



Multiple high profile resignations at BOI

- The entire director board including Chairman Sanjaya Mohottala, Dr. Sanjaya Kulatunga, Dr. Harsha Subasinghe and Jayamin Pelpola have stepped down
- Following the board's resignation, Director General Pasan Wanigasekara is also reported to have tendered his resignation

The entire director board of Sri Lanka's apex investment promotions agency, Board of Investment, and its Director General are reported to have stepped down from their positions with immediate effect. Mirror Business learns. [SEE FULL STORY ON M1 >>>](#)

Dr Hemantha Says ALL PREVENTIVE MEASURES TAKEN AGAINST MORE COVID-19 PATIENTS ENTERING SL

- Travellers not boarded into flight unless their PCR is negative
- Mandatory negative PCR report required prior to arriving at airport
- Only fully vaccinated people and those with negative reports allowed to leave airport

In the wake of fears amongst people that Omicron might enter Sri Lanka wreaking havoc, the Health Ministry yesterday said all preventive measures had been taken at the country airports to prevent more possible COVID-19 patients from entering the country. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)

China suspends power projects on three islands in the North

- The company has, subsequently, signed a contract with the Maldivian Government to establish solar power plants on 12 islands

China's Sino Soar Hybrid Technology Co., Ltd. has decided to suspend power projects on three islands in the Northern Province due to security concerns raised by a third party. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)

PM's office refutes reports of official role given to Shiraz Yoonus

- Issuing a statement, the Prime Minister's Office refuted claims that Yoonus was serving as the Muslim Religious Affairs Coordinator

The Prime Minister's Office refuted reports that SLPP member Shiraz Yoonus held any post or designation at the Prime Minister's office and added all statements released by Yoonus did not represent the views of the government or the Prime Minister. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)

Experts point out measures to be taken to avert possible gas explosions

- If a cylinder is found to be leaking they are advised to move the cylinder outside
- Advised to inform their respective sales agents or govt officials via 011 5 811 927 or 011 5 811 929

While highlighting measures to be taken to prevent and minimise possible gas explosions, the Committee to Investigate LP gas explosions said a total of 131 such incidents had been reported across the country during the period from January 01, 2021 to December 01. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)

Sri Lanka gears up for double threat - Dengue and Omicron

- The month of November alone recorded over 4000 positive dengue cases, health experts fear cases will rise this month
- The Dengue and COVID-19 viruses, show similar symptoms - fever, fatigue, body pain, headache, cough, cold, and nausea

Sri Lanka's health experts yesterday said that the health sector was gearing up for a double health threat as fears of the Omicron variant entering the country existed while the dengue virus was already causing havoc. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)

More information about Omicron needed to get clearer picture: SLMA

- Experts are of the opinion that the new variant is more transmissible

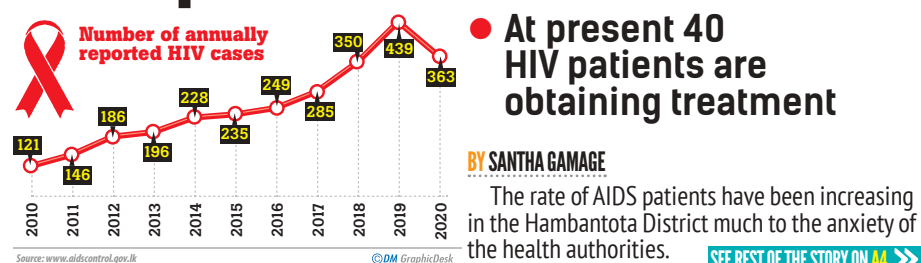
While stating that it's premature to draw conclusions about the new COVID variant, the Sri Lanka Medical Association said the theories and opinions put forward by experts, are yet to be proven. SLMA President Dr Padma Gunaratne told a news briefing yesterday that in every pandemic situation, things tend to change from time to time. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)

Eastern Terminal to be developed into a logistics hub: Minister

- Investor willing to spend \$ 200 million
- Terminal will be fully functional by 2024

Eastern Terminal of Colombo Port will be developed into a logistics hub together with an investor who is willing to spend \$ 200 million for it, Minister of Ports Rohitha Abeygunawardena told Parliament yesterday. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)

AIDS patients on the increase

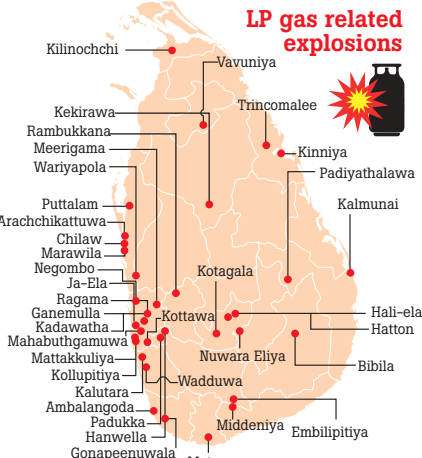


PUCSL is ready to regulate gas - PUCSL Chairman

- In 2019, we started drafting standards for petroleum products with SLSI
- A Standard for LP Gas is already formulated
- The industry act for PUCSL to regulate the downstream Petroleum Industry prepared by the Legal Draftsmen was cleared by the Attorney General in 2012



The Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka (PUCSL), the electricity sector regulator and the designated regulator for the petroleum industry, together with Sri Lanka Standards Institute (SLSI) has already formulated a standard for the much-talked LP gas in September this year and is ready to regulate LP Gas and other related industries, Janaka Ratnayake, Chairman of Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka said. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)



POLITICAL GOSSIP

Her gallivanting days are over!

A fair and lovely white-collar high-up who had been gallivanting about with a political bigwig in the province neglecting her official duties is facing a disciplinary inquiry these days, they say.

It had come to light that this fair high-up was in the habit of going on jaunts with the provincial bigwig after leaving her office on the pretext of going out on circuit inspection. The fair high-up has found herself in dire circumstances now as the provincial bigwig is no longer in power, they say.

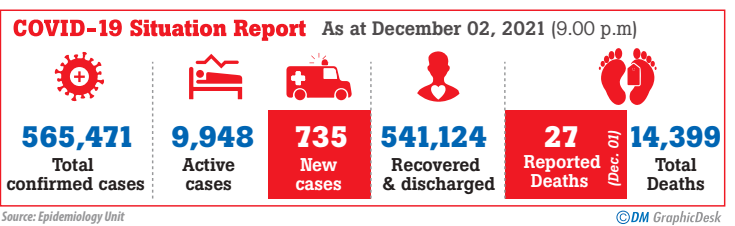


Read more POLITICAL GOSSIP in the inside news pages

Best way to face Omicron variant is to boost immunity through vaccination: Medical experts

- Not possible to prevent the variant entering the country

Claiming that it was not possible to prevent the Omicron Covid variant entering the country, medical experts said yesterday the best way to face the new variant was to keep the immunity at a healthy stage by obtaining the COVID-19 vaccines at the earliest. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)



Withdraw controversial gas cylinder stocks preventing further disasters: Vijitha

- People should be provided with alternative gas cylinders

Claiming that immediate intervention of the Government was needed to resolve the incidents of gas explosions, National Peoples' Power (NPP) MP Vijitha Herath said yesterday steps should be taken to withdraw the controversial gas cylinders from the market preventing further disasters. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)

The US donates additional Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines to Sri Lanka

- 2.6Mn vaccines and over \$17.9Mn in emergency supplies have been donated

Nearly 200,000 additional Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine doses arrived in Sri Lanka today as a donation from the American people. This gift demonstrates the ongoing commitment of the United States to support Sri Lanka in the fight against COVID-19, a statement from the U.S. embassy said. [SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A4 >>>](#)

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POLITICAL GOSSIP

He can no longer abuse his authority!

A top team member handling a Ministry much talked about these days is said to be in deep gloom.

The main reason for the despondency is his inability to exercise his authority any longer in regard to matters like calling for and awarding tenders and placing orders for things required for his Ministry, they say.

There was a time when this politico could do things in the way he wanted, and he had lost no time in taking advantage of this chance to fatten his purse.

However, the situation



has now changed as all types of affairs he could once run for his own benefit are now being handled by other parties, they say.

Courtesy:

Historic Little Sigiriya Rajamaha Vihara

Several wall paintings, inscriptions left unattended

BY KUMARA LIYANARACHCHI

Several wall paintings, inscriptions and cave paintings in the historic Little Sigiriya Rajamaha Vihara in the Kotmale colony in Uhana in the Ampara district have been left to the mercy of the elements without any attention much to the anxiety of the residents of the area and Chief Incumbent of the temple.

Chief Incumbent of the temple Bambarawane Saddhatissa Thera said the history of the temple that runs as far back as the second century (BC) and that the 21 cave paintings belonged to the pre-historic age. He said the temple had been built during the Anuradhapura period and that the wall paintings were akin to Sigiriya and Ajantha frescoes. Ven. Thera pointed out that the Department of Archeology had several years ago provided protection to the paintings with a cement cover but it was now leaking. He said the



conservation project commenced in 2016 had been abandoned in a short time.

However, Director of Chemistry in the Department of Archaeology Geethan Kurupparachchi said a conservation project had already been planned and that it would be implemented soon.



SLFP PROPOSES TO HOLD PROVINCIAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS EXPEDITIOUSLY

BY YOHAN PERERA AND AJITH SIRIWARDANA

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) yesterday suggest that it would be appropriate to hold the Provincial Council elections expeditiously, under the former election system.

The party proposed that old electoral system should be limited to this particular election alone. The suggestion was made at the Select Committee of Parliament to Identify Appropriate Reforms of the Election Laws and the Electoral System and to Recommend Necessary Amendments held yesterday.

State Minister Dayasiri Jayasekara who was testifying on behalf of the party at the committee stated that many problems have risen due to postponing of the provincial council elections for a long time. He stated that his party was of the view that the provincial council elections should be held immediately. Furthermore, local government elections should be held in the first quarter of next year. The number of local government representatives should be limited to a maximum of 5,500, he said.

Minister Mahinda Amaraweera stated at the committee that it is not appropriate to extend the term of local government bodies. The Minister also pointed out that the public opinion is that the number of seats in local government bodies should be reduced.

Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva explained that after the announcement of the Local Government Elections, the powers of those institutions should be transferred to a commissioner until the election is held and the new members are sworn in.

The Leader of the House, Minister Dinesh Gunawardena stated that the Attorney General is of the view that the Provincial Council elections cannot be held under the existing law and that the necessary legal provisions should be brought for the purpose of the stated. He also stated that the general opinion of the Committee is that the Provincial Council elections should be held expeditiously.

The SLFP proposed that the number of members to be elected from the divisions should be 60 per cent and the number of members to be elected proportionally should be 40 per cent when the electoral system is amended. "Necessary legal provisions should be made to limit election expenses. H.E the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's presentation of a Cabinet Memorandum on Limiting Election Expenditure is commendable" SLFP representative said. The party also said that women's representation at all levels should be 25 per cent of the total number of candidates.

Furthermore, the conduct of media during election period should be

regulated. The SLFP also emphasised the importance of regulating social media behaviour.

Professor Sudantha Liyanage, Vice Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayawardenepura, Chairman of the Expert Committee on the analysis of appropriate reforms of the election laws and the electoral system and to recommend necessary amendments stated if the new electoral system is adjusted to the 70:30 ratio, the existing number of seats in local government bodies could be reduced by 1,500.

He also pointed out the need to revise the electoral system so that the winning political party in the local government area gets two bonus seats.

The Secretary to the Select Committee, Deputy Secretary General and Chief of Staff of Parliament Ms. Kushani Rohanadheera stated that the next meeting of the Parliamentary Select Committee will be held on the 07th.

State Ministers Lasantha Alagiyawanna and Duminda Dissanayake also represented the SLFP at the committee meeting. Members of Parliament M. A. Sumanthiran, Madhura Withanage and Sagara Kariyawasam were also present as members of the Committee.

Officials representing the Election Commission and the Attorney General's Department were also present.

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The Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) has received information that some Sri Lankans residing abroad send remittances to their dependents in Sri Lanka, knowingly or unknowingly, through various racketeers.

CBSL is aware that there have been instances where certain brokers collect foreign currency from Sri Lankan employees in other countries and credit the accounts of their dependents in Sri Lankan rupees by way of cash or transfers through the financial system. The public may not be aware that they are committing offences punishable in terms of law for the violation of the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. Further, available information indicate that these transactions could be linked to drug trafficking and other illegal activities.

Hence, the CBSL hereby informs all Sri Lankans residing abroad and their dependents not to be victims of such illegal activities, knowingly or unknowingly.

The CBSL emphasizes the need for all concerned parties not to become victims of illegal operators and to ensure that they remit their foreign remittances to Sri Lanka only through banks and through financial institutions which are supervised by the CBSL or other international banks and financial institutions.

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Special Kids' Activity	05 th	4.00pm - 5.00pm

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GERMANY AGREES NEW COVID CURBS AS OMICRON VARIANT SPREADS ACROSS GLOBE

Germany agreed on new COVID-19 restrictions on Thursday and the United States prepared to do the same, while U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said the Omicron variant showed the pandemic could be around for "some time".

The new variant is spreading across the globe, with countries including the United States, India and France reporting their first cases and investors rattled by the prospect that it could hurt the global economic recovery.

The new measures agreed in Germany focus on the unvaccinated, who will be barred from access to all but the most essential businesses such as grocery stores and pharmacies.

Germany is also planning legislation to make vaccination mandatory.

"We have understood that the situation is very serious and that we want to take further measures in addition to those already taken," Chancellor Angela Merkel told a news conference.

"To do this, the fourth wave must be broken and this has not yet been achieved," she said, referring to Germany's latest surge in cases. A



nationwide vaccination mandate could take effect from February 2022 after it is debated in the Bundestag and after guidance from Germany's Ethics Council, she said. Much remains unknown about Omicron, which was first detected in southern Africa last month and has been spotted in at least two dozen countries, just as parts of Europe

were already grappling with a wave of infections of the Delta variant.

But the European Union's public health agency said Omicron could be responsible for more than half of all COVID infections in Europe within a few months, lending weight to preliminary information about its high transmissibility.

BERLIN, DEC 2 (REUTERS)

Iran gives drafts on sanctions, nuclear issues to European nuclear deal parties

VIENNA, DEC 2 (REUTERS) - Iran has provided European powers involved in its tattered nuclear deal with drafts on sanctions removal and nuclear commitments, Iran's top nuclear negotiator said on Thursday, as world powers and Tehran try to reinstate the pact.

The announcement came on the fourth day of indirect talks between Iran and

the United States on bringing both fully back into the deal. The talks resumed after a five-month hiatus prompted by Iran's election of an anti-Western hardliner as president.

"We have delivered two proposed drafts to them...Of course they need to check the texts that we have provided to them. If they are ready to continue the talks, we are in Vienna to continue the talks," Iran's Ali

Bagheri Kani told reporters.

A European diplomat in Vienna confirmed draft documents had been handed over. Under the pact, Tehran limited its uranium enrichment programme, a potential pathway to nuclear weapons though Iran says it seeks only civilian atomic energy, in exchange for relief from U.S., European Union and U.N. economic sanctions.

Cuba condemns US actions on Palestine



Cuba's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Yusnier Romero (PL)

UNITED NATIONS, (PRENSA LATINA) 1 DEC 2021 - Cuba's Deputy Permanent Representative to UN Yusnier Romero on Wednesday reiterated his country's support for Palestine and strongly condemned US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. The international community cannot remain passive ahead of the increased violence

and the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force against Palestinian civilians, in flagrant violation of the UN Charter and International Humanitarian Law, he added.

According to the Cuban diplomat, it is alarming that the UN Security Council remains silent ahead of this serious threat to international peace and security.

UN seeks record \$41 bln for aid to hotspots led by Afghanistan, Ethiopia

GENEVA, DEC 2 (REUTERS) - The United Nations appealed on Thursday for a record \$41 billion to provide life-saving assistance next year to 183 million people worldwide caught up in conflict and poverty, led by a tripling of its programme in Afghanistan.

Famine remains a "terrifying prospect" for 45 million people living in 43 countries, as extreme weather caused by climate change shrinks food supplies, the U.N. said in the annual appeal, which reflected a 17% rise in annual funding needs.

"The drivers of needs are ones which are familiar to all of us. Tragically, it includes protracted conflicts, political instability, failing economies...the climate crisis, not a new crisis, but one which urges



A boy sells food in a park in Kabul, Afghanistan (REUTERS)

more attention and of course the COVID-19 pandemic," U.N. aid chief Martin Griffiths told reporters.

In a report to donors, the world body said: "Without sustained and immediate action, 2022 could be catastrophic."

Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Ethiopia and Sudan are the five major crises requiring the

most funding, topped by \$4.5 billion sought for Taliban-ruled Afghanistan where "needs are skyrocketing", it said.

In Afghanistan, more than 24 million people require life-saving assistance, a dramatic increase driven by political turmoil, repeated economic shocks, and severe food insecurity caused by the worst drought in 27 years.

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- No. 28, Pallegama, Embilipitiya
- No. 91, Anagarika Dharmapala Mawatha, Matara
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EDITORIAL

"The future depends on what you do today"
- MAHATMA GANDHI

OUR THOUGHT

WHEN RELIGIOUS DEVOTION DWARFS HEALTH CONCERNS

Pilgrimage to the holy mountain Adam's Peak (Sri Pada) is expected to commence on December 18 (Saturday). And the good news is that the authorities are expecting restrictions to be relaxed as much as possible when the season begins.

A pilgrimage of the nature of climbing Adam's Peak calls for support and encouragement for devotees. But Covid regulations put a stop to all that and discouraged travel to the summit of the mountain last year. But pilgrims defied state warning notices and embarked on the trek last year. Restrictions being imposed upon pilgrims was the scenario for the past two years.

But when the officials organising the pilgrimage gathered on Wednesday (December 1) to discuss the nitty-gritty associated with the season what came to be highlighted was the need to allow participation in keeping with instructions issued by the health authorities.

It's a known fact that devotees help and encourage each other during the climb to the top and restrictions- despite being a must- would eat into some of the healthy camaraderie that otherwise exists both during the ascending and descending parts of the journey. Apart from the participation of pilgrims devotees are wondering whether the support services- which were not available last year- would be set up along the way this time around.

For the record, last season, pilgrims defied a warning by the Nuwara Eliya District Covid -19 Eradication Unit to refrain from making the journey to the mountain. It is with this background that the season begins on the coming poya day. There are also concerns about hygiene because pilgrims are known to throw litter and pollute the place. These are times when the surrounding areas of the path to the mountain must be kept spick and span because of the pandemic.

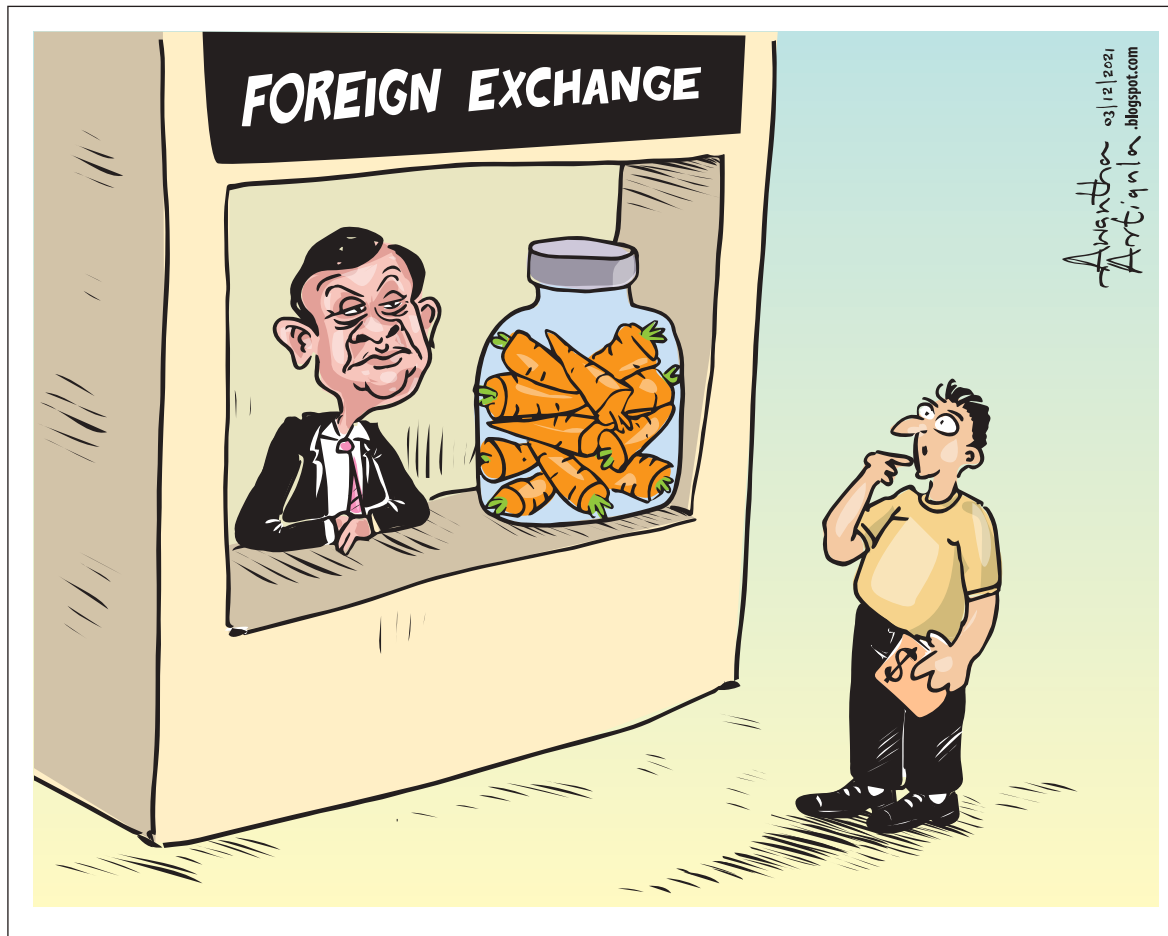
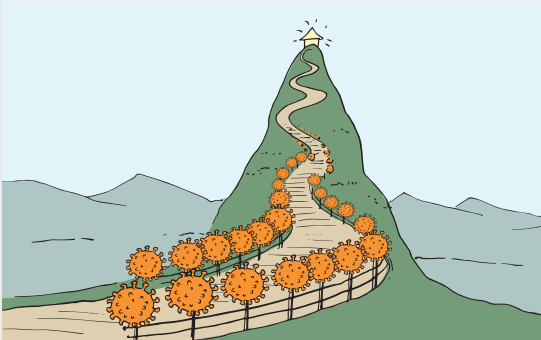
For the last couple of years the Sri Lanka Air Force was engaged in a cleaning process of the path that leads to the mountain. Sri Lankan travellers are not known to behave in an environment friendly manner when stepping into places like the paths that lead to Adam's Peak. This behaviour by them questions the levels of mental discipline they've acquired despite devoting so much time each year to travel to the 7359 foot mountain which holds a revered monument. Adam's Peak is precious for Buddhists, Christians, Muslims and Hindus which the devotees of all these religions having their own version of whose foot imprint lies at the highest point of the mountain. The Buddhists affirm that it is of Gautama Buddha, the Hindus believe that it is of Lord Shiva while the Muslims and the Christians state that it is of Adam; some Christian accounts stating that it is of St. Thomas'.

Being a Buddhist dominant country the season for 'Sripada' will begin with a procession associated with a temple. Devotees participating in the procession will carry a statue of Deity Sumana Saman and the relics of the Gautama Buddha from the Galpoththawala Rajamaha Viharaya in Palmadulla all the way to the summit of the mountain.

Devotees utilising four routes are expected to join in the pilgrimage. These routes start from four different towns; Hatton, Balangoda, Ratnapura and Kuruwita. As with past years all four processions are expected to meet at Heramitipana before completing the last lap of the journey.

This pilgrim season will commence under slightly less severe restrictions compared to the past two years. Already the 2021/2022 season has received the blessings of the Chief Sanganayake of Ratnapura Dissawe Ven. Begamuwe Dhammadiina Thera, Nuwara Eliya District Secretary Nandana Galaboda, Senior Government officials, Divisional Secretaries, heads of Local Governments and officials from the private sector.

There are concerns before the scheduled start to the pilgrimage because schoolchildren also have the habit of making the trek. In January this year some members of a rugby team that did the journey to Adam's Peak tested positive for Covid. But the thinking here in Sri Lanka is that extreme religious devotion can dwarf health concerns before an event as big as climbing Adam's Peak. Let there be protection for devotees making the journey during these challenging times caused by the pandemic.



FOR MORE CARTOONS LOG ON www.dailymirror.lk/cartoon

WHY ELECT REJECTED PEOPLE?

By **Muhammed Ayub**

Some three weeks ago President Gotabaya Rajapaksa put a very valid question to the people summarising the whole history since Independence. Being appropriate to the occasion, the President while speaking at an event to mark the World Science Day, at Temple Trees, on November 10 why the people re-elect the politicians they had rejected before for failure to live up to their expectations. And he urged them to reject such elements once and for all, and elect a new set of representatives.

Though one might feel it to be belated, it is worth discussing the very vital point the head of the State put to his subjects. First of all, this is not a new idea or a question as many leftist parties were raising this issue at least since 1960s. They called the people's habit of alternately electing the same two corrupt and discredited political groups that had proven their ineptitude in resolving issues faced by the people "Thattumaru Kramaya."

Despite the remarks made by the President possibly being a gem of a statement since one cannot expect such words coming from Sri Lankan politicians who know that they would boomerang, it is doubtful if it was really a moment of self-realisation or he spoke from his heart. It must just be a flash of thought uttered without much thought, just pondering over only the actions of the last government. However, had the people followed his advice exactly two years ago, he himself would not be in the saddle to give such an invaluable advice.

In fact, it is astounding to note that the people in this country have elected at every election, since the Independence, those whom they rejected some five or six years ago, interestingly with renewed hopes of having a better future for their children. It was during the first United National Party (UNP) administration that the famous "Hartal" or a general strike by the workers and agitations by the people of the rural areas in the south took place in August 1953. This followed a steep rise in essential items, including rice, the price of which tripled. And the situation was so tense that the Cabinet had to meet in a ship in the Colombo harbour. Had the leftist leaders who spearheaded the urban and rural agitations been prepared, they could even have captured power.

However, the first UNP administration under three Prime Ministers was voted out at the Parliamentary elections in 1956 and a coalition led by the newly founded Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) was elected to power. A chaotic period followed with strikes in a particular year having outnumbered the days of that year. An unprecedented ethnic violence spread across the country claiming hundreds of lives, especially in the North Central Province and the Prime Minister S.W.R.D Bandaranaike was also assassinated in 1959 over a different issue. Despite the sympathy wave



Interestingly, people are wary of newcomers and continue to vote for known parties at elections; despite not being happy at the manner in which they have governed this country

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towards the late Premier Bandaranaike people again voted in the UNP in March 1960, until they defeated the same party in July in the same year and as the President said handed over the reins to the SLFP. That too was not a government with smooth sailing. Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike had to appoint five finance ministers for the five years she ruled the country and had dissolve parliament after the throne speech was defeated in Parliament.

In spite of the people having tested the credentials of the SLFP led by Bandaranaike (husband and wife) twice it was again elected to power in 1970 with two thirds of majority, apparently due to the cancellation of the two measures of rice supplied at a concessionary price. However, it became a torturous administration in terms of supply of essential items where people had to wait in long queues for hours for rice, sugar, bread, flour, chilly, dhal etc. The food scarcity was such that there was a short period when every individual was given half pound of Atta flour for a week through co-operative society outlets. Carrying rice and chillies across districts was banned. Serving rice in hotels was banned on Fridays and Tuesdays.

This paved the way for the UNP which had proven twice (except for their ill-fated three months old rule) its ineptitude in governance to come to power with an unprecedented five sixths of majority in

Parliament. It was a rogue government under Presidents J.R. Jayewardene and R. Premadasa during which the country saw mass-scale corruption, absence of rule of law, mass-scale killings by the law enforcement authorities and State sponsored vigilante groups. It was the period when a state sponsored brutal pogrom was unleashed against the Tamils which in turn made the Tamil community an easy breeding ground for the then small separatist Tamil armed groups.

One cannot but surprise to see the political literacy of the people when they reelected the coalitions led by same SLFP and the UNP in 1994 and 2015. The current ruling party, the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) and the main Opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) are not new political parties in practical sense. They are the avatars of the SLFP and the UNP despite the signboard of the two parties are held by other leaders. Thus the President or Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa cannot absolve themselves from the responsibilities for the highhanded actions and corruption committed by the leaders of the SLFP led coalition (UPFA) government between 2005 and 2014. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa was a very powerful figure in that government.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa's government became unpopular within four years since its huge election victories in 2010 which they achieved following a historic victory in a three-decade long war against the LTTE. The current government seems to have outdone it within a shorter period. Even the members of the Rajapaksa family, such as the State Minister Sashindra Rajapaksa are predicting the defeat of the government at the next election. Yet, pathetically, it is the SJB, the reincarnation of the UNP that is practically waiting to go up in the seesaw when the sun sets on the SLPP regime.

The President's call for the masses to find a new set of representatives is naturally an indication of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), though he might never have thought even in a dream to do so. The former rebels seem to have proven their honesty through dedication and the sacrifices in their political actions as well as lifestyles. Their analyses of the political and economic situations seem sound and realistic. Only issue that is haunting them is their race in cruelty with both the SLFP and UNP governments during their insurrections in 1971 and 1988/89. Yet, the question has to be raised as to how long such a political party has to be given to be reformed. It was a war situation and both the ruling parties at the time too showed even more ruthlessness introducing novel methods of cruelty such as the famous "tyre pyres" and torture chambers.

Interestingly, people are wary of new comers though they seem to be acceptable while preferring the "known devils" and also to be on the winning side, no matter devils ruling the roost. They are not prepared even to test the newcomers but prefer to repose their false hopes on those who have hoodwinked them several times. It is strange.

DM Poll

At a time when the latest COVID-19 variant Omicron is spreading across the world, many countries are imposing travel restrictions and even closing their borders, should the Government tighten the health guidelines and restrict tourist arrivals?

1) Yes 2) No 3) Don't know

LAST POLL

Do you think that the Government allowing the importation of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides revoking the gazette notification issued in April this year is an indication of the Government's inability to manage crucial sectors in the country?

No 1.9% Yes 97% Don't know 1.1%

See web poll at www.DailyMirror.lk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Please join the queue!

Queues are generally formed to get things done in a systematic manner; which help both the server as well as the served. In the western world the people always strictly adhere to this system and they would not allow anyone to jump the queue. If the system is threatened they shout at those who break the queue to get back to the end of the starting line. However, it is very rarely that this happens because all obey the rule.

But this practice is not followed in Sri Lanka. Invariably you get the queue jumpers who try to get things done quickly without waiting for their turn. Sometimes this is done by oiling the palm of the persons in charge, so that one could get preferential treatment. Whether it is in a government office or private place, where there is a queue, there will be at least one person jumping the queue.

Now something good has happened during the past two years with the onslaught of the pandemic. Wherever the Sri Lanka Army is manning the vaccination centres there is some sort of order in that people stay in the queue to get the vaccine when it is their turn. We also had the queues for milk food, gas cylinders, to obtain new passports or renew existing ones, to get documents certified by the Consular office, etc. These queues have instilled some discipline in Sri Lankans, who would benefit from such practices while being here or abroad. We hope that the Sri Lankans will adhere to strict discipline in respect of queues as they have done with regards to wearing of masks.

HM NISSANKA WARAKAULLE

Thoughts on increasing retirement age

Amongst the proposals in the maiden Budget of Honourable Minister of Finance Basil Rajapaksa is to increase the retirement age of the public servants to 65 years with the objective of strengthening the country's work force and at the same time not to curtail the recruitment of new recruits. I see this as a very productive proposal for the following reasons:

- Being occupied will keep them both physically and mentally active
- Income (emoluments) will cushion at least to some extent the rising cost of living
- They will not be a burden to the children as s/he will be independent for at least another 5 years
- They will be more efficient as they are much more experienced and therefore can promise a very satisfactory customer service
- There will be less wastage (of stationeries, etc.) as mistakes are minimal (if any) as they are veterans in their respective fields of employment

* They can share their invaluable experience with the new young recruits and also make them more efficient and knowledgeable

MOHAMED ZAHRAN
Colombo

CB to freeze bank accounts associated with unlawful money transfer methods

WEB COMMENTS

KIKAZARU - Now at the end of the road and hit the wall. Putting in politely we call it "Bankrupt".

ANURA NANAYAKKARA - Too many rules since you became Governor. Why Mr. Cabraal? Punish all the bank robbers, not the citizens of this country!

SSS-Yes. Cabraal and his masters need the dollars to import their luxuries and fatten their foreign accounts in the unlikely event of docile SL people rising against mega corruption and abuse of law.

See more web comments at www.DailyMirror.lk

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By Prof. G. R. A. Kumara

Conveniences at our disposal also entail dangers and limitations—which we need to be aware of and take adequate precautions against. Decades ago we used firewood for cooking and oil for lighting lamps. Today firewood is partly replaced by Liquid of Petroleum Gas (LPG), and lighting by electricity.

As people rush to enjoy modern facilities we often forget or pay little attention to their negative consequences. Apart from economic and environmental concerns, modern comforts create safety issues. Sometimes the business sector ignores safety concerns to sell their products and earn more profit. A culture of corruption encourages such practices.

These days there are growing reports suggestive of a spate of fire hazards and explosions originating from the use of LPG for cooking.

WHAT IS LIQUID PETROLEUM GAS?

The cause of most accidents in the use of LPG for cooking has been gas leaks. A good precaution therefore would be to have a method of detecting leaking gas

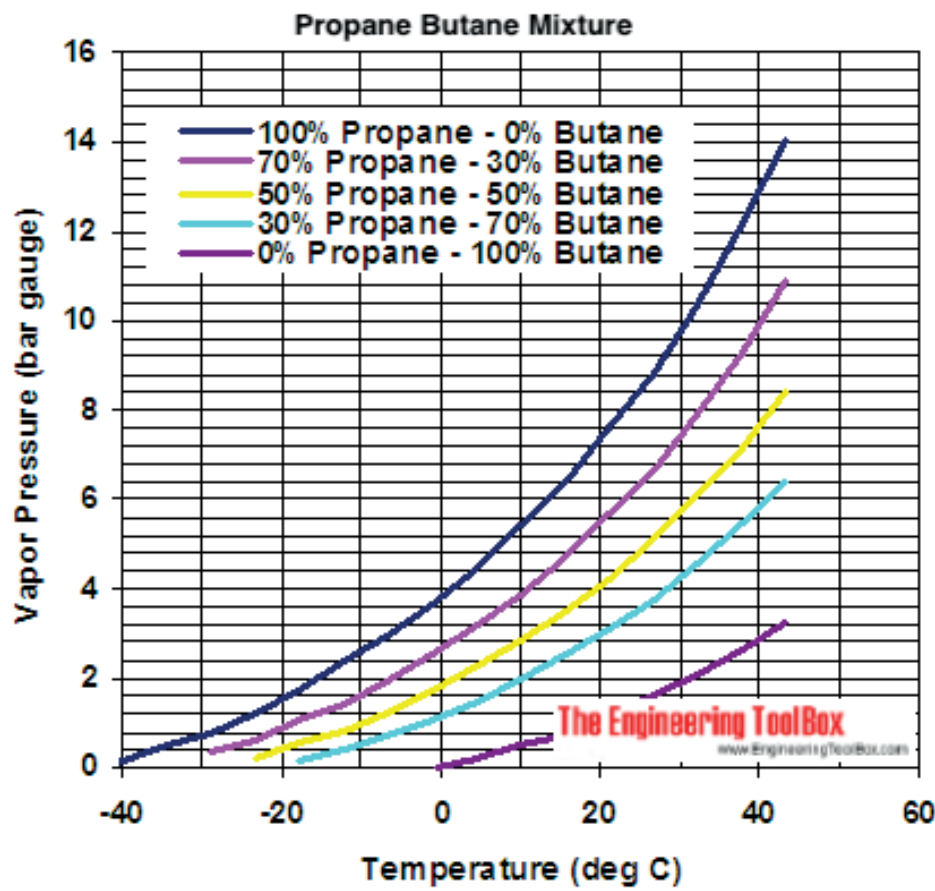
Crude oil refining yields a range of hydrocarbons (compounds comprising carbon and hydrogen) which are liquids or gases found under ambient conditions. Petrol, kerosene and diesel have boiling points (95-150); (150-350); (175- 375) degrees Celsius respectively—which are temperatures well above that of the natural environment. Additionally there are petroleum liquids that evaporate rapidly at room temperature. These are known as 'ethers'.

Two important gaseous components derived from oil are butane and propane. When cooled, these turn into liquids at temperatures of -2 and -42 degrees Celsius. These gases can be liquefied at higher temperatures by applying pressure. At the average room temperature of 30 degrees Celsius, butane and propane can be liquefied at atmospheric pressures of approximately 2 and 10 atmospheres. These are approximately the minimum pressures needed to store butane and propane in liquid form at room temperature. But a larger percentage of propane or butane in a full cylinder exists as a liquid with the remaining 10 – 20% in the form of vapor. So when the cylinder valve opens, the gases (vapor) pushes out and the liquid inside slowly boils. Upon closing the valve the original pressure is regained as long as both liquid and gas are within and the value of pressure depending on the temperature and composition of the gas.

Meanwhile, LP gas also contains a small percentage of pentane (a hydrocarbon with a boiling point of 36 degrees Celsius). Like butane or propane, this substance too cannot cause any harm. Despite its higher boiling point, it is carried away with butane and propane at warmer temperatures.

Commercial LPGs contain mixtures of butane and propane in varying proportions, compressed to pressures of the order of 7- 15 atmospheres. When the percentage of propane is larger, higher storage pressures are required. Again the vapor pressure inside the cylinder increases faster with temperature when the percentage of propane is increased. The plot (taken from www.engineeringtoolbox.com) presented below indicates how pressure varies with the propane/butane ratio in LPG (the numbers depicted in the vertical axis are approximately the pressures measured in units of normal atmospheric pressure).

Generally LPGs used in warm tropical regions, contain 70-80% of butane and



30-20% of propane. Countries with freezing climates prefer LPGs containing a higher percentage of propane because butane evaporate too slowly under such conditions. In warmer environments LPG with a larger percentage of butane is preferable to prevent high pressure building up inside the containers.

It must be said that gas cylinders are sufficiently strong to withstand the pressures, irrespective of the amount of propane present. They don't break-open and explode unless heated by a fire. However, if the pressure is high, gas could leak through a faulty valve in the cylinder or the burner. Sometimes connections to gas carrying tubing could also be leaky or completely yield when the pressure is excessive. LP gases are heavier than air, and if

gas leaks in an enclosed space it builds above the floor. Such situations pose an imminent danger, because the slightest ignition trigger would lead to an explosion and fire.

When the percentage of LPG in the air exceeds 4-6%, the mixture could explode. Often this happens when someone attempts

to light the burner. Sparks produced during the switching on or switching off of electricity could also ignite accumulated gas. Moreover, opening or closing metallic contacts inside a switch always create sparks. Friction encountered in working with tools and sparking due to static electrification are sufficient to ignite an LPG-air mixture. Propane is more flammable compared to butane.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

The cause of most accidents in the use of LPG for cooking has been gas leaks. A good precaution therefore would be to have a method of detecting leaking gas. The nose is the most sensitive chemical detector which humans and animals possess. Certain chemical substances in the minutest of quantities can be smelled. Propane and butane in pure form are odorless. Commercial LPG has a faint smell owing to the presence of aromatic impurities. But this is not strong enough to notice a gas leakage. Therefore an odorant is incorporated into LPG. Odorants introduced are sulphur compounds such as methyl sulfide, thiols and mercaptans. These compounds have smells resembling onions, leeks, durian or mella kola.

In many countries the addition of an odorant to LPG is a legal requirement that gas suppliers cannot ignore. It is ridiculous to say that a gas leak can be detected by the hissing sound of escaping gas. Such sounds are only heard when gas leaks out at an exceptionally high speed. Minute leaks in the cylinder valve and connections can be detected by smearing a solution of detergent. Blowing of bubbles is a sign of gas seepage.

Simple safeguards can greatly reduce accidents associated with LPG cooking. Always install the cylinder in an upright position in a well ventilated location to avoid

a build-up of gas accumulation in the event of a leakage. After cooking disconnect the regulator from the cylinder. Do not leave burners unattended for long durations of time. Check the connections to tubing for tightness. If the cooker is not kept clean, ash and carbon could clog the burner valves causing malfunction. Also, salt in food corrodes burners and valves. If there is a sign of a gas leakage, do not ignite the burners and carefully disconnect the regulator from the cylinder. Open doors and windows, avoid switching-on or switching-off electricity. Stay away from the premises for a while. If there is a fire near the gas cylinder or tubes delivering gas to the burner, do not attempt to disconnect the regulator or shut the burner. Move far away and inform the Fire Department if the situation worsens.

Standard LP gas cylinders, cookers and accessories are designed to prevent gas leakages, even if there are pressure changes due to alterations in gas composition (propane/butane ratio) or changes in temperature. However, if the gadgets are substandard or faulty; gas leaks could occur, causing serious accidents.

To reduce the incidence of accidents associated with LPG cookers the general public must be vigilant and follow precautionary measures. The sale of brands of LPG without odorants and substandard cookers and accessories must be regulated. And any alterations to the gas composition must be notified. LPG can be managed safely by following the proper precautions and adopting consumer protection legislation.

The writer is a research professor and scientist attached to the National Institute of Fundamental Studies, Sri Lanka.

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REVOCATION OF POWER OF ATTORNEY

I WICKRAMA ARACHCHIGE LALITHA KARUNA SUDASINGHE alias SURANGA LALITHA of No. 38, 3rd Lane, Egodawatta, Madampe do hereby given notice to the government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the general public that I have cancelled, annulled and revoked with immediate effect the power of Attorney I have granted to Mrs. BRHAMMACHARIGE KARUNAWATHI of No. 26, Pahala Mahawewa, Mahawewa by an Instrument of Special Power of Attorney bearing No: 22777 dated 30.05.2014 and attested by H. J. M. D. JAYASINGHE Notary Public of MARAWILA. I shall hereinafter not hold any responsibility for the transactions made by the said grantee BRHAMMACHARIGE KARUNAWATHI through the said Special Power of Attorney.

WICKRAMA ARACHCHIGE LALITHA KARUNA SUDASINGHE alias SURANGA LALITHA 30.11.2021

FEATURES

By
Kamanthi Wickramasinghe

On February 27, 1921 a newly inaugurated care home located at the heart of Bambalapitiya opened doors to two destitute mothers who wished to spend the eve of their lives in a secure and homely atmosphere. This venue, initially named as the Mallika Home for Destitute (now known as the Mallika Home) was a dream come true for Mrs. Mallika Hewavitarne Lama Ethani, mother of Anagarika Dharmapala who spearheaded the Buddhist Renaissance movement in Sri Lanka. This dream became a reality as a result of the Mallika Anatha Nivasa Samithiya founded by her in 1920. A century later, the Mallika Nivasa Samithiya (Society) Ltd., has expanded its operations to not only provide care, security and protection for elderly women but also for infants, children and teenagers.

THE LEGACY CONTINUES

At a time when women were expected to be confined to their homes, without playing any role in society, Mrs. Hewavitarne turned the tides by inaugurating the Home, thereby enabling women to play an important role in colonial Ceylon. This endeavour was also supported by men, particularly her son Dr. C. A Hewavitarne who purchased the land on his behalf of his mother, where the Mallika Home is situated today. The Home thereby commenced its mission to serve poor and destitute elderly women in the country at an era where the welfare of destitute women of impoverished Buddhist families was not a subject of discussion. Today, the Mallika Home is the oldest Buddhist Home for elders in Sri Lanka.

The number of admissions subsequently increased to 37 during the year of its inauguration and therefore new Halls of residence were gradually added to the original building. As such, the Laura De Mel Hall, the Neil Hewavitarne Hall, the Gunasekara Hall and the Anagarika Dharmapala Hall were built in succession over the years. Today, the Home can accommodate up to 90 elders.

At a time when women were expected to be confined to their homes, without playing any role in society, Mrs. Hewavitarne turned the tides by inaugurating the Home, thereby enabling women to play an important role in colonial Ceylon

In 1952 the Mallika Nivasa Samithiya was gifted five acres of land in Aniyakanda, Ragama by Sir Ernest De Silva and Lady Evadne De Silva to build an orphanage for boys. Subsequently, the Parakrama Nivasa for Boys opened doors in 1954 and since its inception the Parakrama Child Development Centre has been a safe haven for hundreds of destitute boys between ages 5-18.

Thereafter, the Sneha Child Development Centre was established in 1971 to provide care for abandoned boys and girls below five years of age. This idea was initiated by Mrs. Snehalatha Amarasinghe. With time, a Montessori and a day care Centre was also

Centenary celebration of Mallika Nivasa Samithiya

A NOBLE MISSION TO PROVIDE SECURITY, PEACE AND TRANQUILITY TO THE DESTITUTE



A commemorative stamp launched to mark the Centenary Celebration of the Society



Ven. Ambulugala Sumangala Thera



Karu Jayasuriya

established at the same premises to provide better facilities for children. These children participate in various events organized by the Society.

Seth Medura, the first paying home of the Society was opened in 1978 thereby providing pleasant and comfortable accommodation for elderly ladies at a very nominal amount. As means of providing further paying accommodation for elderly ladies at a nominal cost, Seth Sevana I and II were eventually inaugurated in 1999 and 2001 respectively. The Mallika Nivasa Samithiya also succeeded in initiating the first dementia care Centre with the support of HelpAge Sri Lanka in 2002.

Amidst various other developments the Society is now in the process of collecting funds to setup its Centenary Building to accommodate dementia patients as well as provide better residential facilities for the elderly mothers.

Throughout the years, meals and medicine for all the homes continue to be supported by generous donors, benefactors and trustees. The society also receives maintenance grants from the Department of Social Services and the Department of Probation and Child Care Services.

GRATITUDE TO A GREAT LADY

At a commemorative event held to mark the centenary celebration of the Society, Ven. Ambulugala Sumangala Thera, the Chief Incumbent of Maha Bodhi Agrashrawaka

Viharaya, Maligakanda, expressed his gratitude to Mrs. Mallika Hewavitarne while mentioning the Herculean efforts made by her son David Hewavitarne to bring about the Buddhist revivalist movement in Sri Lanka. "Even after a century, the Mallika Nivasa is like a tree sprouting with new shoots. The Mallika Nivasa sits on a land given to Mallika Hewavitarne by her son Charles Hewavitarne, Sri Lanka's first medical specialist. His financial donation and Mrs. Hewavitarne's dedication has provided a home for many individuals to spend their lives with much relaxation. Whenever we hear Mallika Hewavitarne's name we cannot forget Srimath Anagarika Dharmapala. Sri Lanka was dominated by colonial invasions during the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. During this period the Sinhalese and Buddhists weren't treated well. It was during this time that Mallika and Don Carolis Hewavitarne welcomed the birth of their firstborn David Hewavitarne, who was later known as Anagarika Dharmapala. Dharmapala's mother was a pillar of strength that encouraged him to bring about a change in colonial Ceylon. He succeeded in establishing the London Buddhist vihara in England at a time when Sri Lanka was still a colony. His mother's motivation encouraged him to address religious leaders in America. We also cannot forget Mrs. Hewavitarne's contribution to the Buddha Sasana who took the initiative to print the Tripitaka and other Dhamma books. To serve this purpose the Hewavitarne Trust was initiated by her relatives. As such, she has contributed a



A performance by elderly mothers of the Mallika Home



Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa garlanding a portrait of Mrs. Mallika Hewavitarne

yeoman service to the nation, not only by serving the Buddha Sasana but also by giving birth to a great son of this soil."

APPRECIATING THE LIVEWIRES BEHIND THE ENDEAVOR

Gracing the occasion as Guest of Honour, former Speaker of Parliament Karu Jayasuriya recalled how he has been in contact with the Mallika Nivasa since 1990. "At the time I was serving as the Mayor of Colombo. This Home provides love, care and protection to the elderly mothers. We need to remember Mrs. Mallika Hewavitarne for her efforts to make this endeavor a success. In fact, Dr. Hewavitarne also extended his support. Successive managements have dedicated their time, finances and effort for the progress of this initiative. A piece of land near Visakha Vidyalaya costs around one billion today. This shows that there were generous donors at the time the Mallika Home was inaugurated. Many infants, children and teens showcased their talents today and eventually they will come out in society as good citizens

and we appreciate these efforts. There were many other additions to the Mallika Nivasa including the Parakrama Children's Home. If these children don't get necessary care and support they will be misled. The infants' too would have had no future if they were abandoned on the streets. Efforts such as providing residential facilities for elders who can pay a nominal fee to setting up a Centre to care for dementia patient are much appreciated as well. All these have been successful as a result of the capable management. I extend gratitude to everybody who has supported this endeavor throughout the years. We wish that this endeavor moves from strength to strength in years to come."

The event was also graced by the presence of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and Shiranthi Rajapaksa. Prime Minister Rajapaksa presented awards to long-standing members of the Mallika Nivasa Samithiya and a commemorative stamp too was launched to mark the Centenary of the Society. The Society continues on its mission to 'add life to years' of destitute women, infants, children and teenagers with love, care and affection.

PICS BY INDIKA HANDUWALA

Ratmalana Audiology Centre; A YEOMAN SERVICE TO CHANGE LIVES

In the context of a global pandemic, International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) will be celebrated on December 3 under the theme "Fighting for rights in the post-Covid era". This year's theme has been selected specially to look in to the challenges, barriers and opportunities for people who live with disabilities during the time of the pandemic.

The Ratmalana Audiology Centre or fondly known as the RAC by its clients and the people in the area was set up 15 years ago to be the Centre of Excellence in Hearing and Speech therapy for the benefit of people with hearing, speech and educational difficulties. The RAC had been providing free hearing screening of newborn babies born in government hospitals. The objective of doing so is to detect early any hearing impairments faced by them and to intervene early for better results and impact. Thereby reducing the negative impact from undetected or late detected congenital hearing loss which could lead to significant language and academic delay in children. Further the RAC provides



free hearing testing, speech therapy and special education services to all students at the Ceylon school for the Deaf and Blind Ratmalana.

The center specializes in helping manage hearing impairments in children and adults through amplification (hearing aids). Speech and language therapy services at RAC help children and adults with communication disabilities to overcome them and have shown promising results over the years. The Speech and Language Therapy services have been beneficial for people with communication difficulties such as; intellectual disability, persons with autism spectrum disorders, hearing impairment, stammering, various voice disorders, cerebral palsy, people with language or speech difficulties after a stroke, etc.

Special education services at Ratmalana Audiology Centre have helped many children who struggled to enter mainstream school setups or



who struggled to keep up with the mainstream school settings, to manage easily and perform better in the school.

RAC is well equipped with state-of-the-art testing laboratories and equipment and an experienced professional team of clinicians.

Connect with us today for information and appointments regarding Hearing, Speech and Special Education on 0773945945 or for FREE online pre-screening log on to www.giftsound.lk
Early detection of hearing and speech impairments can change lives.

MIRACLES THROUGH INTERCESSION OF FR.OSCAR ABAYARATNE

Many people are claiming God has worked miracles for them through the intercession of Rev.Fr. Siri Oscar Abayaratna who by the power of the Holy Spirit launched the Kithu Dana Pubuduwa (KDP) which is widely regarded as the world's most powerful charismatic renewal movement with its vision and goals ranging from personal holiness and community life to poverty alleviation, the battle against climate change and the all-religions solidarity alliance.

Fr.Oscar or Swamithaththa as he was lovingly known, passed away on November 4. To commemorate the first month after his death, the KDP will hold a Thanksgiving Mass tomorrow Saturday December 4 at the Sri Prasansaramaya at Walpola in Ragama.

Since the number of people who could attend is limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic and health restrictions, the Mass will be live-streamed via zoom from 7.00 AM tomorrow.

LITERARY AWARDS CEREMONY

The State Literary Awards Ceremony – 2020 and 2021 will be held on December 3rd at the BMICH under the

patronage of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs and attended by the

State Minister of National Heritage, Performing Arts and Rural Arts Promotions, Vidura Wickramanayake. The event is organized by

the State Literary Advisory Council chaired by Ven. Rambukkana Siddhartha Thera and the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Health Capsule



Anxiety link to irritable bowel syndrome seen in DNA – Research

Genes may go some way towards explaining why a common but poorly understood gut disorder - irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) - is often linked to anxiety, say researchers. They hope their discovery will stop IBS being wrongly labelled as an emotional state or "all in the mind". The team studied more than 50,000 individuals with IBS, comparing their DNA with that of healthy people. The results are published in the journal Nature Genetics. IBS is thought to affect about one in 10 people and can cause distressing abdominal pain, bloating and bouts of constipation, diarrhoea or both

Source : BBC

Day of Persons with Disabilities (Dec 3)

Shaping an inclusive future in a post COVID-19 era



BY KAMANTHI WICKRAMASINGHE



Over one billion people across the world are crippled with a certain kind of disability that keeps them from functioning, often requiring healthcare services. The World Health Organisation (WHO) observes an increase in the number of people with disabilities particularly due to chronic health conditions and population ageing. People with disabilities have been disproportionately affected during the COVID-19 pandemic, not only due to lack of access to healthcare

services but due to further sidelining experienced from a societal point of view.

In his message in view of the Persons with Disabilities Day that falls today (December 3), the United Nations Secretary General António Guterres called upon everybody, including persons with disabilities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. "COVID-19 has laid bare the persistent barriers and inequalities faced by the world's one billion persons with disabilities who have been among the hardest hit by the pandemic. A disability-inclusive pandemic response and recovery should be guided by persons with disabilities themselves, forge partnerships, tackle

People with disabilities have been disproportionately affected during the COVID-19 pandemic, not only due to lack of access to healthcare services but due to further sidelining

injustice and discrimination, expand access to technology and strengthen institutions to create a more inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 world."

Furthermore, disability rights groups are calling on governments to include

people with disabilities in their priority lists with regards to vaccinations and even in re-employment schemes. "Even though some of them are deaf, they have various other skills, but unfortunately they are not given due prominence," opined Rasanjali Pathirage of the Disability Organisation Joint Front. "Many of them are more vulnerable to be victims of gender-based violence and incidents of sexual abuse," she added.

WHO statistics indicate that heart disease, diabetes, stroke, lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease were collectively responsible for nearly 100 million additional healthy life-years lost in 2019 compared to 2000. Injuries are another major cause of disability and death.

BY MUQADDASA WAHID



In 2019, 439 cases of HIV/AIDS were reported, while in 2020 there was a reduction of cases as only 363 cases were reported. Dr Darshanie Mallikarachchi, Consultant Venereologist and National Programme Coordinator for IEC, Advocacy and Condom Promotion at the National STD/AIDS Control Programme, opined that this could be due to the reduced screening carried out due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "Due to travel restrictions, people could not travel to get tested and there were also less people referred. We too could do less outreach activities. This contributed to reduced screening." She also stated that due to the pandemic, public attention has shifted from diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Therefore, this year's theme for World AIDS day is "End Inequalities. End AIDS. End Pandemics." "We cannot forget COVID-19, but focus should be given to other diseases as well," explained Dr Mallikarachchi.

Early detection is important

She also shared that increase of reported cases did not mean these were new infections, the increase in reported cases was due to increased screening. "If those tested have symptoms of acute HIV infection, then it can be categorized as a new infection. Mostly those tested have had the infection for a while," said Dr Mallikarachchi.

She stated that when HIV infection is detected early, it can be controlled and prevented from progressing into AIDS. "Through anti-retroviral therapy, the viral load is reduced to undetectable levels. This will prevent the progression to AIDS thereby preventing immune system deterioration. When viral load is reduced to undetectable levels, the infected person will not be able to transmit the disease and can have normal life expectancy and lead healthy lives. They will have to take daily anti-retroviral therapy. Such women can also have a normal delivery safely," she revealed.

Currently pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), taken before possible exposure to HIV, and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), taken after possible exposure to HIV, are available at STD clinics to prevent contracting HIV/AIDS. She stated that PrEP and PEP are also given to those at high risk for contracting HIV/AIDS.

Voluntarily Test for HIV/AIDS

"Even when the disease has progressed to AIDS, there are treatments to control the disease. Currently, mortality rate for AIDS is lowering. Therefore, HIV has become a chronic manageable condition," she said, adding that people should not be scared to test for HIV infection. She shared that testing could be done at the STD clinics available across the island, at hospitals or even via

WORLD AIDS DAY 2021

HIV/AIDS is now a manageable condition



When viral load is reduced to undetectable levels, the infected person will not be able to transmit the disease and can have normal life expectancy and lead healthy lives

self-test kits which can be ordered online and delivered. "However, self-test kits available in the country are less sensitive than the blood tests we have in the clinic. Even if one gets tested at the clinic, confidentiality of the patient is protected," said Dr Mallikarachchi.

She stated that anyone who has had unprotected sex should get voluntarily tested for HIV, even when it is done only with their faithful partner. "More

than 50% of the females who test HIV positive have only had sexual relations with their one faithful partner," she revealed adding that those with risky behaviours and those at high risk should get screened regularly.

Awareness starts from schools

"Students should be educated about safe sex and STIs. This will increase the awareness of STIs and incidences will be minimized. People should also be aware of the treatment options available and not stigmatize those infected.

Sri Lanka does not have the latest treatments such as the injection available in other European countries, but the treatment currently available can control the disease and can even prevent progression of HIV to AIDS," reiterated Dr Mallikarachchi.

BY SARAH MUIZ



As the Covid-19 threat is still lurking around the corner it is paramount to be aware of the health complications that may rise in a patient during the post Covid phase. Today's Health Capsule would like to draw the attention to patients with osteoporosis conditions, vulnerable to complications during the post Covid period. In conversations with the Health Capsule, Consultant in Rheumatology and Rehabilitation of the Matara General Hospital, Dr. Himantha Atukorale explains how Osteoporosis could pose a challenge to patients, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic.

What is Osteoporosis?

Explaining the condition, Dr. Atukorale said that Osteoporosis is a disease that causes brittle bones. "The bone has a protein named collagen, which forms a frame on top of which minerals are deposited to add strength. When the bone mineral density becomes low, we call this Osteoporosis. This leads to easily breakable bones" he added.

Stating that a serious concern about Osteoporosis is its asymptomatic nature, Dr. Atukorale added that symptoms include small fractures that can happen throughout a few years without the awareness of patients. Other symptoms include spinal fractures that are not painful unless they pinch adjacent nerves. This pressure effect can give rise to severe pain. "Sometimes when multiple fractures happen in the spine, this can lead to changes in alignment. These alignment changes which are termed, kyphosis or scoliosis, can create muscle tension/pain. Osteoporosis can also cause fractures of hips and forearms after even a small fall" he said.

Link between COVID and Osteoporosis

It is a fact that COVID has caused people to adopt sedentary behavior. Accordingly, the lock down periods and stay at home concept has an unhealthy effect on many diseases including Osteoporosis. This has resulted in diseases like osteoarthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol levels and heart ailments being on the rise.

"One of the key reasons for a greater chance of acquiring osteoporosis is lack of exercise. Exercise is clearly known to enhance bone mineral density. Also poor choice of food might play a role here. Food which is high in sugar and lipids but have low levels of vitamin D or calcium might increase the chances of osteoporosis" the doctor noted.



SLMA's Health Journalism Awards HC journalist wins Award of Excellence in Health Journalism



Dr. Punnami Amarasinghe - one of the journalists of the Daily Mirror's Health Capsule (HC) won an Award of Excellence in Health Journalism

(Doctor category - English medium) at the recently concluded Health Journalism Awards for Excellence 2019/2020 organised by the Sri Lanka Medical Association.

Dr. Amarasinghe's award-winning article titled 'Gift Your Child With the Best' on breast-feeding practices was published in the Health Capsule.

Managing Osteoporosis amidst a pandemic



DR. HIMANTHA ATUKORALE
CONSULTANT IN RHEUMATOLOGY AND REHABILITATION OF THE MATARA GENERAL HOSPITAL

Can Osteoporosis during the COVID pandemic be avoided?

While explaining that patients can stay healthy and keep their bones, joints and muscles fit by eating a healthy diet which has fewer calories and is rich in minerals and vitamin D, Dr. Atukorale further noted that home based exercises like aerobics and Zumba even for 20 - 30 minutes a day will help. "Some resort to activities like dancing, climbing stairs, skipping and brisk walking outdoors at a safe location. Exposure of skin to sunlight especially between 10.00AM and 3.00PM can enhance the production of Vitamin D within the body" he added.

Preventing Osteoporosis related complications

"The main complications are fractures, while hip and forearm fractures are disabling and need quick orthopedic cures. Fractures of the spine can cause spinal cord or nerve compression. Personally, I advise patients to avoid falls by using simple appliances like walking canes or woking frames especially if they struggle with walking. There are certain modifiable risk factors known to correct osteoporosis. These are quitting smoking, reducing alcohol intake, maintaining a good body weight and getting treatment for premature menopause" the doctor explained.

Take home message

"Be wary of osteoporosis during the COVID-era, especially if you have a family history of fractures. Females of post-menopausal age group when frail have a higher risk of osteoporosis related fractures. If walking is difficult, eyesight is poor and if there are imbalance related health problems, it is always better to seek medical advice. Do not hesitate to use a walking aid as this helps in avoiding falls" Dr. Atukorale advised.



P2 Full Stock Market

P3 Finance Minister to inaugurate Sri Lanka...

P5 China's long march to West: An opportunity...



Access-led JV bags Rs.43bn contract to construct East Container Terminal



Chairman Sumal Perera

Managing Director Rohan Fernando

Executive Vice Chairman Christopher Joshua

■ Access holds 51% of JV while China Harbour Engineering holds the rest being technical partner

■ Construction to be completed in 36 months; commercial operations by May 2023

Access Engineering PLC (AEL), Sri Lanka's leading construction enterprise in JV with its technical partner China Harbour Engineering, a world-renowned marine

contractor, has been awarded the contract to construct the East Container Terminal (ECT) of the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA).

The project was advertised for competitive bidding where a local company was required to be the majority shareholder of a proposed JV with the requirement of major marine construction experience being contributed by the respective international partners.

In this instance, Access holds 51 percent of the JV and is set to gain technical knowhow and experience of building large-scale marine construction projects.

"We will strive to complete the project

ahead of the scheduled 36 month contract period," AEL Managing Director Rohan Fernando said.

He further stated that this may be the single biggest contract awarded to a Sri Lankan led JV and commended on how SLPA has promoted and given the opportunity for Sri Lankan companies to take part in such large infrastructure projects.

Upon successful completion of the ECT project, Access Engineering would get required experience to compete for similar projects outside Sri Lanka.

The ECT was originally planned to be commercially operational in 2016 and would be 08 years behind schedule when operations are earmarked to begin in 2023.

The SLPA has fast tracked the bidding process and has set aside SLPA reserve funds, which allow them to own and operate the terminal.

ECT is the second deep-water terminal to be developed since the Colombo International Container Terminal (CICT) started commercial operations in 2013.

MORE ON P4

Blockbuster Sept. earnings season comes to close

- Listed corporates deliver all-time high Rs. 110bn in total earnings
- Indicates successful acclimatisation of big corporates to new business climate
- Lower taxes, historically low interest rates, pent-up demand and rupee depreciation among key contributors to higher earnings

restrictions and lockdowns.

Citing a report by Softlogic Stockbrokers, Gradient Alliance, a Colombo based corporate finance services and research firm said the listed companies had reported Rs.110 billion in cumulative earnings in the July-September period, marking a robust 48 percent growth from the comparable quarter in 2020.

During the same period in 2020, Sri Lanka's listed companies reported cumulative Rs.73.9 billion in earnings, hitting at least a two-year high, as the economy was recovering from months long lockdowns, which gave rise to a strong pent-up demand and exceptional support from historically low interest rates and other liquidity support that came from the Central Bank.

Sri Lanka's listed companies' earnings reached an all-time high in the January-March quarter in 2021 when the cumulative earnings crossed the Rs.100 billion mark for the first time in history to record Rs.109 billion, logging a 189 percent growth, Softlogic Stockbrokers reported in June.

Although these earnings slowed down in the subsequent April-June quarter to Rs.76.3 billion, the September quarter earnings is a clear reflection that big corporates have largely defied the nearly one and a half months long soft lockdowns that prevailed during that quarter to come out stronger than ever.

Their deep pockets relative to small and medium sized enterprises and their outside nature, which have given them the ability to command a significant influence of the daily lives of people and the economy in general, have also enabled them to successfully navigate the restrictions.

While the September earnings season has largely been a mixed bag, companies in the banking, insurance and finance sector firms with significant exposure into exports, telecommunication, pharmaceutical, FMCG and other consumer staples, construction and real estate reported higher earnings, the analysis of the interim reports filed with the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) showed.

The higher earning hopes, particularly

in companies with a larger exports component such as Expolanka Holdings and Hayleys PLC pushed the stock indices to all-time highs as they delivered robust top and bottom line performances, made possible by the strengthening global demand and the weakening rupee against the dollar.

The lower corporate income tax, the Value Added Tax and the removal of the Nation Buildings Tax also contributed to elevated bottom lines of the companies during both 2020 and 2021, while the all-time low interest rates saved millions of rupees in interest expenses for companies, which otherwise would have eroded their earnings.

Perhaps due to the record-high corporate earnings enjoyed for nearly two years, the government proposed to impose a 25 percent one-off surcharge tax on those who have earned a taxable profit of Rs.2.0 billion for the financial year ended 2020/21, affecting about 62 larger companies.

MORE ON P4

Multiple high profile resignations at BOI

- Entire director board reported to have stepped down with immediate effect
- BOI Director General also reported to have tendered resignation

Kulatunga, Dr. Harsha Subasinghe and Jayamin Pelpola.

Following the board's resignation, Director General Pasan Wanigasekara is also reported to have tendered his resignation.

A vague statement issued by the BOI confirmed the resignation of "prominent members" of its board, but fell short of giving out the names.

The entire director board of Sri Lanka's apex investment promotions agency, Board of Investment, and its Director General are reported to have stepped down from their positions with immediate effect, Mirror Business learns.

The BOI board was headed by Chairman Sanjaya Mohottala and the other board members were Dr. Sanjaya

According to highly placed sources, the immediate reason for the multiple resignations was a decision taken at the highest levels of the government to revoke a Cabinet paper, which facilitated the appointment of 29 new officers to the BOI at higher salaries.

MORE ON P4

hSenid IPO opens today

The initial public offering (IPO) of software provider hSenid opens at 9.00 a.m. today.

Managed jointly by NDB Investment Bank and CT CLSA Capital, hSenid marks Sri Lanka's first ever IT/BPM public equity issuance, allowing the public to invest in a whole new sector of the economy, and potentially Sri Lanka's most promising sector for future growth.

According to the Joint Managers to the issue, hSenid's IPO is expected to draw active interest from a diverse spectrum of both local and foreign investors including institutions and high net-worth individuals (HNWIs), along with significant interest from retail investors.

The company offers over 55.3 million ordinary voting shares to the public at a price of Rs.12.50 per share, with the IPO aiming to raise approximately Rs.700 million.

MORE ON P4

Laufgs Gas stresses change in composition not causing leakages and explosions

- Identifies substandard related equipment and bad practices as main reasons
- Says change in butane and propane composition was not carried out to make additional profits

PLC, the only private sector LPG operator in the country's duopoly cooking gas market.

The company stressed that the majority of incidents relating to gas leaks are due to incorrect LP gas usage and inferior equipment, and it is a rare occurrence that incidents reported are caused by leaks from the cylinder valve or canister.

"We can assure you that the recently reported incidents did not occur due to the composition of the LP Gas in the cylinders.

Companies that import LP gas to the country assure that all imported LP Gas and cylinders are aligned and adhered to the standards imposed by the Sri Lanka Standard

Institute SLS 712-1998 for LP Gas and SLS 1178-2013 for LP Gas cylinders," Laufgs Gas said in a statement to the media yesterday.

It pointed out that the reports shared on traditional and social media that the leakages are caused by the composition of the LP gas filled in cylinders is misleading.

"Most of the accidents reported in the recent past were mainly due to the customers' incorrect LP gas habits and also substandard equipment usage," the company said.

From 27 to 30 November alone, over 27 incidents of LP gas related explosions were reported across the country.

MORE ON P4

Colombo Port transshipment volumes up in Oct. ending 3-month declining streak

The transshipment container volumes at the Port of Colombo rose for the first time in October ending a 3-month declining streak due to disruptions in global vessel movement, the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) data showed.

In October, the transshipment volumes handled by the Port rose 3.2 percent Year-on-Year (YoY) to 499,886 TEUs, after recording declines of 10.5 percent YoY in September, 7.9 percent YoY in August and 4.1 percent YoY in July.

However, the container handling at China Merchant Port (CMPort) Holdings-managed Colombo International Container Terminal (CICT) declined by 4.7

percent YoY to around 262,000 TEUs in October, though the volumes grew by 4.9 percent YoY to 2.54 million TEUs in the ten month period according to the company.

According to available data, the container volumes handled by South Asia Gateway Terminal (SAGT) declined by 18 percent YoY to 433,535 TEUs in the September quarter (from July-September) while container volumes handled by SLPA-managed Jaya Container Terminal (JCT) and East Container Terminal (ECT) declined by 10 percent YoY to 554,946 TEUs.

MORE ON P4

SLTDA and Tourism Ministry called out by COPE for failing to develop islands in Kalpitiya

The Ministry of Tourism and the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) were called out by the Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) for failing to develop the islands in Kalpitiya despite having received Cabinet approval, a delay that is taxing the hard-hit tourism sector in terms of development, investment, and revenue generation.

A total of 12 islands that are under SLTDA remain untouched for nearly a decade, and despite an investor having applied to develop five of the islands (2,055 acres) in 2011.

The delay is attributed to the

relevant authorities failing to identify the institution to obtain approval for the water bungalows project.

COPE Chairman Charitha Herath asserted prolonged delays for obtaining approvals, even for investors who have a positive track record, are an obstacle to the development of the tourism industry and the national economy.

To ensure the islands are utilised to their full potential, the COPE directed the Tourism Ministry and the SLTDA to implement a "special project" within a "strong" legal framework.

MORE ON P4

Fresh joint effort to promote Sri Lanka

- Sri Lankan ambassadors requested to submit promotional plan within a month
- Officer for Tourism Promotion to be appointed at all embassies

The Tourism Ministry together with the External Affairs Ministry is gearing up to launch a fresh initiative to promote destination Sri Lanka to global travellers for which Sri Lankan embassies across the world have been called upon to put forward an action plan within a month.

MORE ON P4

New start-up airline 'Fly Lankan' to operate flights to Maldives

- India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Malaysia and the UAE to be added

The new start-up airline and Sri Lanka's third scheduled international operator 'Fly Lankan' will be commencing operations with flights to the Maldives by end of this month.

This was revealed by Fly Lankan CEO Dr. Arosha Fernando during a special meeting held at the High Commission of the Republic of Maldives in Colombo in the presence of the Ambassador of Maldives to Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Seychelles, South Africa & Australia, Omar Razak. "As per our Business Model, we are



From left: Imran Cader - MD of Galactic Holdings, Onella Karunanayake - Director of OSM Holdings Group & Global Park, Dr. Arosha Fernando - CEO of Fly Lankan, Ambassador of Maldives to Sri Lanka Omar Razak, Chairman of Fly Lankan - S. Nathan and Udaya Thuduwatte - Senior Consultant of Fly Lankan

in discussions with OSM Holdings Group, Global Park and Galactic Holdings to partner with us in our Maldivian operation," the CEO Fernando said.

He also highlighted that the airline

will be commencing operations with flights to a total of six international destinations after Maldives including India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Malaysia and the UAE.

MORE ON P4

ICCSL recognised at Business World Awards 2020



The International Chamber of Commerce Sri Lanka (ICCSL) was recognised at the Business World International Organisation Award Ceremony for a Most Outstanding Service Excellence award 2020, which was held at Taj Samudra Hotel on Sunday.

Several leading personalities were recognised at the event including Arjuna Ranatunga, Singer Yohani de Silva, Mahela Jayawardena and Chamuditha Samarawickrama. Immediate Past Chairman Dinesh Weerakkody is seen receiving the award from former President Maithripala Sirisena MP.

PwC to host exclusive webinar on investing in Bangladesh

The Invest in Bangladesh webinar organised by PwC Sri Lanka in collaboration with PwC Bangladesh, scheduled for December 7, is part of a broader series of webinars under the theme cross-border expansion.

There will be a number of senior officials addressing the forum from PwC's regional offices, who are experts on Bangladesh.

Moderated by PwC Sri Lanka Director Deals Strategy Ruwini Fernando, the webinar will explore macro-economic aspects and the business environment within Bangladesh and how businesses interested in making an investment could be established and operated, within a government-backed, developing paradigm of a rapidly progressing country. The forum's objective is to help Sri Lankan corporates broaden their business reach through cross-border trade and investment and thereby establish a competitive and robust presence in the regional economies.

The esteemed panel that would be leading the discussion will comprise of Bangladesh Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Nihad Kabir, High Commissioner from Sri Lanka to Bangladesh Prof. Sudharshan Seneviratne and PwC Bangladesh Managing Partner Transaction Services Mamun Rashid, along with other PwC experts.

Some noteworthy transactions carried out in the advisory capacity by PwC Bangladesh include advising Japan Tobacco in its US \$ 1.47 billion acquisition of Dhaka Tobacco – the country's largest FDI to date and advising the Shanghai Stock Exchange in a 25 percent acquisition of the Dhaka Stock Exchange. PwC Bangladesh was also appointed to handle the National Single Window project to streamline international trade by modernising and digitising Customs and bringing together government departments involved in import and export under a digital platform.

The Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), the principal private investment promotion and facilitation agency of Bangladesh, is mandated for providing diversified promotional and facilitating services with a view to accelerating industrial development of the country. The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) is currently actively seeking foreign investment, particularly in the apparel industry, light manufacturing, energy, power, agribusiness and infrastructure sectors and offers a range of investment incentives under its industrial policy and export-oriented growth strategy. The current fiscal regime of Bangladesh consists of direct and indirect taxation and is governed by the National Board of Revenue.

Speaking on the value of investments in Bangladesh, Fernando stated, "Bangladesh has one of the most competitive cost structures in the world and is well-positioned to diversify its exports and move up the value chain. The country also has large pharmaceutical, footwear and agricultural-processing industries. The country now seeks to mobilise further investment in the country, as it continues to build on their experience in supporting sustainable development in Bangladesh. This has also presented investors with a number of attractive opportunities to benefit from. The country has been hailed by The Economist as the new Asian Tiger. And the investor appetite reflects this. Last year it received its highest ever level of foreign direct investment (FDI) at US \$ 3.61 billion, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development."

With insights provided by PwC's team of highly-skilled professionals, who are knowledgeable experts in current and future industry trends and key business indicators for investment, this webinar promises to be an ideal platform to gain an in-depth view on the Bangladesh market, emerging trends, growth drivers, regulations, route to market and opportunities for partnering. Bangladesh's economy has witnessed steady growth with gross domestic product (GDP) growing at an average of 6 percent during the past decade. It is poised to grow by 7 percent on average until 2033, according to a forecast by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR). Supported by a demographic dividend, strong exports, digital transformation and stable macroeconomic conditions, Bangladesh has become one of the fastest growing economies in the world. As such, the country offers generous opportunities for investment under its liberalised industrial policy and export-oriented and private sector-led growth strategy.



Chief Operating Officer and Advisory Leader Channa Manoharan



Chief Executive Officer Sujeeewa Mudalige



Director Deals Strategy Ruwini Fernando

Finance Minister to inaugurate Sri Lanka Economic Summit 2021

The upcoming Sri Lanka Economic Summit 2021 (SLES 2021), the foremost and most anticipated economic event of Sri Lanka, will be inaugurated by the chief guest, Finance Minister Basil Rajapakse, on December 6, under the theme 'Springboard for revival: Opportunity to reset'.

Central Bank Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal will deliver the keynote address at the inauguration of the summit, which will bring together leading national and international thought leaders, economists

and industry experts on to one platform, as they lead discussions on charting a sustainable course for economic recovery and development. Ceylon Chamber of Commerce Chairman Vish Govindasamy will deliver the welcome address.

The two-day summit will feature seven curated sessions offering unique insights and perspectives on several topics of contemporary economic significance, including setting the macro foundation for growth, the case for public-private sector collaboration in advancing



Basil Rajapakse



Ajith Nivard Cabraal



Vish Govindasamy

economic development, Sri Lanka's potential as a technology hub, opportunities to enhance

export revenue and how Sri Lanka can reposition itself for the new normal in travel.

SLES 2021 is scheduled to be held on December 6 and 7, as a hybrid summit, catering to participants who would join online as well as participate in-person at Shangri-La Hotel.

Participants have the opportunity to register online from <https://chamber.lk> for the entire two-day summit or choose the sessions they wish to attend. Registrations for the event are now open. For further information, please contact events@chamber.lk or 0115588852 or alike@chamber.lk or 0115588805.



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ADELE TO RETURN TO LIVE SHOWS IN LAS VEGAS NEXT YEAR

Adele on Tuesday announced a series of concerts in Las Vegas starting in January in what will be her first live performances since 2017. The British singer will perform two shows each weekend from Jan. 21 to April 16 at Caesar's Palace Hotel in the desert city. **REUTERS**

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POACHING

Today's column is not a lesson on how to poach eggs or fish. It is all about how crafty people poach other peoples' staff. This is not something new, it has been happening for yonks. The audacity on how the poachers approach the staff is another story.

Approaching a domestic aide is very much a common practice among our Colombo circles. Walking into a house and noticing how clean and neat the house is, sets the wheel turning in their minds on how to inveigle the domestic staff by offering a few thousand rupees more. They will do this by moving into the kitchen on the pretext of wanting to be helpful or slip their telephone number to the aides requesting them to

give a call when alone. At times, the call is not to offer them employment but to learn about the happenings in the home and, in return, they oil the domestics' palms with some money.

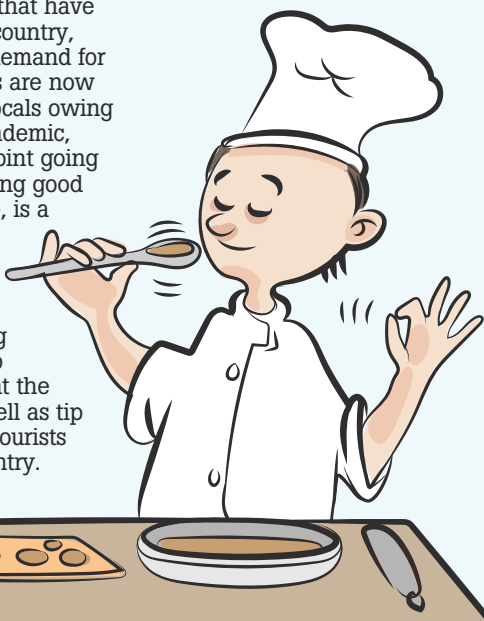
The bigger poaching happens among the exotic villas that have sprung up all over this country, where there is a huge demand for good cooks. These villas are now very popular with the locals owing to the never ending pandemic, most of whom see no point going on holiday and not having good meals. A cook, therefore, is a key point in any resort and having a good one will make all the difference and is a guarantee of attracting more clientele. It is also common knowledge that the locals spend more as well as tip better than the type of tourists who come into this country.



The bigger poaching happens among the exotic villas that have sprung up all over this country, where there is a huge demand for good cooks.

Many villas advertise on job sites and other social media. When the advertisements do not attract a suitable cook, they get on to the next step, which is attempting to poach the neighbouring villa's cook. If the staff are looked after well, they too have their loyalties and will not pack up and leave. What must be borne in mind is that any staff member who ups and leaves after being enticed with some additional cash are capable of leaving in the same manner when approached by another.

Such poaching could be avoided if the owners of these establishments carry on their business in a fair fashion by looking out for their staff rather than be conniving and shady and resorting to poaching another's employees.



Matthew McConaughey not seeking Texas Governorship 'at this moment'

Matthew McConaughey will not run for Governor of Texas "at this moment", the Oscar-winning actor said Sunday, after months of speculation that he would make the leap into politics. The 52-year-old's political ambitions had caused excitement in liberal circles, and particularly among Texans appalled by Governor Greg Abbott, who signed a highly restrictive law banning most abortions.

"As a simple kid born in the little town of Uvalde, Texas, it never occurred to me that I would one day be considered for political leadership," the rom-com heartthrob turned serious actor said in a video posted online.

"It's a humbling and inspiring path to ponder. It is also a path that I am choosing not to take at this moment."

Polls had shown McConaughey would fare better against Abbott than Beto O'Rourke, the Democratic former presidential candidate who formally entered the race earlier this month. Abbott is seeking a third term in the November 2022 election, for which nominations close on December 13. McConaughey told AFP earlier this month that a gubernatorial campaign had "been discussed. It's a possible avenue." The "Dallas Buyers Club" and "True Detective" star had not declared allegiance to either major party.

He described himself as "aggressively centrist", adding: "Not because that's the place of gray and compromise... I think today it's a daring space. It's the space of outlaws." **AFP**



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Yohan, Rohan and Neyomi

Shyamalee
Tudawe



Hi!!

COLOMBO IS TALKING ABOUT



Charmaine, Nelum and Raneel



Khalia and Yohan



PIX BY Waruna Wanniarachchi

CAN'T WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS
THE DE LANEROLLE BROTHERS



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Yasmin, Shanthi and Ishramali



Yogya and Ryan



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BY TIRANYA RANASINGHE

The internationally acclaimed De Lanerolle Brothers held their sold-out Christmas concert 'Can't Wait For Christmas' at Hilton Colombo. Adhering to the health regulations imposed by the government, the audience was limited to a certain number of guests, making the show more intimate. Requirements such as wearing masks throughout the show and showing proof of double vaccination were implemented as a measure of taking extra precaution. In order to cater to the high demand for the Brothers, more shows were added and the Brothers performed four shows in one day. The concert was the perfect entrance to the Christmas season as the two brothers welcomed December with their hit medley of Christmas carols.

The show started with a bang as the Brothers sang a few songs that were usually not in their Christmas repertoire. Dappling different genres and ages, the Brothers sang ballads such as 'Unchained Melody' by the Righteous Brothers and 'I Dreamed a Dream' by Anne Hathaway, adding their own twist to it. These were tracks that would have been performed in a usual De Lanerolle show. The Brothers moved onto Christmas hits such as 'Long Time Ago in Bethlehem' and 'Let It Snow'. The brothers prompted the crowd to sing along with them, celebrating the true spirit of Christmas. Subsequently, one of the Brothers, Ishan De Lanerolle performed a lovely version of 'Blue Christmas' with his rich, deep voice reverberating in the room.

With a short break in between, the

Can't wait for
CHRISTMAS

latter part of the show began with classics such as 'Silent Night' and 'O Holy Night' and the Brothers' heavenly harmonies made a vast impact in the hearts of the audience. The set continued with more upbeat and fast-paced songs such as 'Rudolf the Reindeer' and 'Santa Claus is Coming To Town' and their performance was accompanied by a cheerful Santa Claus who animatedly wandered across the room. The set came to an end with the Brothers' children, Yohan and Khalia De Lanerolle executing a joyful performance with 'Feliz Navidad'. The two prodigies were joined by the stars of the evening towards the end of the song and were followed by thunderous applause from the audience, with many cheering loudly for them. The show was followed by a buffet at Graze Kitchen.

SWEN
"It was simply fabulous. I loved how they started with their usual songs and moved on to sing Christmas songs"



PRAMITH
"It was a wonderful sight to see them singing with their kids at the end"



MALATHI
"It was really good. I really enjoyed the show and my favourite song would have to be Blue Christmas"

PRIYANTHI DE SILVA

"My Son and I were delighted to be at the Christmas concert by our much loved De Lanerolle Brothers! Firstly, the stage, lighting, seating arrangements with social distancing in mind (beautiful chairs too!), were all perfectly executed. Everyone was required to wear masks throughout the show and all complied unlike what I have seen at certain other events.

The brothers started off with one of my FAVOURITE songs sung by them at many shows (Marry Me) which I never get tired of listening to, followed by 3 other lovely songs and then the Christmas songs. Rohan's humour and the way he bonds with the audience is something I truly love. Ishan's voice is on another level! These two brothers are so entertaining and so genuine with their love and appreciation towards their audience.

The show was followed by a fabulous dinner at the Graze Kitchen and even from there I was listening to the brothers singing again at their final show for the evening! Can't quite get enough of them I guess!

Congratulations to the Hilton for being strict with social distancing and mask wearing as well as organising this show so well and to the Brothers for helping us all de-stress with their wonderful entertainment. Thank you!"

SHANALIE RODRIGO

"I first heard the De Lanerolle brothers sing over 10 years ago and have been hooked since. It was so great to hear them once again and I can't think of a better way to get into the Christmas spirit. We all had a wonderful time and I'd like to thank dialog star points for coming through..."



DAMAYANTHI
"It was an excellent show"

SHIRENDRA LAWRENCE

"Despite the challenges of these times, We need a little sparkle to kick off the season. As always, Rohan and Ishan did a super job of ticking that box"



GILL BROWN UK

"Something I never expected when I left the UK for a short holiday in Sri Lanka was to witness a simply amazing concert. I happened to come to the Hilton Colombo with friends and even though we didn't have a ticket we watched from a distance. To imagine that Christmas is celebrated in this manner with some amazing singing with beautiful backdrops and breathtaking decor at the Hilton Colombo was simply amazing. We truly loved what we heard and saw. Truly gave me that start to Christmas"



MARCHE DE LA FOI

SEEING LIFE IN COLOUR



Lresonate with the famous words spoken by Henri Matisse who once said that creativity takes courage, and that certainly was the case for me. I needed bold courage to walk out of the old and into the newness that awaited me, to embrace the transformative potential that lay within. SEEING LIFE IN COLOUR is a multilayered and diverse display of my creative journey that commenced over a decade ago when I finally got the courage to embark on my childhood passion to paint and express myself in colour giving a voice and image to the emotions within. The creative side of me remained dormant and unrealised until now, since I dedicated my life to the study of science pursuing a degree in Microbiology and Virology at the University of Aberdeen and then went onto live and work in Scotland for many years before embracing the role of motherhood. My faith filtered into every part of my life and became the very fabric of my artwork when my creative side emerged built on a framework of



memories from my childhood, marriage and motherhood. I hope that the pieces displayed, would encourage and bring hope to someone who would be needing it, in a world that is masked with layers of deceptive grandeur that hides the true nature of one's emotional fragility. When I look back at my journey with my art work and the years that have passed by, I can observe the metamorphosis of what was once formless and merely an aspiration transformed into a collection of beautiful artwork. Discovering and unleashing the creative side in my later life has been such an amazing journey and I hope that the excitement and joy of the process has translated to all the pieces that will be displayed in my debut exhibition which will be open to the public on the **4th and 5th of December 2021 at the Harold Peiris gallery.**



"Marche de la foi", which means walk of faith in French, was conceived devoid of structure, inhibitions and time constraints, where each piece of artwork had my undivided attention for as long as it was needed to reach perfection and became a form of worship to God who made my life exceedingly beautiful from within, filling me with a peace that surpassed all understanding. There is something cathartic in the creative process, whereby I enjoyed having complete control of the outcome of what was produced regardless of the errors, flaws and blemishes that are inevitable and almost assured while creating art. The external beauty of any piece, masks the many layers of imperfections, fears, insecurities, and flaws of the creative process, finally unveiling the near perfect image that is finally displayed. This aspect fascinated me, since life in itself resembles the very same, so unique to one's own journey and experiences but encompassing so much beauty whether it be latently buried within. Unlike many other artists who most often have a formal training, I had none, other than a passion to explore my creative side and a still small voice that guided and directed my path. I believe that our unspoken and unmaterialised aspirations have every



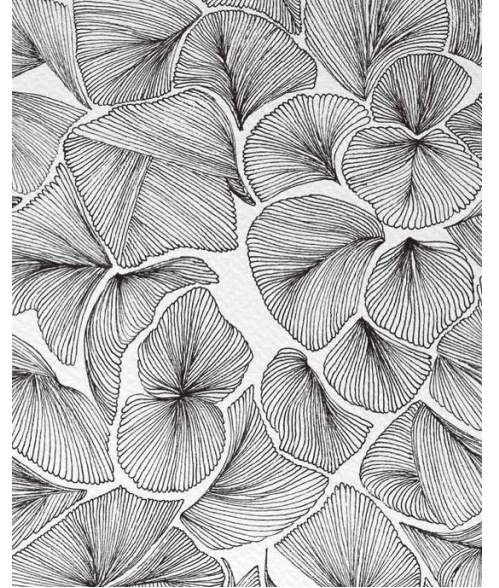
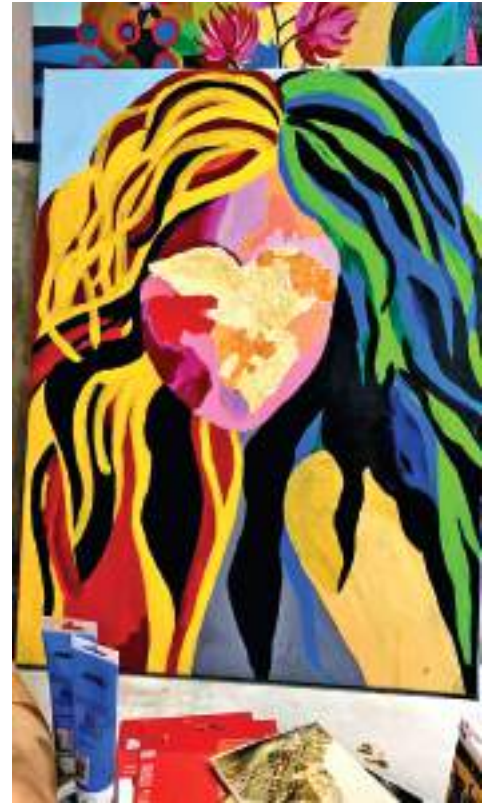
SEEING LIFE IN COLOUR is a multilayered and diverse display of my creative journey that commenced over a decade ago

chance of becoming a reality when circumstances align themselves preempting almost a divine intervention which has been so evident in my life. I hope that my work captures and illustrates the very energy of what predisposed the painting in the first instance. I have no grand illusion that my artwork will appeal to all who view my work, it may not even create a tidal wave of an impact in one's mind, but I do hope that my work would speak to the hearts of some, and evoke a sense of peace, calm, hope, joy and even give a glimpse of the unlimited capabilities and talents buried within ourselves that usually remain dormant and hidden until we face a cataclysmic event which instigates and arouses the latent possibilities that we are born with to arise to the surface.

My abstractions reflect certain motifs and shapes infusing into my work from my scientific background quite unconsciously which illustrates the fact that our life experiences, whether it be in the form of formal education or otherwise, have an innate tendency to get ingrained in the recess of our subconscious mind and adds to the composite human being we get molded into. I use art to externalise the myriad of emotions that are buried within using a melange of vibrant and contrasting colour juxtaposed with shapes and motifs that keep repeating trying to emphasise the fact that we are created to live an abundant life, experiencing the diversity of colour, hoping that one would become intoxicated with the beauty of it, thereby elevating the mood and attitude of our soul, rather than be confined to a mere existential type of living simply to survive, seeing life through the visionary lens encompassing just a few colours when there is such a varied compilation of vibrancy to choose from. The aspect of colour and the brief discussion of it, makes one ask the empirical question whether we are truly living that abundant life that is waiting to be experienced, lived and celebrated? Or do we simply exist in a bare minimum reality, confined, and imprisoned by our own doing, almost afraid to live and experience life to the fullest? After almost a decade of an incubation period, 'Marche de la foi' is excited to transition into the next stage of its life, hoping to create customised art, based on the ambience, space and vision of the client whether it be for a home or office.

By Deepthi Amarasekera

4th and 5th of December 2021 at the Harold Peiris Gallery.



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The Horton Plains is located on Sri Lanka's highest plateau, between altitudes of 6,300 to 6,600 feet above the sea level. The landscape consists of lands covered in a tropical cloud of forests or savannah grasslands, locally known as 'pathana'. A visit to Horton Plains or 'Mahaeliya' as it is locally named is quite popular amongst locals, who mostly visit during the weekends. For this reason it is best that you try to visit during a weekday to truly experience the Plains' isolated serenity.

Horton Plains can be reached by main road or rail. The most common approach is by road either from North via Pattipola or from South via Ohiya. If coming by rail visitors can get down either at Pattipola or Ohiya and walk or arrange transport. No public transport is available and an entrance fee is charged from visitors and vehicles that enter the park.

For those who visit Horton Plains, the most significant trail is the main circuit Nature Trail involving Small World's End, World's End, Baker's Falls and Chimney Falls views. There are also Nature Trails to Thutupolakanda and Kingalpothiha.

World's End

The Main Trail starts at Farr Inn, a lodge built by Thomas Farr, which has now been turned into Horton Plains Information Centre. The trail is about 9 km and takes about 3 1/2 hours to complete at a leisurely pace. The trail is of easy level except the portion of trail leading to Baker's Falls and back through the Cloud forest. Only eco friendly material is allowed from the Park Entrance Watch Post in to the Park. However, plastic water bottles can be taken in but need to be brought back. Polythene covers or bags, cigarettes and lighting material such as boxes of matches or lighters are not allowed to be taken in.

The Farr Inn provides the visitor with interesting information and publications about Horton Plains.

Visitors to the park can follow a 10km loop that incorporates all of the spectacular features, enabling them to enjoy them while adhering to the strict rules for environment protection and nature conservation. The best time to visit is early morning, when the air is likely to be clearest so you can enjoy the best views. In the afternoons, clouds tend to descend and the area gets misty.

The Plains are actually named after Sir Robert Wilmot Horton. The Horton Plains are the headwaters of three major Sri Lankan rivers, the Mahaweli, Kelani and Walawe. It is a beautiful and silent place that offers some excellent hikes surrounded by mountains such as Kingalpotta (2395m) and Totapola (2357m).

The 'Plains' form an undulating plateau over 2000m high. The diversity of the landscape is matched by the wide variety of wildlife, although sightings of the larger animals are very rare.



It is a beautiful and silent place that offers some great hikes surrounded by mountains, such as Kirigalpotta (2395m) and Totapola (2357m)

Wildlife

Horton Plains is home to a wide range of wildlife such as leopards, sambar deer and wild boar, but boar and leopard sightings are rare. The purple-faced langur is sometimes seen in the forest on the Ohiya road, while you may also spot the endemic toque macaque.

Birdwatching

The area is popular with birdwatchers. Endemic species include the yellow-eared bulbul, the fan-tailed warbler, the ash-headed babbler, the Ceylon hill white-eye, the Ceylon blackbird, the Ceylon white-eyed aranga, the dusky-blue flycatcher and the Ceylon blue magpie. Birds of prey include the mountain hawk-eagle.

Plants

Chrysopogon covers the grasslands, while marshy areas are home to bog moss. The umbrella-shaped, white-blossomed keena is the main canopy over montane forest areas. Rhododendron zeylanicum, has blood-red blossoms and the purple-leaved Strobilanthes blossoms once after five years, and then dies.

Small World's End at Horton Plains

It takes about 25 minutes to get to Small World's End from the brick sign post at trail division and about 37 minutes from the Park Entrance Watch Post.

Baker's Falls

To access this fabulous waterfall, one needs to travel through the cloud forest through a path from the trail. There are two access points to the waterfall. One may easily get this trail bypassed but if one leads through it, the path takes you to the bottom of the waterfall that will show many vivid landscapes of the waterfall and surroundings.



GAMES & CARTOONS

4633

Sudoku

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

SOLUTION NO. 4632

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3x3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any. The solution will be published on next game page.

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

DailyMirror

CROSSWORD

CLUES FOR CROSSWORD NO. 1407

Solution for No. 1406

1	G	2	O	3	P	4	A	5	T	6	S				
7	N	E	T	H	E	R	8	D	O	A	B	L	E		
	L		D		E		A		T		O				
9	A	D	Z	E	10	F	U	G	I	T	I	V	E		
			A		E		E		O		A				
11	E	X	T	R	A	C	T	13	V	O	D	K	A		
	A				T		S				I				
15	S	N	I	D	E	16		17	E	T	H	I	C	A	L
	T		E		U		O		N						
20	S	H	O	U	L	D	E	R	21	D	E	B	T		
	I		C		D		I		I		U				
23	S	N	E	E	Z	E	24	E	G	G	N	O	G		
	E		D		R		D		O		Y				

Across	Down
7 Mixture of untoasted dry cereals and fruits (6)	1 Painter (4)
8 Varieties (6)	2 Close-fitting pullover shirt (1-5)
9 Rice beer (4)	3 Any of certain cathedrals and large churches; originally connected to a monastery (7)
10 Heartsease (8)	4 (informal British usage) aggravation or aggression (5)
11 Small root or division of a root (7)	5 Unravel (6)
13 A fixed look with eyes open wide (5)	6 Cantata (8)
15 Bowler hat (5)	12 Limited to one idea or thought (3-5)
17 Someone who listens attentively (7)	14 Grant (7)
20 Grave (8)	16 Insect (6)
21 Strain (4)	18 Inside leg (6)
23 Wild cat of Central America (6)	19 Itinerary (5)
24 (Computing) requiring a phone line to dial (4-2)	22 Conduit to carry off smoke (4)

Due to the prevailing situation in the country there will be no crossword competition. The publication of the crossword is purely for your enjoyment.

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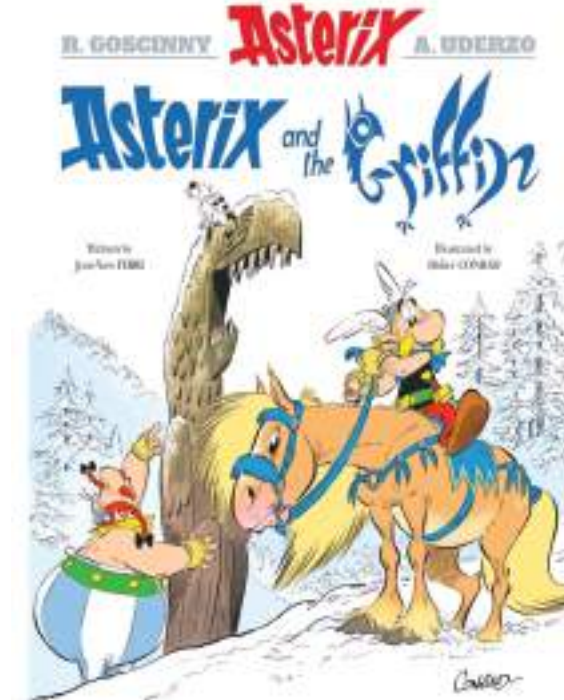


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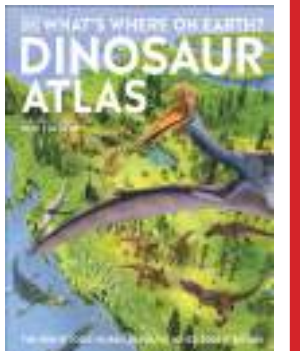
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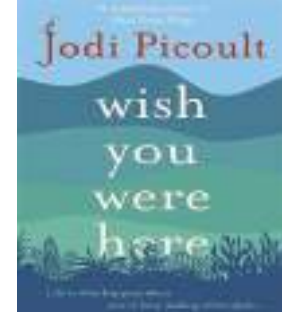
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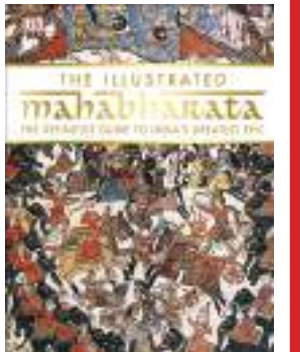
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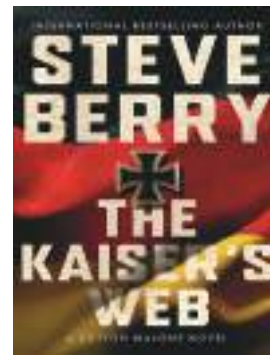
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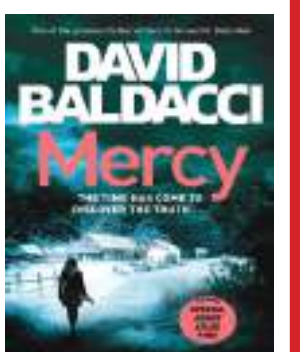
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