamic trade activities, NDB has been a front runner and a pioneer in delivering efficient, effective, and enhanced solutions, services and banking experiences to all its loyal patrons. Its deep-rooted core values drive constant excellence and its longstanding clientele stands as a testament to the bank's determined growth and success over the years.

Daraz records fastest delivery this 11.11

The 1,500+ strong Daraz operations team, delivered an outstanding performance from the moment the clock struck midnight on 11.11 this year. The team worked around the clock and were on the ground 24/7 weeks prior to the kick off of the biggest sale of the year. The team made their first delivery by 1:24 p.m. on 11 November, the fastest delivery on record. Over 200,000 packages were subsequently delivered across the island during the campaign period.

The Daraz operations team, include the inbound, outbound, order sorting, administration, frontline quality control teams as well as the delivery heroes. Daraz employed an additional 1,000 members to ensure fast delivery and the best user experience to their customers.

Rakhil Fernando, Managing Director of Daraz Sri Lanka stated, "Despite the fast expansion of operations and logistics infrastructure to support 11.11, Daraz has continued to focus on maintaining high standards within the context of end-to-end operations, while ensuring product quality and safety during delivery. The '11.11' mega sale is undoubtedly the ultimate efficiency



Package Sorting & DEX Team



Warehouse Team

test, as thousands of purchases are made during the sale. And the team delivered above and beyond expectations, with the aim of maintaining customer satisfaction

at all times, which is a great achievement and a testament to commitment and hard work employees are putting into the growth of the industry."

LOOK

www.ceylontoday.lk

Easy Being Vegan in Sri Lanka?



By **AMA H. VANNIARACHCHY**
CEYLON TODAY FEATURES

"People need to be educated so that they can make intelligent moral choices"

- Gary L. Francione

Vegan food has become a trend in today's world. Vegan food is food that is prepared by avoiding the use of animal products and is purely based on a plant-based diet. Vegan food avoids dairy products too. Therefore, vegan food is generally known to be costly and difficult to prepare. Restaurants that offer vegan food offer them at a high price. However, in reality, vegan food is not costly nor is it rare or difficult to prepare.

Why vegan food is known to be expensive is because vegan food is prepared to satisfy the taste buds of those who crave the taste of meat. But this spoils the whole concept of being a vegan. Being a vegan is about avoiding animal products, adopting a plant-based diet and practicing a conscious and compassionate lifestyle and also, training your mind and life for a minimalist lifestyle. Choosing to be a vegan is a conscious choice. So if you still crave the taste of meat and want your vegan food to taste like meat, it clashes with the ideology of veganism. Hence, a pure vegan diet is easy and economic. It is environmentally friendly, organic, and minimalist.

Also, if you choose to be vegan, it is a choice to choose animal-cruelty-free products. Therefore, if you crave to enjoy how the meat of an animal tastes, there is no point in choosing veganism.

In Sri Lanka, the traditional cuisine is mostly vegan. Dairy products are considered a luxury and not a part of the daily diet of a traditional Sri Lankan until modern times. Our traditional sweetmeats are mostly vegan. Cow's milk is not used to prepare our traditional sweets.

So, if you plan to adopt veganism, being a Sri Lankan makes it easy for you. It is an effortless, economic process. The traditional Sri Lankan cuisine consists of rice, vegetables, and fry. These vegetables are



cooked with coconut milk and some are cooked with water. Cow's milk or ghee is not used to cook Sri Lankan curries. The oil used in Sri Lankan cuisine is coconut oil or sometimes sesame oil.

Fries such as an onion fry or bitter gourd (karavila) are made without adding any dairy products or any animal products. The sambol is usually made of greens or sometimes vegetables such as the Pathola sambol. Snacks, desserts, and drinks are also plant-based and cow milk is not a required ingredient in traditional Sri Lankan cuisine. Most of the traditional drinks are made of fruit juices and sometimes coconut milk is added to it.

Let us take a look at a common traditional Sri Lankan meal that is purely vegan.

Breakfast

- ▶ Hoppers (plain), lunu miris or kocchi sambol
- ▶ String Hoppers, dhal curry and pol sambol
- ▶ Diya bath (add coconut milk, curry leaves and onions to the leftover rice from the previous meal)
- ▶ Milk rice with lunu miris
- ▶ Imbul kiribath (milk rice stuffed with coconut and treacle)
- ▶ Mun kiribath (milk rice cooked with green grams) and lunu miris
- ▶ There is a vast number of yams and cereals you can have for breakfast and they are boiled and eaten with coconut and lunu miris. (yams - raja ala, bathala, manioc, cereals - mung ata, kadala, kawupi and so on.)

Lunch

- ▶ Rice (red or white)
- ▶ Dhal curry
- ▶ Polos curry (cooked jackfruit)
- ▶ Other vegetables that are common in Sri Lanka are kohila, nelum ala (stem of the Nelum plant), karawila (bitter gourd), pumkin, and the list goes on.
- ▶ Some vegetables are not cooked but stir fried with oil. Dambala is a vegetable that can be made like this.
- ▶ Sambol made of green leaves
- ▶ Pol sambol, or pathola sambol

Dinner

- ▶ String hoppers, dhal curry, pol sambol
- ▶ Kurakkan thalapa with a spicy gravy
- ▶ Pol roti with lunu miris
- ▶ Hoppers with lunu miris
- ▶ Pittu with coconut milk and lunu miris
- ▶ Some also eat rice with vegetables for dinner

Snacks

- ▶ Del fries
- ▶ Jackfruit fries
- ▶ Manioc fries

Sweets

Most of our traditional sweets are vegan. They are made of rice flour, mung flour, kithul treacle, kithul jaggery, coconut milk, and sometimes added spices. Some are fried in coconut oil.

- ▶ Konda kawum
- ▶ Mung kawum
- ▶ Aasmi
- ▶ Athiraha
- ▶ Aggala and many more.

Drinks

Herbs are boiled and consumed as a drink during the morning or evening with kithul jaggery. These herbs could be for example, belimal water, ranawara water and polpala water.

Fruit juices are common and they are consumed purely as juice or sometimes coconut milk and kithul jaggery is added into it.

This is a brief introduction about going vegan as a Sri Lankan. It is not costly nor is it a difficult task. Vegan recipes are in our Sri Lankan cuisine. There is no need to pay extra for your vegan burger or your vegan meat (actually this sounds ridiculous), if you wish to be vegan. Simply adapt to a traditional Sri Lankan diet. Remember that being a vegan is also a lifestyle, it has a deeper meaning than spending a lot on vegan food.

Veganism is a conscious choice to be minimalist, compassionate and aware of all living beings around you and to be environmentally friendly. It is a journey.

"It's a pretty amazing to wake up every morning, knowing that every decision I make is to cause as little harm as possible. It's a pretty fantastic way to live."

Colleen Patrick-Goudreau



Lady in Red!

Gabrielle Union rocks a stunning monochromatic look in London



Float On

Kelly Rowland stays warm in an emerald coat at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade



Matching With Mom

Farrah Abraham and daughter Sophia poses with the Grinch while wearing matching Christmas pajamas



Lovebirds!

Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez hold hands as they arrive at a music studio in LA

SLT-MOBITEL, the National ICT Solutions Provider's education arm, the SLT Training Centre (SLTTC) has introduced a new Pearson BTEC International Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Engineering Course (Level 3), from the world-recognised, UK education body, enabling students who have completed their O/L examination to keep alive their dream of becoming an engineer a reality.

SLTTC is recognised as a premier educational institution, empowering the youth by developing knowledge and requisite skills sets in pursuit of affordable higher education while also contributing significantly to building the nation's ICT ecosystem.

Understanding the need to support students who seek to fast track their education after completing the O/L examination and aspire to become Engineers, SLTTC have introduced the International Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Engineering Course (UK) with a duration of only six months, equipping learners with the knowledge, understanding and employability skills.

Upon completion of this Foundation course, students can continue their aspirations through three elective pathways conducted at SLTTC. Students can select the Pearson BTEC – Engineering Higher National Diploma (HND) in Digital Technology or Electrical and Electronics. Students can also enrol in UK's prestigious high-ranking University of Hertfordshire's BEng (Hons) Engineering Degree programmes conducted at SLTTC to pursue an engineering career.

Notably, SLTTC is the sole franchiser in South Asia for the University of Hertfordshire's BEng (Hons) Engineering Degree programmes. The University is accredited by the Washington Accord and recognised by the University Grants Commission in Sri Lanka. While SLTTC delivers high-quality University programmes at an extremely affordable price, the University's MSc Program is also available via SLTTC and discount scholarships are applicable for local students. Students who complete the degree programme are also entitled to a two-year post work permit in the UK.

Pioneering education for the telecom sector, SLTTC's new Pearson BTEC HND in Digital Technology is the first-time ever to be offered in the country for

Making Dreams Come True

O/L qualified students to get fast track Pathway to Internationally recognised Engineering degrees



students. Awarded also by Pearson UK, this course is designed to address an increasing need for high quality

professional and technical education pathways leading to the degree or master's levels.

Pioneering education for the telecom sector, SLTTC's new Pearson BTEC HND in Digital Technology is the first-time ever to be offered in the country for students

In addition, students who have concluded their O/Ls can also enrol in the SLTTC conducted Certificate in Applied Information Technology or the Certificate in Telecommunication Technician (NVQ 3 or 4). For students who have completed their A/Ls in the Physical Science and Engineering Technology streams, the University of Hertfordshire's BEng (Hons) Engineering Degrees are distinguished pathways.

Moreover, students from Bio science or Physical Science streams who have also completed their A/Ls can enrol in the SLTTC conducted Pearson BTEC (Level 5) HND in Electrical and Electronics Engineering. The Pearson BTEC HND in Business is another world-recognised course offered through SLTTC for students after their A/Ls. Based on students' A/L results, SLTTC awards up to 30 per cent scholarships to talented students. All Pearson awarded courses are monitored closely by the awarding body and instruction is by highly qualified, internationally recognised local lecture panel.

Displaying the success of its graduands, SLTTC proudly acknowledges that more than 10 students were awarded First Class Honours during the past consecutive years

Providing easy access for students, SLTTC's main courses are conducted at its modern Welisara faculty which is located a few minutes from the Kerawalapitiya Highway. Students study in comfortable amenities including fully-equipped laboratories with advanced equipment, a vast library, canteen, sports and recreational facilities including a hostel with provision for accommodation. While students have to undergo valuable six months industrial training at SLT, to support students in their journey towards higher education and their dream careers, SLTTC is offering easy payment schemes with a 5 per cent discount for the full payment.

Handing Over



The occasion of handing over the platoon registration held recently. The moment of handing over the registration to Bro. Janaka Fonseka the Principal of De Mazenod college by the commanding officer 7th Battalion Lt. Col. N.C.G. Silva.

Training Officer Major Dileepa Alwis, Major Frank Marthinu the Prefect o Games of De Mazenod College, Platoon Commander Lt. Asela Perera, Sergeant Piyal M.A.S., members of the Cadets Platoon and the Old cadets joined the event.

M+ Celebrates its Opening Ahead of Public Launch

M+, Asia's first global museum of contemporary visual culture in the West Kowloon Cultural District of Hong Kong, opened to the public on 12 November with three weekends of celebratory programmes for everyone to enjoy.

The West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCD) and M+ on 11 November invited guests and media to inaugurate this monumental addition to Hong Kong and Asia's cultural landscape. The media preview of M+ was followed by a ribbon-cutting ceremony, officiated by Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), Carrie Lam; Secretary-General of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR, Wang Songniao; Chairman of the Board of the WKCD, Henry Tang; Chief Secretary for Administration of the HKSAR, John Lee Ka-chiu; Chairman of the M+ Board, Victor Lo; Vice Chairman of the Board of the WKCD, Ronald Arculli; Secretary for Home Affairs of the HKSAR Government, Caspar Tsui; Chief Executive Officer of WKCD, Betty Fung; and Museum Director M+, Suhanya Raffel. Other guests attending the event included members of the WKCD Board, the M+ Board, the Board of the Hong Kong Palace Museum, committees, and panels of the WKCD, government officials, and other stakeholders.

Carrie Lam said, "M+ is the much-anticipated flagship project for the local and international visual arts sector. The museum's scale is second to none in Asia. It houses and displays visual culture collections from Hong Kong, Mainland China, Asia and other regions. Looking ahead, we have the grand opening of the Hong Kong Palace Museum scheduled for mid-2022, so along with the newly renovated Hong Kong Museum of Art, Victoria Harbour



will soon be home to three spectacular world-class museum facilities, paving the way for Hong Kong to become a global landmark for visual art and culture."

Henry Tang said, "The opening of M+ completes a major milestone in the development of West Kowloon, making a vital contribution to the future of Hong Kong as one of the world's leading art hubs, and a world-class tourism destination for local, regional, and international visitors. Together with other arts and cultural facilities in the West Kowloon Cultural District, M+ will offer visitors an arts and cultural journey with a holistic experience, creating multiple synergies with regional and international cultural partners that will help revitalise Hong Kong's tourism industry in a post-pandemic world."

Victor Lo said, "For many years, M+ has nurtured the careers of artists from Hong Kong and Mainland China through the acquisition of works and by supporting emerging talent through our programme of awards, commissions,



and displays. We are delighted to open the doors of M+, Asia's first global museum of contemporary visual culture, so that we can build on our role to enrich the lives of this region's artists, makers, practitioners, and professionals while fostering cultural exchange between Hong Kong and the world."

Suhanya Raffel said, "Our vision for M+ is to build a community of learning that encourages empathy, respect, multiple perspectives, and creativity

through visual culture for all our audiences to benefit from. By offering an open and welcoming platform with creative learning experiences, M+ is dedicated to creating an active culture that connects people, objects, and spaces. It is our hope that the museum inspires the city's residents and international visitors alike."

The opening displays feature M+'s pre-eminent collections of visual art, design and architecture, and moving image from Hong Kong, Greater China, Asia, and beyond. The presentations showcase approximately 1,500 works across 33 galleries and other spaces in the museum.

Visitors will encounter additional new commissions upon entering the Main Hall by Taiwan's leading calligraphy artist Tong Yang-Tze, and the Donor Wall Texture, a digital composition of text displayed on an LED screen by acclaimed Japan's designer Nakamura Yugo. In the Found Space, M+'s subterranean display space for large-scale multidisciplinary works, the first in a dynamic series of installations will present the work of artists Chen Zhen and Danh Vo. A new M+ Commission by Haegue Yang features long braids of metal bells that hang from ceilings of different heights. Video highlights from the collection and a 10-part animation *How to Build a Museum* by Vincent Broquaire are featured on the M+ Facade.

Designed by a global team of the world-renowned architecture practice Herzog and de Meuron in partnership with TFP Farrells and Arup, the 65,000-square-metre M+ building is among Hong Kong's most iconic landmarks, both monumental in its architectural form and radically open in its position in the urban landscape.

Located on the Victoria Harbour waterfront, the architecture consists of a striking terracotta tile-clad tower, featuring a dynamic LED media system on the south facade for the display of M+ content, defining the museum's place within the urban landscape and contributing to the city's vibrant night-time environment.

To celebrate the opening of the museum, M+ will stage opening programmes for the public across three Fridays and weekends following the launch, featuring special tours, making workshops, sensory experiences, live performances, screenings, and digital engagement. The Grand Stair will screen the documentary *Building M+*, and host *M+ Live Art x Hong Kong Ballet—Five Tiny Dances*. A dedicated learning programme will engage families and audiences from different backgrounds and community groups in Hong Kong with the full breadth of its offer as a museum of visual culture. Visitors can explore M+'s collection of moving image works in the Mediatheque, selecting artists' films and videos to watch, including works related to multimedia artist Nam June Paik. The M+ Cinema, which will be open early next year, is a unique addition to Hong Kong's art house landscape, comprising a suite of three cinema houses of different capacities.

All visitors will enjoy free admission to M+ exhibitions and events, in the first 12 months after the opening date. Special exhibitions and events as well as cinema screenings may require separate paid tickets. For details on M+'s registration arrangements, opening hours and opening programmes, please visit the M+ website.

Messi claims record-extending seventh Ballon d'Or

Argentina's Lionel Messi won the Ballon d'Or award for the best player in the world for a record-stretching seventh time on Monday, beating Robert Lewandowski and Jorginho to lift soccer's most prestigious trophy yet again.

The forward added to his 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015 and 2019 trophies after winning the Copa America for the first time with his country last July.

"It's incredible to be here again. Two years ago I thought it was the last time. Winning the Copa America was key," Messi said at Paris's Theatre du Chatelet.

"It is a special year for me with this Copa America title. It meant a lot to win at the Maracana stadium and I was so happy to celebrate with the people from Argentina. I don't know if it's the best year of my life. I've had a long career, but it was a special one with the title with Argentina after the tough times and the criticism."



Lionel Messi with the Ballon d'Or award

Messi, who joined Paris St Germain on a free transfer from Barcelona during the close season after finishing as La Liga's top scorer with the Spanish club, collected 613 points, with Bayern Munich's Lewandowski, named best striker on Monday, getting

580. Jorginho, who won the Champions League with Chelsea and the European championship with Italy, ended up third on 460, ahead of France's Karim Benzema and Ngolo Kante in fourth and fifth places respectively.

Chelsea, named club of the year, also had keeper Edouard Mendy finishing second in the Yashin trophy behind Italy's Gianluigi Donnarumma.

The women's Ballon d'Or went to Alexia Putellas after the Spain midfielder guided Barcelona to Champions League glory.

"The key moment was the Champions League final against Olympique Lyonnais," she said.

Putellas is the third winner of the Ballon d'Or Feminin after Ada Hegerberg in 2018 and Megan Rapinoe in 2019. There was no ceremony last year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

On a good night for Barcelona, the 19-year-old Pedri was awarded the Kopa trophy for the best Under-21 player.

"The best way to celebrate turning 19 is receiving this award. I'd like to thank everyone at Barcelona for helping me here," he said.

(Reuters)

U-21 Women's Development Squad presented with Contracts



Chinthaka Edirimanne, Head of Domestic Cricket Operations, Ashley de Silva, CEO, Ravin Wickramaratne, Vice President and Apsari Tillakaratne, Convener Women's Cricket at the handover ceremony

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) on Monday (29 November) handed over contracts to the recently formed 20-player Under-21 Women's Development Squad, in a bid to strengthen the pool of talent for future international commitments.

The handover ceremony took place at SLC Headquarters with the participation of Ravin Wickramaratne, Vice President, Ashley de Silva, CEO, Chinthaka Edirimanne, Head of Domestic Cricket Operations, Apsari Tillakaratne, Convener, Women's Cricket, and member of the National Selection Committee Thilaka Gunaratne.

"Today is a special day for the 20 players present here, as the day marks your entry to the national cricket pathway. The unique point of this squad is that we have players from places such as Jaffna, Badulla, and Polonnaruwa. This is a very good development in terms of women's cricket," said Ravin Wickramaratne.

"We selected the best 20 players out of a talent screening done among 120 players, and this is a great

opportunity for you'll to capitalize and launch an international cricketing career. However, you need to work hard to get to your goal," he further added.

The welcome address was delivered by Apsari Tillakaratne, who explained that women's cricket is shaping up well on the global stage, and these efforts are part of SLC's plans to build Sri Lanka's place in women's cricket. The newly formed squad is currently undergoing a 3-month special training programme, covering skill development and fitness training, under the watchful eyes of SLC's District and Provincial Coaches.

Once the players complete the programme, they will be further assessed and inducted into Sri Lanka Cricket's Women's District and Provincial Teams to play in the SLC organized annual tournaments, which is expected to take place in March/April 2022.

The girls were contracted by SLC for the 3-month period (1 November to 31 January 2022) as a means of providing financial assistance to them.

Bangladesh Vs Pakistan Test series Abid Ali leads Pakistan to eight-wicket win

Pakistan's Abid Ali fell nine runs short of a second consecutive century as the visitors chased down a target of 202 on Tuesday to win the first Test in Chittagong by eight wickets and take the lead in the two-match series against Bangladesh. Abid, who scored 133 in Pakistan's first innings, and Abdullah Shafique stitched together a 151-run opening partnership in the second innings to put Pakistan within touching distance of victory on

day five of the Test.

Pakistan looked like they would cruise to a 10-wicket win, but Mehidy Hasan trapped debutant Abdullah leg-before on 73 to ease the margin of defeat.

Abid lost his wicket six overs later, when Taijul Islam rattled his pads to get him out leg-before. "Abdullah Shafique was making his debut, so we tried to stay at the crease, wait for bad balls, and succeeded in putting those away," Abid said. "I had done well in domestic cricket



and carried that positive mindset here too. Abdullah played really well; I give him more credit.

"I am a bit disappointed that I got out for 91 in the second innings, but at the same time I am happy that we won the match."

Azhar Ali (24 not out) and Babar Azam (13 not out) then

combined to guide Pakistan over the finish line.

The second Test in Dhaka starts on 4 Dec.

Scores

Bangladesh: 330 and 157 (Liton 59, Yasir 36, Afridi 5-32)
Pakistan: 286 and 203 for 2 (Abid 91, Shafique 73)

(Reuters)

Bhanuka shines with another 50



Bhanuka Rajapaksa

Bhanuka Rajapaksa continued to shine at the Abu Dhabi T10 series with another match winning half century for Chennai Braves against Northern Warriors on Monday.

Rajapaksa who is going strong in the tournament with two half centuries already under his belt, smashed 55 off 23 deliveries which saw four sixes and six fours, to guide Braves to a 10-wicket victory.

Chasing 108 to win, Braves got there in 8.3 overs, with the other opener Mohammad Shahzad scoring 54 off 29.

Earlier, opening the inning, Rajapaksa scored 54 off 29 deliveries against team Abu Dhabi, which saw five sixes and three fours, but it came in a losing cause. Against Delhi Bulls he smashed an unbeaten 64 off 31 which saw four sixes and six fours, which guided them to 124 for 2 in their 10 overs, but once again it was in a losing cause as Bulls chased it down.

Davis Cup Finals Croatia beat Italy to reach semis



Croatia celebrate winning their quarter final match against Italy

Croatia became the first team through to the last four of the Davis Cup Finals after doubles pair Nikola Mektic and Mate Pavic beat Italian duo Fabio Fognini and Jannik Sinner to seal a 2-1 victory in Turin on Monday.

Sinner had battled back from the brink of defeat to beat Marin Cilic and take the tie to a decider after lowly-ranked Borna Gojo shocked Lorenzo Sonego to put 2018 champions Croatia in the driving seat in the tie.

World number one pair Mektic and Pavic proved too strong as they silenced the crowd in the Pala Alpitour Arena to claim a straightforward 6-3 6-4 victory in one hour 19 minutes.

Croatia, who reached the quarter-finals by topping Group D last week,

will face either Serbia or Kazakhstan for a place in Sunday's final which will be held in Madrid.

The 20-year-old Sinner had earlier kept Italy afloat with a battling 3-6 7-6(4) 6-3 defeat of Cilic.

Former U.S. Open champion Cilic served for the match at 5-4 in the second set, but wavered badly to let his Italian opponent off the hook. Sinner was rock-solid in the tiebreak to take the match into a decider in which he broke serve in the first game.

Cilic did respond with a break back, but from 3-3 in the deciding set Sinner took charge to claim a great win. It all proved in vain though as Sinner and Fognini could make little impression on Croatia's doubles specialists.

Earlier, the 23-year-old Gojo, ranked 279th in the world, beat top-30 player Sonego 7-6(2) 2-6 6-2. Gojo looked tight early on and found himself 4-1 down in the first set, but hit back impressively to claim the tiebreak.

Sonego looked to have turned the tide when he eased through the second set, but Gojo, serving brilliantly, forged ahead in the decider and showed great resilience to save break points and hold a marathon service game serve at 4-2.

Gojo, who upset Australia's higher-ranked Alexei Popyrin in the group phase last week, claimed victory when Sonego struck a forehand over the baseline.

(Reuters)

Northern Masters to take part in 6-a-side tournament

By M.H. YAKEEM

Northern Masters Cricket team was formed in September 2020 with a view to give an opportunity to cricketers with a heritage from the North. The team made its debut tour to Colombo after formation, where they played against Thomian Masters and also with a Combined Colombo team. They have confirmed their participation at the 6-a-side tournament organised by Colombo Masters, to be held at the P. Sara Stadium on 4 December.

The team is sponsored by Isha Group of Companies and will be captained by Sri Lanka match referee Nalliah Devarajan.

The Northern Masters was founded by Harry Vaheesan (Director of Cricket-Jaffna Kings), Michael Arnold (Ride4Ceylon), and J. Veerasingam (Manipay Parish).

SL v WI 2nd Test

Permaul's five-for headlines brilliant day for visitors



Veerasammy Permaul celebrates a wicket

Veerasammy Permaul starred with a brilliant five-wicket haul for the West Indies as they skittled out Sri Lanka for 204 and ended the day on 69/1 before rain curtailed play in Galle.

West Indies opted for spin at both ends to begin proceedings, with the left-arm orthodox of Jomel Warrican matched with Roston Chase's off-breaks.

Pathum Nissanka and Oshada Fernando continued where they left off yesterday in response, as runs flowed early, though their morning plans backfired with Fernando edging to 'keeper Joshua da Silva for 18.

Angelo Mathews joined Nissanka, though their aspirations of a solid partnership were quelled inside seven overs, thanks to a double strike from Veerasammy Permaul in just the second over of his spell. Trapping Nissanka in front for 73, Dhananjaya de Silva was punished for being in two minds, edging to the man with the gloves for just two.

The double-blow spelt danger for Sri Lanka, only compounded after Mathews hobbled off the ground after running a single.

Spin continued to tangle Sri Lanka, with

debutant Charith Asalanka (10) also undone by Permaul, whose questions continued to go unanswered.

Not to be outdone, Warrican was back in the act with two more of his own, dismissing Dinesh Chandimal (2) and Ramesh Mendis (5) in consecutive overs.

Permaul would then snap up the next two wickets of Embuldeniya and Lakmal to bring up his maiden five-wicket haul in Test cricket. It wouldn't take long for West Indies to wrap things up as Mathews (29) would be the last man to be dismissed. It was spin again which did the damage as Warrican celebrated the scalp.

West Indies then headed to lunch at 2/0.

Openers Kraigg Brathwaite and Jermaine Blackwood then batted sensibly in the second session, treating the deliveries on their merit. They also looked relatively comfortable against the Sri Lankan spinners, a massive improvement from their performance in the first Test.

Blackwood was closing in on his half-century when Praveen Jayawickrama would deliver the first blow for the Lankans. A delivery pitching on middle and leg would

SCORES

Sri Lanka 1st innings

P. Nissanka lbw V. Permaul	73
D. Karunaratne c&b R. Chase	42
O. Fernando c J. Da Silva b J. Warrican	18
A. Mathews b J. Warrican	29
D. de Silva c J. Da Silva b V. Permaul	02
C. Asalanka c N. Bonner b V. Permaul	10
D. Chandimal lbw J. Warrican	02
R. Mendis c S. Hope b J. Warrican	05
S. Lakmal c J. Warrican b V. Permaul	12
L. Embuldeniya b V. Permaul	01
P. Jayawickrama Not Out	00
Extras (0b 7lb 3nb Open 0w)	10
Total (61.3 overs) 204 all out	
Fall of Wickets: 1-106 Karunaratne, 2-139 Fernando, 3-152 Nissanka, 4-154 de Silva, 5-169 Asalanka, 6-169 Chandimal, 7-178 Wanigamuni, 8-187 Embuldeniya, 9-200 Lakmal, 10-204 Mathews	
Bowling: Kemar Roach 6-2-12-0, Jason Holder 8-2-23-0, Kyle Mayers 2-0-13-0, Veerasammy Permaul 13-3-35-5, Roston Chase 14-0-64-1, Jomel Warrican 18-3-55-4	

West Indies 1st innings

Kraigg Brathwaite Not Out	22
J. Blackwood lbw P. Jayawickrama	44
N. Bonner Not Out	01
Extras (0b 0lb 2nb Open 0w)	02
Total (29.4 overs) 69-1	
Fall of Wickets: 1-62 Blackwood	
To Bat: Hope, Mayers, Chase, Da Silva, Holder, Roach, Permaul, Warrican	
Bowling: Suranga Lakmal 4-1-16-0, Lasith Embuldeniya 14-4-35-0, Ramesh Mendis 3-0-7-0, Praveen Jayawickrama 8.4-2-11-1	

straighten enough to trap Blackwood, who then reviewed unsuccessfully to bring an end to his knock of 44.

The heavens then opened up in Galle with West Indies at 69/1. Rain persisted for the remainder of the day, meaning no further play was possible. The visitors though would be happy with their showing in the day with a brilliant performance on the field followed by a steady outing with the bat as they trail the hosts by 135 runs.



Ranuda Somarathne (L) and Dunith Wellalage

England U-19 tour of Sri Lanka England win first ODI by 25 runs

England U-19 won the first Youth ODI by 25 runs at the SSC yesterday. Sri Lankan skipper Dunith Wellalage won the toss and invited England to take first lease of the wicket. England's top order did well against the Lankan bowlers as they managed to score 242 runs in 49.3 overs. William Luxton was the top scorer with 44 while James Rew contributed a useful 40 runs.

Skipper Wellalage was the pick of the bowlers, grabbing 5 wickets for 30 runs in 9.3 overs. The rest of the bowlers also did well to restrict England to a chasable total.

Sri Lanka ended up being 25 runs short as they were bundled out for 217 runs in 47.3 overs. Chamindu Wickramasinghe and Anjala Bandara gave Sri Lanka a brilliant start with an opening partnership of 50 runs. Ranuda Somarathne, who was making his debut, and the skipper also made useful contributions. Dunith Wellalage played a gritty knock to score 68 runs in 68 deliveries with 1 six and 6 fours and Ranuda batted for 73 deliveries with 7 fours to score 57 runs.

England: 242 (49.3) (William Luxton 44, James Rew 40, James Sales 28 n.o., George Thomas 27, Jacob Bethell 23, Rehan Ahmed 23, Tom Prest 22, Dunith Wellalage 5/30)

Sri Lanka: 217 (47.3) (Dunith Wellalage 68, Ranuda Somarathne 57, Chamindu Wickramasinghe 34, Anjala Bandara 20, Joshua Boyden 3/27, Rehan Ahmed 2/31, Tom Prest 2/36, Josh Baker 2/46)

106th Colombo Championship Tennis Tournament 2021 Anjelika crowned Women's Champ



Anjelika Kurera in action

Rising tennis sensation Anjelika Kurera of Ave Maria Convent Negombo, continued her brilliant form to secure yet another title when she defeated Neyara Weerawansa in two straight sets (6/4, 6/0) in the women's open final at the 106th Colombo Championship Tennis Tournament 2021 yesterday.

It was a one-sided affair from the get go, where Anjelika was seen playing aggressively to wrap up victory with ease.

Anjelika has had a brilliant outing throughout the tournament. Earlier, she outplayed Hasali Gajaba (4/1, 4/2) in the quarter-final and then went on to defeat Tuwini de Alwis (6/1, 6/1) in the semis.

This is Anjelika's third Women's open title, which she last won in 2018 and 2019.

30-Member team for Weightlifting World Championship

A 30-member team comprising 20 weight lifters (10 Men, 10 Women) and 10 officials, will take wing to Uzbekistan for the Weightlifting World Championship, to be held from 5 to 17 December.

The lifters will not only be eyeing to increase their world ranking, but most importantly,

their prime target will be qualifying for next year's Commonwealth Games to be held in Birmingham next year.

Team:

Men: I. Kumara, Thiwanika Palagasinghe, Lakmal Kumara, M. Wijesinghe, D. Egodawatte, Indika Dissanayaka, Sudesh Peiris, Chinthana Vidanage,

S.M. Peters, Ushan Vidanapathirana

Women: Srimali Samarakoon, Hansani Gomez, Chamari Warnakulasooriya, M. Umera, N.S. Rajapaksa, V. Arshika, D.T. Gurugama, D.N. Sanjana, B.C. Priyanthi, J.B. Haputhanthri
Officials: M. Rathnayaka

(Manager), P.J. Kumara (Assistant Manager), R.B. Wickramasinghe (National Coach), M.R. Gunathilaka (Coach), R.D. Wansapura (Coach), G.N. Dayan (Coach), G.N. Gamage (Coach), N.R. Bandara (Coach), Lal Ekanayaka (Doctor), Manjula Pradeep (Masseur)



Champion team

Major Club 50 over Tournament Tamil Union emerge champions

Tamil Union C & AC emerged champions of the SLC Major Club 50 over Tournament conducted by Sri Lanka Cricket when they beat Ragama CC by 36 runs in the final at P. Sara Oval yesterday (30).

Ragama CC won the toss and elected to field first. Tamil Union scored 181 runs for 9 wickets in their 50 overs, with Santhush Gunathilake

(47), Supun Kavinda (42) and Sadeera Samarawickrama (34) making useful contributions and helping to build their inning. Kalhara Senarathne, Ishan Jayaratne, Janaka Sampath and Nipun Malinga claimed 2 wickets each.

Ragama CC bowled out 145 runs in 32.4 overs. Saminda Fernando (38), Ishan Jayaratne (26), Nishan Madushka (23)

and Janaka Sampath (20) were the main scorers. Jeffrey Vandersay claimed 5 wickets for 27 runs, while Dilum Sudeera and Pramod Madushan claimed 2 wickets each.

Brief Scores:

Tamil Union: 181/9 (50) (Santhush Gunathilake 47, Supun Kavinda 42, Sadeera Samarawickrama 34, Kalhara

Senarathne 2/22, Ishan Jayaratne 2/27, Janaka Sampath 2/29, Nipun Malinga 2/36)

Ragama CC: 145 (32.4) (Saminda Fernando 38, Ishan Jayaratne 26, Nishan Madushka 23, Janaka Sampath 20, Jeffrey Vandersay 5/27, Dilum Sudeera 2/28, Pramod Madushan 2/45)

(IR)