

Kandos
The original chocolate
Rs. 5/- upwards

The Island

Kandos
The original chocolate
Rs. 5/- upwards

Vol. 41 No.19 Tuesday 7th December 2021, 18 pages Rs.30 Registered in Sri Lanka as a Newspaper - ●



SJB MPs staging a protest outside Parliament yesterday alleging that they were harassed by the ruling party members. The protest was led by Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa.

Speaker promises to appoint bi-partisan committee to look into incidents in Parliament

Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena announced in Parliament yesterday (06) that a committee consisting of senior members from the Government and Opposition would be

appointed within the week to look into the incidents that took place in Parliament last Friday and Saturday and submit a report.



Mahinda

SJB holds an 'alternative parliament sitting'

BY SAMAN INDRAJITH
The SJB yesterday (06) held a meeting which they called an 'alternative parliament' after boycotting the parliamentary sittings in protest of the alleged 'unruly conduct' of the government MPs in the Parliament Chamber and the lobby last Friday (03) and Saturday (04). The party boycotted yesterday's Parliamentary sitting,



Sajith

saying that they would not attend the sittings until Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena ensured their safety inside and outside the Chamber.

A scuffle erupted in Parliament Chamber on 3 December when SJB MP Manusha Nanayakkara requested more time to speak. MP Nanayakkara

P 4 >>>

New Cases 568 (at press time) Total: 568,250	Active Cases Total: 11,078	Recovered 362 Total: 542,688	Deaths 23 Total: 14,484
---	--------------------------------------	---	--------------------------------------

COVID-19 **Daily Death Count: 23**

Two-year reconciliation project spurns Lord Naseby's disclosure

EU, Germany funded scheme costs Rs. 8 mn

BY SHAMINDRA FERDINANDO

The National Peace Council (NPC) says war-related matters hadn't been discussed at the nearly two-year-long reconciliation project that brought together students from Eastern, Jaffna, Ruhuna and Sabaragamuwa Universities.

More than 160 students have participated in the project that culminated with a conference on the theme of 'Plural Sri Lanka: Paths to reconciliation.' Foreign Minister Prof. G.L. Peiris delivered the closing address and responded to questions from the audience.

Pointing out that post-war reconciliation efforts had been badly hampered by allegations that the Sri Lankan military killed over

P 4 >>> Prof. G.L.



High Court Trial-at-Bar orders release of several accused from 11 charges in CB bond auction case

BY AJA ABEYNAYAKE

Colombo High Court Trial-at-Bar yesterday ordered the release of several accused, including former Finance Minister Ravi Karunanayake and former Central Bank former Governor Arjuna Mahendra, from 11 charges out of 22 in connection with the Central Bank bond auction held on 31 March, 2016.

Colombo High Court Trial-at-Bar held that public property charges against the accused could not be maintained. Indictments had been filed against Perpetual Treasuries Private Ltd (PTL), former Finance Minister Ravi Karunanayake, CBSL former Governor

P 4 >>>



Jacky to be grilled by Indian police

BY S VENKAT NARAYAN

Our Special Correspondent
NEW DELHI, December 6: India's Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez to appear before the investigators on Wednesday (December 8) in the national capital in connection with its ongoing probe in INR2-billion money laundering

P 4 >>>



Jacqueline



An unidentified Pakistani diplomatic official places wreath of flowers at the remains of Priyantha Kumara, a Sri Lankan employee who was lynched by a Muslim mob in Sialkot last week, after it was unloaded at an air port in Colombo yesterday. (Photo/Eranga Jayawardena)

More gas explosions; helmet saves female victim

BY RATHINDRA KURUWITA

Several more incidents of gas explosions were reported on Sunday night from several parts of the country. In one incident, a woman's life was saved in Pannala as she was wearing a helmet as a precaution at the time. "I wear a helmet because I am worried about these explosions. I was saved because of the helmet. Several flying shards hit my helmet during the explosion," she said. Explosions were reported in Galle and Yatawatta too.

Johnston on why yahapalana govt. did not have JO members prosecuted

BY SAMAN INDRAJITH

The yahapalana government had tried to prosecute the then Opposition MPs belonging to the Joint Opposition for a fracas in the Chamber of Parliament, but got cold feet on finding that CCTV footage records proved



Johnston

the partiality of former Speaker Karu Jayasuriya, Chief Government Whip and Highways Minister Johnstone Fernando said yesterday.

Making a statement, in Parliament, following the announcement by

P 4 >>>

Myanmar court sentences ousted leader Suu Kyi to four years in prison

A special court in Myanmar's capital sentenced the country's ousted leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, to four years in prison on Monday after finding her guilty of incitement and violating coronavirus restrictions, said a report published by The Hindu, quoting a legal official.

The sentencing was the first in a series of cases in which the 76-year-old Nobel laureate is being prosecuted



Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi. File Image

since the Army seized power on Feb. 1, preventing her National League for Democracy party from starting a second five-year term in office.

The incitement case involved statements posted on her party's Facebook page after she and other party leaders had already been detained by the military, while the coronavirus charge involved a campaign appearance ahead of elections in

November last year which her party overwhelmingly won.

The Army, whose allied party lost many seats in the election, claimed massive voting fraud, but independent election observers did not detect any major irregularities.

The court's ruling was conveyed by a legal official who insisted on anonymity for fear of being punished by the authorities. Suu Kyi's trials are closed to the media and spectators, and her lawyers, who had been the sole source of information on the proceedings, were

P 4 >>>

'SJB MPs who raised fears about their safety in Parliament fearlessly eat in its canteen'

BY SAMAN INDRAJITH

Agriculture Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage yesterday said that the SJB MPs had given the lie to their own claim of not having adequate security in Parliament by having meals in the members' canteen.

Participating in the third-reading stage debate



Mahindananda

on Budget 2022 the Minister said: "Thirty four SJB MPs have had their breakfast in the Parliament canteen. They came here visited the canteen and had their meals before staging protests

this morning. This proves that they have no security fears.

JEFF & NUT
SJB has held an alternative parliamentary session at party head office on the budget.
That way, it can also defeat the budget and form a govt.

Express your love with just one click
Kandos
Now with just one click get the full range of exquisite KANDOS chocolates delivered right to your door step or have a pack of your selection delivered to your bestie, sweet heart or any other.
Go to- www.kandos.lk
Islandwide Delivery | Cash on delivery | VISA | MasterCard



Professor Gathsaurie Neelika Malavige, Head of Department of Immunology and Molecular Medicine, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, and a former honorary secretary of the Vaccine and Infectious Diseases Forum of Sri Lanka (VIDFSL), was felicitated recently at a special ceremony by the VIDFSL in appreciation of the globally recognised service she has rendered to medicine and research on dengue and COVID-19 and her appointment to the WHO Technical Advisory Group on scientific, technical and strategic matters related to the COVID-19 technology access pool.

No evidence of vaccine hesitancy being higher among young

By RATHINDRA KURUWITA

There is no evidence that vaccine hesitancy is higher among the youth contrary to claims by health officials, according to the Sri Lanka Opinion Tracking Survey (SLOTS) and Sri Lanka Health and Ageing Study (SLHAS) Wave 2.

These studies were conducted by the Institute for Health Policy (IHP), Colombo and

Peradeniya, and Ruhuna universities between October and November 2021. Dr. Ravi Rannan Eliya and Dr. Sanjay Perera are the focal points of the surveys.

However, those living in the Northern and Eastern provinces, ethnic minorities, and lower income earners have a higher chance of not being vaccinated, the studies have revealed.

The study has also found that most of those who have not been vaccinated are willing to

be vaccinated. However, about 50% of them will do so only if they are given vaccines of their choice.

"84% of them prefer Pfizer," the studies have found.

"Highest contact frequency, during the lockdown, was seen in those between the ages of 30 and 39, followed by 18-29 year olds. There was no evidence that social contacts by adults have increased during November, but contact frequency for children did increase

owing to increased contacts at school."

The surveys also show that around 16% of adults report at least one of the seven most predictive symptoms of COVID-19 in the past week, but less than 5% of them undergo testing.

"This suggests that current testing/isolation strategy does not contribute much to controlling transmission, and there is much room to improve effectiveness and efficiency."

No sign of an end to CEB turmoil with CEBEU and new CEBSEA locking horns

By IFHAM NIZAM

Secretary to the President Dr. P.B. Jayasundera yesterday assured the Ceylon Electricity Board Senior Engineers' Association (CEBSEA) that he would take up recent blackouts and alleged sinister moves by the Ceylon Electricity Board Engineers Union (CEBEU) with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

Speaking on the sidelines of a press briefing at the Taj Samudra yesterday, CEBSEA Executive Committee Member Nandika Pathirage told The Island that the CEBEU wanted CEB Chairman M.M.C. Ferdinando and CEB General Manager M.R. Ranatunga removed from their posts as they were keen to have Friday's countrywide blackout probed thoroughly.

Pathirage also alleged that a senior official was trying to shield the CEBEU as regards the ongoing investigations by the Criminal Investigations Department. "We brought this to the notice of Dr. Jayasundera," Pathirage added.

It was a clear case of sabotage that caused the countrywide blackout experienced on December 3, a senior Power Ministry official said, adding that initial investigations had revealed



Ceylon Electricity Board Senior Engineers' Association (CEBSEA) executive committee members addressing the media yesterday. Pic by Saman Ranaweera

attempts by some elements to cripple the Biyagama-Kottawa line as well.

The Island learns that both sub grids were guarded by the police, and therefore it should be clear for the Ceylon Electricity Board top management and the Police Department who the culprits are.

Another expert said there couldn't have been some same type of tripping on two days causing total failure. "The whole system may need checking the protection system may need proper setting if this was not a sabotage," he

added.

Another Independent Energy Expert said, on 29 Nov, both circuits of the Kotmale-Biyagama transmission line had tripped.

"This led to a partial blackout. This was like a rehearsal for Friday's outage.

Due to the high rainfall, Mahaweli reservoirs are generating a high amount of electricity, and most of them are linked to this 220kV line (Upper Kotmale, Kotmale, Victoria, Randenigala and Rantembe total 760 MW)," he added.

Due to the work-to-rule, and the engineers' non-cooperation with the CEB GM, the report on what happened has not been properly studied and released to the regulator, the Public Utilities Commission, according to sources.

The same line tripped, this time taking the whole grid down with it. The Under Frequency Load Shedding (UFLS) that tripped on 29 Nov. could not manage the situation on 03 Dec.

Both the events happened during a work-to-rule campaign of CEBEU.

Jacqueline Fernandez not allowed to leave India

By S VENKAT NARAYAN OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, December 6: Sri Lankan-origin Bollywood star Jacqueline Fernandez was stopped from leaving India at the Mumbai international airport on Sunday. The actor was to travel to Dubai for a show.

She was stopped from leaving the country by immigration officials at the international airport in Mumbai after a Look Out Circular (LOC) was issued by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) against her. She was detained briefly before she was allowed to go.

This is in connection with the Suresh Chandrashekar extortion and money laundering case. Jacqueline, who wanted to go to Dubai for a show, will now be taken to Delhi for questioning. As per authorities, the agency will not let Jacqueline leave India till the probe is on. ED had recently filed a 7,000-page chargesheet against Suresh Chandrashekar and others in connection with the INR2-billion money laundering case. According to the allegation, Suresh, while serving a sentence at Tihar Jail in Delhi, had extorted money from the wife of a businessman.

Jacqueline Fernandez's

name popped up with regard to the ED's earlier allegation that the actor had unearched monetary transactions with Suresh. The ED had further said that Jacqueline was also given gifts by Suresh. Apart from her, the agency had called actor Nora Fatehi to join the probe.

According to the chargesheet, Chandrashekar revealed during interrogation that he had gifted a horse worth INR5.2 million and a Persian cat worth INR9,00,000 to Fernandez. The actor has allegedly received gifts worth INR100 million from him.

A report by Bollywood Hungama claimed that Chandrashekar sent huge amounts to Fernandez's relatives as well. She has already been questioned by the ED in connection with the case. Fernandez is a Bahrain-born actor-model who formerly worked as a TV reporter. While her father is a Sri Lankan, her mother is of Malaysian-Canadian descent. Jacqueline won the Miss Universe Sri Lanka pageant in 2006, and represented her country at Miss Universe in the same year. She is a Bollywood actor

who made her Hindi film debut with Aladin (2009). The Sujoy Ghosh directorial also starred Riteish Deshmukh, Amitabh Bachchan and Sanjay Dutt. Active in the industry for over a decade, she has worked in films such as Judwaa 2, Housefull 2, Baaghi 2, Mrs Serial Killer, Murder 2, Race 2, Kick, and Housefull 3.

The 36-year-old was also seen in British film Definition of Fear, Sri Lankan film According to Mathew, and Netflix films Drive and Mrs Serial Killer. Her last release was horror-comedy Bhoost Police co-starring Saif Ali Khan, Arjun Kapoor and Yami Gautam.

Fernandez currently has projects like Bachchan Pandey, Attack, Cirkus, Ram Setu, Telugu film Hari Hara Veera Mallu starring Pawan Kalyan, and a cameo in Kannada film Vikrant Rona. She was to accompany Salman Khan, Shilpa Shetty, Prabhudeva and others in 'Da-Bangg The Tour Reloaded' scheduled for December 10 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Jacqueline Fernandez judged the ninth season of the dance reality show Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa (2016). She has also appeared in music videos including "Mere Angne Mein" by Neha Kakkar and Raja Hasan. Her recent hits include "Genda Phool" and "Paani Paani" with Badshah.

PUBLIC AUCTION

NATIONS TRUST BANK PLC

Notice of sale under Section 9 of the Recovery of Loans by Banks (Special Provisions) Act, No. 4 of 1990

SCHEDULE

1. All that divided and defined allotment of land marked Lot 1 depicted in Plan No.1029 dated 14.10.2012 made by M. L. Wijethilake, Licensed Surveyor of the land called Totilagasmadiyewatta and Murukkuwepadanguwehena situated at Pandaha, within Pandaha Grama Niladari Division, Deraniyagala Divisional Secretariat limits and Deraniyagala Pradeshhiya Sabha Limits in Atulugam Korale in the District of Kegalle, Sabaragamuwa Province.

Containing in Extent Two Acres (2A., 0R., 0P.)

together with soil, plantations and everything else standing thereon as per said Plan No. 1029 and registered under Volume/Folio E40/42 at the Avissawella Land Registry.

2. All that divided and defined allotment of land marked Lot 2 depicted in Plan No. 1029 dated 14.10.2012 made by M. L. Wijethilake, Licensed Surveyor of the land called Totilagasmadiyewatta and Murukkuwepadanguwehena situated at Pandaha, within Pandaha Grama Niladari Division, Deraniyagala Divisional Secretariat limits and Deraniyagala Pradeshhiya Sabha Limits in Atulugam Korale in the District of Kegalle, Sabaragamuwa Province.

Containing in Extent Two Roods and Thirty-Four Perches (0A., 2R., 34P.)

together with soil, plantations and everything else standing thereon as per said Plan No. 1029 and registered under Volume/Folio E02/108 at the Avissawella Land Registry.

Whereas by Mortgage Bond bearing No. 01 dated 29th June, 2017 attested by Hidella Arachchige Achini Ruwandika Perera Notary Public of Tangalle, Mobistar Trading (Private) Limited as obligor and Daulagala Muruthange Gedara Thushara Sampath Niroshana alias Muruthange Gedara Thushara Sampath Niroshana Daulagala as mortgagor mortgaged and hypothecated the rights, property and premises morefully described in the schedule hereto in favour of Nations Trust Bank PLC of No. 242, Union Place, Colombo 02 as a security for the due repayment of the financial facility obtained by the said Mobistar Trading (Private) Limited; And Whereas the said Mobistar Trading (Private) Limited has made default in the payment due on the facilities secured by the said Bond; As per authority granted by the said Nations Trust Bank PLC,

I shall sell by above mentioned properties by way of Public Auction at the spot.

Property described in the Schedule ON THE 18TH Day of January 2022 AT 11.00 A.M.

Access to the Property in Schedule: - From Deraniyagala Town proceed along Noori road for a distance of about 5km up to Panakura Junction, then turn right onto Maliboda Road and proceed about 2.5kms, then turn right on to 28th Road, and proceed about 2km, to reach the subject property is situated at the both sides of the road

Mode of payment:- The successful purchaser shall pay to the auctioneer the following amounts in cash upon conclusion of sale.

01. Ten percent of concluded sale price (10%)
02. The balance payment of the Ninety Percent (90%) should be paid to the Head Office of NATIONS TRUST BANK PLC within 30 days from date of auction.
03. Local Authority charges One percent (1%)
04. Auctioneer's commission of two and a half percent (2.5%)
05. Total expenses incurred on advertising and other expenses (100%)
06. Clerk & Crier wages Rs. 1500/-
07. Notary expenses and other expenses Rs. 3500/-

* The auction will be conducted in accordance with the strict guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health, adhering to COVID 19 protocol.

For information relating to fees and other details contact the following officers.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Nations Trust Bank Plc,
No. 242, Union Place,
Colombo 02.
Tel.: 01124218742

L. B. SENANAYAKE AUCTIONEERS

Licensed Auctioneers, Valuers & Court Commissioners for the Commercial High Court of Colombo Western Province and District Court of Colombo State and Commercial Banks. No: 200, 2nd Floor, Hulftsdorp Street, Colombo 12. Tel: 0773242954-0112445393.

LOST SHARE CERTIFICATES		
The following Share Certificates have been reported lost or destroyed:		
Name of Company: PGP GLASS CEYLON PLC		
Name of Shareholder	Share Certificate No. NIC No	No. of Shares
Mr. Ruwan Priyanga Weeraman	P10997	100
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN That if within fourteen (14) days from the date of publication, no claims or representations are made, the Directors of the company will proceed to issue Duplicate Share Certificates and the Original Share Certificates will be deemed cancelled and void.		
P W CORPORATE SECRETARIAL (PVT) LTD REGISTRARS 07.12.2021		

Revocation of Power of Attorney

Notice is hereby given to the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the General Public that the Special Power of Attorney bearing No. 200 dated 03rd March 2021 attested by W. A. Damitha Amali, Notary Public of Gampaha which is registered in the book of Written Authorities maintained by the Additional Registrar General Office at Gampaha in Volume 95 Folio 87 entry 513 dated 04th March 2021 in favour of Ilangakoone Pathiranalage Chathura Mahesh Sugath Kumara (Holder of National Identity Card No. 197932103921) of No. 144/B, Baduwathugoda, Bemmulla is cancelled and revoked with immediate effect and henceforth shall not be liable for any act or deed under this said Power of Attorney.

Dinesh insists Manusha tried to intimidate Speaker

Opposition MPs fear for their safety in the House – JVP



Dinesh



Anura



Prasanna



Shehan



Bandula

Leader of the House, Education Minister Dinesh Gunawardena told Parliament yesterday that no member of the House should be allowed to threaten and intimidate the Speaker and action should be taken immediately to control the unparliamentary conduct of the Opposition MPs.

Taking part in the debate on Budget 2022, the leader of the House said that the SJB MPs had displayed their callous disregard for parliamentary traditions, Standing Orders and dignity and decorum in the House last Friday and Saturday.

“We discussed this matter at length at the special party leaders’ meeting. The Speaker is the one who gives leadership to this august assembly. No MP can threaten and intimidate him or any presiding member. All MPs are duty bound to prevent any such threats, acts of intimidation and influences on the Chair. It is also the responsibility of the Leader of the House and the Chief Government Whip to assist the Speaker to conduct parliamentary sessions without hindrance.

“We must ensure the protection of the Speaker. When we scrutinise the video footage of Friday’s session, we can see how MP Manusha Nanayakkara ran to the Chair, threatening the Speaker. That is an unparliamentary act. We must ensure that the Speaker’s word or ruling on any matter is final. That is how a parliament is run anywhere in the world. The Speaker should order an investigation into this matter. We are saddened and hurt by the Opposition’s conduct of threatening the Speaker and thereafter trying to politicise the issue. We should put an end to this conduct of the opposition MPs.

“When there was a country-wide power cut, electricity supply in Parliament, too, was disrupted on Friday. That is a dangerous incident. That, too, should be investigated. We saw

how the opposition MPs became jubilant when there was a power outage. We have no problem with the Opposition complaining of any incident to anyone but they should not forget that they cannot absolve themselves of the blame for the incident.

JVP leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake: The SJB MPs have complained of an incident where its MP Manusha Nanayakkara was threatened. It is said that MP Nanayakkara fears for his life. He is afraid of moving out of parliament. An MP should be given the opportunity to speak freely without fear. If an MP has to leave Parliament in disguise in fear of being attacked, then one could understand the gravity of the prevailing situation in this country.

“We have seen enough committees, discussions and reports. One a complaint was lodged with the CID over an incident in this House. But nothing came of that probe. No punishment was meted out to any MPs involved in that incident. There have been many committees in the past over incidents that took place in the House but no action has been taken.

“I believe that the Speaker himself can give a ruling on the matter after scrutinising the video footage of the days of the recent incidents.

“We call on the Speaker not to let this incident be forgotten. We call on him to give a ruling on the matter.

SLPP MP Mohamed Muzammil: Although the SJB MPs boycotted the Parliament sessions, they did not forget to visit the parliament canteen today. They do not come to the chamber saying that they do not have security. If so, how come they could come to the parliament canteen? Their protest is intended to draw attention of the foreign powers who are against this country.

MP Anura Kumara addressed only one side of the matter. He should have spoken about both

sides of the issue.

Time was when attempts on the lives of some MPs in this Parliament. There were knife wielding MPs as well as chilli powder throwers. We also have seen the way the former Speaker handled similar situations.

In the most recent incident, an SJB MP tried to attack the Speaker. It is our duty to protect him. We would not allow anyone to attack you while we are here. I find that the incumbent Speaker is too democratic. He gives more time to the Opposition. We on the government side have lodged a complaint against MP Nanayakkara. We need an urgent probe into that complaint. Today, the debate is to be on the Housing Ministry. Sajith Premadasa boycotted the debate to cover up his frauds as the Minister of Housing in the yaha-palana government.

State Minister Shehan Semasinghe: I call on the Speaker to investigate all incidents seven days prior to the Friday incident. At this rate, we are not sure that SJB MPs may stab the Speaker any time.

State Minister Kanchana Wijesekera: The Opposition MPs level allegations against officials and others by taking cover behind Parliament privileges. We are ready to debate. Some of those sections expunged from the Hansard are published by the media.

Trade Minister Bandula Gunawardana: There have been many similar incidents in the past. The worst time in the known history was the time when Karu Jayasuriya was the Speaker. He did not permit the uttering of the name of the then President in this House. Today, some Opposition MPs even call the incumbent president a mad person in this House. Every MP should be treated respectfully and it is also the duty and responsibility of every MP to maintain his or her dignity. It is unfair to level baseless allegations. There is a need for every-

one to conduct themselves according to the Standing Orders.

Tourism Minister Prasanna Ranatunga: The Speaker has always acted in a democratic manner. The SJB tries to show that there is no democracy. The Opposition MPs tried to assault State Minister Kanchana Wijesekera today. If they could come to the canteen of Parliament why can’t they come to the Chamber? It is no surprise that Anura Kumara Dissanayake speaks for the SJB. He has always worked with them.

Matale District MP Pramitha Bandara Tennakoon: Someone in the officials’ box left of the Chair had videoed the incidents in the Chamber and leaked it to the media. That is a threat to security. It should be investigated and action should be taken against the person concerned.

Colombo District MP SAD Jagath Kumara: Every member in this House is duty bound to respect the Chair. SJB MP Field Marshal Sarath Fonseka spoke about the Chair in a derogatory manner. Some Opposition MPs behave in a deplorable manner. The Opposition MPs raise points of order unnecessarily. The Opposition is trying to intimidate the Speaker and that is a threat to democracy.

Leader of the House Minister Dinesh Gunawardana: There are wrong social media reports about the committee to be appointed by the Speaker.

Speaker Mahinda Yapa Aiywardena: That committee will comprise members of both the government and the Opposition.

MP D. B. Herath: When the Opposition MPs tried to attack the Speaker, the Chief Government Whip protected the Speaker. The SJB tries to propagate lies and internationalise them.



Religious leaders arriving at the Pakistan High Commission in Colombo yesterday to hand over a request demanding justice for lynched Lankan factory manager Priyantha Kumara. Pic by Thushara Alpattu

India, Russia sign AK-203 assault rifle deal, extend military cooperation till 2031

BY S VENKAT NARAYAN
OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, December 6: India and Russia signed two major agreements as the two countries began their first-ever 2+2 ministerial dialogue here on Monday morning.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh met his Russian counterpart Sergey Shoigu, and the two sides signed contracts for the manufacture of nearly 6,10,000 AK-203 assault rifles under a joint venture in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh. The deal is worth over INR50 billion, or \$6.66 million.

The assault rifles will be manufactured by a Joint Venture, Indo-Russian Rifles Private Ltd. (IRRPPL), at Korwa, Amethi in Uttar Pradesh. The IRRPL was set up jointly between the erstwhile OFB [now Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Limited and Munitions India Limited] of India and Rosoboronexport and concern Kalashnikov of Russia.

The deal has been struck over the high cost of each rifle and the high incidental costs of the Ordnance factory. As part of efforts to bring down costs, Russia dropped the royalty to be charged in the deal, officials confirmed. With the \$5.43-billion S-400 missile systems as well as other big ticket deals, the defence trade between India and Russia crossed \$15 billion since 2018.

A bilateral logistics support deal Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement as well as a Navy-to-Navy cooperation MoU are also in the works.

Russia has also begun deliveries of the S-400 long range air defence systems, the shipments of which are en route. They should arrive in the next 10 days, a senior defence official said. Two teams of Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel have already been trained to operate the system and the first unit to be deployed in north west India is expected to be operational within the next two-three months.

After the meeting with Shoigu, Rajnath Singh tweeted that the two leaders had “productive, fruitful and substantial bilateral discussions on defence cooperation” and that “India values its special and privileged strategic partnership with Russia”.

He said in a second tweet: “India deeply appreciates Russia’s strong support for India. We hope that our cooperation will bring peace, prosperity and stability to the entire region.”

The leaders from the two nations are expected to sign as many as ten agreements in the fields of defence manufacturing including rifles and helicopters, defence logistics, oil and space, among others.

India had faced ‘unprovoked aggression’ on its northern borders for more than a year, said Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday during the first-ever India-Russia ‘2+2’ dialogue. He sought “greater engagements in Central Asia and the Indian Ocean Region” during the talks.

Notice of Sale Under Section 9 of the Recovery of Loans by Banks (Special Provisions) Act No. 4 of 1990.

AUCTION SALE BY DFCC BANK PLC

ALL THAT DIVIDED AND DEFINED ALLOTMENT OF LAND DEPICTED AS LOT 01 IN PLAN NO. 3821 DATED 23/06/2007 MADE BY A M ANURARATHNALICENCED SURVEYOR A PORTION OF GALKURUYAYA KATUPOTHIA SITUATED AT PADENIYA VILLAGE IN WAGAPANAHA KORALE PALLESINA PATTUWA WITHIN THE DAMBULLA TOWN GRAMA NILADHARI DIVISION DAMBULLA DIVISIONAL SECRETARIAT DIVISION IN MATALE DISTRICT CENTRAL PROVINCE TOGETHER WITH THE BUILDINGS TREES PLANTATIONS AND EVERYTHING ELSE STANDING THEREON IN EXTENT A 00 R 00 Perches 6.2 or 0.0157 Hectare

Property Secured To DFCC Bank PLC By Bond Nos. 8327, 8673, 8849 and 11095 All Attested by T S I Wettewe Notary Public of Kurunegala in favour of DFCC Bank PLC for the facilities granted to PADUKKAGE DON THANUJA HARSHANI GUNAWARDHENA as the Obligor.

Access to Property: Proceed from Dambulla town clock tower junction along Anuradhapura road for about 600 meters and turn right on to 12 feet wide gravel road and further about 50 meters along this road to reach the subject property located on the right side of the road fronting to same.

I SHALL SELL BY PUBLIC AUCTION THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED HERETO ON 22nd December 2021 AT 10.30 AM AT THE SPOT

For Notice of resolution refer the Govt. Gazette dated 24/12/2020 Divaina, The Island and Thinakkural dated 21/12/2020.

Mode of Payment:

The successful Purchaser should pay the following amounts in cash to the Auctioneer at the fall of the Hammer.

- Ten Percent of the Purchased Price (10%)
- One Percent as Local Govt. Tax (01%)
- Auctioneer Commission Two & a Half Percent (2.5%) out of the purchased price
- Total Costs incurred on advertising
- Clerk & Crier wages Rs. 1500/-
- Notary fees for conditions of sale Rs. 3,000.00
- Balance 90% of the Purchased Price together with any other statutory levies, duties, taxes or charges whenever imposed by the Government of Sri Lanka to be payable within 30 days from the date of sale.

Title deeds and other connected documents could be obtained from Manager Litigation DFCC Bank PLC No. 73, W A D Ramanayake Mawatha, Colombo 02. Telephone: 011 2 371 371.

I W JAYASURIYA AUCTIONEER VALUER COURT COMMISSIONER
369/1 Dutugemunu Mawatha Lawella Road Mawimada Kandy
T.p/Fax: 081-2210595 Mobile: 071-4962449 - 071-8446374
Email: wijeratnejayasuriya@gmail.com

PRAYER TO ST. ANTHONY

Oh! Holy St. Anthony, Gentlest and Kindest of All Saints, your burning love for God, your exalted virtue and your great charity to your fellow creatures made you worthy when on Earth to possess miraculous powers. Miracles waited at your word and that word you were ever ready to speak at the request of those in trouble. The anxious prayer of bitter trail was never addressed to you in vain, to the sick you gave back health you restored what was lost, the sorrow stricken were the object of your tender compassion even the dead you raised to life when the wounded heart cried on to the thee from the depth of its anguish, when on earth were you not the saint who had the tenderest compassion on those in distress and sorrow encourage by this thought and convinced by the efficacy of your intervention, thanking you for the favours you have already granted me. I appeal to you to grant me this favour (mention favour), Oh! St. Anthony, Please whisper my prayer to the ears of the Infant Jesus who loves to linger in your arms, one word from you and my prayer will be answered, oh! speak the word and the gratitude of my heart will ever be yours.

Say this prayer with confidence, the impossible will be done immediately, miracles will take a little longer. Promise to publish this prayer.

Thank you

ZA



Newly appointed Chargé d'Affaires of the UAE Embassy in Colombo, Ibrahim AlGergawi met Public Security Minister Sarath Weerasekera to discuss security matters and matters of mutual interest for both countries.

SLCFA: USA has no moral right to talk about 'democracy' and 'human rights' having caused so much destruction worldwide

Sri Lanka was not invited to the so-called Summit for Democracy organized by the United States because it was not given in to the dictates of the Western World, Sri Lanka-China Friendship Association (SLCFA) said yesterday.

SLCFA President, Attorney-at-Law Ananda Goonatilleke said that it was an attempt to tarnish international images of both Sri Lanka and China.

"By sidelining Sri Lanka from the list of invitees, the Washington admin-

istration indicates their support for US sponsored resolutions in the UN Human Rights Council against our country and also marks its antagonism as Sri Lanka has resisted from fully bending to the dictates of US hegemony," he said.

SLCFA believes that this is another ploy by the United States to apply pressure on countries across the world that may have not done everything that the United States wants them to do.

The U.S. Treasury Department on

Friday (03) announced that it will impose a series of sanctions next week to mark the U.S. Summit for Democracy on people allegedly engaged in corruption, serious human rights abuse and those who undermine democracy. In the last few decades US sanctions have killed and caused serious harm to millions of people across the world. Despite overwhelming evidence that sanctions hardly change state behaviour and only harms the vulnerable groups in a country, the US engages in

this practice.

SLCFA believes that nations that have invaded a number of countries in the global south and killed and displaced hundreds of millions of people, in the last two decades, do not have a moral right to talk about 'democracy' and 'human rights.' These two values have also been abused by the US in the last few decades to intervene in other nations and create chaos. The US has backed dictators that have caused immense

suffering to hundreds of millions of people, while overthrowing democratically elected progressive leaders in the global south.

While democracy is universal, it is also specific and democratic practices have developed under specific conditions. Thus, without taking these diverse factors into consideration, interpreting 'democracy' and 'human rights' by the standards set by nations that have the blood of millions of innocents is the height of hypocrisy.

High Court...

Arjuna Mahendran, Perpetual Treasuries Limited (PTL) beneficiary owner Arjun Aloysius, PTL Chief dealer Kasun Palisena, Chairman of PTL Jeffrey Joseph Aloysius, Chitta Ranjan Hulugalle, Muthuraja Surendran, Ajahn Gardiye Puchiheva and Badugoda Hewa Indika Saman Kumara in connection with bond auction held on March 31, 2016.

The case against seventh accused Ranjan Hulugalle was dismissed on pre-

liminary objections raised.

President's Counsel Anil Silva, Counsel Asela Serasinghe, Hafeel Farisz, Sahan Kulatunga and Vishwaka Peiris appeared for the seventh accused.

The Attorney General's stance regarding the future cause of action to be informed on 26 Jan. 2022.

The Attorney General had alleged that the PTL had been using the Central Bank's important undisclosed information to alter the final outcome

From Page 1

of the Treasury bond auction and it had a huge impact on the overall national economy as a result of the subtle; the systematic conduct of the offences related to the fraud and had caused injustice to other primary sellers in the bond market, and the PTL had acted cunningly and made a huge profit and conspired to cause a huge loss to the government.

The case was postponed until 26 Jan. 2022.

Johnston...

Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena that a committee comprising government and Opposition MPs would be appointed to investigate the incidents of violence in Parliament on Friday and Saturday, the Chief Government Whip said: "Time was when MPs came to the Chamber armed with knives to attack us. During an incident that went out of the control of former Speaker Karu Jayasuriya, MPs resorted to fisticuffs. Some MPs threw chilli powder, while some hurled chairs. Following that incident the yahapalana government and its speaker Karu Jayasuriya tried to prosecute the Opposition MPs. They lodged complaints at the Colombo Crime Division and the Rajagiriya police station. They boasted that action would be taken against us under the criminal law. Somehow the investigation was stopped. Later, when the CCTV footage was inspected it was found that the Speaker had summoned outsiders to

the Chamber. Among those outsiders was a secretary of Karu Jayasuriya, who later decided to stop the investigation seeing that he would be in trouble if the probe continued," the Chief Government Whip said.

"It is obvious that with regard to the Friday incident, the SJB MPs are trying to cover the wrong doing of their MP. Today they state that there is no security for the opposition MPs. JVP MP Anura Kumara Dissanayake spoke in this House today. TNA MPs too do not complain of such insecurity. That proves the SJB is propagating a lie.

"MP Manusha Nanayakkara rushed to the Chair on Friday addressing the Speaker by the name of an animal. We stood up for the protection of the Speaker, who always upheld democracy in this House. The speaker allows all opposition MPs to raise points of order to hinder the speeches of government MPs. There was no need to continue

From Page 1

the session after five in the evening if those opposition MPs had not been allowed to waste the time by raising points of order unnecessarily. Only the minister who is supposed to deliver the reply speech is entitled to ask for additional time, not the opposition MPs. MP Nanayakkara had no right to ask for additional time and thereafter tried to attack the Speaker. There are security personnel assigned to the Speaker but they cannot come to the Chamber that was why we rushed to protect the speaker.

"The opposition's so-called boycott is a ruse. Today the debate is on the expenditure heads of the Housing Ministry. That ministry was under Sajith Premadasa during the yahapalana time. If the debate proceeded as planned all his corruptions would have come to the surface. Therefore the opposition leader made use of this issue to boycott the debate so that his wrongdoings could be kept under the carpet".



Second Secretary of Embassy of Japan, Seiya Ninomiya, presenting a memento to a long-serving employee during the 37th anniversary of the Sri Jayawardeneperura General Hospital (SJGH) Commemoration Ceremony on Dec 1 as a representative from the Embassy of Japan. The SJGH was constructed by the support of Japan in 1983, and one of the great symbols of the historical relationship and token of friendship between Japan and Sri Lanka.

SJB holds...

From Page 1

walking towards the Speaker's chair caused a melee between government and Opposition MPs. A tense situation arose again in Parliament on 4 November, when an exchange of words took place between opposition MP Manusha Nanayakkara and State Minister Kanchana Wijesekera in connection with the previous days' incident.

Following the earlier two incidents, the SJB held a protest in front of the entrance of Parliament building yesterday (6) morning. Thereafter the SJB MPs met at the SJB Head Office for an 'alternative parliamentary sitting' and live broadcast their speeches prepared for yesterday's Committee Stage Debate on social media channels.

Two-year...

40,000 civilians on the Vanni east front, The Island sought clarification as regards measures taken by the NPC to improve relations among the communities, and the following questions were raised:

The Island: During your two-year long project did participants discuss specific war crimes allegations and disclosure made in the House of Lords in Oct 2017 that contradicted unsubstantiated accusations pertaining to 40,000 civilian deaths.

Executive Director NPC Dr. Jehan Perera: "No, we did not discuss these war-related matters. The project was titled "Creative Youth Engagement for Pluralism" and it focused on the nature of Sri Lanka as a plural society and the value framework that should guide it. The research papers highlighted the diversity within Sri Lankan society that goes beyond ethnicity and religion. They included topics such as "Attitudes of Society on Education and Transsexuality: A Comparative Study on the Ideologies of a Community with Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Education,"

and "Pluralism and University Subculture: An Ethnological Study on Young Behavior towards Social Cohesion," and "An Investigative Study of the Challenges Posed by the Changes in the Aboriginal Society."

The Island: What is the total cost of the project?

The NPC: Rs 8 million was spent to train and mentor the writers of the 30 research publications in four universities, translate, review and publish their findings in book form and for the conference which brought the students to Colombo.

Question 3: What is the GoSL's contribution?

The NPC: There was no direct financial support by the government. Four state universities supported through their faculty members and students.

The Island: What is the NPC's stand on accountability resolution and announcement made in Geneva that the Sri Lankan military would be subjected to a fresh inquiry?

The NPC: In order to get out of these allegations, there is a need for a

From Page 1

credible and independent investigation. Our preference is for a national mechanism that is acceptable to all sides. Accountability will need to be a part of the reconciliation process. NPC favours the restorative justice approach which focuses on ensuring justice to victims. This includes an acknowledgement of wrongs done and reparations and institutional reform to ensure that there is non-recurrence.

The Island: Are you also engaged in post-war reconciliation projects funded by Norway?

The NPC: NPC hasn't obtained funds from Norway for the past five years.

The recently concluded project has been funded by a project called Strengthening Reconciliation Process here jointly funded by the European Union and the German Federal Foreign Office and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft Fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the British Council in partnership with the Sri Lankan Government.

Myanmar...

From Page 1

served with gag orders in October forbidding them from releasing information.

The cases against Suu Kyi are widely seen as contrived to discredit her and keep her from running in the next election. The constitution bars anyone sent to prison after being convicted of a crime from holding high office or becoming a lawmaker.

Opposition to military rule remains strong 10 months after the army's takeover, and the verdict may inflame tensions even further.

There were protest marches on Sunday against the military government and calling for the release of Suu Kyi and other detained members of her government. An army truck deliberately sped into a march by about 30 young people in Yangon, the country's biggest city, and at least three of the protesters may have been killed, according to unconfirmed reports.

The verdicts in Suu Kyi's first two cases, on incitement — for allegedly spreading false or inflammatory information that could disturb public order — and violating the Natural Disaster Management Law for allegedly breaching coronavirus restrictions, were supposed to be delivered last Tuesday. However, the court postponed its ruling with no explanation. At the same time, it agreed to allow testimony this week on a separate coronavirus charge from an additional defense witness who had previously been unable to attend court because of ill health.

Suu Kyi's lawyers sought vigorously to have the incitement charge dismissed. The prosecution's evidence consisted of statements posted on a Facebook page of Suu Kyi's party. Defense lawyers argued that Suu Kyi and a co-defendant, former President Win Myint, could not be held responsible for the statements — which criticized the takeover and suggested in broad terms that it be resisted — because they were already in detention.

The former mayor of Naypyitaw, Myo Aung, was another defendant in the charge, which carries a maximum penalty of two years in prison and a fine. Win Myint was sentenced to a total of four years and Myo Aung to

two years.

February's seizure of power was met by nationwide nonviolent demonstrations, which security forces quashed with deadly force. They have killed about 1,300 civilians, according to a detailed tally compiled by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners.

With severe restrictions on nonviolent protest, armed resistance has grown in the cities and countryside, to the point that U.N. experts warned the country is sliding into civil war.

The military took Suu Kyi into custody on the day of its takeover, and she has not been seen in public since then, though she has appeared in court in several of her trials.

Judgment on Suu Kyi's second count of violating coronavirus restrictions is scheduled for Dec. 14. The maximum penalty for each count is three

years' imprisonment and a fine.

Other cases against Suu Kyi now being tried cover the alleged unregistered import and use of walkie-talkies by her security guards; violation of the Official Secrets Act, in which jailed Australian economist Sean Turnell is a co-defendant; and four separate corruption charges covering the alleged acceptance of a bribe and abuse of office to obtain favorable terms on property transactions. Each of the corruption charges has a maximum penalty of 15 years' imprisonment and a fine.

A trial on a fifth corruption charge has not yet started, and state media last week announced a sixth charge has also been filed against Suu Kyi.

The latest charge accuses her and Win Myint of corruption in granting permits to rent and buy a helicopter.

In mid-November, the military-appointed election commission announced it intended to prosecute Suu Kyi and 15 other senior political figures for alleged fraud in the last election, which could result in her party being dissolved.

The military has declared it seized power because of widespread election fraud, a claim that independent election observers say lacks evidence.



Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi. File Image

Jacky to...

case linked to conman Sukesh Chandrashekhar, according to sources.

Fernandez has been asked to be present at the ED office by 11 am on December 8 as her questioning is significant in the case as a witness in the alleged multi-crore extortion racket operated by Chandrashekhar.

The actor has earlier skipped various summons issued by the federal agency citing different reasons.

The ED's move came a day after she was offloaded from an Air India flight at the Mumbai international airport at about 5.25 pm by Immigration officials as a Look Out Circular (LOC) in the case of the Enforcement Directorate is pending against her.

She was supposed to fly to Muscat by "AI-985 flight scheduled at 5.50 pm on Sunday". The LOC was issued with directions that Fernandez should not be permitted to leave India.

Earlier, the ED has questioned the actress here in August. The federal agency then recorded Fernandez's statement in its more than six-hour questioning here in August-end.

Another actor, Nora Fatehi was

also questioned by the ED in connection with the same case for the second time on Thursday.

The ED is looking into various people who are directly or indirectly connected to this case.

Reports suggest that the ED is looking into the possibility that money was invested abroad and it was led by Chandrashekhar, who is accused in 21 cases.

This ED case is based on an FIR filed by Delhi Police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW) against Sukesh Chandrashekhar, who is accused of cheating and extorting Aditi Singh, wife of the former promoter of Religare Enterprises Shivinder Mohan Singh, arrested in October 2019 in a case related to alleged misappropriation of funds at Religare Finvest Ltd.

Chandrashekhar and his associates reportedly took money from Aditi Singh after posing as government officials and promising to get bail for her husband. Chandrashekhar reportedly persuaded Aditi Singh to transfer money by impersonating a central government official over a spoof call

while he was lodged in Rohini jail in Delhi and promised to manage bail for her husband.

Both Chandrashekhar and his actor-wife Leena Maria Paul were arrested by the Delhi Police in September for their alleged role in the duping case. The Delhi Police has so far arrested 13 people in connection with the case.

The ED suspects that Chandrashekhar had extorted money from several people while he was in jail.

In October, the ED officials had conducted raids at Chandrashekhar's sea-facing bungalow in Chennai and had found a fleet of 16 luxury cars worth millions of rupees.

At the time of the incident, Chandrashekhar was lodged in Delhi's Rohini jail and was running an extortion racket from behind the bars.

In September, the ED had arrested two aides of the jailed conman against whom the Delhi Police recently invoked stringent provisions of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA).

From Page 1



Photo taken on Dec. 3, 2021 shows a meeting of the Joint Commission on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in Vienna, Austria. (EU Delegation in Vienna/Handout via Xinhua)

'More flexibility' likely in next round of Vienna nuke talks

Diplomats from the European side of negotiations returned to their home countries for consultations on two proposals put forward by Iran, which reportedly insist on the priority of removal of all sanctions, which were imposed against Tehran by the administration of former US President Donald Trump after he withdrew from the deal in 2018.

IANS: The new round of Vienna talks, aimed at the restoration of the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal, is likely to see "more flexibility" from the involved parties, a top official said.

After six months of hiatus in the talks, Iran and the remaining parties to the deal, with the indirect involvement of the US, resumed their discussions to restore the agreement, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), on November 29, reports Xinhua news agency.

On December 3, diplomats from the European side of negotiations returned to their home countries for consultations on two proposals put forward by Iran, which reportedly insist on the priority of removal of all sanctions, which were imposed against Tehran by the administration of former US President Donald Trump after he withdrew from the deal in 2018.

The Iranian negotiation team has also announced that it has prepared a third document expounding on verification of lifting sanctions and the Islamic Republic's demands for the US to guarantee that the next administration would not abandon the deal again.

In response to a question about the demands of the Iranian negotiating team in these proposed documents, the country's top nuclear negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani stressed that "our emphasis is that within the framework of JCPOA, all issues related to our nuclear activities must continue".

He added that any sanctions that violate JCPOA regulations and all sanctions related to the nuclear deal, or imposed and reinstated under the US "maximum pressure" campaign, must be lifted immediately.

Bagheri Kani said that Iran's proposals are on the table, and the other side of the talks is supposed to provide "reasonable, documented and logical responses".

Although some hurdles lie ahead of the progression of recent talks, the Iranian side and other parties have argued that it is still possible to reach an agreement in the talks.

Diako Hosseini, an Iranian researcher of international affairs, told the local Ebtekar daily on Sunday that "it was not expected that a dispute would be resolved in this round or the views would come closer to each other, but it will be possible for the views to come closer in future talks".

Asked where the problem lies at the current negotiating table, the expert said it is in "the gap in expectations".

"We had this gap in 2015 (negotiations) as well; and because of the US withdrawal from the JCPOA (in 2018) and its consequences, it is much deeper today.

S.E. Asia countries want high-speed rail, but wary of Chinese influence

By HIDETAKA YAMAMURA AND MIYUKI YOSHIOKA / YOMIURI SHIMBUN CORRESPONDENTS

BANGKOK / HONG KONG — Southeast Asian countries are increasingly wary of China's efforts to expand its influence by participating in railway network projects in the region.

On Friday, a high-speed railway connecting China and Laos, a landlocked country in Southeast Asia, was officially opened. Chinese President Xi Jinping and Laotian President Thongloun Sisoulith held online talks on the day and agreed to deepen cooperation, using the railway — a key project in China's "One Belt, One Road" economic mega initiative — as a foothold.

"We'll continue to communicate strategically with Laos and jointly seek the high-quality development of the One Belt, One Road to build a solid community sharing a common destiny," Xi said at the talks, according to China Central Television and other media.

In response, the Laotian counterpart said, "The railway was realized with China's support and we feel indebted to them."

He also said: "Laos has benefited from the One Belt, One Road initiative. We'll further strengthen our strategic communication."

With a total length of about 1,000 kilometers, the railway connects Kunming in China's Yunnan Province with Vientiane, the capital of Laos, in about 10 hours.

Thursday marked Laos's National Day. At a ceremony held in Vientiane, participants prayed for the safety of the newly built railway. According to Laotian state media and other sources, Laotian Prime Minister Phankham Viphavanh attended the ceremony.

Train cars were manufactured in China and named "Lane Xang" after a historic Laotian kingdom.

In Laos, the train runs more than 400 kilometers from Vientiane to Boten at the Chinese border in about 3½ hours, significantly reducing travel

time. It sometimes takes more than a day to travel by car.

"Laos has high expectations for an increase in exports of its agricultural products and an influx of tourists via the railway," an expert on Laos said.

The high-speed rail project was carried out by a joint venture set up by

China and Laos. The Laotian side covered most of its share of the construction costs through loans extended by a Chinese government-affiliated financial institution and other funds.

However, it has been pointed out that if the railway becomes unprofitable and repayments fall into arrears, Laos may find itself caught in what is called "a debt trap," in which the country will be forced to transfer its interests in the railway to the Chinese side.

According to a report compiled by a private U.S. research agency in September, Laos' total debt to China is 64.8% of its GDP, the highest such ratio in the world. Therefore, Laos' ability to repay the debt has been called into question.

Meanwhile, China apparently aims to use its stronger ties with Laos as a tool to restrain Vietnam, which borders both countries. Vietnam has strong wariness toward Beijing in light of the "special relationship" between Vietnam and Laos as "brother countries" of the Indochina region.

"China is aiming to soften Vietnam's stance toward Beijing by showcasing that Laos has taken a major pro-China turn," a Chinese researcher familiar with Sino-

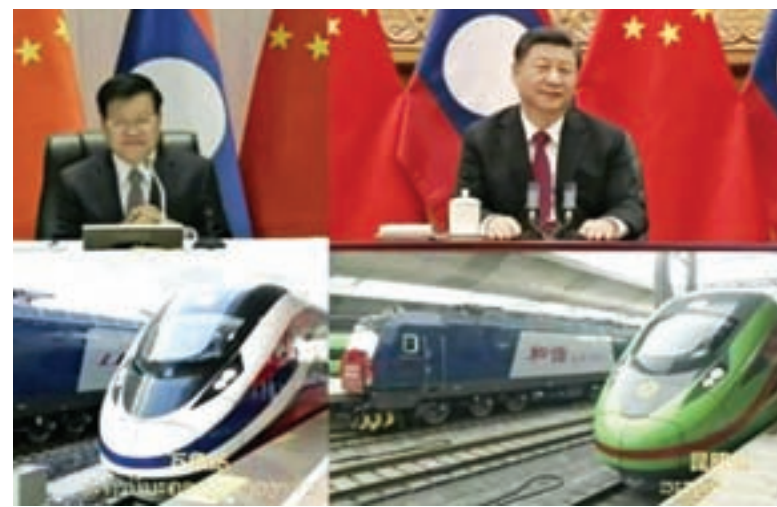


Photo from Lao National Television's Facebook: Laotian President Thongloun Sisoulith, above left, and Chinese President Xi Jinping watch the departure of high-speed trains online on Friday.

Vietnamese relations said. Southeast Asian countries are hoping that the expansion of their railway networks will help spur the recovery of their economies, which have been in a slump due to the novel coronavirus pandemic. However, whether to proceed with the projects as part of China's One Belt, One Road initiative will be the focus of attention.

In Malaysia and Singapore, a plan for a high-speed railway linking the two countries had been suspended due to its costs and other problems, but the project was resumed last month.

After a meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaacob late last month, Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said that Singapore received a proposal from the Malaysian side to revive the project.

In Thailand, construction has begun for a part of a new high-speed railway, with plans to connect it to the newly completed Laos railway in the future.

Bang Sue Grand Station, located in the northern part of Bangkok, is to become fully operational later this month as one of the largest railway terminals in Southeast Asia.

(Japan Times/ANN)

මුද්‍රිත මාධ්‍ය අනුග්‍රහය **දිවයින** **The Island**

වවර හෝල් රඟහල පදනම සංස්කෘතික දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව ශ්‍රී ලංකා කලා මණ්ඩලය රාජ්‍ය භාවය උපදේශක සභාව එක්සත් ජාතික සංවර්ධන කොමිෂන් සභාව

රංගකලා මහෝත්සවය - 2021

11 මහාචාර්ය එදිරිවීර සරච්චන්ද්‍රගේ මනමේ	16 රාජිත දිසානායකගේ සිහින හොරු අරංග
12 සයිමන් නවගත්තේගමගේ සුභ සහ යස	17 නිලංක නිසලාන්පල්ලේ අතරමැදියා
13 හෙන්රි ජයසේනගේ හුණුවටියේ කථාව	19 ඩන්දල ජයවර්ධනගේ බෙරහඬ
14 තරංග ඩණ්ඩාරගේ චච්චරී	20 ජයලත් මනෝරත්නගේ අන්දරේලා
15 ධර්මසිරි ඩණ්ඩාරනායකගේ ධවල නිෂභා	21 අශෝක හඳගමගේ අත්වික් කඩේක මරණයක්

3.30 **6.30** **චලිත චිත්‍රපට** **ව්‍යුහමය කර ඇත**

සියලුම ආසන සැලසුම් (Box Planned) කර ඇත.

☎ විමසීම් : 0112 441 208, 071 4909290 (චමීර)

මුද්‍රිත මාධ්‍ය අනුග්‍රහය **දිවයින** **The Island**

වවර හෝල් රඟහල පදනම සංස්කෘතික දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව ශ්‍රී ලංකා කලා මණ්ඩලය රාජ්‍ය භාවය උපදේශක සභාව එක්සත් ජාතික සංවර්ධන කොමිෂන් සභාව

රංගකලා මහෝත්සවය - 2021

11 පුණ්‍යසේන ගුණසිංහගේ දික්තල කාලගෝල	16 ප්‍රියංකර රත්නායකගේ අත්විගනී
12 ජනක ප්‍රේමලාල්ගේ රාජකපුරු	17 කේ.ඩී. හේරත්ගේ ජගත්මා
13 දයානන්ද ගුණවර්ධනගේ නර්ඛිනා	19 අබ්දුල් සමුද්දීන්ගේ රතු මගුල් කපුවා
14 සෝමලතා සුමසිංහගේ විකෘති	20 ආර.ආර. සමරකෝන්ගේ කැළණි පාලම
15 රෝහණ දන්දෙණියගේ රාජස පරාජස	21 වාමික හත්තවත්තගේ රජා මං වහලා

3.30 **6.30** **වවර රඟහල** **ව්‍යුහමය කර ඇත**

සියලුම ආසන සැලසුම් (Box Planned) කර ඇත.

☎ විමසීම් : 0112 431 878, 071 800 8202 (නාමල්)

The Island

Published by Upali Newspapers (Pvt) Ltd.
223, Bloemendhal Road, Colombo 13.
Tel: 011-2497500, 011-2497571,
011-2497572, 011-2497573 Fax: 011-2497543
www.island.lk / E-mail: prabath@unl.upali.lk

Advertising Dept.

Tel: 011-2436892 Fax: 011-2344252, 011-2497543

Circulation Dept.

Tel: 011-2497568, 011-2497519, 011-2497580 Fax: 011-2334564

Tuesday 7th December, 2021

New laws alone won't do

The government is keen to amend the election laws to provide for restrictions on campaign expenditure, and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has given the Legal Draftsman necessary instructions in this regard, Media Minister Dallas Alahapperuma has reportedly said. It is hoped that the new laws to be made will also make it mandatory for candidates and political parties to disclose sources of their campaign finance, and the amounts of funds they receive by way of donations.

Laws to regulate campaign finance are long overdue, and the government initiative is therefore welcome. However, one should not be so naïve as to expect all problems related to campaign expenditure, etc., to disappear with the introduction of a few more laws. It is one thing to make laws; it is another to enforce them properly. We already have enough and more laws to prevent election malpractices, but the problem is that they are not applied correctly and fairly.

Politicians are adept at circumnavigating laws and compassing their political ends. When the 19th Amendment was introduced, it was widely expected to enable key state institutions to emerge independent and strong. But the Constitutional Council tasked with depoliticising those outfits became a mere rubber stamp for the Prime Minister, who manipulated it to further the interests of his government. This is the fate that befalls all laws in this country.

The problem with the election laws is not that they lack teeth; instead, it is that the authorities concerned lack the courage to enforce them strictly. The results of several elections, and the 1982 referendum should have been cancelled, given widespread rigging and violence that marred them. What was witnessed before and during the presidential and parliamentary elections in the late 1980s was the very antithesis of democracy; polling agents were chased away and ballot boxes stuffed openly while the police looked on. The North-Western provincial council polls (1999) were also affected by large-scale violence and rigging, but the results were not declared null and void.

Minister Alahapperuma has said the laws to be made will help usher in a new political culture. One should not be faulted for being sceptical about the possibility of such a radical change happening in Sri Lankan politics simply because of a few more additions to the country's huge body of laws. If the government is genuinely desirous of changing the existing, rotten political culture, it ought to follow Alahapperuma's example anent electioneering.

The media has been watching Minister Alahapperuma's election campaigns with interest over the years. He has had the courage to spurn the conventional campaign methods; he does not use posters, banners, bunting, etc. When he chose to swim against the tide and take the high road, not many expected him to succeed in dirty Sri Lankan politics, but he has received a very positive response from the electorate. He has thus been able to keep the cost of electioneering very low. If he can conduct decent polls campaigns under the existing election laws, and get elected, why can't others? There are several other politicians who also conduct clean election campaigns, and the onus is on the public to appreciate their courage to be different and reward them with votes. Sending the right men and women to Parliament is half the battle in draining the swamp.

It is heartening that the government has realised the need to regulate campaign finance at last and reportedly taken steps to introduce new laws for that purpose. If the SLPP had cared to set an example to others by keeping its campaign expenditure low, it would not have had to go out of its way to scrap duty on sugar imports in a questionable manner, some moons ago, to please one of its main financiers, thereby causing a huge loss to the State coffers. This scam has damaged its image irreparably.

Now that the government has evinced a keen interest in regulating campaign finance, will the ruling SLPP disclose, *suo motu*, the amounts of funds it received for the 2019 presidential election and the 2020 parliamentary polls, the sources thereof and actual expenditure.



In a special issue review for the Science Journal, Susan Hyde, professor of Political Science at the University of California, observes that democracies continue to shift from tailwinds to headwinds implying that the overall environment for fostering democracy continues to decline under adverse circumstances.

BY KUSHAL POKHAREL

Democracy as a contested notion has involved heated debates around its actual meaning, ideals and the process of endorsement and ratification. Historically, the debate has been framed around the ideals of liberal democracy championed by the West which tend to combine democracy and capitalism. What is missing in this debate is the discussion around contextualising democracy.

Amid shrinking Euro-Western hegemony, democratic processes continue to decline, particularly in the post-colonial countries. In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, the problem has been exacerbated by growing surveillance, discriminatory prohibitory orders and their violent enforcement, deliberate misinformation and disinformation. Fraught with multifaceted challenges emanating from issues of migration and refugees to policy corruption and constitutional coups, democracy has arrived at a critical juncture.

In their international bestseller *How Democracies Die*, professors Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt argue that democracies continue to erode in a more subtle and invisible way without involving much bloodshed and military warfare. More importantly, such erosion is more profound in countries generally known to be champions of democracy, like India and the United States of America. While India was relegated to the status of Partly Free from Free in the Freedom House report, American democracy, particularly during the Trump administration, plunged into its deadliest crisis with episodes of political violence and forced suppression.

In a special issue review for the *Science Journal*, Susan Hyde, professor of Political Science at the University of California, observes that democracies continue to shift from tailwinds to headwinds implying that the overall environment for fostering democracy continues to decline under adverse circumstances. Nevertheless, the rise of individuals

without a political track record—businessmen, social activists and academicians—in mainstream politics with the support of popular votes, particularly in the Western countries, raises the question of whether or not corporate capitalism and democracy can survive together.

Though autocratic regimes have been significantly toppled, a serious threat is emerging from the whimsical desires and chaotic nature of elected leaders. Under the pretext of the responsibility to protect the nation and citizens, elected leaders have undermined democratic principles and the rule of law. This has not only fostered the autocratisation of democracy, but also raised a serious question about the relevance of representative democracy.

Some of the defining features of the backsliding include an intent to undermine the public mandate, disregard for the principles of separation of powers, zero tolerance of the opposition's ideas and a vehement attack on individuals or institutions with differing perspectives. The principles of democratic norms and values have been neglected. An attempt to bewilder the public using the media as a tool to spread misinformation and disinformation has also become rampant in the downfall of democracies.

During the administration of President Duterte, in the Philippines, until recently, a ban was imposed on media outlets that published criticism of the government's pandemic response. Whether it be the case of amassing emergency powers by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban on the pretext of the deepening Covid-19 crisis or the restriction on the freedom of assembly to support a protest movement in Algeria, democratic processes have come under severe attack.

In Nepal's context, profound debates around the suitability of the newly institutionalised federal model is growing amid signs of failure of representative democracy. In this context, an innate desire to dismantle democratic institutions and processes seems to be on the rise. Institutions have been deliberately weakened. Ranging from lucrative political appointments to bureaucratic reshuffling, abuse of authority has become rampant.

Whether it is party politics or national politics, democratic norms seem to be waning. The latest confrontation

between the executive and the judiciary is a testament to this. The promulgation of ordinances by bypassing parliamentary proceedings has become a new norm. Be it the erstwhile Oli government or the present Deuba government, the promulgation of ordinances has generated heated controversy.

The constitution of the country has come under repeated attack, and the Supreme Court has emerged as a saviour in recent times. Having said that, the apex court has come under a great deal of criticism owing to the Chief Justice's blatant violation of judicial norms and values further stifling democratic practices within the judiciary. Internal democracy within the political parties is at the lowest ebb. Ranging from the decision to convene key party meetings to the appointment of party leaders in the cabinet, the high-handedness of a handful of first-generation leaders in such political parties show the gravity of the situation.

Several attempts to infringe upon constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights have surfaced of late. The nation has witnessed a series of public protests in recent times, particularly due to the unholy intention of the government to shrink civic space and public freedom. Be it restricting peaceful assembly or imprisoning protestors for expressing dissenting voices against the authorities, the government has been repressive.

The political leadership has engaged in a terrible blame game using demeaning language at public forums, further making a mockery of democracy. Attempts to prove oneself right in every possible way at the cost of tarnishing the image of others have emerged as a serious issue in Nepali politics. Consequently, accountability and transparency as two major pillars of a vibrant democracy continue to dwindle.

Saving democracy calls for an accommodative leadership committed to addressing deeper structural problems. Creating an environment where citizens and larger civil society can work together by respecting dissenting voices will be instrumental towards restoring democratic practices.

(The Kathmandu Post/ANN)



Lessons learnt from outrageous power outage

The countrywide power outage that took place on Friday 03 November, 2021, shook the nation.

As everyone is suspicious of everyone else in this country, most people suspected that it was sabotage masterminded by the Engineers of the CEB Unions. The engineers have threatened the government that they will resort to a strike if their demands, particularly on the subject of the New Fortress Energy agreement are not met.

It became quite clear that the 21 million Sri Lankans living in this country could be held hostage by the union leaders, even if, in this instance, they had not been responsible for it. Public spiritedness which has to be the basis of any national action had in any case been ignored by the CEB Unions when they threatened the government a few days back.

The situation has shown how delicate our predicament is. A small group of people could hold the entire country to ransom if they disagreed with the authorities. Both the country and the Government has now taken cognizance of this. This can also be a massive security risk.

Continuation of the outage could have even led to a violent uprising of the public against the Union officials who would have been targeted. Fortunately, the government held its nerve and better



judgment prevailed on the side of the Engineers to correct the situation.

However, like with all adversities, several new opportunities have surfaced. One is how to diminish the monopoly that the CEB, which is a bane of the country. Here one option could be to decentralize the generation and supply of power to the districts. A study should be undertaken to enable every District to control its electricity supply and, over a period of ten years make it into a viable profit-making undertaking. This will be particularly endorsed and greeted by those of the Northern and Eastern

Provinces who are agitating for more decentralised powers. Also, the other Districts will support this proposition. Engineers from the Districts will be able to use their ingenuity in working out techniques for cheaper and more cost-effective generation of electricity and giving assistance to the multiple industries that will commence in the future.

With regard to the security dimension of electricity supply it is imperative that the armed forces are made conversant with every aspect connected with the running of the Electricity facilities. In this way, the country can never be held to ransom by any group. The armed forces will be trained to move and take over the operations in case of sabotage or even if one day an attack takes place by external forces.

In all this it seems evident that the New Fortress Energy Agreement is not acceptable to the general public and not only to the Unions. The Government has to take this into account and if necessary call for a plebiscite on this issue. If Parliament and the people of this country want the government to proceed with it so be it. However, if the people reject it the government has a valid justification to withdraw from the agreement.

A. Jayatileke

In Memoriam: Daya and Alfred Wijewardena



Alfred



Daya

Daya Wijewardena was many things to many people. These included, but were not limited to, being: a wife to her husband, Alfred; a surrogate mother to her nephew, Dayananda; a grandmother/great-aunt to Dayananda's children; a teacher to countless students at Anula Vidyalaya; a trusted confidante to my mother; and a beloved aunt to my brother and me. In her later years, she greatly supported the work of her husband, spending many countless hours, being a sort of unpaid personal assistant charged with doing, things, like taking down dictation for his planned workshops. Her one complaint was about her own handwriting, which she didn't consider to be very good since she had been forced in school to write right-handed, despite being a natural left-hander. It's been a decade since her passing, but the void left by her absence has not diminished.

Alfred Wijewardena – or D.A. Wijewardena, as he was professionally known – was a multi-hyphenate Renaissance man, who lived by the motto 'plan your work and work your plan'. A qualified Attorney-at-Law, with a Degree in Laws and a B.Sc. in Logic, he was also a Justice of the Peace, but in his early days he'd done a variety of jobs, including being the Game Ranger at Yala National Park and a teacher at Ananda College. He subsequently focused on administrative matters, becoming the first Secretary of the then newly-formed State Services Disciplinary Board (which had replaced the Public Service Commission, where he was an Assistant Secretary). He ultimately set up his own institution known as The Centre for Studies in Disciplinary Management. An avowed workaholic, he worked well past retirement, only stopping in the last two or three years of his life. When he had some free time, he enjoyed playing tennis at the SSC, where he was a Vice President for many years. He left us three years ago, but there's rarely a day that goes by when we don't think of or talk about him.

My brother and I called Alfred's wife 'Daya Aunty', although in reality those two words tended to morph into one, creating a brand new descriptor specific to her: 'Dayaunty'. She loved us abundantly, with that love even extending to our childhood puppy, Shiny, who similarly adored Dayaunty, particularly as she often brought Shiny a succulent bone to chew on when she came to visit. Dayaunty was kind, caring, nurturing and she loved to laugh, albeit very softly... She didn't ever have a cross word for us.

We never referred to Dayaunty's husband as 'Alfred Uncle', despite our multi-generational age gap. To us he was 'Alfie', because he was our pal: someone who was always on our level, someone we could relate to. For years he drove a Volkswagen Beetle, which we referred to as the 'Alfie Car'. He was such a character that he constantly had us in stitches, giggling until our sides hurt, thanks to the yarns that he spun. Picture the perfect babysitter (or, from our perspective, a best buddy) and that was Alfie. He set the bar very high when it came to fun uncles.

Our childhood was enriched beyond measure for having Dayaunty and Alfie in it. When Alfie (often distracted by other thoughts but still wanting to be a part of the ongoing conversation) would say something grammatically correct but factually unfeasible – like his infamous "You

spoke to him when he was dead?" line of inquiry – Dayaunty would titter almost silently, which naturally made us crack up even more.

Dayaunty had a sense of adventure and would have happily travelled the world if only Alfie wasn't tethered to work. ("Inquiries, baba, inquiries" is how he explained his professional life to us.) So, a solitary trip to India on pilgrimage notwithstanding, Dayaunty had to make do with escapades in-country. These included one memorable visit to Yala during which her quiet chuckling threatened to actually form sound when someone, on seeing a herd of elephants, queried incredulously: "Why does that elephant have five legs?!" Dayaunty was much quicker on the uptake than the rest of us, but when the penny finally dropped, it was a wonder that all the wildlife in our immediate vicinity didn't run for the hills, such was the laughter emanating from our vehicle!

On the singular occasion that our parents were unable to have us join them when they went abroad for a conference, they entrusted us into the care of Alfie and Dayaunty – and we had a ball. Even though we loved and were used to spending time together, and they treated us like their own children, both Dayaunty and Alfie must have felt the weight of responsibility that came with such a serious undertaking; however, we never saw any hints of anxiety from either.

When Dayaunty unexpectedly had a stroke 10 years ago, I thought she would soon recover. So, when Alfie called me to convey the news of her passing with the words "the firecracker has gone", it took a long time for the reality of the situation to sink in. Dayaunty's departure was a seismic event and it felt as though she took a part of our childhood with her when she went.

Then, in 2018, after bemoaning his loss of productivity and his perceived lack of usefulness to society as a result of stopping work, Alfie decided to follow suit. Never again would we hear him recite 'Inky, Pinky, Polly' incorrectly, just to make us laughingly (and somewhat exasperatedly) exclaim: "Oh, Alfie, you don't know anything!" Gone were the tales of his exploits on the tennis court ("I have bad knees now because my doubles partner used to make me run for all the drop shots!") and his adventures in emailing ("I was worried about writing to you too much because I thought I'd fill up the computer!"). If part of our childhood went with Dayaunty, the rest accompanied Alfie.

How does anyone recover from – or at least mitigate – such grief, devastation and loss? One step is to remember the good times and focus on all the positive things that Daya and Alfred Wijewardena brought to so many people – in their immediate and extended families, amongst their friends, in their lives and in their careers.

As we mark, on successive days, what would have been Alfie's 100th birthday (7th December) and 10 years since Dayaunty's passing (8th December), we pause to reflect on two extraordinary lives that touched so many others in a multitude of ways. We will always love Alfie and Dayaunty, and we'll be forever grateful for the roles that they played in our lives, particularly our childhood. We hope their sansaric journey is short. May they both attain Nibbana!

Dr. Mihirini Wijewardena

Need for traffic lights at Pamankada junction

Now that the Havelock Road is open to traffic on both sides up to the Pamankada bridge, the Pamankada T-junction has become a real bottleneck, especially during the rush hours in the morning and again in the evening. There were no problems when it was one way. With unruly drivers manning private buses and three wheelers and the motor cyclists, it is indeed a hassle for the law-abiding drivers to manipulate their vehicles in a melee.

As Havelock Road has been opened to vehicular traffic both ways, there is a large number of buses belonging to the CTB as well as private buses on route numbers 120(Horana and Kesbewa and



Pettah), 162 (Bandaragama to Pettah), 135(Kelaniya to Kohuwala) and 141 (Wellawatte to Narahenpita) that ply up and down passing this T- junction.

It would be good before some serious motor accident takes place to install traffic lights at this junction. Every driver tries to get out of the melee as quickly as possible and ultimately all vehicles get stuck and take a longer time to move on. Installing the lights would instill some discipline to the reckless drivers especially during the time that school children are transported.

HM Nissanka Warakulle

By Dr Upul Wijayawardhana

Of many a wonderful saying that embellishes the Sinhala language, none seems more appropriate, at present, than the expression "Yanne koheda? Malle pol!"; when asked "where are you going?", the reply is "I have coconuts in my bag!". Of course, it is a well-known tactic adopted by politicians of all shades, the world over; when asked a penetrative question for which they have no answer, instead, they answer their own imaginary question! Judging by similar responses to my article "Continuing craziness" (The Island, 11 November) I wonder whether there is, perhaps, 'Covid-induced confusion'.

Whilst thanking G A D Sirimal (Continuing craziness: The Island, 15 November) for his advice on how I should write about the 'war victory', may I point out that his blaming me for not giving the credit to General, sorry, Field Marshall Sarath Fonseka shows that he seems to have completely failed to grasp the context of my piece. In my article, I was not discussing the war but expressing my total disbelief that the two people, at the helm of the country, are unable to tackle the total indiscipline rampant in the country with the resultant chaos, though they were able to defeat a ruthless terrorist group! In this context FM Fonseka is totally irrelevant as he is far from being at the helm!

I agree with Mr Sirimal that "The government, under Mahinda Rajapaksa, won the war" is the most accurate way to describe the war victory. After all, it is the 'ruler' who gets the credit for a war victory and, in fact, blamed in case of defeat. Though no one can deny the part played by FM Fonseka for the war victory, unfortunately, it was his own behaviour, following the end of the conflict, that soured the victory. Because he was so convinced that the victory was primarily his that crafty Ranil was able to convince Fonseka to stand against Mahinda at the presidential election. During the campaign, Fonseka declared that the day after victory he will hang the Rajapaksa in Bogambara prison. Meanwhile, Ranil was giving assurances to the Tamil diaspora in Europe that he would sort out 'the minority problems', as he would become the 'executive' PM, once Fonseka was elected President!

It is beyond comprehension how FM Fonseka got in truck with the UNP, which acted with disdain, mocking the army at every turn. The UNP ridicule was mostly directed at Fonseka, one MP stating in parliament that he could not lead even the

Salvation Army! As PM, Ranil signed a peace treaty with Prabhakaran at the instigation of Norway, which was breached by the Tigers even before the ink was dry! Army suffered many setbacks due to his actions. The UNP continued to ridicule the attempts of Mahinda's government at defeating terrorism.

To grab political power, Fonseka was prepared to forget all those insults. Worse still, he was prepared to let down his own army. When unfair accusations of human rights violations were made Fonseka's explanation was that he was abroad when "the white flag incident, etc. occurred. As he was abroad at the time of winning the war, how come he claims the major part of

gracefully, instead of taking to politics, he surely would have earned a much better place in history.

Commenting on my article, Buddhi Perera in his opinion piece "From Craze to prosperity" (The Island, 12 November) states: "When thinking about the past performance of these brothers, namely Mahinda, Gotabaya and Basil, the last two names would not give rise to pleasant memories. As Secretary of Defence, during Mahinda's rule, Gotabaya gave all assistance to our security forces Commanders by providing all men and material they asked for and some named the battle as Gota's War. One may always wonder why it was not Mahinda's, Sarath's, Wasantha's or Roshan's War". Maybe, in a "Yanne Koheda? Malle Pol!" stance, Mr Perera states providing all assistance would not give rise to pleasant memories! Memories would not be pleasant only for Tiger sympathisers!! The reason why some named it 'Gota's war' is simply because Gota performed that vital function of coordination which, according to many defence experts, was the most important reason for the 'war victory'.

Perera also refers to an opinion piece by Rohana Wijayawardhana (Country in peril? The Island 11 November) which was printed beside mine, expressing an opposing view, which illustrates the high journalistic traditions maintained by The Island over the 40 years of its existence. Wijayawardhana, by the way is no relative of mine, fears the country is in peril due to the following reason: "The present set is being led by a person who had many serious allegations against him even before his election while all past leaders did not have such allegations". Whilst I greatly doubt whether all our past leaders were squeaky clean and had no allegations against them, am more concerned that the present President is being castigated on the basis of unproved allegations. It looks as if the vilification campaign of the Tiger rump has had the desired result!

In spite of the recent political setbacks, I still feel that provided Gota and Mahinda can repeat their past performance, the prevailing chaos can stop so that Sri Lanka starts a journey towards prosperity. Others may disagree but I still feel they are the only hope as there is no alternative in sight, at the moment. The fact that the opposition is failing badly was well highlighted in the editorial "Enemies of people" (The Island, 17 November).

My fervent hope is that all politicians realize the great danger the country faces and work together for better times.

Yanne koheda? Malle pol!

the victory? Further, his attacks on the Navy Chief Karannagoda is despicable, to say the least. In the final phase of the battle, our Army was advancing under the cover of the Air Force and the enemy was cornered because the Navy effected a blockade, preventing the escape of terrorists. Who coordinated all this? It was Gota and that is why the Tiger rump has named him the "Terminator". Aided by some burning with jealousy, The Tiger rump levelled many accusations against Gota but nothing was ever proved. The fact that the eace-loving Sri Lankan voters could see through these was shown by the massive endorsement Gota received at the presidential election.

FM Fonseka's thirst for political power seems totally unquenched. After having made mincemeat out of the reputation of Sajith, and his father too, in a "Derana 360" programme prior to the last presidential election, unashamedly he became a Sajith devotee, after the announcement by Sajith that FM Fonseka would get a top post in his administration. Now it is rumoured that he is in competition with Champika in the move to oust Sajith! A significant proportion of his recent outburst in Parliament had to be 'bleeped-out' for broadcast news. Had he retired

Prevent growth of extremism through stronger institutions

BY JEHAN PERERA

The killing of a Sri Lankan, in Pakistan, by a frenzied mob, who accused him of committing an act of blasphemy, serves as a grim reminder of the ever-present danger of pent-up emotion exploding in society. Over the eons, religion has served to humanize the more primitive nature, lurking within human beings. "Be kind to the stranger in your midst, because you were once strangers in the land of Egypt," is the biblical injunction too often ignored by the very people who profess to follow its teachings. It is not only in Pakistan that such inhuman acts have occurred, especially when there has been a failure of national leadership to instill a higher ethos of morality in the people, too often for the sake of electoral gain.

Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan has been accused of defending Pakistan's blasphemy law and promoting Islamic fundamentalism to come to power and now to shore up support for his government that is failing to solve the problems of the people. A clause of the constitution mandates the death penalty for any "imputation, insinuation or innuendo" against the Holy Prophet. Presently Pakistan faces economic sanctions by the EU, as does Sri Lanka, due to its adherence to this law and other human rights issues. The EU has raised issues related to the protection of journalists, religious extremism, misuse of blasphemy laws, and forced conversion in some parts of the country. A compromised political environment in which there is impunity leads people to take the law into their own hands according to their notions of what is right and wrong.

Mobilising the emotions of people, whether by religion or ethnic nationalism, to gain and retain power, is like sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and other members of the Sri Lankan government have expressed their strong condemnation of the heinous crime against its citizens and demanded justice. Prime Minister Khan has pledged justice and referred to the "day of shame" for Pakistan. More than a hundred alleged participants in the crime have been arrested. There have also been images of Pakistani civil society groups saying sorry for what has happened. Likewise, Sri Lankan civil society will also recall the support that Pakistan gave to Sri Lanka during the years of war and, diplomatically, on the issues of human rights violations raised by sections of the international community.

DANGEROUS MIX

It is also necessary for Sri Lankans to be mindful about what has happened



Priyantha Kumara, who was lynched in Pakistan

within Sri Lanka itself during the JVP insurrection, the 1983 riots, and, more recently, in Aluthgama, Digana and Kurunegala. In all of these instances, there was a measure of state complicity, or inaction, which is worse than the savage deeds of a mob as the state represents the civilization of the country. This state failure has been on account of the over-politicisation of the state machinery to the point where senior officers of the state, most of whom have joined the state for idealistic reasons, cannot and do not perform their duties due to political interference. In a manner similar to Prime Minister Khan, President Rajapaksa, and the current government, won elections by catering to the nationalism and fears of the ethnic majority, with some of its allies spewing hatred towards the ethnic and religious minorities.

There are disturbing signs that the situation of state failure is growing more serious in Sri Lanka. The release of former Governor Azath Salley after he had been in remand jail for eight months on charges that the court said were not sustainable. All charges against him by the Attorney General were dismissed as they lacked merit. The injustice done to him and his family, the loss of eight months of his life and his reputation, require reparations which may be forthcoming as he is a person of stature. There will be countless others who are less able to fight their cases, like the former Governor did. In addition, there have been several

There are disturbing signs that the situation of state failure is growing more serious in Sri Lanka. The release of former Governor Azath Salley after he had been in remand jail for eight months on charges that the court said were not sustainable. All charges against him by the Attorney General were dismissed as they lacked merit. The injustice done to him and his family, the loss of eight months of his life and his reputation, require reparations which may be forthcoming as he is a person of stature.

killings in police custody of prisoners who are alleged to have tried to escape when taken to find their store of weapons or in cross fire or by suicide. Making matters worse is that in some of these cases the families and lawyers of the imprisoned persons have given advance warning that those held in cus-

ody are scheduled to be killed, but nothing is done and the deaths take place.

The same inability or unwillingness to ensure accountability can be seen at multiple levels, be it in relation to the manner in which the three-decade long war ended, or the Easter Sunday bombings, or the Central Bank bond scandal, or the sugar tax scandal, the Yugadanavi Power Plant issue and, most recently, the explosion of large numbers of cooking gas cylinders which have led to deaths and burning down of people's homes. In none of these cases has investigations led to the masterminds being found and meted out justice. With time, the cases might be forgotten and the wrongdoers get away with their crimes. Perhaps it is in apprehension of the potential crisis situation in the country that the Supreme Court has written a strong judgement in a case that is representative of the people's sense of compassion and care for all living beings as directed by the sacred religious texts. This was with regard to whether elephants captured from the wild and taken to homes and temples as objects of social prestige should be returned to their supposed owners or released to the wild or sent to protected sanctuaries.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

In a decision that can have far reaching ramifications for the rule of law, and for the system of checks and balances, and wisely in a case that is less politically controversial, the Court cited

a famous judgement by Lord Denning in the English Courts where he said, "It is settled in our constitutional law that in matters that concern the public at large the Attorney General is the guardian of the public interest. Although he is a member of the government of the day, it is his duty to represent the public interest with complete objectivity and detachment. He must act independently of any external pressure for whatever quarter it may come." The Court said that "these observations aptly apply to the role of the Attorney General of Sri Lanka." Notably the respondents in this case were the Prime Minister and Minister of Wildlife.

If positions, such as the Attorney General, are to be filled with persons who will make decisions in line with the Court judgement above, it is necessary that they should be persons with integrity and competence. They also need the space to be able to do their work without political interference. It was to achieve this objective that two different governments, headed by two different political leaders from two different political parties took steps to ensure the passage of the 17th and 19th amendments in 2001 and 2015 respectively. These two amendments had the common feature of reducing the President's powers and seeking to increase the independence of state institutions from political interference. A police force that is independent of political influencers, who act behind the scenes, is more likely to act with integrity in dealing with the impunity that is growing in the country.

The government's pledge of a new draft constitution, before the end of the year, provides an opportunity to reform the system of governance and put an end to the multifarious violations and weaknesses in it that breeds impunity and resentment which is the fuel for extremism of all sorts. The political space should be kept secular, unlike in the case of Pakistan with its religious law, and kept free from religious or ethnic nationalist biases. The reintroduction of the scheme of appointment of higher officials of state, through a multi-partisan constitutional council consisting of members of government, Opposition and civil society, would lead to better appointments than the President alone making the appointments. The members of the constitutional council would together select the most appropriate persons to high offices of state and to insulate them from politically-motivated interference. This is particularly important in the case of the higher judiciary, the last bastion of freedom in a democracy that is going wrong. The present deterioration in the integrity and quality of decision-making at multiple levels and in multiple institutions highlights the need for a strong system of government, based on checks and balances—real good governance.

Deepti Khatuja, head clinical nutritionist, Fortis Memorial Research Institute says, "Scientific research has shown there is the benefit of going meatless and vegan. The common thing is people saying they are not able to meet protein diet with a vegetarian diet. But this is not correct. Low fat milk products and legume nuts soya products (soya milk and tofu) can replace curd and paneer and help us take care of protein content as well."

and paneer and help us take care of protein content as well."

She further said, "Fibre plant food is a good source of fiber and they actually help in controlling weight. A vegan diet is equally enriched with antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals, which are lacking in meat as they are typically loaded with fats. The concept of immunity has come in and can be taken care of with the vegan diet."

Another nutritionist Disha Doshi says, "There

Plant based meal ideal for holistic wellness

BY SHARBANI BANERJEE

As the world observes International Meatless Day with a large number of people turning vegan across the world, doctors and health experts too believe turning meatless is suitable for every age and stage of life. Some research has linked vegan diets with lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and lower rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer.

At the age when the young population is at a higher risk of suffering various health issues due to changing lifestyle and increased meat consumption, a plant-based diet and going vegan has become vital.

Talking about the same, Deepti Khatuja, head clinical nutritionist, Fortis Memorial Research Institute says, "Scientific research has shown there is the benefit of going meatless and vegan. The common thing is people saying they are not able to meet a protein diet with a vegetarian diet. But this is not correct. Low-fat milk products and legume nuts soya products (soya milk and tofu) can replace curd

are around 500 million vegetarians in India, and studies show that eating more meat-free meals will help you avoid chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer. Even a plant-based diet can fulfill all your nutritional requirements. Affirmative, today fortified foods contain vital minerals such as B12, calcium, iron, vitamin D, and folate."

"Vegetarian and vegan diets can also supply enough protein to your body through sources such as nuts, seeds, grains such as quinoa, pulses, legumes, beans, and even vegetables such as broccoli," she added.

As per a Singapore Chinese Health Study (SCHS) that recruited over 63,000 adults aged 45 to 74 from 1993 to 1998 and followed their health improvement for 11 years, in addition to researching the relationship between different types of meats and the volume of heme iron in each. Participants who consumed the most Red-meat and poultry had a 23% and a 15% increase in diabetes risk, respectively.

Furthermore, according to the American Heart Association, eating less meat can lower your risk of

stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, some malignancies; type 2 diabetes, obesity, and other health problems.

While doctors and health experts on one hand have been supporting much about the health benefits of going meatless, a surge has also been seen in the food industry where a plant-based diet has paved its way to aware the masses.

According to Rajat Bahl, Director at The Forest



Superfood, with proper choices of food, plant-based diet not only provides all required nutrition but also eliminates all the odds of meat-based diet such as type II diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and site-specific cancers such as GI tract, breast, ovaries, and uterus.

Rajat Bahl, Director at The Forest Superfood said "As we all have been seeing, the number of people suffering various ailments is only increasing. This is because of unhealthy diet practices that people are following. A meat-based diet although provides nutritional support, it comes with a package of ill effects that the body must endure. It is high time we switch to a plant-based diet which not only

provides all the nutrition the body requires but also eliminates all possible ill effects of meat-based diets."

"We must consume foods that promote healthy psychological and hormonal response, a happy gut and support immune function and minimize inflammation. Those foods that come directly from nature to our plates meet all four criteria. Plant-based foods such as nuts, fruits, vegetables, and seeds are a few to mention," added Bahl.

Nutritionist Ruchi Sharma, Founder Eat Fit Repeat says, "After numerous researches, it's getting popular that cutting back on meat can have positive effects on health and overall wellbeing. Limiting meat consumption brings a variety of benefits that range from better gut health to sustainable and healthy weight loss."

"Less or no consumption of meat has been linked with overall improved health and reduced risk of developing various chronic diseases. Recent researches proved that vegetarian meal plans are twice as effective as a meat-driven diet when it comes to sustainable and effective weight loss. Limiting meat intake is directly related to increasing plant-based diet which increases the intake of a lot of beneficial compounds such as antioxidants, dietary fiber and a number of micronutrients," added Sharma.

Dietitian Mac Singh, co-founder FITELO, says, "A plant-based diet consists of exclusively plant foods, including fruit, vegetables, grains, and legumes. These foods are abundant in fiber, plentiful in vitamins and minerals, cholesterol-free, and low in calories and saturated fat. Consuming a variety of plant foods provides the body with all the protein, calcium, and other essential nutrients it needs."

He further said, "A plant-based diet helps the body stay well hydrated since 30% of the water needed by the body should come from the food we consume. Including a plant-based diet ensures the body gets multiple enzymes that help the body digest and break down the food we eat. Enzymes are proteins that support metabolism and the chemical responses in our bodies." (The Statesman/ANN)



BY NICOLA PERERA

What spaces exist for students and staff of ethnic and religious minorities, within the university? Do students and staff in these groups have the liberty and security to openly identify themselves, claim their identities, be visible? Do either university structures and policies or the culture and attitudes within the university community, ensure a lack of discrimination, with the same rights, privileges and opportunities, for such persons to live, work, and study in an environment of acceptance, without hostility or marginalisation? I speak of the ethos of majoritarianism, located in a university of the south, which is predominantly the normative of education in the country.

If I were to ask students, staff, or administrators how persons of ethnic and religious minorities are treated in the university, I suspect they would immediately point to the existence of cultural groups that have long been established in university culture. Most universities and faculties will have a Tamil Society, a Hindu Students' Society, a Muslim Majlis, various Christian groupings, and so on. Each will organise various cultural festivals, such as carols for Christmas, Ifthar, etc. At first glance, there appears to be representation and accommodation of ethnic and religious minorities, and this is institutionalised within the university.

But this accommodation is superficial and tokenistic. Against the existence of these various groups, consider the Student Union itself, which formally represents the entire student body. Who do they actually represent? The Student Union in the Faculty of Arts organises Buddhist festivals, pinkamas, and all-night piriths at the beginning of the year, as well as inviting Buddhist monks for Poyas, like Vesak and Poson. The major event of the year for the Student Union is the *Sahithya Ulela*, for which the Union goes all out: portraits of the greats of Sinhala literature adorn the pillars of the Faculty, together with quotations from their works. The drama festival is a huge



Dominances, hegemonies and diversities

part of the *Sahithya Ulela*, during which hugely popular Sinhala plays are performed.

This is the way things have always been in the university's framework of majority default and minority tolerance. There are religious and cultural student societies to represent and take care of non-Buddhist and non-Sinhala students, representing deviations from the norm, while the Student Union itself, regardless of its political/ideological tendency, firmly represents and centres Sinhala-Buddhist religious and cultural concerns instead of the diverse student body as a whole. The majority culture is dominant to the

point where it is the ubiquitous default, and all minority positions are tokenised into tolerated representations. It is a system and space that privileges my ethnic background, where my presence goes unquestioned, unremarked upon and unmarked.

On the other hand, what discriminations, aggressions, and microaggressions do students and staff of ethnic and religious minorities face in and outside class? What could they tell us, if we could only assure them of the security to openly talk about such things without fear of retaliation? What is our role as academic staff, regardless of discipline, to initiate dif-

icult conversations about inclusion, acceptance, to challenge the biases, prejudices, absences? What microaggressions, hostilities, subtle or overt othering do we as staff and administrators perpetrate? What is the culture that we create in university?

What of the class of Muslim students who were told that they can keep their cultural identity but should wear colourful abayas and hijabs, instead of the dark colours they preferred? What of the Muslim staff member who was requested to come and speak to these students, to present herself as a role model who chose to wear colourful shalwars while covering her head? Is it

in any way relevant that these requests were made by a staff member clad in Kandyan sari? Of course, it is: the representation of Sinhala Buddhist culture as the university's default makes its aesthetics and preferences the standard, which apparently Sinhala individual staff members feel empowered to enforce.

What of the Muslim women students who were stopped at the entrance of the university after the Easter bombings? The security guards told them to wear their hijabs in such a way as to show their ears. Is the university capable of recognising this harassment as harassment? Was this an officially-sanctioned policy that required the security guards to act this way? Or were they merely empowered to perform this harassment in that moment by the long-established practice of treating Sinhala culture, dress, and presentation as normal and default, with all marked minority cultures as suspicious deviations? Would the existence of the Muslim Majlis be sufficient to let these students agree with the common perspective that the university – by policy or practice – does not discriminate on the basis of religious/ethnic grounds? Could these students have gotten away with showing impatience, even a touch of hauteur (as I did when I produced my ID card for inspection) at the guards' power to remark on their ethnicity, police their attire – in myriad small ways to let them know that their presence in the university space was under surveillance, at the majority's sufferance?

It is not enough for the university to complacently point at tokenistic student groups as evidence of non-discrimination. Even the simple representation of diversity, at which the university is already failing, would still not be enough: including Tamil-language plays at the *Sahithya Ulela* and making sure to include the portraits of Tamil and Muslim writers as well is necessary, but far from sufficient. What we need is active anti-discrimination, in both word and deed, to identify these situations and contexts in which staff and students of religious and ethnic minorities in our universities are harassed, othered, and discriminated against every day, and to figure out ways to end those practices and prevent them from recurring, through policy, through education, and through our own efforts as the people who uphold and perpetuate university culture.

Nicola Perera is attached to the Department of English Language Teaching, University of Colombo.

Kuppi is a politics and pedagogy happening on the margins of the lecture hall that parodies, subverts, and simultaneously reaffirms social hierarchies.

The Vedic, Jain, and Buddhist traditions established the principles of ecological harmony centuries ago through their quest for spiritual and physical symbiosis, synthesized in a system of ethical awareness and moral responsibility.

By J P GUPTA

Climate change is the long-term alteration of temperature and typical weather patterns in a place. The cause of the present climate change is largely human and industrial activities, like burning fossil fuels such as natural gas, oil, and coal.

Burning these materials releases what are called greenhouse gases into the Earth's atmosphere. This over the decades has caused increase in atmospheric temperature of 1.2 degree Celsius compared with the pre-industrial era.

This increase in temperature is due to increased release of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, as a result of industrial activities. If this is not checked, atmospheric temperature will further increase by 1.5 degree Celsius by 2030.

The effects of increase in average temperature on the planet will include an array of natural disasters ~ from forest fires, volcanic eruptions, storms and earthquakes to a rise in sea levels. On human behaviour, it is found that the results will be fire of rage, anger, resentment, depression, suicides, denial and indulgence.

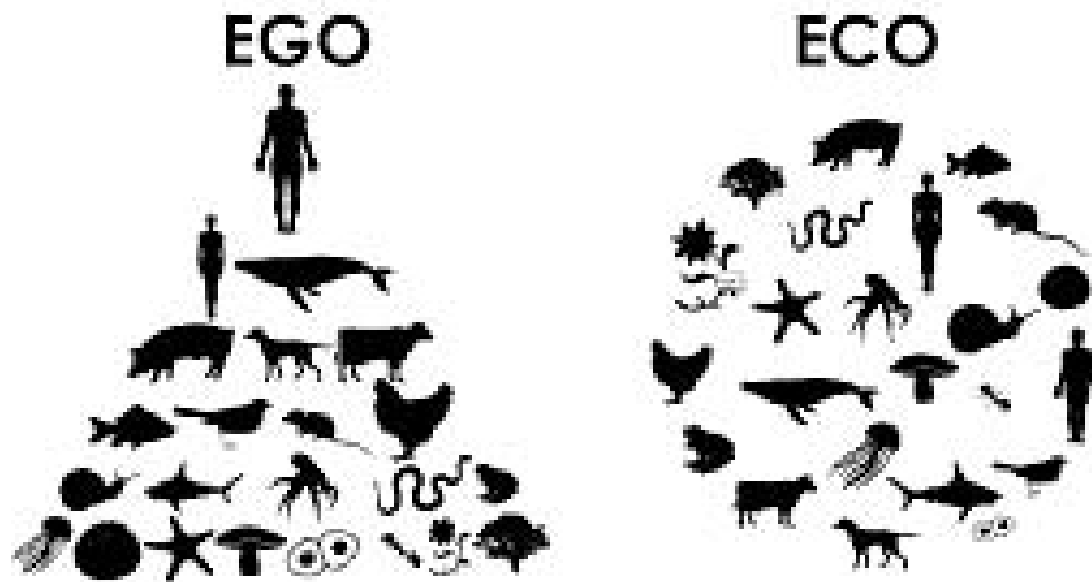
They are playing havoc with mental and physical wellbeing of humanity. The causes for increase in CO2, resulting in the rapid rise in global temperature are many. Besides population explosion and decades of abject misuse of natural resources, there has been increase in demand for energy for industrial activities, resulting in increased use of fossil fuels such as coal, crude oil, natural gas, besides deforestation of land for industrial activities.

The recently concluded COP-26 conference held in Glasgow, UK, attended by the world's leaders, deliberated on an urgent need to address the climate change crisis, which threatens human existence. COP stands for Conference of the Parties (countries) that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) ~ a treaty that came into force in 1994. There is a need for countries to be Carbon Neutral which means balancing carbon emissions, that is "absorb the same amount of carbon that we emit" by planting more trees and adopting eco-friendly sustainable energy sources, or renewable energy.

The solution to the problem lies in replacing fossil fuels by renewable energy i.e., solar, hydro, bio-fuel, wind energy and green hydrogen. It lies in a switch to sustainable transport. Petrol and diesel vehicles, planes and ships use fossil fuels. Reducing car use, switching to electric vehicles and minimising plane travel will not only help stop climate change, but it will reduce air pollution too.

Equally, it is important to live in harmony with nature using ancient wisdom, and by having a

Ecosophy believes in understanding the wisdom of the Earth and living in an ecological harmony with every species, organism and resources in this planet.



Ecological Harmony

lifestyle which is need based, and not greed based. There are three types of Hydrogen ~ Grey Hydrogen, Blue Hydrogen and Pink Hydrogen. Hydrogen is being produced for refineries and many other industrial uses by the process of steam reforming of natural gas.

This process for hydrogen is called grey hydrogen, because during hydrogen production, carbon dioxide is generated and released to the atmosphere. Hydrogen generated through the process of steam reforming along with Carbon capture of CO2 (Carbon sequestration) is named as blue Hydrogen.

Capture and utilisation of CO2 is expensive. Hydrogen produced using nuclear energy, it termed as Pink Hydrogen. There is another form of clean Hydrogen called Green Hydrogen which is produced by the Electrolysis of water by using renewable energy. No CO2 is evolved and thus this is called green hydrogen. India is uniquely placed as producer of the cheapest solar energy.

The Vedic, Jain, and Buddhist traditions established the principles of ecological harmony centuries ago through their quest for spiritual and physical symbiosis, synthesised in a system of ethical awareness and moral responsibility. The ancient sacred literature of the Vedas enshrines a holistic and poetic cosmic vision.

Thus, India could produce the cheapest green hydrogen not only for domestic consumption, but for global needs. There are several challenges that India faces with respect to technology, storage and transportation. India needs to develop new materials, electrolysis development, safety standards and regulatory regime. Cost of production of green hydrogen is very high.

Ancient wisdom could be the panacea for climate change. Mahatma Gandhi said, "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed." Ancient Wisdom shows the way to live in harmony with nature.

Mother Earth took billions of years to produce fossil fuels ~ coal, crude oil, natural gas. Now it must bid farewell to these sources and seek the help of the Sun to meet energy needs of her citizens, through solar energy and green hydrogen. The authenticity of ancient wisdom could be presented

by spiritual masters to change the mindset of humanity on how to live in harmony with nature.

There are two important dates in human life, one is the date of birth and the other is when one is able to find out the 'why' of life. Certain important lessons must be learnt. Business should be beyond profit and loss; it should be for transforming lives. Need of the hour is to go for a circular economy i.e. to use and reuse.

Long before ecology started facing problems, the ancient Indic heritage had already provided a spacious spiritual home for the environmental ethos.

The Vedic, Jain, and Buddhist traditions established the principles of ecological harmony centuries ago through their quest for spiritual and physical symbiosis, synthesised in a system of ethical awareness and moral responsibility. The ancient sacred literature of the Vedas enshrines a holistic and poetic cosmic vision.

They represent the oldest, the most carefully nurtured, the most elaborately systematised, lovingly preserved oral tradition in the annals of the world. Unique in their perspective of time and space, their evocative poetry is a joyous and spontaneous affirmation of life and nature.

The Vedic Hymn to the Earth, the Prithvi Sukta in Atharva Veda, is unquestionably the oldest and the most evocative environmental invocation. In it, the Vedic seer solemnly declares the enduring filial allegiance of humankind to Mother Earth: 'Mata Bhumi Putroham Prithivyah: Earth is my mother, I am her son.' Mother Earth is celebrated for all her natural bounties and particularly for her gifts of herbs and vegetation.

Her blessings are sought for prosperity in all endeavours and fulfillment of all righteous aspirations. A covenant is made that humankind shall secure the Earth against all environmental trespass and shall never let her be oppressed. The Vedic seers regarded the Earth as 'sacred space' for the consecrated endeavours and aspirations of humankind and for the practice of restraint and responsibility.

This affirmative view of the inviolable sacred space in human consciousness is integral to the Vedas and the Upanishads. On it rests the Vedic vision of a world filled with the purity of the spiritual environment and the sanctity of environmental spirituality and morality.

We invoke and imbibe Aum, the primordial sound of cosmic Harmony and pray for Peace and Harmony in Heaven; Peace and Harmony in the Sky and on the Earth; Peace and Harmony in the Waters; Peace and Harmony in the Herbs, the Vegetation and the Forests; Peace and Harmony among the Peoples and the Rulers of the World; Peace and Harmony in Spiritual Quest and Realisation; Peace and Harmony for one and all; Peace and Harmony Everywhere and in Everything; Peace, True and Real Peace, Let that Peace repose in my inner space, Peace of Peace, Everlasting Peace, We pray for Peace.

(The Statesman/ANN)

Billie Eilish's agoraphobia under control

Singer Billie Eilish used to struggle with the anxiety disorder - which causes people to avoid places, or situations, that may trigger panic - but she no longer gets 'freaked out' in public places.

The 19-year-old megastar says: "I'm starting to have an adulthood which is new for me, and very exciting, and I have had new experiences, and new people, and lots of love."

"My attitude used to be like, 'I can't go out, I can't go here, I can't go there.'... I wasn't able to go to a park, or go get coffee. It freaked me out. But in the last year I opened up to it."

The 'Bad Guy' hitmaker used to be known for her signature black and green hairdo, but she credits going blonde with helping her deal with the disorder.

She explained: "If I'm being cautious and not trying to be in everybody's faces, it's cool... I didn't used to be able to do that because my pride was too huge. I was like, 'I only want to be seen if I look like myself.' So I would never wear anything normal."

And the Grammy-winner admitted she no longer cares if people hate her.

She says: "I feel a lot of pressure, but back then I was more loved - I was pretty overall loved, to be honest. And I was scared



Billie Eilish: No longer cares if people hate her

because I wanted to keep that love.

"But now tonnes of people hate me, so I'm not worried anymore. If you like me, you like me, and if you don't, you don't."

Billie's mom, Maggie Baird, has helped her deal with the ups and downs of fame.

The 'My Future' hitmaker - who writes all her music with her 24-year-old musician-and-producer sibling, Finneas - added: "I guess I turn to my mom, honestly, the most in this period."

"She's new to this, just as I am, meaning fame, and this kind of world, but my mom has a very good way of looking at the world and she is the main person that I go to. Literally, maybe the only person that I go to."

Seen 'N' Heard

HEARD...those in the know-how describing certain parts (musical structure) of some of the new creations, floating around in the scene here, as very similar to what we have heard in the past.

One senior musician jokingly said that it's the singers (or composers) of the past who have copied our new creations!

E-Pals

- Name: Brianne (America)
- Age: 18
- Gender: Female
- E-Mail: brianneofgreengables@gmail.com

(I'm a freshman in college. My interests include historical fashion, reading, writing poetry, sewing, arts and crafts, Phantom of the Opera, thrifting, and folk music. I'm looking for e-mail pals who I can talk to about my everyday life and my hobbies/interests! I am open to talking to pals of either gender that are around my age (18). Feel free to email me and we can start chatting about books, art, and anything else!)

* If you would like to be listed in our E-Pals column, e-mail your details to: jetliner02@yahoo.com

World Singles Top 10

1. Easy On Me - Adele
2. Stay - Kid KAROI and Justin Bieber
3. Cold Heart - Elton John and Dua Lipa
4. Love Nwantiti (Ah Ah Ah) - Ckay
5. Shivers - Ed Sheeran
6. Bad Habits - Ed Sheeran
7. All Too Well - Taylor Swift
8. Industry Baby - Lil Nas X and Jack Harlow
9. My Universe - Coldplay and BTS
10. Heat Waves - Glass Animals



Glass Animals: 'Heat Waves' (10)

UK Pop Top 10

1. Easy On Me - Adele
2. ABCDEFU - Gayle
3. All I Want For Christmas Is You - Mariah Carey
4. Last Christmas - Wham!
5. I Drink Wine - Adele
6. Oh My God - Adele
7. Flowers (Say My Name) - Arrdee
8. Seventeen Going Under - Same Fender
9. Overpass Graffiti - Ed Sheeran
10. All Too Well - Taylor Swift



Gayle: 'ABCDEFU' (02)

Remembering a great artiste

on his 25th anniversary



Clarence Wijewardena



The late, and great Clarence Wijewardena is one artiste who will never ever be forgotten - when it comes to music.

It was Clarence who revolutionised the Sinhala music scene, and it was his creations that brought into the limelight, what is now referred to as 'Sinhala pops.'

His very first band, the Moonstones, electrified the scene with their special brand of Sinhala pops and, from that point onwards, hits after hits followed.

Before long, several others decided to follow in the footsteps of Clarence and the local scene began to reverberate to his music...and style.

Clarence and the Moonstones became an integral part of the local music scene and were seen, on stage, at practically every big concert that was held here...and abroad, as well.

Then came the Golden Chimes, and the Super Golden Chimes, with Clarence at the helm, again.

Later, Clarence had short stints with the bands Universe and Madara.

Twenty-five years ago, Clarence's era, in the music scene, came to an end, and his 25th death anniversary is being celebrated, in a very special way, at

the Nelum Pokuna theatre, in Colombo.

Initially, arrangements were made to celebrate this nostalgic occasion with a live concert, with audience participation, but the pandemic and the new variant, Omicron, has relegated this tribute concert to an online event.

The venue remains the same, but with no live audience participation.

'Tribute to Clarence' will be live streamed, to the world, and it's all happening on December 12th, 2021, from 7.00 pm onwards.

The commemorative concert will feature 25 living legends, who originally sang Clarence's creations.

Billed to appear are Annesley Malawana, Indrani Perera, Anil Bharethi, Shyami

Fonseka, Sanath Nandasiri, Malkanthi Nandasiri, Lilanthi Karunanayake, Priyankara Perera, Rohana Siriwardana, Lankika Perera, Chandani Hettiarachchi, Menik Chandrika, Lalith Ponnampere, Tyrone Mihindukula, Rohana Siriwardana, Dezmund Rodrigo, Vernon Perera, Dhammika Bandara, Saman de Silva, Athula Adikari, Walter Fernando, Ranil Mallawarachchi, T. M. Jayaratna, Thisara Fernando and Rajiv Sebastian, with Rajiv's band, The Clan, also providing the accompaniment.

According to Rajiv, most of the artistes will perform in medley form in order to accommodate as much as 50 songs for the music loving public to reminiscence the days of Clarence Wijewardena.

The evening's proceedings will be handled by emcees Vijaya Corea and Ariyasiri Withanage who will unfold the hidden facts of Sinhala Pop.

To be a part of the action, you need to purchase your ticket from lk.book-myshow.com - priced at Rs. 2,000 - and the concert could be viewed from any part of the world.



The stars who will be seen in action at the 'Tribute to Clarence' concert

Layout by Chamath Gunawardena

Action...in the coming weeks

The lead up to Christmas, and the New Year, certainly doesn't look 'blue,' in any way.

Initially, I was thinking of Elvis Presley's 'Blue Christmas' - what with the pandemic, and the new variant, creating chaos...everywhere.

But...yes, the showbiz scene here seems to have changed, for the better.

On December 8th (that's tomorrow), 'The Legends of Ceylon' is the title of a musical evening, that will take place, from 7.00 pm onwards, at the Irish Pub, in Colombo, featuring Geoffrey Fernando, Mignonne, Noeline, Sohan, Dalrene, and Manilal, backed by the group Mirage.

Sohan & The X-Periments, a name associated with sing-along events, will be involved in

two sing-alongs this month - on December 12th at The Grand Kandyan Hotel, and on December 17th at the BMICH

Banquet Hall.

The Christmas Sing-Along, in Kandy, commencing at 7.00 pm, will have, in the vocal spotlight, Corrine, Clifford

Richard, Sohan, and Trishelle, along with The X-Periments.

The 17th event, at the BMICH, from 7.30 pm onwards, will also feature Corrine, Clifford Richard, Sohan, and Trishelle, with guest stars Falan Andrea and Radika.

Sohan indicated to us that the festive scene seems to be brightening up, a bit, and that he and his band do have work coming their way.

"We are going to be pretty busy for the next few weeks."

At the Irish Pub tomorrow night



Sudoku No. 4942

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

Solution to No. 4941

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

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

KAKURO 4179

		18	12				12	10	
	14				5	16		12	
		13					4		
11			20				30		8
	6			9			28		
			20						
		7					7		
							10		
		30							
									7

Solution 4178

		26	3			16	7		
	11	9	2		9	7	2	27	
12	5	6	1		21	9	4	8	7
	4	1	3	20	5		6	1	3
		12	8	3	1		9	12	7
			21	8	4	9	17	11	2
10	4			8	4	9	17	11	2
20	8	3	9		23	8	9	6	
	3	2	1			9	8	1	

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



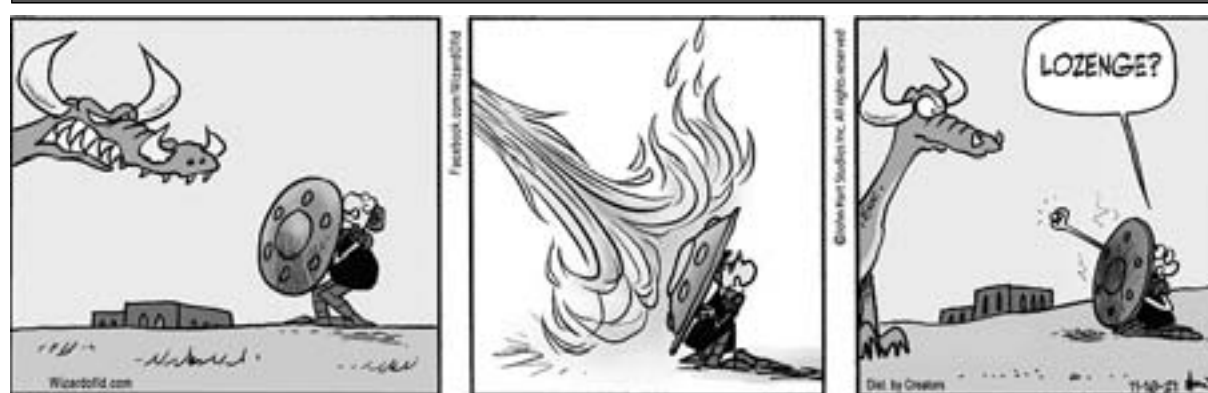
Andy Capp

By Reg Henry Scargelli



Wizard of Id

By Parker and Hart



Mother Goose & Grimm

By Mike



Mutt & Jeff



Pickles



Completed his unfulfilled dream

Kumar Sanu completed his unfulfilled dream over the weekend when he sang the rap portion of the famous 90s song, *Ye Kaali Kaali Aankhein*, which featured in Shah Rukh Khan's hit film, *Baazigar*. Kumar Sanu was a guest on the singing reality show *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*.

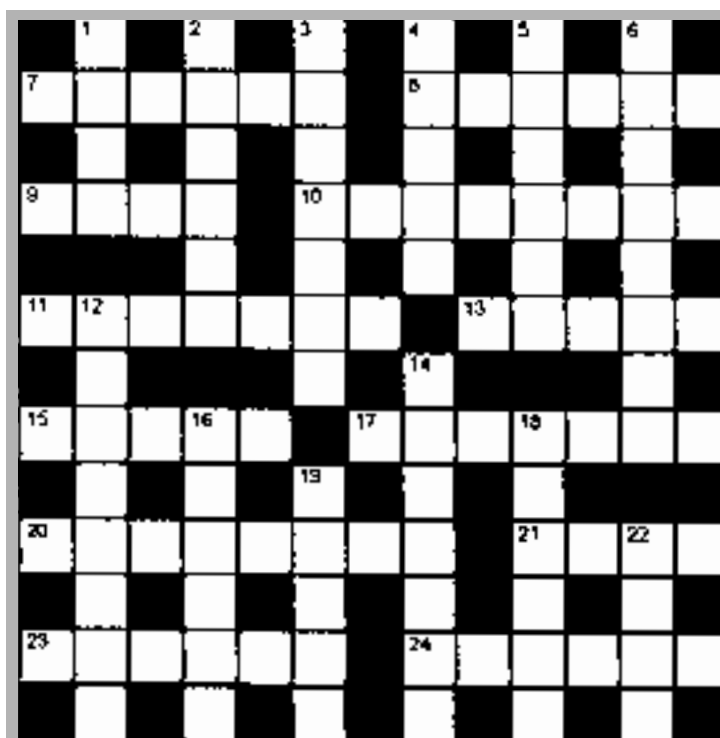


Kumar Sanu was a guest on Sa Re Ga Ma Pa.

the song *Yeh Kaali Kaali Aankhen*. I could have done it easily, but he didn't let me do it."

The singer added, "Since then, I always wanted, from the bottom of my heart, to take revenge on him by singing the rap part. And today my revenge is completed on the sets of *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*."

When contestant Yumna Ajin sang the song on *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*, Kumar Sanu walked up to the stage and sang the rap portions that were done by Anu Malik in the original song. A LiveHindustan report claimed that Kumar Sanu also said, "I actually wanted to take revenge on Anu Malik. He didn't let me sing the rap part of

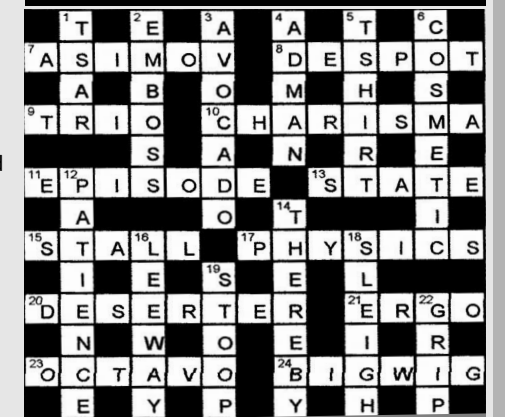


Daily Island Crossword No. 3847

- Across**
 7 Cling (6)
 8 At the first signs of the symptoms one should see him (6)
 9 (of champagne) extremely dry (4)
 10 Biased (3-5)
 11 Ice-skating rink (3,4)
 13 Rest one's weight on one's knees (5)
 15 Fragrance (5)
 17 Proportionately (3,4)
 20 City in central Mali (8)
 21 Anti-social behaviour order (Abbr.) (4)
 23 Large number or amount (6)
 24 Solid food prepared from the pressed curd of milk (6)
- Down**
 1 Boom (4)
 2 Particular aspect of life or activity (6)
 3 Accrue (7)
 4 Person who does no work (5)
 5 Litigate (6)
 6 Motion (8)

- 12 Passageway (8)
 14 Beat (7)
 16 Fluid (6)
 18 Lecturer (6)
 19 Edict of the Russian tsar (5)
 22 A large wilderness area (4)

Crossword No. 3846



Date: 07-12-2021

Aries: It is a day of good and bad results. You will have parties. You will participate in entertainment. It is a good day for beginning new creations.

Taurus: It is a day of good and bad results. The improvements in your businesses will dwindle. You will come under enemy assault. It is advisable that you act with foresight.

Gemini: It is an auspicious day. While you should work hard, you will reap benefits according to your hard work. You will be successful at competitive examinations. You will be in difficulties in matters where you trust others.

Cancer: It is a day of good and bad results. You will participate in distant and overseas trips. There will be differences of opinion at places of work. Since others will criticize you, you should go about the day's work with patience.

Leo: It is a day of good and bad results. It is a busy day for you. Due to restlessness some oversights will occur. You will feel some depression. Circumstances that make you encounter clashes due to sudden and speedy action.

Virgo: It is an auspicious day. Your views will win. You will have a lot of travelling to do. You will be victorious at your work place meetings. You will work in unison with your relatives and friends.

Libra: It is an auspicious day. You will be able to amicably settle differences of opinions at your place of work. Your worth will be well recognised in society. It is an auspicious day for buying or constructing new houses as well as for launching new creations.

Scorpio: It is a day of good and bad results. You will spend your time on the requirements of others. There will be obstacles for your businesses as well as you will encounter economic pressure.

Sagittarius: It is an auspicious day. While there will be an increase of your duties, it is a tiring day for you. Your mind will be restless. It is not good to act according to your views. There will be differences of opinion with your associates.

Capricorn: It is an auspicious day. You will go about your work with enthusiasm and virility. Your aspirations will be fulfilled. There will be a decline in your businesses.

Aquarius: It is a day of good and bad results. You will experience restlessness in your mind. Problems that cause disappointment at place of work will occur.

Pisces: It is a day of good and bad results. Your duties will become more systematic. It is a troublesome day. You will spend your time on behalf of others. You will increase your obstacles by acting according to your opinion.

Cuba dominate jumping events at Pan American Junior Games

Cuba has been providing its sports expertise for Sri Lanka to grow in various fields for some time now. The guidance of Cuban coach Luis Miranda was crucial in the country doing well in jumping events during the recent past. How strong Cuba is in jumping events was proven once again at the inaugural Pan American Junior Games in Cali, Colombia, hosts of the 2022 World Athletics U20 Championships as they dominated horizontal jumps. Incidentally, those notable feats come in the backdrop of Sri Lanka terminating the services of Cuban coaches.

All major gold-winning performances in horizontal jumps of their junior athletes at the Pan American Junior Games stand taller than the top senior national performances of Sri Lankans. Here is a look at some of them.

The 19-year-old Leyanis Perez jumped beyond 14 metres in all six of her attempts to take her first international victory in 14.39m. Earlier in the year she jumped a NACAC U20 record of 14.53m to move to third on the world U20 all-time list but was then forced to miss the Olympic Games through injury.

Sri Lanka's top performers in the senior category are still to break the 14 metres barrier in the women's triple jump. The country's national record of Vidusha Lakshani stands at 13.66 metres.

"It was a beautiful experience," said Perez. "I wanted to secure gold in the first round and jump further with my remaining attempts. I am thankful to be here

and make up for my absence in Tokyo. I jumped here with a nine-step run-up and I plan to compete with my full run-up at the World Indoor Championships next March."

Compatriot Andy Hechavarria also confirmed the Island's dominance in the event with a 16.77m win in the men's triple jump. The senior national men's triple jump record of Sri Lanka is Sreshan Dhananjaya's 16.71 metres feat in 2019.

Other notable performances of Pan American event

Another South American record fell on the last day of the competition. Venezuela's 2018 Youth Olympic Games finalist Silenis Vargas smashed the area U20 record in the hammer with 65.63m, more than two-and-a-half metres better than the previous mark, held by Chile's Mariana Garcia. Vargas surpassed the 60-metre mark for the first time in her career and joined Cuba's Yaritza Martinez, winner with 67.47m, on the podium. Garcia settled for bronze with a best of 64.86m.

With more than 400 athletes from 30 countries competing in Cali, 13 countries won at least one gold medal, with another eight having at least one athlete on the podium. Brazil dominated the medal tally with 30 medals (10 gold, 12 silver and eight bronze), followed by Cuba (9-6-3) and Ecuador (9-2-2).

Gabriela Anahi Suarez completes the sprint double. Suarez, who competed in the 4x100m at the Tokyo Olympics, opened the golden path for Ecuador with an impressive 100m win in

11.32, finished more than two tenths of second ahead of her closest rival. She added the 200m title with a personal best of 22.96, then added bronze in the 4x100m and even came close to a fourth medal when running the third leg of the 4x400m mixed relay. Her team finished third but was disqualified due to an obstruction.

She celebrated in tears as she remembered her former training partner, the late 2019 world 200m bronze medallist Alex Quinonez.

Anderson Marquinez capped a magical Friday for Ecuador, winner of five of the 12 gold medals contested on the second last day of the competition. Marquinez ran a personal best of 20.51 to take the 200m and ran the third leg of the victorious 4x400m squad. Race walker Glenda Morejon and javelin thrower Jenisey Angulo also reached the highest step on the podium in their respective events.

Another Olympian, Chayenne da Silva, left Pascual Guerrero Stadium with three gold medals. The 21-year old Brazilian, who holds the South American U23 record, first won the 400m hurdles in 55.97 and then joined her teammates to win the women's and mixed 4x400m titles.

Equally impressive was Anahi Alvarez, Mexico's most decorated athlete at the Games all sports combined. A week after she won the individual title and the mixed relay silver in the triathlon, the 20-year-old was impressive in the 1500m, winning by almost nine seconds (4:20.68), and then produced another great display of distance running in the 5000m with 15:52.80.



Cuba dominated jumping events of the Pan American Junior Games.

Latham defends New Zealand's batters' approach

New Zealand captain Tom Latham has defended the approach of his batters in the second Test at Mumbai. New Zealand were bowled out for 62 in the first innings and for 167 in the second innings. Over the course of the second innings, the aggressive approach taken in vain by a few batters had come in for criticism.

Latham suggested that the plan was to try and reverse the pressure that the Indian spinners were putting on the batters.

"I think so, in these conditions you can't just allow them to bowl. They're very good, very accurate and don't give you much to hit. For us, it is about putting a little bit more pressure on them to get a few more fielders away from the bat because you know they don't miss that often. So for us, it is about guys having a certain plan and then sticking to that. Unfortunately, if you had a plan and you're getting out, then that's just the game, that's just cricket. And so it's up to each individual on how they want to approach their innings," said Latham in his post-match press conference on Monday (December 6).

Ross Taylor was one of the batters who had tried to attack nearly every ball of his eight-ball stay before miscuing a loft off Ashwin. Asked about Taylor's approach, in particular, Latham said, "Ross obviously had the approach where he wanted to try and put their bowlers under pressure. And you certainly need to do that. Subcontinent players tend to take people out from around the bat pretty quickly. And unfortunately for Ross, it didn't quite work out for him, pretty sure that's the plan Ross had heading into that innings."

Similarly, Latham also put down the 62 all-out in the first innings to a really bad day out. "One of the things in cricket where



"The more you play in these parts of the world, the more you learn and the more you're able to grow your game."

everything you do, doesn't seem to work," said Latham. "And I think it's one of the days that happens in cricket, and it's happened with teams all around the world. Unfortunately, it was our time. And things didn't quite unfold quite the way we'd have wanted to. So you got to take a lot of learnings from it and I think the way we were able to come out in the second innings, guys sort of changed their game plan a little bit and a put little bit more pressure on the bowlers. And as we know here in India the longer you go, throughout the match the harder it gets to bat," he added.

Latham also felt that the entire group would come off better from the experience of playing in these

conditions, even as a few of the less experienced batters managed to make an impact through the series.

"Yeah, you're right, those three guys you just mentioned [Will Young, Rachin Ravindra, Daryl Mitchell], pretty sure it's their first time to this part of the world, and for them to step up in different times in the match and over two games, and make contributions throughout the Test series is great for depth of New Zealand cricket. The more you play in these parts of the world, the more you learn and the more you're able to grow your game. Obviously very pleasing for those guys. But also for everyone else, there are learnings to take and next time we're in these conditions or similar conditions and hope

those learnings are put to practice next time," said the stand-in captain who was also pleased with improvements over the two innings.

"I think from our point of view, something we always talk about is the character and the effort that the group puts in. Obviously, when you get bowled out for 60 it puts you behind the eight ball. But something we talk about is the character and try to have a presence and try to put in as much effort as you can. And I certainly think we've done that over the last four days. And take the first innings out of it, it becomes a little bit of a different story. Certainly, something that I can't fault with this group at all," he said.



Fifth Ashes Test moved out of Perth

Cricket Australia confirmed yesterday that the fifth Ashes Test will be moved out of Perth owing to the pandemic-related restrictions. The Ashes, which kicks off on December 8 at the Gabba in Brisbane, was originally scheduled to finish with the final game at the Perth stadium from January 14. Cricket Australia is yet to decide on the replacement venue.

The decision had to be taken because of border controls, quarantine requirements and the complexities of hosting a five-Test series in a tight schedule. The board stated that it worked closely with Western Australia Cricket, making every effort to retain the game in Perth but it didn't prove to be feasible.

The Weber WBBL Final was an enormous success with the largest standalone crowd in the league's history, and CA and WA Cricket look forward to Perth Stadium hosting the Scorchers' KFC BBL opener against the Brisbane Heat

on Wednesday, December 8.

"We acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of the WA Government, relevant agencies and Perth Stadium over recent months," Nick Hockley, Cricket Australia CEO, said. "We are very disappointed that we are unable to stage the fifth Vodafone men's Ashes Test at Perth Stadium. We did everything we could in partnership with the WA Government and WA Cricket to make it work under the current border and health arrangements, but unfortunately, this was not possible."

"We are particularly disappointed for Western Australian cricket fans who were so looking forward to seeing the first-ever Ashes Test at the new stadium."

Perth Scorchers' first game of the Big Bash League, however, is set to go ahead at the venue on December 8. They are also set to host the opening ODI of the home series against New Zealand, which will involve three 50-over games and a T20I.

(cricbuzz)

Weerasinghe guides Sri Lankan Airlines to Travel Trade Futsal title

D.V.M. Weerasinghe booted Sri Lankan Airlines to a nail-biting win over Traveller Global to clinch the Travel Trade Sports Club five-a-side Futsal Soccer "Cup" Championship title 2021 at its 2nd edition, concluded on Saturday, at the Club Fusion Sports Arena, Boralesgamuwa.

The tournament was not sponsored, all expenses were borne by the Travel Trade Sports Club. The tournament was revived after three years, the last held in July 2017 at the Futsal World, Colombo 10.

Eight teams pooled into two groups participated in the tournament in two stages, the "league" and the "Knock-out" consisting 19 matches in total including the three finals.

The "Cup" Championship final was fiercely contested with no quarter asked, no quarter given.

Sri Lankan Airlines were comfortably placed at the end of the first seven minutes of play via two goals cleverly booted by M.R.M. Riyaz (2-nil). Traveller Global came back strongly in the second period of play and equalized through goals scored by MM Ismarilla and RD Ruwanthillake (2 all).

As scored stood dead locked at full time (2-2), the penalty shootout was enforced. Both teams found the net four times each and the final kick taken by Traveller Global went astray and the decider for Sri Lankan Airlines was scored by Weerasinghe (5-4).

Metro Travels won the "Plate" Championship, beating the previous "Cup" runners -up, Cinnamon Grand "B" 2-1 and Hilton Colombo Residences beat the previous "Plate" winner, Cinnamon Grand "A".

League Stage Match Results (12)

Sri Lankan Airlines beat Cinnamon Grand "A" 5/2; Cinnamon Grand "B" beat Infinity Vacations 2/1; Traveller

Global beat Hilton Residences 3/0; Metro Travels beat Walkers Tours 2/0; Cinnamon Grand "A" beat Hilton Residences 3/1; Cinnamon Grand "B" beat Walkers Tours 1/0; Traveller Global beat Sri Lankan Airlines by the toss of a coin (full time 2/2 / Penalties 5/5); Metro Travels beat Infinity Vacations 3/0; Metro Travels beat Cinnamon Grand "B" 4/0; Traveller Global beat Cinnamon Grand "A" 3/2; Infinity Vacations beat Walkers Tours by a toss of a coin (Full time 1-1 /penalties 3-3) Sri Lankan Airlines beat Hilton Residences 6/1

Knock-out Stage Match Results

"Cup / Plate" Semi Finals: Traveller Global beat Cinnamon Grand "B" 4/0; Sri Lankan Airlines beat Metro Travels 3/0.

"Bowl" Semi Finals: Cinnamon Grand "A" beat Walkers Tours 3/1; Hilton Residences beat Infinity Vacations on penalties 2/0 (full time nil all)

Results of the 03 Finals:

"Bowl" - Hilton Residences beat Cinnamon Grand "A" 3/1; Most Outstanding Player - Samith Davian from Hilton Residences

"Plate" - Metro Travels beat Cinnamon Grand "B" 2/1; Most Outstanding Player - A. Hasmathulla from Metro Travels.

"Cup" - Sri Lankan Airlines beat Traveller Global on Penalties 5/4 (Full time 2 all); Most outstanding Player - DVM Weerasinghe from Sri Lankan Airlines.

The tournament Chief Referee was the experienced, Anton Atapattu from the Mercantile Football Association and Officiating Referees were from FFSL.

Awards were presented by TTSC Officials, Bonita Odayar (President), Anil Hapugoda (VP), Anushka Perera (Treasurer) and Adrion Jansz (Asst. Treasurer)

Ben Stokes has an aura - Australia know what he can do



Ben Stokes made an unbeaten 135 and shared 76 with last man Jack Leach to help England to a one-wicket win in the third Test at Headingley in the 2019 Ashes series.

Jonathan Agnew, the BBC cricket correspondent has said that Ben Stokes' return to the squad just before England came to Australia was a huge boost and one that changed the complexion of the series.

We are reproducing his column which appeared in the BBC website.

This has been an unprecedented build-up to an Ashes series.

Even if you can put aside seismic events 10,000 miles apart involving Azeem Rafiq and Tim Paine, the schedule, Covid restrictions and weather have left both teams underprepared.

Whereas Australia have named their starting XI for the first Test at the Gabba, England are still weighing up some key decisions because they have had only two-and-a-bit days of cricket since they arrived down under. Whatever path they ultimately take will be a bit of a gamble.

They will surely want James Anderson to play in the day-night second Test in Adelaide, but that comes hot on the heels of the first, where it looks likely to be damp and humid. His experience in the cauldron of a first Ashes Test with very few England fans in attendance would be invaluable, too.

Can they play him in both? If they do, where would that leave Stuart Broad, who hasn't played since the first Test against India because of a calf injury? Do they even omit a spinner and play four frontline seamers because of Ben Stokes' lack of cricket?

Given his time out of the game - Stokes has not played anything meaningful since July and not in a Test since March - England will be wary of exposing their star all-rounder.

However, there is no denying that Stokes' return to the squad just before they came to Australia was a huge boost and one that changed the complexion of the series.

Eight years ago, he announced his arrival

on the world stage on an Ashes tour where an entire era of English cricket fell apart. He was one of the few bright spots, making his maiden century in only his second match.

Four years ago, he missed out completely because of what happened in Bristol and, without him, England were vastly inferior in a 4-0 defeat.

We thought it might be the same again this time around, only for the good news to lift spirits on a grey Monday morning in the UK. All of a sudden, it was as if everyone was jumping for joy. I know that Joe Root was uplifted by it. Stokes is such a key member of the team. Batting, bowling, catching at slip and leadership - he is like four cricketers in one.

Because he has been out for so long, we will have to see how he goes, but he's such a brilliant player it's hard to think he won't have a big impact at some point.

The crowds for Ashes series in Australia are always partisan and will be even more so this time around because of the lack of travelling England supporters.

However, I expect Stokes to get a rousing reception because Aussies love competitors and winners, which is exactly what he is.

It was interesting to hear Australia coach Justin Langer say he has nightmares about what Stokes achieved at Headingley two years ago, playing one of the greatest Ashes innings of all time to give England the most incredible victory.

It was probably a little tongue-in-cheek from Langer - I'm not sure he actually has nightmares - but the lack of machismo we would normally expect from an Australian coach gives an indication of the regard Stokes is held in by the men in baggy green caps.

He has an aura. Many of the current Australia team were in Leeds and they will have the memories. It will only take him to

look even slightly dangerous and they will start wondering what he is capable of doing.

That is what happens when a player has a reputation and has gained the respect of the opposition.

The build-up has not only been strange for the players, but also for the media.

Broadcasters can't get into Brisbane, meaning TV and radio coverage of the first Test will come from Sydney.

Similarly, the Australian newspapers haven't been able to get near the England team, so the tourists have been spared the usual dialogue of being written off and told they are useless. England often take a pummeling before the first ball is bowled.

That is just one of the things to have gone England's way. The lack of preparation will be a leveller at the Gabba, where England have an awful record. If the fifth Test is not played in Perth and is instead a day-nighter elsewhere, that theoretically favours the tourists.

Still, even taking all of those things into consideration, the Australian line-up looks powerful and well-balanced, while England have the same old issues around their top order.

How are Rory Burns, Haseeb Hameed and Dawid Malan going to fare? Will Root's brilliant form continue? How will Stokes return after months out of the fray? How do they manage their bowlers? There are so many imponderables.

England can't do any worse than their last two visits here, where they have lost nine, drawn one and won none.

When they won here in 1986-87, they won the first Test in Brisbane. The series win in 2010-11 came after a famous Gabba draw.

If they can get out of Brisbane with something, it will feel like they have a real chance.

Vijaya, Rantharu shine at Dialog President's Gold Cup Volleyball Championship



Women's Champions Vijaya Sports Club pose with their awards.

Rantharu Sports Club, Debegama and Vijaya Sports Club, Koswadiya won the men's and women's titles respectively of the Dialog President's Gold Cup Volleyball Championship 2020 at the National Youth Services Council Indoor Stadium on Sunday.

Vijaya Sports Club, Koswadiya beat Hirdaramani Sports Club Galigamuwa 3-1 in the women's final. After being beaten 18-25 in the first set the team fought back scoring victories in the next three sets to win the award. J.W.P. Thushari (best setter),

Chathurika Ranasinghe (best blocker), Sanjeevani Adhikari (best defender) and Dinesha Prasadani (best attacker and most valuable player) who did well for the winners received awards for their outstanding performances. Nimeshika Sewwandi Gunasekara and Harshani Senaratne from



Men's Champions Rantharu Ports Club pose after they won the men's title.

Hirdaramani were adjudged the best server and best receiver respectively. In the men's final, Rantharu Sports Club, Debegama beat United Sports Club, Nattandiya to win the men's title. Kanishka Madushanka (best server), Ruchira Sampath Jayatunga (best setter),

Nishan Kodisinghe (best blocker), Suranga Wickramasena (best defender) and Sanka Dineth Jayaratne (most valuable player) received individual awards for Rantharu. Kushan Chamara (best receiver) and Mahela Indeevara (best attacker) won awards for United.

Kandos

The original chocolate

Rs. 5/- upwards



The Island SPORT

Tuesday 7th December, 2021

Phil Salt sets up big win for Dambulla Giants



Niroshan Dickwella scored 37 runs.

Phil Salt hammered 64 in 27 balls and Nuwan Pradeep and Ramesh Mendis picked up three wickets each as Dambulla Giants beat Kandy Warriors by 20 runs in the second match of the Lanka Premier League played at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Monday.

In reply to Giants' 190 runs, Warriors could post only 170 as Pradeep and Mendis shared six wickets between them.

Phil Salt was the Player of the Match for his 64 which was inclusive of four fours and five sixes. "I'm just going out there trying to play positive cricket," he said. "I know from playing out here a few times that the new ball doesn't stay new for very long, and you've got to make the best of it."

Salt and Niroshan Dickwella gave a superb start to the tournament for Giants as they put on 97 runs together in the first 7.4 overs. From that point on, it

was always going to be tough for Warriors. Dickwella scored 37 runs inclusive of six fours. Skipper Dasun Shanaka chipped in with 24 runs while Ramesh Mendis hit an unbeaten 22 runs in 11 balls.

Warriors did fight with the bat thanks largely to Rovman Powell's 42 off 21, but the best they could do was get close enough so their net run rate wasn't too badly damaged.

Scores:

Dambulla Giants 190 for 7 in 20 overs (Niroshan Dickwella 37, Phil Salt 64, Dasun Shanaka 24, Ramesh Mendis 22n.o.; Lahiru Kumara 3/34, Al-Amin Hossain 2/36)

Kandy Warriors 170 for 8 in 20 overs (Angelo Perera 24, Rovman Powell 42, Sachindu Colombage 27; Nuwan Pradeep 3/31, Ramesh Mendis 3/21)

Gladiators restricted to 116 runs

In reply to Galle Gladiators 116 runs, Colombo Stars were 39 for three wickets at the end of the fifth over in the third match of the Lanka Premier League played in Colombo.

Nuwan Thushara led their bowling attack accounting for Pathum Nissanka and Kusal Perera.

Earlier, Stars bowlers did well to contain Galle Gladiators to 116 runs as Dhananjaya de Silva, Dushmantha Chameera and Akila Dananjaya picked up two wickets each. De Silva, who opened bowling and Chameera removed Gladiators open-

ers Danushka Gunathilaka and Kusal Mendis cheaply.

With six batsmen failing to reach double figures, it needed a 25 ball 38 runs from Ben Dunk and an unbeaten 25 from Isuru Udana for Gladiators to reach their eventual total.

Scores: **Galle Gladiators 116 for 8 in 20 overs** (Ben Dunk 38, Samitth Patel 14, Isuru Udana 25n.o.; Dhananjaya de Silva 2/18, Dushmantha Chameera 2/25, Akila Dananjaya 2/19)

Colombo Stars 39 for 3 in 5 overs (Nuwan Thushara 2/16)

India win second Test in Mumbai to seal series

India wrapped up a crushing 372-run win over New Zealand with five sessions to spare in the second Test to complete a 1-0 series victory.

Resuming on 140-5 in pursuit of a nominal 540 in Mumbai, New Zealand were bowled out for 167 as the last five wickets fell for five runs in 30 balls.

Jayant Yadav, playing his first Test since 2017, took four wickets on Monday to finish with 4-49 while fellow off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin claimed 4-34 - and a remarkable 8-42 in the match.

New Zealand never came close to repeating their achievement in the first Test, when they batted out the final day

to earn a draw, nine wickets down.

Jayant had Rachin Ravindra caught at slip before dismissing Kyle Jamieson and Tim Southee without scoring.

He then had Will Somerville taken at short leg, and Ashwin had Henry Nicholls stumped for 44 to wrap up victory.

The game will be best remembered for New Zealand left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel becoming the third man to take 10 wickets in a Test innings.

Victory means India stay third in the World Test Championship table, behind Sri Lanka and Pakistan. New Zealand are sixth.



New Zealand were bowled out for 167 as the last five wickets fell for five runs in 30 balls.

Chathurya, Thehan, Oneli, Tania win Under 18 doubles titles

Chathurya Nilaweera and Thehan Wijemanne and Oneli Perera and Tania Doloswala won the Under 18 boys' and girls' doubles titles of the 106 Colombo Championships on Sunday.

In the Under 16 doubles finals, Saajida Razick and Dinara de Silva and Thilina Dissanayake and Nithila Goonetilleke were the girls' and boys' win-

ners respectively, while Abdul Cader and Dhanushka Dias clinched the Under 14 boys' doubles title.

Match Results

Under 18 girls doubles final: Oneli Perera and Tania Doloswala beat Hasali Gajaba and Minuki Wanniarachchi (2-4, 4-2, 10-4)

Under 18 boys doubles final: Chathurya Nilaweera and Thehan Wijemanne beat Vichinthya Nilaweera and Heshika Perera (4-1, 4-1)

Under- 16 girls doubles final: Saajida Razick and Dinara de Silva beat Dinethya Dharmaratne and Anitra Dharmaratne (5-3, 4-2)

Under 16 boys doubles final: Thilina

Dissanayake and Nithila Goonetilleke beat Methvan Wijemanne and Lital Goonetilleke (5-3, 4-2)

Under 14 boys doubles final: Abdul Cader and Dhanushka Dias beat Kavidu Sawmya and Ganuka Fernando (4-2, 5-3).



Abdul Cader and Dhanushka Dias



Oneli Perera and Tania Doloswala



Saajida Razick and Dinara de Silva



Chathurya Nilaweera and Thehan Wijemanne (Pix by Kamal wanniarachchi)



Imtiaz Buhardeen increases stake in Sierra Cables to 20 per cent

By HIRAN H. SENEWIRATNE

High net worth individual investor Imtiaz Buhardeen on Friday increased his collective stake in Sierra Cables PLC to 20 per cent.

Imtiaz's stakes are via Carlines Holdings Ltd. and Almas Organization Ltd. As at September, the collective stake was 17.5 per cent and since then he has been collecting select quantities to go up to the 20% mark. He said the stake was increased in value, given the upside he sees in the market segments served by Sierra Cables, CSE sources said.

On Friday, Sierra Cables saw 1.73

million shares traded between a high of Rs. 14 and a low of Rs. 13.50 before closing at Rs. 13.80, down by 20 cents. During the week 14.4 million of Sierra shares changed hands via 1,589 trades for Rs. 197 million. An intra-week high of Rs. 14.50 was achieved though it was below the 52-week record of Rs. 14.80.

Sierra Holdings Ltd. owns a 58 per cent stake in Sierra Cables, public float of which is 27.46 per cent; held by 21,388 shareholders as at September 30.

Amid those developments, at the beginning the CSE indicated some negative performance. Later showed some marginal increase and buying interest was witnessed in blue chip companies. Therefore, the All-Share Price Index



increased by two per cent. Index heavy Commercial Leasing and Finance share price declined by 19 percent or Rs 7.70. Its shares started trading at Rs 47.70 and at the end of the day they dropped to Rs 32.50, thus dragging the All-Share Price Index by 110 negative points.

However, Expolanka Holdings and Browns Investments have shown acute

price escalations. Expolanka shares gained by five percent or Rs 14.74. Its share price shot up to Rs 295 from Rs 280.25, contributing 64 points to the All-Share Price Index and Brown and Company shares shot up to Rs 315 from Rs 281. Its share price appreciated by 10 percent or Rs 28.25, thus contributing positive points to the All-Share Price Index.

Both indices moved upwards. The All-Share Price Index went up by 46.09 points and S and P SL20 rose by 81.8 points. Turnover stood at Rs 6.7 billion sans any crossings. In the retail market, top seven companies that mainly contributed to the turnover were, Commercial Leasing and Finance Rs 2.6

billion (80 million shares traded), Expolanka Holdings Rs 983 million (3.4 million shares traded), Browns Investments Rs 598 million (40.7 million shares traded), Brown and Company Rs 371 million (1.2 million shares traded), Vallibel One Rs 184 million (2.4 million shares traded), Royal Ceramic Rs 146 million (2.1 million shares traded) and LOLC Holdings Rs 145 million (147,000 shares traded). During the day 252 million share volumes changed hands in 39000 transactions.

Yesterday, the US dollar was quoted at Rs 202.26, which was the Central Bank controlled price, to prevent escalations of essential imported items and inflation in the country.

Money launderers would be brought to justice regardless of social standing – CBSL Governor

By STEVE A. MORRELL

Money-laundering and related financial frauds would be intensely investigated and those suspected of such financial crime would be brought to justice regardless of social standing. The law would be enforced stringently on those who engage in these malpractices, Central Bank Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal said.

The CBSL Governor made these comments in response to questions posed by the press at the media briefing addressed by him on December 4 at CBSL's Atrium complex. At the head table with Governor Cabraal were Deputy Governor Dr. K.M.M. Siriwardena, Deputy Governor Ms. T.M.J.Y.P. Fernando, Deputy Governor Dr. N.W.G.R.D. Nanayakkara and Deputy Director of the Foreign Remittances Facilitation Department Dr. B.H.P.K. Thilakawardena.

It is of importance that banks have assured the Central Bank that such suspect transactions would be closely monitored. The receipt of large parcels of funds that raise suspicions would be thoroughly probed. Banks would be empowered to investigate the origins of such funds. If valid explanations are



Central Bank Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal

not forthcoming as to how such moneys were amassed, action would be taken following intense investigations to bring wrong-doers to justice, the CBSL Governor said.

On the subject of Sri Lankan migrant workers, Cabraal said that the number of workers who departed this year was comparatively low. Some 20,000

were left for employment. This figure was nowhere near the annual departure rate. Before the pandemic, about 96,000 or more Sri Lankan migrant workers were employed in other countries.

Cabraal added: "The low worker departure numbers this year meant dollar remittances this year were also low."

"However, such remittances attracted duty free concessions, which encouraged migrant workers to send back earnings."

"In exchange rates, the dollar was now Rs.210. This meant that depreciation of the rupee was stalled."

"Inflation is subjected to global prices of oil, coal and other goods Sri Lanka imports. Based on such international prices, import value of such commodities was beyond the control of the local authorities and did influence the inflation that was experienced by Sri Lanka."

"Departure to other countries for employment by Sri Lankans was now facilitated to ensure such departures were not stalled in any way because of the importance of forex remittances."

"There was also now a useful pension scheme in addition to the duty-free allowance; mainly to encourage inward remittances."

Jetwing Hotels and BookingWhizz partners to launch best practices in digital marketing



BookingWhizz, a global technology provider in CRM, digital marketing, sales and guest management for the leisure industry has collaborated with Jetwing Hotels to bring seamless digital experiences to its guests, partners, and stakeholders.

Headquartered in the UK with a footprint in Colombo, BookingWhizz offers total solutions that will boost revenue and enhance operational efficiency and ROI long term. With this state-of-the-art solution, hoteliers can take control over the booking process and turn their websites into a powerful sales tool, helping owners of any scale to increase inbound traffic and ultimately enhance foreign exchange earnings in the island. With extensive management experience, skills in the hospitality industry and a robust after-sales team, the company sets to bring the best in digital marketing capabilities to Sri Lanka.

Jetwing, a specialist in travel, tourism, and hospitality for close to 50 years manages properties around the island catering to travelers within and outside Sri Lanka. The group is dedicated to help guests' ease of booking and investing in BookingWhizz's user-friendly and powerful technology will facilitate this. The CRM solutions offered by BookingWhizz will help to retain clients by harnessing data collected through profile management and providing hoteliers user friendly dash-

board for metrics. Using the CRM data will assist personalization of client profile and target promotions better, converting first time guests to lifelong customers.

"Our flexible packages can be tailored to customer needs as we understand that every hotel is different and unique. With an increased booking pace with our powerful technology, we can support the economy with foreign exchange and help the industry bounce back faster" said Suteash Balasubramaniam, Chairman at BookingWhizz Colombo. The company's growing base of loyal and satisfied customers is a testament to its work in the industry. Offering impartial and up-to-date advice with the clients' best interests at heart, continuously researching future trends, innovating on solutions is the company's forte.

"We look forward to working together with BookingWhizz to provide an enhanced digital experience to all our guests. From Jetwing's inception, we have always aspired to provide a legendary service, and this is another key area that we have been working on for a few years" said HiranCooray, Chairman of Jetwing Symphony PLC.

The partnership sets to provide leadership in digital marketing and to lead the industry with evolving standards of excellence. To explore the services of BookingWhizz, please call 0773 713 731 or 0768 014 959.

Bank of Ceylon named "Bank of the Year 2021 - Sri Lanka" by The Banker magazine U.K.

Bank of Ceylon, the premier financial services organization in Sri Lanka, was awarded the coveted title of "Bank of the Year 2021 - Sri Lanka" by The Banker Magazine U.K. at an event held in London recently. The prestigious award is recognition of the Bank's contribution to uplifting the lives of all Sri Lankans, while fulfilling its duty as the premier state bank.

This award adds yet another title to the multi-award winning bank that has been listed in the Top 1,000 Banks in the World ranking, consecutively since 2012, with a country ranking of No. 1 by The Banker magazine, UK, as well as being listed as the No. 1 Banking Brand in Sri Lanka by Brand Finance Lanka with a brand value of over Rs. 53 billion for the year 2021 - the highest ever brand value recorded by a banking institution.

Commenting on being able to achieve this feat despite the economic realities of the pandemic, General Manager of Bank of Ceylon, K. E. D. Sumanasiri says:



Kanchana Ratwatte, Chairman and K. E. D. Sumanasiri, GM

"For over eight decades Bank of Ceylon has worked tirelessly to develop both the nation's economy and the lives of our people. And, we are justifiably proud to have been named "The Best Bank of the year by The Banker Magazine UK. We thank the entire staff of the bank and our loyal customers who have contributed to us being honoured with this prestigious award."

Bank of Ceylon has been a true resilient

leader in the banking industry in Sri Lanka as the front runner in Covid-19 relief efforts, economic revival programmes, and moratoriums, in line with the Central Bank policies, as the single largest lender to COVID affected businesses under the Saubagya Renaissance facility with Rs. 39.1 billion disbursed. Of special note are the number of financial assistance and special loan schemes targeting the Micro and SME sector, to ensure sustainability of businesses.

In its broader role as the premier bank in the country, Bank of Ceylon also established a dedicated unit for exporters, under the banner-Export Circle. The new unit functions to assist exporters comprehensively to build networks and financial capacity to compete in the international market.

Despite a challenging year, Bank of Ceylon achieved yet another milestone in its asset base surpassing the Rs. 3 trillion level in the first quarter of 2021 and a growth of 20% during the nine months ended 30th September 2021, backed by a 23% rise in the loan book for the same period.



Two-day complementary workshop on 'Heart of Sales' for Sri Lankan organizations

Excellence Edge International (EEI), Singapore, in association with Diligent Solutions, Sri Lanka conducted a Two full day complementary workshop on "Heart of Sales" on 2nd and 3rd December, via ZOOM to Sri Lankan organizations to meet the challenges they face due to the present pandemic situation. EEI Sri Lanka Representative Linton Fernando, Founder, Diligent Solutions organized the program and it was conducted by the Jacky Lim, one of the most sought trainers in Singapore.

Jeffrey Williams, Managing Director, EEI Singapore, said that they planned to visit Sri Lanka in March 2020 but due to the Covid situation, it was not possible. Now they hope to

conduct a "Singapore Week" March 2022 in Sri Lanka where three prominent trainers from EEI, will conduct a series of workshops in Marketing, HR and organizational development. These workshops will be held in Colombo, Galle and Kurunegala aiming the small and medium size industries and entrepreneurs. Further, the participants will be given an opportunity to visit Singapore to study further on the above and to obtaining hands on international experience in running a business successfully.

Jacky Lim, who has developed his own concepts on sustainable sales culture, exposed his findings such SCORE, STORY and Customer's Buying Journey (CBJ) to the



Jeffrey Williams

participants who highly appreciated the inputs. Managing Director of Dhanusha Marine, Sumithra Fernando, A leading boat



Jacky Lim

manufacture, said that this one of the best programs on "sales" he and four of his employees who participated in the two-day



Linton-Fernando

session and thanked the organizer for offering this valuable two-day session free of charge. The value of the session is US\$ 130 per participant.

Linton and Jeffrey, together with Jacky Lim and Gustin Low are looking forward to meet many organizations during the Singapore Week that they have planned to conduct in March 2020. More details will be circulated later. Linton appreciates the participants and EEI for offering the program for the Sri Lanka industries as their complements. By sending an email to lintonfernando@gmail.com you can obtain more information on the "Singapore Week".

SECURITY	VOLUME	***V.W.A PREVIOUS CLOSE	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	***V.W.A TODAY'S CLOSE	CHANGE (Rs.)
MAIN BOARD							
A SPEN HOT HOLD	5,511	36.5	36.20	37.60	35.00	35.60	-2.4 -9
ABANS	2,000	153	151.25	151.25	148.00	148.50	-2.9 -4.5
ACCESS ENGL	792,223	31.6	32.00	32.00	30.70	30.90	-2.2 -7
ACL	658,795	89.4	89.40	91.90	88.50	90.10	7.7 -7
ACL PLASTICS	4,612	583.25	588.00	588.00	572.00	583.00	-0.25
ACME	4,621	12.5	12.00	12.40	11.40	12.20	-2.4 -3
AGALAWATTE	597,895	45.2	45.50	48.00	44.10	47.10	-4.2 1.9
AHOT PROPERTIES	10,502	42.2	43.00	43.50	43.00	43.50	3.0 1.3
AITKEN SPENCE	47,176	80.6	80.50	81.80	80.50	80.90	3.0 3.3
ALLIANCE	6,840	80.1	80.00	80.00	79.00	79.00	-1.3 -1.1
AMANA BANK	371,472	4.6	4.70	4.70	4.50	4.60	0.0 0.0
ASIAASSET	653	8.4	8.50	8.50	8.20	8.30	-1.1 -1.1
ASIAASSET [AAF-P-0000]	139	10	9.00	10.00	9.00	9.80	-2.0 -2
ASIA CAPITAL	1	7	7.10	7.10	7.10	7.00	0.0 0.0
ASIRI XD	8,865	32	31.70	33.50	31.70	32.90	2.8 9
ASIRI SURG XD	15,625	17.5	17.80	17.80	17.00	17.40	-5 -1
BAIRAHA FARMS	17,507	223.25	225.00	230.00	220.00	229.00	2.5 5.75
BALANGODA	3,004	20.8	21.00	21.90	20.80	21.00	9 2
BUKIT DARAH	584	379.5	395.00	395.00	384.00	393.50	3.6 1.4
C M HOLDINGS	62,662	105	105.00	113.75	103.75	109.50	4.2 4.5
C T HOLDINGS XD	1,120	165.75	165.50	170.00	165.50	168.75	1.8 3
CARGILLS XD	2,244	210.5	214.50	219.00	210.50	214.75	2.0 4.25
CARGO BOAT	15	63.3	67.00	67.00	64.00	63.00	0.0 0.0
CARSONS	3,118	290	290.25	290.50	290.00	290.00	0.0 0.0
CDB [CDB.X0000]	27,366	92	92.20	95.00	92.00	94.30	2.5 2.3
CENTRAL FINANCE	27,153	90.5	89.50	90.80	88.10	88.90	-1.7 -1.6
CENTRAL IND	28,394	187	188.00	192.00	187.00	189.00	1.0 2
CEYLINCO INS [CINS.X0000]	155	1000	982.00	999.00	982.00	982.50	-1.7 -17.5
CEYLON INV	10,729	50	50.90	51.90	50.00	51.70	3.4 1.7
CEYLON TOBACCO XD	13,802	887	894.00	894.00	883.00	885.00	-4 2
CHEMANEX	216	73.6	73.50	76.90	73.50	76.90	4.4 3.3
CHEVRON	12,977	105.5	105.75	108.00	105.75	106.00	4 5
CIC	650,180	56.2	57.00	58.00	55.50	57.70	2.6 1.5
CIC [CIC.X0000]	470,218	45.8	45.80	47.00	45.00	46.70	1.9 9
CITRUS LEISURE	22,678	8.2	8.20	8.50	8.20	8.50	3.6 3.3
COLD STORES	6,295	523.25	526.00	530.00	520.00	524.75	2.1 1.5
COLOMBO CITY	3	896.5	899.00	900.00	895.00	896.50	0.0 0.0
COLOMBO LAND	5,335	33.9	34.80	34.80	33.00	33.90	0.0 0.0
COMMERCIAL BANK	29,871	80.1	80.00	81.50	79.70	81.20	1.3 1.1
COMMERCIAL BANK [COMB.X0000]	35,368	73.4	75.00	75.00	72.90	73.30	-1.1 2
CONVENIENCE FOOD	6,049	1150	1130.00	1100.25	1120.00	1124.00	-2.2 -26
DANKOTUWA PORCEL	34,632	14.4	14.30	14.40	14.30	14.30	6 1
DFCC BANK PLC	20,810	59.3	59.00	61.00	59.00	60.00	-1.1 7
DIALOG	294,749	11.2	11.20	11.20	11.00	11.00	-1.7 -2
DIMO	51	581.75	584.00	584.00	541.00	581.75	0.0 0.0
DIPPED PRODUCTS	620,444	50.4	51.30	51.30	49.50	50.10	-6 3
DOCKYARD	479	73	73.00	76.00	73.00	73.00	8 6
DOLPHIN HOTELS	25,120	32.2	33.50	33.50	31.80	32.00	-6 2
DURDANS	7	139.75	139.75	139.75	139.75	139.75	0.0 0.0
E B CREAMY	8,282	23.8	23.60	24.00	23.50	23.80	0.0 0.0
EAST WEST	10,267	9.3	9.30	9.70	9.30	9.30	0.0 0.0
EASTERN MERCHANT	13,166	7.6	7.40	7.80	7.30	7.80	2.6 2
EX-PACK XD	2,806,162	22.2	22.00	23.20	21.90	22.20	0.0 0.0
EXPOLANKA	3,379,313	280.25	285.00	297.75	280.25	295.00	5.2 14.75
FORT LAND	50,568	21.5	21.10	22.20	21.00	21.50	0.0 0.0
GRAIN ELEVATORS	34,644	117.75	117.00	117.75	115.00	116.75	-8 -1
HAYCARB	88,225	71.8	71.50	72.00	70.70	70.90	-1.2 -9
HAYLEYS	587,720	104.5	105.00	108.00	103.75	106.50	1.9 2
HAYLEYS FABRIC	401,080	38	38.00	38.80	37.20	37.70	-7 -3
HAYLEYS FIBRE	4,430	65	66.00	66.00	64.00	65.00	0.0 0.0
HAYLEYS LEISURE	10,719	20	20.10	20.50	20.00	20.20	1.0 2
HDFC	6,408	31.8	31.80	31.80	30.20	30.40	-4.4 -1.4
HDMAS HOLDINGS	100,447	68.9	69.00	70.00	68.50	68.70	-2 2
HNB	39,682	149.75	150.00	150.00	147.50	148.75	-6 1
HNB ASSURANCE	44,905	43.9	43.80	44.00	43.00	43.00	-2.0 -9
HNB [HNB.X0000]	17,662	130.5	132.00	132.75	130.50	131.00	3 5
HORANA	12,600	28.1	27.20	28.80	27.00	27.50	-2.1 -6
HOTEL SIGIRIYA	2,501	80	86.00	86.00	80.00	80.00	0.0 0.0
HOTELS CORP	19,710	15.3	15.30	15.50	15.00	15.10	-1.3 -2
INDUSTRIAL ASPH	535,064	4	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	0.0 0.0
JAT HOLDINGS XD	1,976,019	20.5	20.80	22.80	20.80	22.00	7.3 1.5
JKH	91,480	145	145.00	147.00	144.50	145.00	0.0 0.0
KANDY HOTELS	1,550	7.7	7.80	7.80	7.80	7.80	1.3 1
KEGALLE	5,290	130	125.00	133.00	122.25	126.25	-2.8 -3.75
KELANI CABLES	19,500	380.25	380.00	394.00	378.25	388.50	-2.1 8.25
KELANI TYRES	47,204	83.2	82.00	82.50	81.10	81.90	-1.5 -1.3
KELANI VALLEY	406,348	71.8	71.00	78.00	70.20	75.30	4.8 3.5
KINGSBURY	25,346	8.5	8.90	8.90	8.50	8.60	-1.1 1.1
KOTAGALA	745,160	8	8.10	8.20	7.80	8.00	0.0 0.0
L O L C HOLDINGS	147,114	974.75	970.00	1,000.00	970.00	993.50	1.9 18.75
LAKE HOUSE PRIN	10	143	145.00	145.00	144.75	143.00	0.0 0.0
LANKA ALUMINIUM	231,229	25.4	25.00	26.30	25.00	26.00	2.3 6
LANKAASHOK	4	709	700.00	700.00	700.00	709.00	0.0 0.0
LANKA HOSPITALS	88,177	56.1	55.50	58.50	55.00	55.70	-7 4
LANKA IOC XD	4,496,872	29.2	31.00	32.70	30.90	31.10	6.5 1.9
LANKA TILES	143,240	105.5	105.50	107.50	103.00	105.00	0.0 0.0
LANKA VENTURES	14,216	54	54.00	55.00	54.00	55.00	1.8 1
LANKA WALLTILE	137,417	115	115.00	119.00	114.50	117.00	1.7 2
LANKEM DEV	358,669	5.7	5.60	5.90	5.60	5.70	0.0 0.0
LAUGFS GAS	21,032	21.5	22.20	22.20	21.50	22.10	2.7 6
LAUGFS GAS [LGL.X0000]	38,652	15.9	15.90	16.30	15.50	16.20	-1.8 3
LAXAPANA	32,240	14.5	14.50	14.50	13.90	14.00	-3.4 5
LB FINANCE	483,792	63.7	63.70	65.20	63.00	63.20	-7 5
LEE HEDGES	3,101	75.9	75.90	76.00	75.90	75.90	0.0 0.0
LION BREWERY XD	1	545	555.00	555.00	555.00	545.00	0.0 0.0
LMF	70,156	230	230.00	232.00	225.00	228.00	-8 2
LVL ENERGY	77,006	10.4	10.40	10.50	10.40	10.40	0.0 0.0

SECURITY	VOLUME	***V.W.A PREVIOUS CLOSE	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	***V.W.A TODAY'S CLOSE	CHANGE (Rs.)
6th, December, 2021							
MALWATTE	60,432	24	23.10	25.40	23.00	25.30	5.4 1.3
MALWATTE [MAL.X0000]	11,000	15.9	15.00	16.50	15.00	16.50	3.7 6
MELSTACORP XD	779,737	55	55.50	57.00	54.50	55.10	1 1
MERCHANT BANK	64,130	5.9	6.20	6.20	6.00	6.10	3.3 2
MULLERS	830,125	1.3	1.30	1.30	1.20	1.30	0.0 0.0
NAMUNUKULA	3,896	333.75	332.00	363.50	328.00	343.00	2.7 9.25
NAT. DEV. BANK	45,769	70.7	71.00	72.00	70.60	71.70	1.4 1
NATIONS TRUST	2,686	55.4	56.00	56.00	55.20	55.50	1 1
NATIONS TRUST [NTB-X-0000]	346	64.5	64.20	64.50	64.20	64.50	0.0 0.0
NAWALOKA	397,862	9.8	9.50	10.10	9.20	9.80	0.0 0.0
NESTLE	15,328	1240	1249.75	1250.00	1240.00	1250.00	8 10
OVERSEAS REALTY	324,148	17.8	17.40	18.00	16.50	17.40	-2.2 -4
PANASIA	299,778	16	16.00	16.30	15.70	15.80	-1.2 -2
PANASIAN POWER	418,859	5.6	5.60	5.80	5.50	5.50	-1.7 -1
PEOPLE'S INS	37,395	32.7	33.00	33.00	31.00	31.10	-4.8 -1.6
PEOPLES LEASING	214,860	10.7	10.80	10.80	10.60	10.80	9 1
POP GLASS XD	2,219,833	16.5	16.30	16.60	16.30	17.90	8.4 1.4
PRINTCARE PLC	11,461	42.2	43.20	43.20	42.50	42.50	7 3
R I L PROPERTY	1,141,794	13.8	14.00	14.20	13.60	13.60	-1.4 -2
REGNIS	39,735	66.6	67.00	70.00	65.50	66.00	0.0 0.0
RENUKAAGRI	369,365	4.3	4.30	4.40	4.20	4.20	-2.3 -1
RENUKA CITY HOT	3	281.5	292.75	292.75	292.75	281.50	0.0 0.0
RENUKA FOODS	192,199	17.1	16.30	19.50	16.30	18.50	8.1 1.4
RENUKA FOODS [COCO.X0000]	20,905	12.2	12.50	12.70	12.30	12.60	3.2 4
RENUKA HOLDINGS	286,008	17.5	18.20	18.20	17.20	17.20	-1.7 -3
RENUKA HOLDINGS [RHL.X0000]	1,600	12	12.60	12.60	12.60	12.60	5.0 6
RESUS ENERGY	57,145	37.2	35.50	40.00	33.10	35.20	-5.3 -2
RICHARD PIERIS	105,112	18.5	18.10	19.00	18.10	18.50	0.0 0.0
ROYAL CERAMIC	2,173,716						

Orient Finance on strong growth trajectory in Q2 of FY 2021/22

Sustaining growth momentum in FY2021/22, Orient Finance PLC posted a profit before tax of LKR 207.69 Mn for the first half of the 2021/22 financial year, reflecting an exponential growth momentum compared to the corresponding period in the previous first half financial year. The Company's net operating income for the same period increased by 92% from LKR 405.58 Mn to LKR 777.44 Mn in 2021/22. While profit before tax of LKR 147.8 Mn for the second quarter ending 30th September 2021, reflecting a growth of 386% when compared to the corresponding period in the previous financial year. This performance was secured as a result of the expanding the new Gold loan business and reducing the cost of funds. Notwithstanding the challenging economic conditions, the company's total assets for the period increased to LKR 15.9 Bn in comparison to LKR 14.8 Bn recorded during the corresponding period in the previous financial year.



K.M.M. Jabir, Director and Chief Executive Officer of Orient Finance PLC



Anil Tittawella, Chairman of Orient Finance PLC

Anil Tittawella, Chairman of Orient Finance PLC commented, "I am pleased to report on the Company's strong performance in the face of the unfolding challenges due to the ongoing pandemic and the resulting changes in the economic conditions. Orient Finance has upheld its commitment to its stakeholders to maintain a

steady course while driving a sustainable performance. As part of the Janashakthi Group, we are able to derive tremendous brand recognition and support which is critical in our success. The Company demonstrated resilience in face of adversity and I am confident that we will continue building upwards from where the Company is positioned presently with a legacy of four decades."

This impressive performance is a testimonial to the visionary management team and the exceptional hard work contributed by staff through the year under review. Sharing the future plans of the Company, K. M. M. Jabir, Director and Chief Executive Officer of Orient Finance PLC said, "It gives me great pleasure to note that the recalibration of systems and processes at Orient Finance PLC over the last two years is delivering positive results by way of continuous growth and robust performance across all KPIs.

Planters' Association commends government's decision on agri input imports

Expresses commitment to and emphasises the need for broader engagement to find a long-term solution

Commending the Government's decision allow private sector imports of fertilizer and agrochemicals into the country, to The Planters' Association of Ceylon (PA) has offered its support to the authorities in arriving at a long-term solution to the issue, amenable to all parties.

The association - which represents the Regional Plantation Companies (RPCs) involved in the commercial cultivation of tea, rubber and other plantation crops - urged collaboration between key stakeholders, to address the underlying reasons which led to the ban.

"We appreciate the Government's decision and response to the requests of the country's agriculture and plantation sectors and would also like to

request for its implementation to be fast-tracked," Planters' Association Media Spokesperson, Dr. Roshan Rajadurai said. "While naturally, given how it impacts many livelihoods across the country, the subject created heated debate, this prudent decision now presents an important opportunity for collaboration between stakeholders."

"As the country's premier plantation industry representative, the Planters' Association expresses its fullest commitment to working in partnership with the authorities, to identify feasible opportunities for organic agriculture adoption and to articulate a comprehensive roadmap to achieve this vision."

As producers of predominantly export crops - which undergo stringent

testing for chemical residue -RPCs adhere closely to the recommendations of organisations such as the Tea and Rubber Research Institute (TRI and RRI) in the application of agri inputs. However, since this may not be the case for all crops cultivated in the country, particularly those aimed at the domestic market, it is important to formulate a mechanism in this regard, the PA points out.

Such collaboration will be a win-win for all stakeholders, the PA reiterates. It will minimize the use of agri-inputs - an important milestone in the government's vision in moving towards organic agriculture, ensure the health and wellbeing of the people and provide greater stability and direction to farmers and the private sector.

Emirates A380 soars over the Sevens Stadium with dazzling flypast, to celebrate the UAE's 50th Jubilee



Emirates took to the skies to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the UAE, with a spectacular flypast over the Emirates Dubai 7s stadium.

Thousands of rugby fans were treated with a low-level flypast above The Sevens Stadium with the Emirates A380, emblazoned with the unique 'United Arab Emirates 50' design on both sides of the aircraft marking the Golden anniversary of the UAE.

Taking off from Dubai International Airport, the Emirates A380 made its approach above the stadium to wow the crowds for the flypast at 1540hrs, cruising by at a gentle speed and an altitude of just 500 feet. Commanding the Emirates A380 was

UAE National Captain Mubarak Al Mheiri, supported by Captain Christopher Gauci and First Officer Tom Mayall.

The aircraft conducting the aerial flypast was adorned with the name of the 'UAE' and '50', using dynamic lines and curves that illustrate the vibrant character of the nation, celebrating its achievements over the last five decades. The 'Year of the Fiftieth' logo is also represented in the overall livery design.

Today's flypast underscores the airline's commitment to the long-standing Emirates Dubai 7s. Taking place over this

weekend, the Emirates Dubai 7s is welcoming over 80,000 fans and spectators to watch 22 of the world's best teams compete, along with an array of other activities and matches happening in the periphery around rugby, cricket and netball, as well as the Emirates Dubai 7s Youth Sports Festival.

Emirates' connection to the game of rugby goes back to 1987, when the airline became the Emirates Dubai 7s Official Sponsor. Since then, Emirates has helped elevate the profile of the sport of rugby in the UAE and around the world, working with partners like World Rugby and others to promote the sport and engage with rugby fans and players.

KVPL wins Best Corporate Citizen Sustainability Award in Agriculture

Kelani Valley Plantations PLC (KVPL) secured the Best Corporate Citizen Sustainability Award in Agriculture at the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC) Best Corporate Citizen Sustainability Awards (BCCSA).

The prestigious honour cements KVPL's status as one of the country's most respected pioneers in the field of sustainable and ethical plantations management. Hayleys Plantations Managing Director, Dr. Roshan Rajadurai believes that the company's latest accolades will also help to establish Hayleys Plantations as a case study of exceptional corporate stewardship within the nation's agricultural sector, at a time when sustainable innovation is the urgent need of the hour.

"We are honoured to have been granted such prestigious recognition. I express my gratitude to the entire team, without whom such an achievement would not be possible.

"Sustainability is a way of life at Hayleys Plantations, and over the years, our entire team has worked tirelessly to incorporate environmental best practices into every aspect of our operations in a real and meaningful way, while investing in our employees and their communities. Having collated our experience in sustainability, we



KVPL Director/CEO, Anura Weerakoon (second from left) accepts the certificate from CCC Secretary General and CEO Manjula De Silva (third from left), as CCC Board Member Ashoka Peiris (third from right) presents Hayleys Plantations Managing Director, Dr. Roshan Rajadurai (second from right) the award with KVPL General Manager- HR, Anuruddha Gamage (far left) and KVPL Assistant Accountant, Shehan Anupama (far right).

stand tall as a veteran, ready to collaborate, and help formulate a blueprint for a more sustainable future for the entire Plantations sector," Dr. Rajadurai stated.

Celebrating its 30th year of operations in 2022, Hayleys Plantations has been at the forefront of a progressive transformation in the plantation sector. Elaborating on the unique expertise developed by Hayleys Kelani Valley Plantations Director/ CEO, Anura Weerakoon said: "For three decades, KVPL has invested, experimented, and innovated an entirely new approach to plantations management.

LAUGFS Lubricants tie-up with the National Transportation Commission to provide relief to private bus owners

LAUGFS Lubricants, Sri Lanka's only home-grown lubricant brand, is now serving the Sri Lankan private bus owners. In response to the current pandemic situation, which has had a significant global impact, LAUGFS Lubricants collaborated with the Transport Ministry and the National Transport Commission to launch a relief program for private bus proprietors in Sri Lanka.

According to the concept put forth by the State Minister of Vehicle Regulation, Bus Transport Services, and Train Compartments, and Motor Car Industry and State Minister of Community Police Services, Dilum Amunugama, this programme will provide much-needed relief to more than 20,000 private bus owners across the island by giving a special fuel allowance with the purchase of selected LAUGFS Lubricants products designed specifically for transportation buses made through the LAUGFS Petroleum Centre network.

"Being the only home-grown lubricant brand in Sri Lanka, we are enthused to continuously



assist the Sri Lankan economy in rising through the ranks. We are delighted to be working with the Transport Ministry and the National Transport Commission to launch a relief program to provide much-needed assistance to private bus owners affected by the prevailing pandemic situation. We also appreciate the steps taken and the support offered by the National Transportation Commission in launching this initiative, which we believe will be a great achievement. As a Sri Lankan company, we are constantly striving to improve our

community. With the dedication and hard work of our group members, as well as the Transport Ministry and the National Transport Commission, we will be able to provide significant relief to our customers," commented the Chief Executive Officer of LAUGFS Lubricants Ltd. and Director/Chief Executive Officer of LAUGFS Petroleum Ltd., Dr. Niroshan Jay Pieries.

In the presence of the State Minister of Vehicle Regulation, Bus Transport Services, and Train Compartments, and Motor

Car Industry and State Minister of Community Police Services Dilum Amunugama and the Governor of Sabaragamuwa Province Tikiri Kobbekaduwa, a symbolic tie-up token was presented to the Minister of Transport (Ms.) Pavithradevi Wanniarachchi.

LAUGFS Lubricants Limited, a fully owned subsidiary of LAUGFS Holdings, offering lubricant solutions for every class of motor vehicle. Since its inception in 2008, LAUGFS Lubricants has contributed to the advancement of the Sri Lankan economy by fabricating premium quality engine lubricants in accordance with international standards. By following an in-depth research and analysis, the lubricants are manufactured to suit the tropical climate while providing extended mileage for vehicles. LAUGFS Lubricants' plant in the Malwatta BOI Zone utilizes cutting-edge technology to blend engine oil locally in compliance with the highest international industry standards, gaining the trust of all motorists.

MY Kalizma - first Superyacht to berth at Port City Colombo Marina

The Port City Colombo Marina welcomed the MY Kalizma - The Classic Superyacht, once owned by Hollywood screen idols Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. The first Superyacht to sail into the Port City Colombo Marina, established Colombo as a calling port in the Indian Ocean with facilities for berthing luxury Superyachts.

Pierre Pringiers, Chairman of the Sail Lanka Yachting Group which manages the Port City Colombo Marina said, "The 145' Kalizma - built in 1906 by GL Watson in Scotland - arrived from the Maldives on Sunday, marking a milestone in the development of Colombo as a Superyacht destination. To see this historic Superyacht berthed



The Superyacht MY Kalizma at the Port City Colombo Marina.

at the marina is the fulfilment of a dream for me, and is a fitting tribute to our staff who have efficiently handled the logistics and administrative details. I also want to express my sincere thanks to the officials of the Port City Colombo

and the Customs, Immigration, and all the agencies involved. I'm hoping that the arrival of Kalizma will augur well for the success of visiting Superyachts and the opening up of Sri Lanka for cruising and yacht charters - one of the new pillars of the tourism industry."

MY Kalizma has served in both world wars as part of the British Royal Navy. It was in 1967 that two of Hollywood's most famous actors, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor chartered the yacht for a cruise on the Mediterranean. They fell in love with the yacht and Burton bought it and gifted it to Taylor. They named the yacht Kalizma, after their three daughters, Kate, Liza and Maria.

Nestomalt SALARY for LIFE announces its second winner

Nestomalt announced the second winner of its one-of-a-kind consumer promotion 'SALARY for LIFE' 2021. A 29-year-old mother of one, Ms. D.D.M. Thalagala from Dambulla was selected the winner this year and will receive Rs. 50,000 every month from Nestomalt until she turns 55, subject to the competition's terms and conditions. Conducted for the second consecutive year, Nestomalt 'SALARY for LIFE' aims to reward one of its loyal consumers, by helping them kick-start their journey to achieve their ambitions and progress in life.

"I have always wanted to be an entrepreneur and make a name for myself in the construction industry. So winning Nestomalt 'SALARY for LIFE' is a dream come true for me and my family. I am grateful for Nestomalt for taking me a step closer to my life-long ambition of having my own business" said Ms. D.D.M. Thalagala.

The Nestomalt 'SALARY for LIFE' competition required consumers between 18 and 50 years to send the flap of a 400g Nestomalt pack to be eligible for the raffle draw. Picked at random, one winner receives Rs. 50,000 a month from Nestomalt until they turn 55, as per the terms and conditions of the competition.

"As Nestlé Lanka's flagship brand Nestomalt has positively charged the progress of Sri Lankan families for over 50 years.



"It gives us immense pleasure to be able to power the ambition of yet another one of our consumers and help them kick-start their journey. We were overwhelmed by the number of entries we received and hope to continue this life-changing competition in the years to come" said Ruwan Welikala, Nestlé's Vice President - Dairy.

"For many years, Nestomalt has contributed immensely to the lives of Sri Lankans across generations. I am proud that the brand has been a catalyst for positive change, helping consumers progress in life through initiatives such as the Nestomalt Marathon, Buddhi Prabhodaya and of course, SALARY for LIFE" said Jason Avanceña, Managing Director of Nestlé Lanka.

Nestlé has been in Sri Lanka over 115 years, and Nestomalt has been trusted and enjoyed by Sri Lankan families for over 50 years. Exclusively manufactured in Sri Lanka, Nestomalt is the country's most loved iconic malted beverage, offering the goodness of malted barley and milk, and enriched with essential nutrients to energize body and mind.

Business News

Victoria Golf & Country Resort awarded Sri Lanka's Best Golf Course at World Golf Awards

Victoria Golf & Country Resort (VGCR) secured the award for Sri Lanka's best golf course at the eighth Annual World Golf Awards. The World Golf Awards celebrate and reward excellence in golf tourism, world-class courses and golf destinations, recognizing leaders setting the benchmark in the industry. Votes are cast by professionals working within the golf industry and by golf tourism consumers.

VGCR is owned by John Keells Properties (JKP) and managed by Troon International. It is located by the Victoria Reservoir, in the hills of Digana. The golf course has been lauded for its picturesque nature and unique sporting experience.

"Victoria Golf & Country Resort's recognition at the World Golf Awards is a validation of JKP's investment in its properties and future growth, the untiring efforts of the staff and the

faith that members, residents and guests have in the quality and distinctive experience on offer at the resort," said Nayana Mawilmada, Sector Head of John Keells Properties and Executive Vice President - JKH.

The award also has considerable significance for Sri Lanka's tourism sector. "Sri Lanka's tourism industry is in the process of recovering from the pandemic. As we continue to navigate current challenges and as global tourism and travel gradually open, it is important to keep building and investing for the future. Golf tourism constitutes a key segment of the global travel and tourism marketplace. The award also provides a boost for the country as it signals Sri Lanka's numerous offerings and experiences that speak to a wide demographic of global travellers," noted Asela Wavita - General Manager of Victoria

Golf and Country Resort. The unique shapes and contours of VGCR, flanked by scenic vistas, create a challenging and memorable sporting experience even for seasoned golfers who have experienced fine courses around the world. Landscaped on a 517-acre land, the course was designed by Donald Steele & Co. in 1977 and is ranked among the "100 Most Beautiful Golf Courses in the World" by Golf Digest. VGCR's recently introduced turnkey holiday villas and townhouses located within the golf course have been well received. Over 50% of Sunrise Ridge Holiday Homes have been sold to date while all premium land plots from phase one, which was launched in September 2020, have been sold out.

Further, the golf course and



its facilities have been extensively renovated recently - the course was laid out with Turf Grass "Zorro Zoysia" from USA and installed with state-of-the-art automated irrigations systems. The recent award at the World Golf Awards reaffirms the quality

of the course, unique experience and world-class standards at the Victoria Golf & Country Resort.

Victoria Golf & Country Resort is managed by Troon International, the biggest golf resort and club management

company with over 640 resorts around the world. Through its partnership with VGCR, Troon International brings world-class agronomy practices and turf management as well as club house management and operations, offering unique golfing experiences in Sri Lanka and exclusive benefits and access to Troon-managed courses around the world for members of VGCR.

The World Golf Awards™ is part of World Travel Awards™, which is currently celebrating its 27th anniversary. Their global media partners include Destination Golf, TV5Monde, International New York Times, Bloomberg and CNBC with a monthly readership of 1.7 million and a TV audience reach of 90 million.

DFCC Bank signs MOU with National Chamber of Exporters to drive the growth of Sri Lanka's export industry

DFCC Bank, the premier commercial Bank in Sri Lanka, announced the landmark signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the National Chamber of Exporters (NCE) and will now act as one of the Chamber's key strategic partners. Through this MOU, DFCC Bank extends the comprehensive array of end-to-end financial solutions to all members of the NCE, providing access to customized export financing solutions that in turn enable them to do bigger and better business.

The National Chamber of Exporter of Sri Lanka is the leading chamber exclusively responsible for serving the export sector with a wide range of services. The Membership of the Chamber represents leading exporters across all product and service sectors in Sri Lanka, ranging from Large to Small export-oriented enterprises.

The MOU is valid for a period of one year and enables all export related businesses to obtain a host of benefits offered by DFCC Bank. The MOU is therefore of notable importance for all individuals and



(From left to right Ms. Nilmini Gunaratne - VP Marketing & Sustainability DFCC Bank, Anton Arumugam - VP Offshore Banking, Trade and Institutional Business Development DFCC Bank, Thimal Perera Deputy CEO DFCC Bank, Shihan Marikar SG/CEO NCE and Ms. Menaka Wanniarachchi - Director Operations - NCE)

businesses involved in the production of exportable goods and services, both private and public in nature. Foreign exchange income generated through exports is currently a critical requirement towards ensuring that the country gains financial stability. As such, the partnership stands to add significant value in growing exports overall, while securing economic stability and resilience.

Commenting on the importance of the new partnership with NCE, DFCC Bank DCEO, Thimal Perera, stated, "DFCC Bank is proud to partner with NCE to offer its expansive export financing solutions to all NCE members. We look forward to supporting the growth of the Sri Lankan economy and driving the export market to greater heights

through the partnership, thereby creating significant economic value for the nation. The MOU is yet another step in DFCC Bank's long-term journey of partnering the growth and prosperity of our stakeholders and our customers in particular."

"Through this strategic partnership, NCE as the exclusive Chamber representing exporters will be able to support its members, as always, by creating a platform for members and the bank to interact. Our aim is to develop and sustain exports of Sri Lanka thereby adding value to the economic development of this country. The Chamber aims to facilitate both DFCC bank and member exporters of the Chamber through various programs conducted by us," commented NCE Secretary General/CEO, Mr. Shiham Marikar.

Throughout its rich history, spanning six decades, DFCC Bank has provided financial services for a plethora of well-known Sri Lankan entrepreneurs and entities, most of which have gone on to become leading exporters and providers of services to the international market.

Leading Singaporean edtech platform Tutopiya provides Sri Lankan tutors with global teaching opportunities



Tutopiya CEO Nuha Ghouse

Tutopiya, a Singapore-based edtech platform, announced the official launch of its tutor recruitment drive in Sri Lanka. This drive comes at a time when online tuition is necessary amidst the pandemic and social distancing measures across the globe.

Tutopiya works with a network of experienced tutors to bring online tuition to students at home. Tutopiya specializes in teaching international school students from grades 1-12 focusing on the IGCSE and A levels by Cambridge & Pearson Edexcel Examination Boards and the International Baccalaureate (IB).

Nuha Ghouse, CEO of Tutopiya said, "We are excited to launch our tutor recruitment campaign in Sri Lanka and have already seen a lot of interest from tutors looking for global teaching opportunities which are not disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to offer students access to quality online education, which is crucial at this point, so we have one of the largest and thoroughly vetted active databases of quality teachers to ensure we provide the highest standard of online tuition."

A growing interest in global online teaching opportunities

Developed and honed in-house over a three year period, Tutopiya's proudly owns its advanced web-based platform and mobile app which completely equips tutors to offer a high quality online learning experience with absolute convenience in lesson scheduling, joining and teaching. In addition, tutors are provided with teaching resources and ongoing continuous training and webinar series to ensure the tutors are fully supported and up-to-date with the latest international curricula and the best online teaching tech-

niques. Tutopiya's faculty of internationally-qualified subject specialist teachers ensures the students have access to advanced standards of knowledge and skills for every subject offered. Tutors are selectively and privately-screened to ensure that they provide students with the best education possible.

Private live and interactive lessons without leaving home. Through Tutopiya's advanced mobile app and web-based platform, students and teachers have a range of features which provide a complete solution for online learning - live lessons, practice assignments, progress tracking, feedback, lesson recordings, to name a few. This makes online learning most effective, efficient and best of all, convenient.

Becoming a Tutor with Tutopiya If you are someone who is passionate about teaching and would like to work with students from different parts of the world, visit www.tutopiya.com and submit your online application under the 'become a tutor' section. <https://www.tutopiya.com/become-a-tutor/>

Traditionally, students who enroll in tuition outside of school have to travel to their tutor's homes or vice versa. However, with more restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this is not a viable option for many. By removing the physical barrier, learners and tutors will have more opportunities and chances for exploring new and qualified educators. Tutors can gain a better understanding of each student through one-on-one time. Through this communication, tutors can deliver customised lessons that suit their individual needs and learning styles for the best outcomes.

Alliance Finance expands its sustainability drive through island wide branches

Alliance Finance Co. PLC, (AFC), Sri Lanka's oldest finance company with over 65 years of expertise in offering affordable and inclusive sustainable finance solutions to empower the nation. AFC has taken a step forward to expand its sustainability drive through its island wide branch network, launching AFC branch sustainability programme, known as the "AFC helping hand" with an aim to help uplift the lives of Sri Lankans and lend a helping hand to the fight against the pandemic. This initiative has several completed projects to date and over 30 project implementations are in progress, despite the challenges from the Covid-19.

The branch network following in the footsteps of AFC, have embraced the opportunity to serve the communities in their respective regions. AFC

donated a vast array of medical equipment to hospitals, lending a hand towards the ongoing battle against COVID-19 including formal reliefs to affected clients & staff. To date the company has supported hospitals in Northern, Uva, Eastern, Southern, Western, Sabaragamuwa and North Western Provinces and many projects are progressing in other provinces as well.

Commenting on the AFC helping hand programme, Deputy Chairman and Managing Director Romani de Silva said, "It is with great enthusiasm we embark on these projects to support our own communities. All of the AFC's branches have rallied behind this programme to fulfil the most pressing needs of their respective locations. We are in the midst of a highly challenging period with the pandemic."



Alliance Finance Dehiattakandiya Branch Donated an Oxygen Concentrator Machine to the Dehiattakandiya Base Hospital on 19th June, 2021

Sri Lanka's first Reggio Emilia inspired Kindergarten with Singaporean collaboration will be launched soon

Reggio Emilia is an approach to early childhood education that views children as individuals who are curious about the world and have powerful potential.

The Reggio Emilia approach to early Reggio teachers employ strategies such as exposing children to a wide variety of educational opportunities that encourage self-expression, communication, logical thinking, and problem-solving.

The Reggio Emilia pedagogy was born after World War II in the town of Reggio Emilia in Northern Italy. It was founded by pedagogist Loris Malaguzzi. Supported by the entire community in Reggio Emilia, this approach is based on constructivist principles and stems from respect, responsibility, and community where learning happens through exploration, discovery, and play.

Creative Thinkers Pre-School Singapore, was founded in 2004 by Sakinah Dollah, a passionate educator with a background in theatre and arts. Creative Thinkers has infused these elements of arts by creating a creative environment and developing a curriculum that enhances the creative potential and uniqueness of the child.

Shyamalee Mahibalan is a Sri Lankan



Creative Thinkers Singapore

writer/poet who has a wide range of experience in teaching enrichment arts/music/science to children in local kindergartens, International primary schools, including special needs schools in Singapore.

Creative Thinkers Kindergarten-Colombo, will be headed by Shyamalee Mahibalan. The school will have a well curated student centered pedagogy bringing in the Reggio inspiration, critical thinking and the Singaporean early childhood elements. Creative thinkers will also be an inclusive school with a nurturing and creative environment.

The teachers are Talented, qualified, experienced and trained in primary and Kindergarten systems in Sri Lanka and abroad.

