



PERMAUL'S MAIDEN FIVE-FOR DERAILS SRI LANKA  
»SEE PAGE 16

# the morning



SIDE-EFFECTS OF CONTRACEPTIVES DISCOURAGE USE  
»SEE PAGE 6



ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE MAS 'OCEAN STRAINER'  
»SEE PAGE 12

## INSURANCE INQUIRIES SURGE ON GAS EXPLOSION FEARS



»SEE PAGE 9

# Gas companies reject CPC test reports

To LISTEN to our lead story, scan this QR code on your device



BY PAMODI WARAVITA

**B**oth Litro Gas Lanka Ltd. and Laugfs Gas PLC yesterday (30 November), the only two players in the liquid petroleum gas (LPG) market, questioned the testing done by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) on LPG samples which were collected over the weekend, noting issues with the CPC's laboratory testing facilities.

Contd. on page 2

- Cite lab facility related issues and lack of international standards
- Note CPC soon to be a competitor
- SJB claims CPC report shows 49:51 propane:butane
- Geo Chem Lanka reports show Litro having 30:70 propane:butane



# Sri Lanka to export medical cannabis soon

- Indigenous Medicine Ministry to submit Bill to Parliament
- Steps to lift colonial era bans on indigenous drugs

BY BUDDHIKA SAMARAWERA

**T**he Indigenous Medicine Promotion, Rural and Ayurvedic Hospitals Development, and Community Health State Ministry is to submit a Bill to Parliament seeking legal approval to export cannabis sativa within the next three months.

Speaking in Parliament yesterday (30 November), Indigenous Medicine Promotion, Rural and Ayurvedic Hospitals Development, and Community Health State Minister Sisira Jayakody said: "We have taken all necessary steps to obtain the necessary legal approval through the Parliament within the next three months only for the export of medicinal cannabis."

Contd. on page 2



State Minister Sisira Jayakody

## No lockdown for Christmas, assures Ramesh Pathirana

No lockdown will be imposed during the upcoming festive season, assured Cabinet Spokesperson MP Ramesh Pathirana. Speaking at the weekly cabinet meeting discussions yesterday (30 November), Pathirana noted that since the majority of Sri Lanka's population has been vaccinated, a lockdown is not necessary, but citizens must act responsibly adhering to health guidelines during the festive season. However, Health Ministry representatives last week noted that...

Contd. on page 8

## Litro warns users against 'unverified' soap tests at home

Requests public to contact 1311 emergency hotline

Litro Gas Lanka Ltd. yesterday (30 November) advised consumers to refrain from resorting to unverified methods, such as a soap test, to determine liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinder-based leaks and to therefore contact the 1311 hotline in case of emergencies.

Contd. on page 8

## Relief for weddings in new guidelines

New health guidelines to be followed from 1 to 15 December were issued by the Director General of Health Services yesterday (30 November). As per the guidelines, a maximum of one-third of usual hall capacity, not exceeding 200 guests, is allowed for indoor wedding receptions. Meanwhile, a maximum of 250 guests will be allowed for outdoor receptions.

# 'Explain Monday's power outages'

- CEB Unions tell Power Minister to clarify
- Power Ministry commences probe

BY BUDDHIKA SAMARAWERA

**T**he Ceylon Electricity Board Joint Trade Union Alliance (CEBJTUA) has stated that Minister of Power Gamini Lokuge and the Government should make a statement regarding the power outages that occurred in several parts of the country on Monday (29 November).

Contd. on page 2



## FAILURE TO PREVENT EASTER SUNDAY ATTACKS Specific intel provided to ex-IGP only one day prior

- Ex-SIS Director admits no specific intel given between 4-19 April 2019
- Says specific intel was not given to political authority

BY BUDDHIKA SAMARAWERA

**F**ormer State Intelligence Service (SIS) Director Senior Deputy Inspector General of Police (SDIG) Nilantha Jayawardena has admitted in court that he did not provide then Inspector General of Police (IGP) Pujith Jayasundara with any specific intelligence information about a terror attack until the day before the Easter Sunday terror attacks of 21 April 2019.

Contd. on page 2



Former SIS Director SDIG Nilantha Jayawardena



Former IGP Pujith Jayasundara

## 20,000 MT of rice from Myanmar for \$ 9.2 million

A proposal made by Trade Minister Dr. Bandula Gunawardana to import 20,000 metric tonnes (MT) of rice at a cost of \$ 9.2 million from Myanmar has been granted approval by the Cabinet of Ministers. According to the Government Information Department, the said stock of rice will be imported to Sri Lanka on the basis of a government-to-government agreement between Sri Lanka and Myanmar, at a cost of \$ 460 per MT. The import will be made through the State Trading (General) Corporation (STC). In September 2021, approval was given by the Cabinet to import 100,000 MT of rice, thus enabling the country to keep sufficient buffer stocks of rice in the country, following a proposal submitted to the effect by Dr. Gunawardana.

Contd. on page 8

## Campaign finances to be regulated

- Cabinet approves plans for level playing field

BY PAMODI WARAVITA

**P**rovisions will be introduced to regulate and control election expenses, following the Cabinet's approval being granted on Monday (29 November) for a proposal by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to the effect, as part of efforts to create a more just playing field for the conduct of free and fair elections, the Government said yesterday (30 November). "Prior to 1977, there were regulations about election-

related spending. Unfortunately, however, with the introduction of the proportional representation electoral system, these regulations did not make their way to the new legislation. In 2017, the Cabinet gave approval to amend existing ordinances and as the final step, President Rajapaksa gave this cabinet paper this week. We hope that with these provisions, a background and a playing field to conduct freer..."

Contd. on page 2

## Kalutara runner-up to replace Samarasinghe

The name of Manju Lalith Warna Kumara has been gazetted to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Kalutara District Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) MP Mahinda Samarasinghe from his parliamentary seat, the Election Commission stated yesterday (30 November).

Contd. on page 8



Manju Lalith Warna Kumara

## Podi Lassi's mother appeals to UN about life threat

- Hands over letter to UN Resident Co-ordinator in Colombo
- Requests intervention to prevent son's death while in custody

BY PAMODI WARAVITA

**F**ollowing a series of custodial deaths this year, the mother of Janith Madushanka alias Podi Lassi, has written to United Nations (UN) Sri Lanka Resident Coordinator, Hanaa Singer-Hamdy, about alleged threats to the life of her son, who is currently in the custody of the Criminal Investigations Department (CID).

Contd. on page 8



Podi Lassi's mother outside the UN office in Colombo yesterday (30 November)

## Alagiyawanna invites critics to gas explosion meeting

- Prez appoints probe comm. to propose urgent solutions

BY PAMODI WARAVITA

**A**n emergency meeting of the Consultative Committee on Trade will take place today (1 December) to discuss the ongoing incidents of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinder-based explosions, with former Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) Executive Director Thushan Gunawardena being invited to attend.

Contd. on page 2

## Booster-less 60+ vulnerable due to gatherings

The Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA) warned that if the population above 60 years of age has not obtained the "booster" third Covid-19 vaccine dose in a backdrop where people are gathering in large numbers at present, it may lead to a disastrous situation in the future.

Joining a programme hosted on TV Derana yesterday (30 November), SLMA President Dr. Padma Gunaratne said: "A festive season..."

Contd. on page 2

**COVID-19 CASES**

ACTIVE CASES: 9,061  
DEATHS: 14,346  
RECOVERED: 540,387  
TOTAL CASES: 563,794

SOURCE: HEALTH PROMOTION BUREAU

---

**COVID-19 TOTAL VACCINATION**

1ST DOSE: 15,929,547  
2ND DOSE: 13,745,161

THE ABOVE STATISTICS ARE CONFIRMED UP UNTIL 7.10 P.M. ON 30 NOVEMBER 2021  
SOURCE: PRESIDENTIAL SECRETARIAT



# { NEWS }

## Gazette Notifications to be submitted to Parliament for approval

Cabinet approved the proposal made by Minister of Finance Basil Rajapaksa to submit to Parliament the following Gazette Notifications containing provisions laid down under the Special Commodity Levy Act No. 28

of 2007 to stabilise the market prices, provide relief to consumers, and protect local agriculture:

- Gazette Notification No.2236 /66 dated 18 July 2021

- Gazette Notification No.2240/20 dated 11 August 2021

- Gazette Notification No.2244/8 dated 7 September 2021

- Gazette Notification No.2249/3 dated 11 October 2021

- Gazette Notification No.2249/16 dated 13 October 2021

- Gazette Notification No.2252/9 dated 2 November 2021

- Gazette Notification No.2252/25 dated 2 November 2021

### Contd. from page 1

### Gas...

“We don’t recognise the credibility of the CPC to conduct tests and issue test reports as they don’t have the necessary equipment calibrated to international standards. Also, they are our competitor as the CPC is in the process of introducing their own product to the market,” a senior official at Litro Gas Lanka told *The Morning* yesterday, referring to the Cabinet approving the establishment of a subsidiary of the CPC to venture into the LPG business in early October.

Last Saturday (27 November), the CPC had taken two samples, of which one report had already been sent to the University of Moratuwa for review. Representatives from the Sri Lanka Accreditation Board for Conformity Assessment (SLAB) were in the CPC lab on 28 November, where 12 new gas samples were collected from the Ratnapura, Colombo, Galle, Kalutara, Kurunegala, and Gampaha Districts for testing.

Laugfs Gas Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Chaminda Ediriwickrama told *The Morning* yesterday that Laugfs Gas cannot accept CPC test results either, as the CPC does not have the proper testing equipment nor have the samples been collected according to the globally accepted manner.

“Samples must be collected from the ports at three levels. That is how international tests are carried out,” noted Ediriwickrama.

However, over the weekend, State Minister of Co-operative Services, Marketing Development, and Consumer Protection Lasantha Alagiyawanna said that, although the CPC did not have the required testing facilities to check the quality of gas earlier this year, it has now updated its facilities and therefore can check the quality of gas.

Allegations levelled against the gas industry claim that a 50:50 butane-to-propane gas composition is dangerous to be used in a country with temperatures such as those in Sri Lanka, and that this composition deviates from the usual 30% propane and 70% butane gas composition. Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) Parliamentarian J.C. Alawathuwa yesterday claimed that the initial report by the CPC, which was sent to the University of Moratuwa, proves the accusation that the gas composition is 50% butane and 50% propane.

“Everybody knows by now that the CPC report shows that the gas composition is 49:51 propane-butane. A total of 40% of Sri Lankan families are affected by this issue. Present this report to the Parliament immediately. Why are you dragging this on?” questioned Alawathuwa in Parliament yesterday.

Opposition and SJB Leader Sajith Premadasa also said yesterday in Parliament that it is important to present the raw reports to Parliament before being subjected to amendments.

On Monday (29 November), State Minister Alagiyawanna stated that an investigative report on the series of gas cylinder-based explosions will first be reviewed by the University of Moratuwa and then the proposals and recommendations be presented to Parliament within the course of this week, despite earlier pledging to present the report to Parliament on that day (Monday).

Although *The Morning* contacted CPC Deputy Refinery Manager K.G.H. Kodagoda regarding the claim made by the SJB that the report shows the gas composition in LPG cylinders to be 49:51 propane-butane, he refused to comment on the matter.

However, senior officials at Litro Gas Lanka said that they have not received any official communication regarding the aforementioned test report. Furthermore, it is learnt that test reports from Geo Chem Lanka (Pvt.) Ltd., the international independent inspection and testing company, show that gas samples of Litro Gas Lanka from September 2021 to November 2021 fall within the range of 30% propane and 70% butane. It is further learnt that all shipments of gas received by Litro Gas Lanka are tested by Geo Chem Lanka.

The reports, as seen by *The Morning*, show that the average values for the three months remain at 35.20% propane and 63.76% butane (in terms of weight).

“Litro Gas Lanka reiterates that the LPG brought into Sri Lanka meets internationally ratified compositions of propane and butane, certified and tested twice at the point of loading and unloading by Geo Chem Lanka (Pvt.) Ltd. We assure that the LPG that is loaded onto the ship at the point of the supplier is unloaded at Kerawalapitiya and stored in LPG storage spheres after which point cylinders of varied sizes are filled in the factory. The entire process, which is done under the strictest safety standards, does not involve any tampering in Sri Lanka while LPG is stored and filled into cylinders with the same specifications that they have been shipped with,” Litro Gas Lanka noted in a press release yesterday.

Furthermore, the press release said that Litro Gas Lanka possesses 8,000 metric tonnes (MT)

LPG capacity, which means that a new LPG stock is required every six to seven days to meet the market demand. Thus, a new shipment of LPG arrives at the Kerawalapitiya filling plant every three to four days, ensuring that customers are given a seamless supply of LPG.

Similarly, Ediriwickrama said that Laugfs Gas too obtains test reports from the loading and discharging ports and that these reports have never shown a 50:50 gas composition. “It also does not make sense for us to increase the composition of propane, as propane is more expensive. It is not commercially viable and not profitable,” he added.

During November, several gas cylinder explosions were reported at both industrial commercial establishments as well as at the domestic household level, including two restaurants in Weligama and Colombo 7 as well as a bakery in Ratnapura. On Monday alone, three explosions were reported from Arachchikattuwa, Kegalle, and Hatton.

Last Saturday (27 November), Opposition and SJB Leader Premadasa said that former CAA Executive Director Thushan Gunawardena had alleged that the propane-to-butane ratio in gas cylinders had been changed to 50:50, while energy expert Nimal De Silva has said that by making the ratio 50:50, the pressure would change and lead to gas cylinder explosions.

### Sri Lanka to...

He added that quality and medicinal cannabis, which can be used to treat cancer and neurological diseases as well as in the cosmetics field, was banned by western nations during the colonial era.

“At present, we are confined to traditional legal frameworks. Especially during the colonial period, the western nations banned indigenous drugs in our country. However, we are now taking the necessary steps to amend such laws and legalise those drugs.”

Cannabis sativa is a plant native to Central Asia and the Indian Sub-Continent which has been used as a drug for both recreational and entheogenic purposes and in various traditional medicines. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the main psychoactive component of cannabis, which is one of the 483 known compounds in the plant, including at least 65 other cannabinoids, including cannabidiol (CBD).

The global cannabis market is estimated to be valued at \$ 20.5 billion in 2020 and is projected to reach \$ 90.4 billion by 2026, recording a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 28% in terms of value.

The Poisons, Opium, and Dangerous Drugs Ordinance of 1929 as amended, criminalised cannabis. However, the Ayurveda Act No. 31 of 1961 as amended has allowed Ayurvedic physicians to obtain cannabis for the manufacture of their medicinal preparations.

Several parliamentarians including Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) MP Diana Gamage, who is currently supporting the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP)-led Government, and SLPP MP Uddika Premaratna have pointed out that Sri Lanka could earn significant export revenue by allowing the cultivation and export of cannabis.

Gamage recently said that the country can stand alone and solve its debt crisis by allowing the export of cannabis oil instead of pleading to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other creditors. She added that if the country can throw out the British-made legislation and allow the cultivation and export of cannabis, it would be able to earn millions of dollars by exporting cannabis oil.

“This country has now been an independent country for 73 years and we should, therefore, no longer be under these colonial laws,” she noted.

Referring to cannabis as a God-given cash crop, Gamage quoted the European Investment Bank as having stated that the global trade in cannabis would grow 1,000% in a period of 10 years.

Meanwhile, Premaratna last week told the Parliament that the country should consider allowing the export of cannabis, and permit the production of moonshine (illicit liquor).

He claimed: “Gamage has been talking about cannabis. Coconut, Kithul, and Palmyrah Cultivation Promotion and Related Industrial Product Manufacturing and Export Diversification State Minister Arundika Fernando has been talking about moonshine, which is a very good solution to the US dollar issue and the current economic crisis in the country. The world has called our moonshine, arrack.”

### Campaign...

“...and fairer elections will be created,” Cabinet Spokesman Dullas Alahapperuma said at the post-cabinet meeting press briefing held yesterday.

He raised concerns about the unlimited spending during election times, which he claimed, has become a practice.

“Regulating the spending capacity during elections is one big aspect of ensuring fair elections. We must also look for an election mechanism that represents the people better. However, we hope that regulating election expenses will create new hope for a country that is exhausted with the current election mechanisms and politicians. We hope that there will be bipartisan support in Parliament for this,” said Alahapperuma.

In September this year, Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) Monaragala Pradeshiya Sabha Member Harshaka Priya Dissanayake, who was accused of bribing voters to garner votes, was disqualified in a landmark High Court judgement. The People’s Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL) and the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) initially filed the case against Dissanayake. Following the ruling, PAFFREL noted the necessity of laws to limit election expenses by candidates.

The Parliamentary Select Committee to Identify Appropriate Reforms of the Election Laws and the Electoral System and to Recommend Necessary Amendments has reached an agreement in consultation with the relevant parties to introduce these provisions.

*The Morning’s* attempts to contact Election Commission Information Officer M.K. Saman Sri Ratnayake for more information on the matter proved futile.

### ‘Explain Monday’s...

The power supply to many parts of the island was disrupted from 7.35 p.m. on Monday for nearly one-and-a-half hours due to a breakdown in the 220 kilowatt (KW) transmission line from Upper Kotmale to Biyagama. Accordingly, the grid substations in Pannipitiya, Ratmalana, Sri Jayewardenepura, Athurugiriya, and Kosgama in the Colombo District had shut down. In addition, the grid substations in Sapugaskanda, Biyagama, Kurunegala, Kiribathkumbura, Peradeniya, Kandy, Gampola, Kotugoda, Habarana, Galle, and Matara had also shut down.

Speaking to *TV Derana*, CEBJTUA Convener Ranjan Jayalal said that Lokuge and the Government should make a statement regarding the power outages.

Commenting on this, Ministry of Power Spokesman Sulakshana Jayawardena yesterday (30 November) told the media that an investigation is currently underway into the power outages.

Meanwhile, Jayalal warned that the current shortage of coal in the country and the closure of the Sapugaskanda Oil Refinery, which supplied about 20% of its furnace oil production to the CEB, could lead to a shortage of electricity in the future.

“As we know, the country’s coal stocks will only be sufficient until January 2022. At present, about 50% of the total electricity demand is generated through hydropower, but now the rainfall has gradually reduced,” he said.

Jayalal further stated that the closure of the Sapugaskanda Oil Refinery will also have a major impact on the electricity generation. Given these reasons, he claimed that there is a possibility of a power shortage in the future.

However, Ministry of Energy Secretary K.D.R. Olga last week told *The Morning* that by-products such as furnace oil and chemical naphtha were also manufactured at the Sapugaskanda Oil Refinery, adding that the halt in the production process would not have a major impact on such products. She said that due to the recent rains, the power plants are not purchasing furnace oil at present. She added that due to this, a significant stock of furnace oil has been accumulated and that therefore, the closure of the said oil refinery does not have a major impact on the furnace oil production.

### Specific intel...

The case against Jayasundara for his alleged failure to take action to prevent the Easter Sunday terror attacks was taken up before the Colombo High Court Trial-at-Bar on Monday (29 November) and Jayawardena, the first witness in the case, was cross-examined by Attorney-at-Law Roshan Dehiwala, who is appearing on behalf of Jayasundara.

During the cross-examination, Dehiwala questioned Jayawardena whether the SIS had failed to convert the information received on 4 April 2019 from a foreign counterpart of a terror attack, into specific intelligence information, and in turn make a prior warning before 20 April 2019. In response, Jayawardena said that he did not have the information to make the said prior warning based on specific intelligence information until he received a telephone call at 4.12 p.m. on 20 April 2019, the day before the attacks.

Dehiwala again questioned Jayawardena as to

how he had informed then IGP Jayasundara of the foreign intelligence information received on 20 April 2019. The witness replied that the message was sent to Jayasundara through a particular software used by the Police Department at the time. The Attorney then queried as to whether he (Jayawardena) would accept the motion if he suggested that the said notice had not been duly referred to Jayasundara as stated by the witness. The witness replied: “No, I don’t accept that. I sent the message through that software. I also called him and informed the matter.”

When Jayawardena was questioned as to whether he admitted that he had not given then IGP Jayasundara specific intelligence information about an attack during the period from 4 to 19 April 2019, he said: “Yes, I accept it. I did not provide specific intelligence information about an attack until the day before the attacks, but I did provide information on the information which I received on 4 April 2019 and the dry run conducted by the group led by National Thowheeth Jama’ath (NTJ) Leader Zahran Hashim.”

Judge Mohamed Irshadeen then questioned whether Jayawardena had passed on the specific intelligence information provided the day before the attacks to the Prime Minister (PM), the Opposition Leader, or the Defence Deputy Minister in the absence of the then Defence Minister in the country. In response, Jayawardena said that he had not informed the political authorities in that regard.

Jayawardena has been named a witness of the prosecution in a backdrop where the Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) into the Easter Sunday terror attacks has, in its final report, recommended that the Attorney General (AG) consider instituting criminal proceedings against the former under suitable provisions of the Penal Code over the said terror attacks. According to the PCoI report, the first communication SDIG Jayawardena made in writing after receiving the intelligence information regarding a possible terror attack on 4 April 2019, was to the then Chief of National Intelligence (CNI) Sisira Mendis by way of the letter dated 7 April 2019. “It is titled ‘Information of an alleged plan of attack’, and the PCoI during his testimony before it queried as to why the term ‘alleged’ was used when the foreign counterpart that sent him the intelligence information had not, and his response was: ‘They say, but we don’t know’.

The PCoI, considering Jayawardena’s evidence before it, has concluded that he had not taken the said intelligence information seriously.”

Meanwhile, current IGP Chandana D. Wickramaratne, who has been named as the 1,214th witness in the case, also testified before the Trial-at-Bar on Monday. He was questioned regarding the role of the SIS and its Director as he had served in the SIS before assuming duties as the IGP. When queried whether the SIS Director should inform the tri forces about the intelligence information they, including the SIS Director, receive, Wickramaratne said that the SIS Director should do so. In addition, he said that the National Security Council, the Defence Ministry Secretary, and the IGP could be informed about intelligence information received regarding terrorist activities. When questioned whether the intelligence agencies should only collect information, he said that in addition to collecting information, it was also the responsibility of the intelligence agencies to improve and disseminate such. When queried whether the SIS Director should be considered a police officer under the Police Ordinance, he said that the SIS Director should act as a police officer.

The case is to be taken up again on 18 January 2022.

On 21 April 2019, Easter Sunday, three churches (St. Sebastian’s Church in Katuwapitiya, St. Anthony’s Church in Kochchikade, and Zion Church in Batticaloa) and three luxury hotels in Colombo (Cinnamon Grand Colombo, The Kingsbury Colombo, and Shangri-La Colombo) were targeted in a series of co-ordinated suicide bombings. Later that day, another two bomb explosions took place at a house in Dematagoda and the Tropical Inn Lodge in Dehiwala. A total of 269 people excluding the bombers were killed in the bombings, including about 45 foreign nationals, while at least 500 were injured. All eight of the suicide bombers in the attacks were Sri Lankan citizens associated with the NTJ organisation founded by the suicide bomber at Shangri-La Colombo, Mohamed Cassim Mohamed Zahran alias Zahran Hashim.

### Booster-less...

“...is coming in the near future. At present, many people seem to have forgotten the pandemic situation and there are large gatherings. In this backdrop, if those above 60 years of age have not received the booster Covid-19 vaccine dose, it may result in a disastrous situation.”

Meanwhile, Medical Research Institute (MRI) Consultant Virologist Dr. Nadeeka Janage, who joined the same programme, said that random bio samples are being tested by the MRI and the University of Colombo since July 2021 in

order to identify new variants. He also said that the relevant reports are being sent to the Health Ministry and the Epidemiology Unit on a weekly basis. Meanwhile, when questioned whether there is a possibility of a new Covid-19 variant developing in Sri Lanka, he said: “According to the tests that have been done so far, there has not been an emergence of such a variant that can have a major impact on health.”

Furthermore, the Health Ministry has stated that even if the Omicron Covid-19 variant (B.1.1.529) enters the country, its spread can be minimised if the people follow the Covid-19-related health guidelines properly.

Speaking at a media briefing held yesterday, Health Ministry Communications Director, Public Health Services Deputy Director General (DDG), and Disaster Preparedness and Response Division Head Dr. Hemantha Herath said: “No matter what variant enters the country, it will only spread if the people don’t follow the health guidelines. Therefore, if everyone follows the health guidelines, the spread of this variant can be minimised. Even if it spreads, the adverse consequences of it can be minimised by adhering to the health guidelines.”

He further stated that since a large number of people from South African countries do not come to Sri Lanka, it is less likely that this variant will enter the country.

In view of the Omicron variant, the Sri Lankan authorities have banned the arrival of foreign travellers who have been to six countries in the African Continent, including South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Lesotho, and Eswatini (Swaziland), within the past 14 days.

However, when inquired whether the Health Ministry was taking steps to impose a ban on travellers who have been to other countries where cases of the Omicron variant have been reported, Dr. Herath, last Sunday (28 November), said: “A final decision has not been reached regarding the imposition of such a ban. However, the matter is constantly being analysed.”

### Alagiyawanna...

This is to take place in a backdrop where President Gotabaya Rajapaksa too has appointed a separate committee yesterday (30 November) to investigate the same and propose urgent solutions.

Gunawardena being invited was announced by Co-operative Services, Marketing Development, and Consumer Protection State Minister Lasantha Alagiyawanna who spoke in Parliament yesterday, responding to Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa.

“Apart from the Trade Consultative Committee members, I invite all Opposition members to also participate in this meeting. The Opposition Leader also suggested two names (Gunawardena and energy expert Nimal de Silva). I will either ask them to meet me at the State Ministry or will invite them for the Consultative Committee meeting,” claimed Alagiyawanna in Parliament yesterday.

This was shortly after Premadasa requested a bipartisan select committee to be appointed to investigate the issue, including Gunawardena and Silva.

Gunawardena, speaking to the media recently, has blamed the gas companies for the recent gas cylinder-based explosions in kitchens. He alleged that a dangerous gas composition of 50% butane and 50% propane is being used by the gas companies, which is leading to these increased incidents of gas cylinder-based explosions.

However, as of last afternoon, Gunawardena, who spoke to *The Morning*, said that he has not received such an invitation. “I will be happy to present my views to the Committee if I am asked to do so,” he added.

Police Media Spokesman Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Nihal Thalduwa said yesterday that 19 incidents of LPG cylinder-based explosions, all involving Litro Gas Lanka’s gas cylinders, were reported within the last two days.

Alagiyawanna further said that the State Ministry will also hold discussions with importers of the different equipment related to a gas cylinder, such as the valve and the regulator.

President Rajapaksa also appointed an eight-member committee yesterday to investigate the recent gas cylinder-related incidents. The committee is tasked with finding the possible causes of the incidents and proffering immediate solutions. Chaired by University of Moratuwa Prof. Shantha Walpola, the committee includes Senior Deputy Inspector General of Police (SDIG) Deshabandu Tennakoon, University of Moratuwa Prof. Ajith De Alwis, University of Sri Jayewardenepura Prof. W.D.W. Jayatilake and Prof. Pradeep Jayaweera, Sri Lanka Inventors’ Commission Commissioner Prof. Narayana Sirimuthu, Industrial Technology Institute Additional Director General of Technical Services Dr. Sudarshana Somasiri, and Sri Lanka Standards Institute Senior Deputy Director – Technical Sujeeva Mahagama.



# HC Moragoda seeks greater security co-operation with India

**S**ri Lanka's High Commissioner (HC) to India Milinda Moragoda explored avenues of further augmenting defence and security co-operation with India, when he met the Defence Minister of India Shri Rajnath Singh in New Delhi yesterday (30).

The Defence Minister of India and the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka discussed a range of issues, while reviewing the existing defence and security ties between the two countries.

High Commissioner Moragoda thanked the Defence Minister for the support that the Indian defence establishment has been extending to Sri Lanka over the years in many spheres. He also thanked India for assisting in controlling the disastrous fires onboard the MT New Diamond and MV X-Press Pearl off the coast of Sri Lanka, which would have resulted in severe marine pollution in the region had they not been controlled in a timely and efficient manner.

The High Commissioner also thanked India for the training opportunities accorded to Sri Lankan military students. It was noted that at any given time there are around 700 Sri Lankan military students undergoing training in India. Sri Lanka is the largest single recipient of Indian training berths in the defence sector. The High Commissioner suggested that the possibility be explored for the provision of further training opportunities for Sri Lankan military students in India.

The High Commissioner particularly conveyed to Defence Minister Singh his appreciation for the assistance extended by India to Sri Lanka by sending military aircraft with medical supplies during the Covid-19 pandemic, transporting much-needed medical grade oxygen to Sri Lanka via the INS Shakti and facilitating transportation of the same by SLNS Shakti, and for air lifting a consignment of urgently required nano-nitrogen fertiliser by transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force recently. In this context, the offer by the Indian Navy to donate a large-scale oxygen generator

## SJB sounds alarm as foreign reserves drop to lowest ever figure of \$ 1.5 b

**N**oting that the Opposition recently alleged in Parliament that foreign reserves have dropped to their lowest-ever levels of \$ 1.5 billion, including gold reserves of \$ 300 million, which amounts to less than one month's imports, and that the Government did not refute this claim, Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) MP Eran Wickramaratne warned that as a result, essential food items and fuel shortages would follow, and the country could face power cuts in the future.

The MP, pointing out that the Sapugaskanda Oil Refinery was recently closed for the first time in its history, also stated that manufacturers and businesses would be able to prepare to face the consequences if the Government informed the country well in advance of such a situation.

"When this Government came to power, the foreign reserves, which were more than \$ 7 billion, have now reduced to \$ 1.5 billion, as this Government is more concerned with giving relief to its cronies than governing the country," charged Wickramaratne.

He added that despite reports that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has provided emergency assistance to 80 countries, including Asian countries such as Pakistan, Nepal, Maldives, and Myanmar, the Government has not yet responded to a question raised in Parliament a year ago whether it had received a rapid financing instrument from the IMF. Sri Lanka did not receive this assistance because the IMF had speculated that the nation would not be able to repay its loans due to the depletion of foreign reserves, which needs a comprehensive reform process.

"Even poorer countries than us in Asia received Covid-19 emergency aid from the IMF, but Sri Lanka was not included in the recipient lists due to the IMF's assessment that Sri Lanka needs major economic reforms in the context of the collapse of its foreign reserves," he stated.

He further claimed: "The present Government, which had criticised and repealed the fuel price formula implemented by the Yahapalana Government as a timely solution to the problems faced by the country, now insists that a fuel formula is good for the country. This proves that they do not have a proper understanding of economic management or governance."

According to the Standing Orders of Parliament, when a question is raised, it can be adjourned only twice. However, Wickramaratne claimed that the Government was still postponing an answer to his question under the pretext of collecting data, and urged that it was the responsibility of the Government to tell the people the truth about the dollar shortage and its consequences in importing essential goods to the country, so they could be prepared in advance.

to Sri Lanka was also appreciated.

The High Commissioner also recalled how the Indian defence establishment supported the repatriation of Sri Lankan military students during the initial months of the lock-down in 2020, by way of facilitating their movement by road, sea, and air, and thanked the Minister for this facilitation.

The two dignitaries took note of the annual bilateral Joint Military and Naval exercises and discussed avenues through which the existing bilateral defence and security co-operation could be further strengthened. They also observed with satisfaction the immense progress achieved by the Colombo Security Conclave during the past one year.

High Commissioner Moragoda also presented

a copy of his policy road map "Integrated Country Strategy for Sri Lanka Diplomatic Missions in India 2021/2023" to the Defence Minister. The High Commissioner was accompanied by the High Commissioner's Defence Advisor Commodore Thushara Karunatunga (SLN) to the meeting.

A former President of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Shri Rajnath Singh is a veteran politician with an illustrious career. Prior to being appointed as the Minister of Defence in May 2019, he held the portfolio of Home Minister in the Cabinet of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Shri Rajnath Singh had also served as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh in early 2000s. He is also the Deputy Leader of the House of the Lok Sabha at present.



High Commissioner Milinda Moragoda and Defence Minister of India Shri Rajnath Singh



EMPOWERING PEOPLE THE WORLD OVER

PROSPECTUS AVAILABLE  
APPLICATIONS NOW ACCEPTED

IPO  
OPENS  
DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>

hSenid Business Solutions, operating from six countries, has provided tangible Human Resource solutions to over a million users, across 1300+ organisations, in 20+ different industries, in more than 40 countries, and stands poised for exponential global growth.

JOIN US IN EMPOWERING PEOPLE THE WORLD OVER  
55,339,076 ORDINARY VOTING SHARES AT  
LKR 12.50 PER SHARE.

The prospectus and application can be downloaded from the link below and the CSE website.

[ipo.hSenidBiz.com](http://ipo.hSenidBiz.com)

OBTAIN  
THE PROSPECTUS

Give a missed call:

0724 551 551



Lead Managers to the Issue



Co-Managers to the Issue.



# The gassy standard

The spate of explosions which are said to have been caused by liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders leaking gas appears to be becoming an even bigger issue than the all-consuming Covid-19 pandemic, and different opinions expressed by various parties and the lack of action on the part of the authorities have pushed the people unto a state of uncertainty.

Even though some have downplayed the seriousness of this issue, while some have exaggerated it, the people's fear as to how to deal with the gas cylinders that may cause a fire or an explosion at any moment is justifiable, as such incidents have seen an alarming rise. On 29 November alone, 10 fires and explosions suspected to have been caused by leaking gas cylinders were reported, sending shockwaves through households around the country.

While various opinions have been expressed as to the underlying reasons behind these explosions, the most discussed allegation is that the composition of LPG cylinders issued to the market has been changed recently, leading to a change in the cylinder pressure. Although this has not been officially corroborated or denied by the Government, State Minister of the Co-operative Services, Marketing Development, and Consumer Protection Lasantha Alagiyawanna has admitted that the process for issuing standards certificates for LPG does not involve evaluating the compositional ratio of butane and propane, and that the Sri Lanka Standards Institute (SLSI) only considers the gas cylinder pressure, which was a main measurement introduced as far back as 1998. He also said that despite having started the circulation of LPG since the 1960s, the country has failed to regulate it properly.

This lack of standards is not an issue that can be attributed to one government or a single group of officials at the SLSI or at other institutions. If Sri Lanka did not have proper standards concerning the quality and composition of LPG since 1998, according to Alagiyawanna, what it shows is a grave lethargy on the part of the politicians of several governments and a lack of national policies concerning standards.

What's more, it shows that the authorities of the relevant institutions have been complacent about the standards that have a direct impact on the people's lives and saw no need for improvement or update, resulting in them merely maintaining the standards that were in place for decades.

Even though no concrete data has still been revealed to suggest a link between the composition of LPG and these explosions, LPG, as a commodity that involves safety concerns in addition to quality concerns, must receive more attention, and the regular update of standards that concern its quality is necessary.

This is a big wake up call for the Government and the responsible authorities to understand that the lack of standards and outdated standards can both be dangerous. The much-anticipated report on the quality and composition of LPG, which was to be represented to Parliament on 29 November, was not presented. However, the Government and the authorities need to make this report a starting point to take a number of short and long-term measures to ensure consumers safety.

The short-term measures will depend on what the report reveals, but must include, among others, updating standards requirements for LPG and removing from the market all LPG cylinders if the explosions have anything to do with the quality of the LPG or cylinders. As a long-term measure, it must introduce a national policy enabling and requiring the relevant State institutions such as the SLSI to regularly identify gaps between local and international policies and standards.

Most importantly, such policies should cover all products, not just LPG, and the relevant companies should also be an integral and responsible party in the implementation of such.



BY BASIL FERNANDO

**C**onstitutions are made in different countries in different moments of history. They are mostly made at a point of time when significant change is taking place or significant change is envisaged.

For example, the unwritten constitutional tradition of the UK was developed at a time when the monarchy was to be brought to an end, and the supremacy of the Parliament was envisaged to be the body to determine the laws by which the country and the nation was to be governed for the future. That was a moment of momentous change, and that change provided the foundation for the practices by which the nation has been governed for the rest of its history.

The French Revolution marked an even more fundamental change. While it also marked the end of the monarchy, it also brought the people more directly into the process of governance.

The making of the Constitution of the US marked the beginning of a new nation altogether. Benefitting from the changes that had taken place in Europe, they created a system of governance where the supremacy of law was to be the key principle around which all the governance was to take place.

The Indian Constitution was made at the beginning of the period of Independence from the British Empire, and it was to mark the manner in which the Indians would govern themselves. Over a long period of time, what the Constitution would constitute of was discussed in great detail. The narratives



of these debates show that one of the major concerns of the drafters of the Indian Constitution was to prevent the kind of arbitrary deprivation of liberties that the British were engaged in during the time of the British Raj. Another major concern was to establish the Judiciary as a genuinely independent institution. The manner of appointment of superior court judges was discussed thoroughly and was enshrined into the Constitution, giving the power of selection for new judges to the Supreme Court to the judges themselves. This arrangement has lasted, despite many attempts by politicians who were more inclined towards authoritarianism and did not want interference from the Judiciary.

The recent Constitution of Nepal

was directed towards achieving several ends. One was to end the rule by monarchy once and for all. Secondly, to end the civil war which lasted over a long period and to bring in those who were engaged in the rebellion against monarchy also into the processes of governance.

In all these Constitutions, a major concern was to bring the entire population into the process of governing themselves by following the principles of equality before the law. Whether it was a concern to end the monarchy or to establish a Government after a long period of civil war, the consensus was that a permanent form of governance requires that nobody is allowed to be above the law. Implied in that conception was that nobody could be outside the jurisdiction of the courts. These two principles always go together. If the courts do not have jurisdiction over any person or a group of persons, then the notion of the supremacy of the law cannot operate. If that principle cannot operate, then there cannot be any other means to hold a nation together.

When the 1948 Soulbury Constitution was adopted, it was for the purpose of marking the end of the colonial period and the beginning of a nation that will be ruled by the people themselves.

When the second Constitution of 1972 was discussed, there was more rhetoric about a homegrown Constitution, but the central political idea behind the Constitution was not discussed at all.

The hidden agenda behind the 1978 Constitution was to undermine the independence of the Judiciary, which was done by way of the removal of the power of judicial review. Other than this, there was no other central idea in that Constitution. The 1978 Constitution, although not openly declared, had a very prominent single idea. It was to end the period of the

supremacy of the law by the creation of a position called the Executive President, who was not subjected to the laws of the country and who was placed outside the jurisdiction of the court. Despite the maintenance of the language of the separation of powers, in fact, it was a central aim of this Constitution to displace the notion of the separation of powers by undermining the role of the Parliament, which was reduced to a rubber-stamping position to approve the will of the Executive President and also very deliberately undermining the role, function, and independence of the Judiciary.

It was a radical departure from democracy. If the Nepalese Constitution marked the end of the rule by a monarch and the beginning of a system of governance where the people were supreme and the separation of powers principle played a central role, the 1978 Constitution of Sri Lanka did the opposite. Although it did not create a monarch, it gave more power to the Executive President than any other modern Constitution in a nation that claims to be democratic. The claim of democracy and the structure of governance that was established in the 1978 Constitution are opposed to each other.

None of the amendments that were attempted, including the 17th Amendment to the Constitution to the 20th Amendment to the Constitution, altered this situation.

As a new Constitution is being discussed in Sri Lanka at a time when the structure of governance that was established under the 1978 Constitution has proved to be an unmitigated disaster, then the central concern should be for the abolition of the 1978 Constitution altogether.

This means first of all the reinstatement of the principle of the supremacy of the law. That implies, at the same time, the reinstatement of the principle of the independence of the Judiciary not only by way of a mere declaration but by restoring the role and the function of the courts. It implies the restoration of the power of judicial review. Further, this also means that all restraints that the Head of State or the Cabinet of Ministers could impose on the rights of the Judiciary to exercise its role as the guardian of the rights of the people should be negated.

In the recent past, we have experienced that many things considered illegal in a country that resets the rule of law has been given the aura of legality in Sri Lanka. For example, the arrest of a person by way of kidnapping, the detention of people in places outside detention centres, the torture and then the killing of such persons and the disposal of their bodies, were all justified by various gazettes which created conditions for such things to take place.

Similar patterns have either been developed by way of such gazettes or by way of practices which have become a normal part of the law enforcement in Sri Lanka. The common saying that Sri Lanka is a lawless country came to be used by the people as a result of witnessing what they normally knew to be illegal being transformed into facts which began to be considered as normal and legal.

A new Constitution that does not achieve this overall transformation, from a country that has lost the principle of the supremacy of the law to one where that principle is restored to the foundational principle, would not be of any use to resolve the kind of crises that the nation is faced with now. A radical restoration of the rule of law and the supremacy of the law is possible only in situations in which people themselves become the makers of their Constitution.

This role cannot be usurped by the very people who are opposed to the supremacy of the law. Thus, the moment of the making of a new Constitution must be a moment at which the people use their power of sovereignty and determine the kind of governance they want to be bound by.

(The writer is the Asian Human Rights Commission's Policy and Programmes Director)

The views and opinions expressed in this column are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of this publication.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Sinhala-only forms: Little done over the years to rectify this

Last Thursday (25 November), my husband and I went to Borella to get our booster vaccine. We were given a form to fill, asking for name, age, when our last jab was, ID number, and a few other details. The form was entirely in the Sinhala language. The three people with me were all Tamil speakers. They could speak Sinhala fluently (unlike most of us Sinhalese who struggle to understand Tamil), but they could not read.

So, I was the translator. At a time when we are talking of "One Country One Law" this is a case in point.

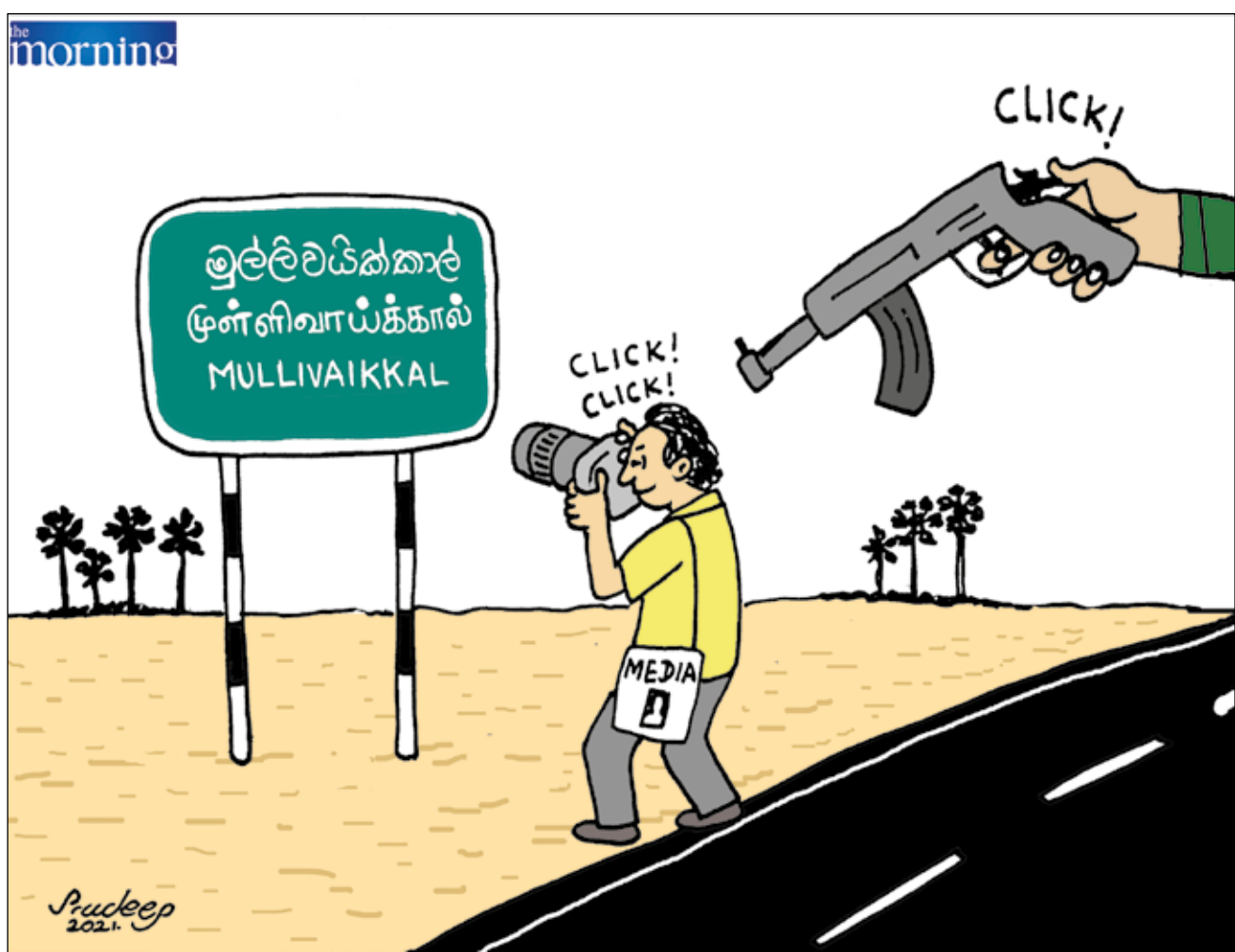
Some years ago, Tamil was accepted as a national language. But it is in these seemingly little and yet most frustrating things where we "keep telling them"

that they are second-class citizens. I have had Sinhala folk say "But this is a Sinhala Buddhist nation!"

My response is: "No, it's a nation where the majority happen to be Sinhala speaking and Buddhist." I am so proud to have among my childhood friends those who happen to be Sinhala Buddhist who are respectful of others, whether Tamil, Muslim, or Burgher.

In countries like Singapore, official matters are conducted in Chinese, Tamil, and English. It means they respect and recognise each other as fellow citizens. We should not feel we are doing anyone a favour by giving them forms in the Tamil language. It is their right as equal citizens.

— Sarla Williams (A senior citizen)





## THE MOST AWARDED CONGLOMERATE FOR DIVERSE EXPORT BUSINESSES AT PRESIDENTIAL EXPORT AWARDS



**Haycarb PLC**  
Best Exporter - Coconut Shell Products  
Sector - 2020/21



**Hayleys Energy Services Lanka (Pvt) Ltd**  
Best Exporter - Marine & Offshore  
Engineering Services Sector - 2020/21

**Hayleys Energy Services Lanka (Pvt) Ltd**  
Best Exporter - Marine & Offshore  
Engineering Services Sector - 2019/20

**Hayleys Free Zone Limited**  
Best Exporter - Hub Operations Sector  
- 2020/21



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

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

**Quality Seed Company (Pvt) Ltd**  
Best Exporter - Floriculture Sector  
- 2020/21



**Dipped Products PLC**  
Best Exporter - Latex Rubber Products  
Sector - 2019/20

## HONoured FOR DRIVING EXPORTS AND TRADE

The Hayleys Group, Sri Lanka's largest and most diversified conglomerate, won 8 prestigious Presidential Export Awards for developing **Sri Lankan exports** and supporting the **national economy** for 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Together, our businesses continue to lead the way and drive exceptional value across their respective diverse industries, accounting for **USD 600 million of the country's foreign earnings and 4.2% of the nation's total export income.**

We are grateful for the outstanding efforts of our dedicated employees, smallholder partners and all business stakeholders for supporting us to create value for our nation.



# Side-effects of contraceptives the main cause of discontinued use: Colombo study

● Survey of expecting mothers highlights factors in family planning preferences

● User discomfort and partner's satisfaction also cited as reasons for not using contraceptives



A Colombo survey revealed how aversion to contraceptive methods also plays a role in unplanned pregnancies

PHOTO © REUTERS

BY RUWAN LAKNATH JAYAKODY

**A**mong antenatal mothers who were not planning to use a contraceptive method following the current pregnancy, the side-effects of the contraceptive methods were considered as the main reason by the majority, followed by those who considered the satisfaction of the partner and those who cited discomfort as a reason for discontinuing the use of certain methods in the future, a study conducted in Colombo found.

These findings were made in a research article on the "Prevalence of unplanned pregnancies and their family planning preferences among antenatal clinic attendees in the Thimbrigasyaya Divisional Secretariat (DS) Division" which was authored by P.S. Nagendran (Medical Officer at the Health Promotion Bureau) and S.P. Godakandage (Consultant Community Physician at the Family Health Bureau) and published in the *Sri Lanka Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* 43 (3) in November 2021.

There are planned or wanted pregnancies and unplanned pregnancies, with the latter being a major public health issue, particularly among certain ethnic and racial groups and low income females owing to induced abortions. In such cases there is an increased risk of abortion-related death and morbidity, especially in countries where abortion is illegal, per "Sexual and reproductive health: A matter of life and death" by A. Glasier, A. Gulmezoglu, G. Schmid, C. Moreno, and P.V. Look. In addition, there are outcomes such as poor maternal and child health, negative physical, emotional, and financial impacts on females, and the immense burden on the national healthcare system due to unplanned pregnancies.

There are two types of unplanned pregnancies; namely unwanted pregnancies where the pregnancy occurred when no more children were desired, and mistimed pregnancies where the pregnancy occurred before the desired time as the conception was expected later. The common cause of unplanned pregnancies has been identified in N. Baydar's "Consequences for children of their birth planning status", as not using contraception, or due to not using a contraceptive method consistently and/or correctly.

While unplanned pregnancies have been caused due to factors such as the failure of contraceptive methods and contraception techniques, in "Estimates of contraceptive failure from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth" by K. Kost, S. Singhe, B. Vaughan, J. Trussell, and A. Bankole, it is noted that

due to the high unmet need for contraception, there is a reduction in the use of a contraceptive method or technique, and that the failure of the contraceptive method includes technical issues on the part of the couple and the failure of the method itself.

Therefore, as explained by A. Daponte, F. Guidozzi, and A. Marineanu in "Maternal mortality in a tertiary centre after the introduction of free antenatal care", effective, equitable, and easy access to effective contraception methods, especially to long acting reversible contraception, would help address this issue. Between 2015 to 2019, there have been 121 million unplanned pregnancies per annum the world over, which corresponded to a global rate of 64 unplanned pregnancies per 1,000 females between the ages of 15 to 49 years, out of which, 61% ended in abortions, which accounted for a rate of 39 abortions per 1,000 females, as mentioned in "Unintended pregnancy and abortion by income, region, and the legal status of abortion: Estimates from a comprehensive model for 1990-2019" by J. Bearak, A. Popinchalk, B. Ganatra, A.B. Moller, O. Tuncalp, C. Beavin, L. Kwok, and L. Alkema.

**Effective family planning is medical advice to prevent unplanned pregnancies. Furthermore, access to family planning and the use of modern methods of contraception is a human right where individuals have the right to choose their preferred method of contraception and to decide freely as to whether and when to have children and their family size**

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates, almost half of the pregnancies between 2015 to 2019 in low and low-middle income countries had been unplanned, with women living in the poorest regions almost three times more likely to have unplanned pregnancies than women from wealthier regions. In Sri Lanka, approximately 360,000 women become pregnant annually, of which one in three (33.3%) are estimated to have an unplanned pregnancy.

The Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) of 2016, by the Census and Statistics Department, reported that 35% of married women in Sri Lanka do not use any form of contraception. The prevalence of unplanned pregnancies is related to, per "Unsafe abortion: The preventable pandemic" by D.A. Grimes, J. Benson, S. Singh, M. Romero, B. Ganatra, F.E. Okonofua, and I.H. Shah, the choice and use of contraceptive methods, and

females' expectations, knowledge, and behaviours. Effective family planning is medical advice to prevent unplanned pregnancies.

Towards this end, P. Dixit, F. Ram, and L.K. Dwivedi noted in "Determinants of unwanted pregnancies in India using matched case control designs" that when there is a need and understanding for the use of contraceptives, and if they are made available, accessible, and used correctly and consistently, unplanned pregnancy is preventable. Furthermore, access to family planning and the use of modern methods of contraception is a human right where individuals have the right to choose their preferred method of contraception and to decide freely as to whether and when to have children and their family size.

That said, due to the lack of understanding and limited access to effective contraception, higher rates of contraceptive failure can occur, as noted by I. Sawhill, A. Thomas, and E. Monea in "An ounce of prevention: Policy prescriptions to reduce the prevalence of fragile families".

Therefore, the danger of such, as pointed out by D. Habte, S. Teklu, T. Melese, and M.G.M.D. Magafu in "Correlates of unintended pregnancy in Ethiopia: Results from a national survey" and Y. Tebekaw, B. Aemro, and C. Teller in the "Prevalence and determinants of unintended child birth in Ethiopia", is lower if the knowledge of family planning and technical skills on the use of family planning methods is sufficient among the vulnerable population. Family planning is an approach to give the right to the couple to decide on the desired number of children to have, the adequate timing of the pregnancies, and the right to choose a contraceptive method of their choice.

Hence, Nagendran and Godakandage's study conducted among a selected cohort of antenatal mothers within a community-setting (as it is at community-based clinics that grassroots-level healthcare workers follow up on the majority of antenatal mothers), analysed family planning methods used in the past, the reason for using the method, future family planning preferences and choices, and the reason for not using a family planning method in the past and future.

A cross-sectional study was performed using an interviewer administered questionnaire in three randomly selected antenatal clinics (Borella, Kirula, and Wellawatte) in the Thimbrigasyaya DS Division of the Colombo Municipal Council between April 2020 and January 2021. A total of 425 antenatal mothers who fulfilled the inclusion and exclusion criteria were included and this meant all antenatal mothers in their first, second, or third trimester who were attending the

antenatal clinics at Borella, Kirula, and Wellawatte of the Districts Three, Four, and Five Medical Officer of Health (MOH) areas of the Thimbrigasyaya DS Division. A consecutive sampling method was used. More information on the current pregnancy and related factors were looked into through the pregnancy records of each mother.

The 425 antenatal mothers who took part belonged to the age range of 15 to 44 years, with the majority (354 – around 83%) falling between the ages of 22 to 34 years. In terms of ethnicity/race, the majority were Sinhalese (158 – 37.2%), followed by Moors (144 – 33.9%), and Tamils (123 – 28.9%). In terms of religion, the majority were Buddhists (146 – 34.4%), followed by Muslims (144 – 33.9%), Hindus (89 – 20.9%), and Christians and Catholics (46 – 10.8%). In terms of marital status, the majority were married (408 – 96%) while 16 (3.8%) were unmarried.

The prevalence of unplanned pregnancies was calculated to be 139 (32.7%) which included antenatal mothers who responded saying that they never wanted to be pregnant (41 – 9.6%) and those who wanted to be pregnant later (98 – 23.1%). With regard to family planning practices, 33% had used some form or method of contraception in the past, with the majority of them (80%) having used it for the spacing of the pregnancy, to widen the inter-pregnancy interval, with half of the 33% who had used such a method in the past (70 – approximately 50%), having chosen barrier methods like condoms (22.5%) or hormonal methods like the depot-medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA – a contraceptive injection that contains the hormone progestin, which is given every three months, and which suppresses ovulation, thereby keeping the ovaries from releasing an egg and also thickening the cervical mucus in order to keep sperm from reaching the egg) (28.3%) as their preferred method of contraception, while 45%, approximately 15% each who had used such in the past, preferred the use of combined oral contraceptive pills, implants, and intrauterine devices, and only four (3%) had used traditional and natural methods.

Advice received from healthcare workers and clinics was the main reason to choose a method of contraception in the past among 63% while around one-third had considered the side-effects before choosing their method of choice. Among the two-thirds (287 – 67%) who had not used a contraceptive method in the past, more than half (165 – 57.6%) said that they were not willing to use a method, while 102 (35.5%) were expecting to get pregnant (predominantly compromised of primiparous females (those who have been pregnant and given birth once and those without a child due to

bad obstetric history), and 20 (7%) claimed ignorance of family planning or contraceptive methods.

Among those who were not willing to use a method in the past, the side-effects of contraceptive methods were considered the major reason (71 – 43.1%), while 56 (33.9%) noted that they had refrained from the use of such due to their spouses not being happy about it. Looking at future contraceptive practices and preferences following the current pregnancy, 58.6% were planning to use a contraception method following the current pregnancy while 41.4% were not planning to do so.

Among the mothers who were planning to use a method, the majority (28.5%) had decided to use DMPA as their method of choice, followed by barrier methods such as condoms (23.7%), implants (18.9%), intrauterine devices (12%), and combined oral contraceptive pills (10.4%). Regarding the time to start using the contraceptive method following the current pregnancy, the numbers were almost equally distributed among the three categories; immediately after delivery, within six weeks of delivery (around 36.2%), and after six weeks of delivery.

Advice received from healthcare workers was the major factor in deciding the type of contraception method to be used in the future (61%). Side-effects were considered by 32.1% when selecting a contraception method for the future. Among future users, half of them were planning to use their chosen method of contraception for two to five years following the current pregnancy (51%), while around 37.4% had decided to use the chosen method of contraception for more than five years. Among those who were not planning to use a contraception method following the current pregnancy (41.4%), the side-effects of the contraception methods were considered as the main reason by the majority (48.3%), followed by the satisfaction of the partner being considered by 23.3%, and 10.8% citing discomfort as a reason for not using a method in the future.

**According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates, almost half of the pregnancies between 2015 to 2019 in low and low-middle income countries had been unplanned, with women living in the poorest regions almost three times more likely to have unplanned pregnancies than women from wealthier regions**

According to the WHO, in 2020, the prevalence of modern contraceptive methods has increased by 2.1% to 57.1% among married women of reproductive age. Per G. Sedgh, L.S. Ashford, and R. Hussain's "Unmet need for contraception in developing countries: Examining women's reasons for not using a method" which cited demographic and health surveys conducted in 52 countries between 2005 and 2014 on the common reasons given by married women for not using a contraceptive method; 26% had expressed concerns about the contraceptive-related side-effects and health risks, 24% had reported having infrequent sexual intercourse or not at all, 23% stated that they or others close to them reject contraception, and 20% mentioned breast feeding and not having resumed menstruation since giving birth.

A community-based cross-sectional study using multi-stage sampling done in Ethiopia (W. Ashebir and T. Tadesse's "Associated factors of postpartum modern contraceptive use in the Burie District, Amhara region, Ethiopia"), revealed that 59.1% of postnatal mothers had started using a modern contraceptive method within 12 months of delivery and that 71.5% of them preferred injectables as a contraceptive method, with postpartum use of modern contraceptives being significantly associated with the maternal education level, discussing family planning methods with a partner, being aware about modern family planning methods (having heard of such at least once), and contacting healthcare professionals.





## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

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

### ➤ GEO-CHEM Reports



GEO-CHEM LANKA (PVT) LTD.  
Office & Laboratory:  
No. 265/26, Di. Donister de Silva Mawatha,  
Koswelle Road, Demaragoda,  
Colombo 09, Sri Lanka.  
Tel: +94 11 2652225,  
+94 11 4855559  
Fax: +94 11 4300724  
E-Mail: colombo@geochem.lk

International  
Independent Inspection  
&  
Testing Company

LPG Quality For September to November 2021

Month	Date	Vessel Name	Total C3 %Weight	Total C4 % Weight	Vapour Pressure (Bar)
September	03.09.2021	Perikilis	37.27	62.48	6.89
			37.09	62.68	6.66
	06.09.2021	Bermuda	38.63	59.91	6.96
			38.59	59.86	6.85
	09.09.2021	Bird	34.15	63.93	6.42
			34.85	63.13	6.50
	14.09.2021	Bolivar	25.10	69.54	5.91
			25.27	67.87	6.16
	17.09.2021	Patreas	25.27	74.38	5.64
			25.12	74.53	5.65
	18.09.2021	Bermuda	39.39	60.15	6.89
			37.40	62.15	6.69
	19.09.2021	Bird	37.77	61.82	6.70
			37.49	62.11	6.67
	24.09.2021	Perikilis	38.54	61.29	6.85
36.00			63.82	6.61	
25.09.2021	Bird	29.69	69.93	6.01	
		28.71	70.85	5.92	
30.09.2021	Bolivar	33.63	65.98	6.45	
		34.40	65.08	6.54	
October	02.10.2021	Bird	38.96	60.58	6.94
			38.39	61.16	6.88
	08.10.2021	Perikilis	36.80	62.77	6.72
			36.73	62.84	6.71
	11.10.2021	Bolivar	33.68	65.91	6.44
36.14			63.44	6.69	
13.10.2021	Patreas	29.46	65.09	6.57	
		28.17	66.20	6.34	

L N<sup>o</sup> 1494



GEO - CHEM LANKA (PVT) LTD. :

Date	Vessel Name	Total C3 %Weight	Total C4 % Weight	Vapour Pressure (Bar)	
14.10.2021	Perikilis	39.92	59.67	7.07	
		37.20	62.41	6.80	
		36.16	62.09	6.62	
21.10.2021	Kilburn	34.58	63.57	6.45	
		36.10	62.31	6.57	
November	02.11.2021	Bird	34.97	63.39	6.45
			32.69	65.73	6.23
	04.11.2021	Bolivar	33.00	65.44	6.26
			33.27	65.25	6.31
	05.11.2021	Patreas	37.41	60.99	6.86
			34.03	65.16	6.38
	08.11.2021	Bird	37.64	61.60	6.75
			38.54	60.30	6.87
	11.11.2021	Bolivar	39.46	60.40	6.85
			32.53	67.29	6.20
	16.11.2021	Patreas	33.67	66.13	6.32
			36.18	63.61	6.54
	18.11.2021	Bird	35.37	64.63	6.46
			38.45	61.35	6.77
	22.11.2021	Patreas	38.78	61.08	6.81
35.78			64.05	6.48	
24.11.2021	Bird	38.87	60.92	6.80	
		38.79	61.03	6.81	
26.11.2021	Bolivar	37.31	62.51	6.67	
		39.54	60.25	6.89	
29.11.2021	Patreas	37.04	62.77	6.64	
		Average Values	35.20	63.76	6.55



### ➤ Specification of current signed contract for 2019-2021

L. LPG Quality Specification

Properties	Unit	Test Method	Result
Vapor Pressure, gauge @ 37.8 Deg C	K Pa	ASTM D-1267 or ASTM D-2598	420 - 830 max
Density	-	ASTM D-1657 or ASTM D-2598	Report
Total Sulphur (After stetched)	PPM/W	ASTM D-2784 or ASTM D-3246	50 max
Corrosion, Copper Strip 1 hour at 37.8 deg C	-	ASTM D-1638	1 max.
Free Water	-	Visual Inspection	None
Odorant (Ethylmercaptan) (If stetched only)	L/1000MT	* Smell Test	26
Olefin (required only from complex refinery sources)	% Mole	ASTM D-2163	5 max
C2 hydrocarbons	% Weight	ASTM D-2163	Report
C3 propane	% Weight	ASTM D 2163	Total C3 saturates 25- 40
C3 Propylene	% Weight	ASTM D 2163	Total C3 saturates 25- 40
C4 i-butane	% Weight	ASTM D 2163	Total C4 saturates 75 - 60
C4 n - butane	% Weight	ASTM D 2163	Total C4 saturates 75 - 60
C4 Butylenes	% Weight	ASTM D 2163	Total C4 saturates 75 - 60
C5 and higher hydrocarbons	% mole	ASTM D 2163	2 max (pentenes 0.5 Max)
Residue Test	ML/100ml	ASTM D 2158	0.05max.
Oil Stain	-	ASTM D-2158	Pass
Dienes content as 1,3 butadienes (Required only from complex refinery sources)	% Mole	ASTM D-2163	0.5max.
MON (Motor Octane number)	-	ASTM D-2598	89 min.

Odour should be distinctive, unpleasant and non-persistent at a dilution 1:250 with air. Sources shall control H2S and Fluorine to internal production limits.

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



litrogas.com





## Station masters mull trade union action

● Cite informal developments at stations

BY BUDDHIKA SAMARAWEEERA

Claiming that it has become impossible to maintain services at several railway stations due to informal development projects of the Railways Department and several other issues, the Sri Lanka Railway Station Masters' Union (SLRSMU) has warned of a possible train union action if the said issues are not addressed.

In a letter to Railways Department General Manager Dhammika Jayasundara, the SLRSMU has pointed out that several constructions being carried out by the Road Development Authority (RDA) at the Kurunegala Railway Station has caused inconveniences to employees living in the railway quarters and their families.

The letter further read that due to the failure of the generators of the Matara to Beliatta railways project, the work at the relevant railway stations could not be carried out at present.

"Even though the failure of

the generators has been brought to the attention of all relevant parties including you (Railways General Manager), no solution has been given yet," it added.

In addition, the SLRSMU has claimed that there are a large number of vacancies for junior staff at all railway stations to activate train signals, which has now become a serious problem.

It further stated that the Puttalam railway line, which was damaged due to the recent heavy rains, has not been repaired properly but that office train operations have resumed. According to the SLRSMU, the resumption of train operations without carrying out the repair work properly, has led to frequent train delays.

Speaking to *The Morning*, SLRSMU General Secretary Kasun Chamara said that if these problems are not resolved soon, they will have to initiate trade union action in the future, albeit reluctantly.

Jayasundara was unavailable for comment on the matter.

## Three new members to Eastern Heritage Task Force

Three new members have been appointed to the Presidential Task Force for Archaeological Heritage Management in the Eastern Province, which was established by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, two of whom are from minority communities.

This was made known via an Extraordinary Gazette issued on Monday (29 November).

The gazette mentions that it

has been identified that Surveyor General W.T.M.S.B. Tennakoon Esquire, has been retired from the public service, and with the need to expand the current Task Force, three additional members were appointed.

The three new members include Surveyor General Ariyaratna Dissanayaka Esquire, Chief Secretary (Retd.) A. Pathinadan Esquire, and lecturer Mufhisal Abubakkar Esquire.

## Mahendra Jayasekera elected President of Colombo YMBA

The 123rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Colombo Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA) was held on 27 November 2021 at the main hall of the association in Borella.

The meeting was held in a hybrid physical-virtual manner, in compliance with Covid-19 health guidelines. At the beginning of the meeting, two minutes of silence were observed to remember the deceased members. The ceremonial inauguration was started by the lighting of the traditional oil lamp.

The following office bearers for the period (2021/2022) were unanimously elected: Mahendra Jayasekera (President), Kusumabandu Samarawickrama



Newly elected YMBA President Mahendra Jayasekera

(Vice President), Nalin J. Abeysekere (Vice President), Daya Weerasekera (Vice President), Sunil S. Sirisena (Vice President), D. Gamini Wimalasuriya (Vice President), Maddumage Ariyaratne (General Secretary), and Prasantha Abeykoon (Treasurer).

## Sri Lanka-India Society elects Kishore Reddy as President

Kishore Reddy will head the Sri Lanka India Society (SLIS), following the SLIS Annual General Meeting (AGM) that was held recently at Taj Samudra. Reddy was unanimously elected as the President of the society, which is held in high esteem in both countries, and took over the leadership from Rohan Tudawe.

Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Gopal Baglay, who is also the patron of the SLIS, was present at the AGM, where he mentioned that the activities of the society strengthen the already cordial relations between the two countries, as both countries will be celebrating 75 years of Independence close to each other. Independence is not just from colonial rule but also from suppression and ignorance.

Rohan Tudawe, the outgoing President, highlighted the activities done by the society and the increased interest evident in the increased number of members. Rohan Tudawe also mentioned how the members of the society, apart from developing the cultural and social relationship, also contributed to the Infectious



Kishore Reddy

Diseases Hospital (IDH) during the pandemic to provide essential and urgent equipment.

Kishore Reddy, addressing the gathering in his inaugural speech, said: "I am humbled and honoured by the trust and confidence bestowed on me. It is indeed a moment of pride for me to be chosen as the President of one of the oldest friendship societies, the Sri Lanka-India Society. Each one of the past presidents were stalwarts in the society and did a great job in developing and continuing the high standards of the society. Filling the shoes of the past presidents is not easy but I will try my best, and with everyone's support I am sure the society can develop on the existing strong foundation."

# Health non-medical TUs organise motorcade

● Demand solutions to salary/promotion issues

BY BUDDHIKA SAMARAWEEERA

**H** health sector non-medical trade unions (TUs), including those of the nursing and paramedical services and public health inspectors (PHIs), organised a motorcade in Colombo yesterday (30) demanding that the Government provide immediate solutions to their issues, including salary and promotion-related issues, threatening otherwise to refrain from sending hospital and public health services-related data and reports to the Health Ministry from today (1 December).

Speaking to the media before the commencement of the motorcade, Government Nursing Officers' Association (GNOA) President Saman Rathnapriya said that the trade unions have decided not to submit any data or reports due to the Health Ministry from today, unless their demands are resolved expeditiously.

"We call on President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, and Health Minister Kehelippa Rambukwella to address the issues of health professionals immediately. If these issues are not addressed expeditiously, we have decided not to provide data or any other reports with regard to hospitals and public health services to the Health Ministry from today," he added.

Meanwhile, PHIs' Union President Upul Rohana also addressed the media during the motorcade.

"Rambukwella has said that he is not ready to have fun with the trade unions, but we are ready to have

fun with him to resolve these issues. Maybe he will lose his ministry post by the end of this struggle," he claimed.

Rambukwella was unavailable for comment on the matter.

Nursing and paramedical trade unions went on a two-day token strike from 7 a.m. on 24 November, demanding speedy solutions to the same issues. A total of 16 trade unions were involved in this token strike, and it was supported by nearly 55,000 health professionals representing 1,100 hospitals and 365 medical officers of health offices islandwide. However, they continued to provide emergency services and the strike was not launched at specialised hospitals such as the Castle Street Teaching Hospital for Women, the Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children, the National Cancer Institute/Apeksha Hospital, Maharagama, and hospitals treating Covid-19 patients.

Elaborating on the reasons that led to the strike at that time,



The motorcade protest yesterday 30 November

PHOTO PRADEEP DAMBARAGE

Rathnapriya said: "The salary revisions recommended by a committee appointed in 2009 have not yet been implemented and as a result, the serious salary anomalies in the health service have not been addressed. The Government has also failed to do justice to approximately 13,000 nurses who have been affected through a circular related to promotions. In addition, there are many issues with regard to the promotions of non-medical professionals."

Speaking further, he said that officers in services including nursing,

paramedical, and allied medicine, no matter how highly educated they may be, have to perform normal duties. Therefore, he emphasised that a system needs to be put in place to enable them to move to higher positions.

Further claiming that the majority of the administrative staff in the health sector at present are doctors, Rathnapriya alleged that the health sector is collapsing day by day due to it. Therefore, he stressed that a health administration service should be established instead of a doctor-based administration.

## Speaker disappointed over front-benchers' absence during sittings

Speaker of Parliament Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena yesterday (30 November) expressed his disappointment over the absence of the majority of the ruling party's front-benchers during parliamentary sessions.

He drew the attention of Chief Government Whip Minister Johnston Fernando towards the situation.

"No front-bench ministers on either side of your seat are present at the moment. This is a very disappointing

situation," he had stated.

Noting that all lawmakers are present when the President attends the parliamentary sessions, the Speaker stated that if the front-benchers remain absent, he would be compelled to invite

the President to take part in all sittings of the House in the future.

All parliamentarians need to attend the sittings to respond to the issues raised in the House, the Speaker stressed, urging them to fulfil their collective responsibility.

## Contd. from page 1

### 20,000 MT...

Speaking at the weekly Cabinet media briefing yesterday (30 November), Co-Cabinet Spokesman Dr. Ramesh Pathirana stated that the rice to be imported from Myanmar will be sold through Sathosa outlets islandwide. He also said that it is hoped to stabilise the price of rice by maintaining a buffer stock of rice in the country. Attempts to contact Trade Ministry Secretary Bhadrani Jayawardhana to inquire into further details with regard to the import, proved futile.

Following cabinet approval to import 100,000 MT of rice, *The Morning*, on 6 October 2021, reported that the Trade Ministry, which is tasked with importing the said stock, is to import a portion of the 100,000 MT rice stock from India, while the rest will be imported from Myanmar and Pakistan. Jayawardhana, at the time, told *The Morning* that suppliers from India, Myanmar, and Pakistan have expressed their consent to supply the consignment. When queried whether there is a specific quantity of rice to be purchased from the above three countries, she said that it would be decided based on the suppliers' capacity. "The quantity of rice that can be supplied by the relevant supplier is imported according to the tender procedure."

### Kalutara...

This comes after Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) MP Mahinda Samarasinghe handed over his resignation as Member of Parliament recently.

He is to assume duties as Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the US and Mexico in the first week of December. Kumara was right after Samarasinghe on the list in the Kalutara District SLPP preferential vote list.

Earlier, while addressing Parliament, Samarasinghe revealed that President Gotabaya Rajapaksa had asked him to take office as the new Sri Lankan envoy to the US and Mexico.

"I expect to resign from Parliament within two to three days and to leave for America on 29 (November)," stated Samarasinghe on 23 November.

Samarasinghe's appointment comes after the retirement of Ravinatha P. Aryasinha from public service, who served as the former Sri Lankan Ambassador to the two Northern American nations.

Upon joining the Sri Lanka Foreign Service, MP Samarasinghe served as the First Secretary to the Sri Lanka High Commission in Australia and as Counsellor for the Sri Lankan Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva in the 1980s.

In addition, he has represented Sri Lanka at the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organisation, the International Telecommunication Union, and the World Meteorological Organisation.

### Podi Lassi's...

Madushanka's mother has also handed over a letter detailing her concerns regarding the alleged threats to her son's life to Singer-Hamdy along with the Committee

for Protecting the Rights of Prisoners (CPRP).

"Madushanka has been detained for a lengthy period now, under detention orders. His mother has advised us that there is now a grave danger to his life. In the past, it was observed that several persons who had been named as underworld leaders by the government authorities, have been killed and murdered during the investigation stage," the CPRP's letter to Singer-Hamdy read.

In her letter to Singer-Hamdy, Madushanka's mother also explained that Madushanka was arrested on 16 October 2020 by the CID, on a detention order. She said that she has received information that following the end of his detention order on 16 December 2021, he will be transferred to the Peliyagoda Criminal Department and that she is concerned about her son's life following this planned transfer.

The CPRP has claimed that it is futile to inform the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) and the Police Department about threats to lives of detainees, as was made clear in the case of Hewa Lunuwilage Lasantha, alias "Tinker Lasantha" who died in a shootout on 25 November which involved the Police, when he was taken to recover hidden weapons, according to the Police. This occurred following his arrest in Kalutara on the same day.

In a statement issued on 26 November, the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) said that Lasantha's Attorney had informed the BASL about an alleged threat to Lasantha's life on the evening of 25 November, after which the BASL had informed Inspector General of Police (IGP) Chandana D. Wickramaratne, the HRCSL, and the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA).

"It is our belief that citizens cannot repose any faith in such institutions regarding any such threat to life. Hence, we request that you (a reference to the UN Resident Co-ordinator) intervene to take whatever measures you can with regard to the same," said the CPRP.

"Madushanka's detention order will end on 16 December 2021. His mother is concerned about his life as there are rumours that an incident similar to what happened to Tinker Lasantha will occur once his detention order ends," CPRP Chairman Attorney-at-Law Senaka Perera told *The Morning* last week.

These developments come following several custodial deaths over the past two years. On 11 May 2021, underworld figure Mabulage Dineth Melan Mabula alias Urujuwa, died in a shootout whilst in police custody. Two days later, on 13 May 2021, Dharmakeerthi Tharaka Perera Wijesekera alias Kosgoda Tharaka, also died in a shootout whilst in police custody. On both these occasions, the Police Media Spokesman at the time, Senior Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Ajith Rohana, told the media that incidents that had occurred while the suspects had been taken for special police operations had led to their deaths.

In a similar incident in October last year, underworld figure Samarasinghe Arachchige Madush Lakshitha alias Makandure Madush, was killed while in police custody. The Police at the time claimed that the victim was killed in the crossfire between the Police and suspected gang members, as the latter group had attempted to extricate him (Madush) from police custody.

## No lockdown...

...the imposition of a national lockdown or travel restrictions in view of the impending festive season would not be a surprise, as the lack of restrictions on prior occasions had resulted in allowing the spread of Covid-19.

Speaking at a media briefing on 23 November, Health Ministry Communications Director, Public Health Services Deputy Director General (DDG), and Disaster Preparedness and Response Division Head Dr. Hemantha Herath said: "We learnt a great lesson in December last year and in April this year. It is up to the Government to decide whether to impose travel restrictions or a lockdown status, taking into account the circumstances. However, it would not be something of a surprise if the country would be locked down or travel restrictions are imposed in view of the upcoming festive season."

Adding that it is therefore important for everyone to act responsibly by following the proper Covid-19-related health guidelines, he had also noted that there has been an increase in the number of Covid-19 deaths reported daily, and that a special team from the Health Ministry's Epidemiology Unit is analysing the reasons for this.

## Litro warns...

"Globally accepted best practices should be deployed at all times when handling LPG for cooking or for any other purpose. This means checking the hose, the regulator, the cooker, and the connecting system which includes the safety clip of the cylinder. If there are any LPG cylinder leaks, it is detectable with the smell and visibility – additionally, the only correct method of checking for leaks is when the entire system is connected and observed," said Litro Gas Lanka in a press release issued yesterday. Furthermore, the company said that in all instances where customers have complained about possible LPG cylinder leaks, the compromising of safety has taken place as a result of a broken or damaged hose, regulator, or cooker.

"All of these devices must be checked and replaced regularly to ensure the best possible safety performance. The hose must be changed every two years and the regulator every five years," said Litro Gas Lanka Channel Safety Advisor Hemachandra Gunathilake in the same press release. Meanwhile, *The Morning* learnt that investigation reports received by Litro Gas Lanka into 15 incidents which occurred from last Saturday (27 November) till yesterday are mainly related to faulty equipment. A document on the summary of the incidents, as seen by *The Morning*, shows that the incidents mainly occurred due to old and defective regulators and hoses, high pressure regulators, defective gas cookers, substandard accessories, the loose positioning of the hose, and the use of a high pressure regulator with a low pressure hose. However, one incident notes a suspected gas leak at the gas cooker-hose connection, whilst another has recorded defects in the cylinder and valve issued by Litro Gas Lanka.

Police Media Spokesman Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Nihal Thalduwa said yesterday that 19 incidents of LPG cylinder-based explosions were reported within the last two days.



# business

ASPI	S&P SL20	Market
11,440.53	3,900.02	Market: Closed
238.44	70.37	Share Volume
↑ 2.13%	↑ 1.84%	350,235,801
		Turnover
		10,054,526,815.05

## Insurance inquiries surge on gas explosion fears

● Companies yet to identify potential increase in GWP

● House insurance fire covers gas explosions

BY SHENAL FERNANDO

**F**eared regarding the safety of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders following a spate of explosions and fires in kitchens across the island has led to an increase in queries by consumers regarding home insurance policies, according to insurance industry sources.

Speaking to *The Morning Business*, several insurance industry sources revealed that over the past week there has been an increase in queries by the general public from insurance companies regarding the particulars of their home insurance policies.

However, one of the sources stated that it is too early to identify whether public fears relating to the safety of LPG cylinders will translate to an increase in gross written premiums (GWP).

Public fears regarding the safety of LPG cylinders have arisen following the recent spate of explosions and fires caused by LPG cylinders that has been reported from around the country including from Colombo 7, Weligama, Kandy, Homagama, Ratnapura, Pannipitiya, Nikaweratiya, Jaffna, and Puttalam.

To LISTEN to our business page lead story, scan this QR code on your device



It is well established by precedence in the insurance industry that potential damages caused to the home of an insurance holder by any explosion caused by a LPG cylinder may be redeemed as damages under the home insurance policy for fire damages.

If public fears regarding the safety of LPG cylinders translate to a surge in general insurance premiums written, it would prove to be welcome news to the general insurance providers who have, unlike their life insurance counterparts, experienced a decrease in GWP over



On 20 November, an explosion was reported from McDonald's in Racecourse, Colombo 7

the past years. Moreover, according to certain industry sources, their general insurance premiums written are down by over 50% compared to pre-Covid-19 levels.

According to statistics published by the Insurance Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka, the general insurance

segment in 2Q2021 recorded a 5.3% decrease in GWP to Rs. 49.1 billion from Rs. 51.9 billion in 2Q2020. In contrast, the life insurance segment recorded a 29.8% increase in GWP to Rs. 56.2 billion in 2Q2021 from Rs 43.3 billion in 2Q2020.

Contd. on page 10

## CPC debt rollover plan fails



Minister of Energy Udaya Gammanpila

● Gammanpila confirms \$ 2.5 billion refinancing attempt didn't work

● Says lenders required guarantee from AAA-rated bank

**T**he debt-ridden Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) has failed to secure a loan of \$ 2.5 billion from US-based PSL America Inc. to refinance the colossal sum of money the state institution owes to two state banks.

Addressing the allegations made by Opposition MPs regarding the \$ 2.5 billion loan sought by the CPC, Minister of Energy Udaya Gammanpila stated in Parliament on Monday (29 November) that this loan has not been obtained as of yet and added it was merely a proposal and that no commission had been paid as alleged.

"At the time I specifically said that such a large sum of money wouldn't be received at such a low interest rate and as I predicted we didn't receive yet. However, the opposition from time-to-time keeps alleging that a loan has been taken with a commission as if they had just woken up from a dream."

Gammanpila explained that the CPC owed \$ 3.6 billion to two state banks (Bank of Ceylon and People's Bank) at an interest rate of 5.5%. "This substantial loan amount has had an adverse effect on the foreign exchange liquidity and the monetary stability of the two state banks," he claimed.

Meanwhile, according to Gammanpila, over the past eight years, the CPC has received 23 unsolicited loan proposals at lower interest rates.

He noted: "On one side, we have obtained loans at high interest rates and are in a dollar crisis, while at the same time certain people have submitted proposals offering US dollars. Due to the fact that the Government will be

criticised for not taking action despite having the option of resolving the country's dollar crisis and obtaining a loan at a lower cost, I requested the Treasury to publish a notice in a newspaper calling for proposals.

"However, the Treasury observations stated that if no response is received to the advertisement, it would hinder its own efforts at raising dollar loans. Therefore, instead of publishing a notice, it recommended appointing a committee nominated by the Finance Ministry to study the proposals received to select a good proposal."

However, when the committee studied the proposals, it was identified that a majority of them required either a guarantee from an AAA-rated bank or a guarantee from one of 25 largest global banks.

"Only one company was prepared to take a sovereign guarantee from the Sri Lankan Government. That was New Jersey-based PSL America Inc.," stated Gammanpila.

He further stated that the committee had recommended in its committee report that the loan be obtained from the aforementioned company and admitted that this unsolicited proposal did require an upfront fee of 7%, as alleged by Opposition MPs.

"When this committee report was submitted, I questioned them regarding this 7% upfront fee and they claimed that they had asked the same question from the persons who had submitted the proposal. They had stated that the CPC is a company in a serious financial crisis and Sri Lanka possesses a very low credit rating."

Contd. on page 10

## First Capital Treasuries PLC hosts investor forum ahead of IPO

**F**irst Capital Treasuries PLC, a subsidiary of the Janashakthi Group's First Capital Holdings PLC, hosted prospective investors, industry partners, media representatives, and members of the public at an investor forum on its upcoming Initial Public Offering (IPO).

First Capital Treasuries released the official prospectus for the IPO at this event. Approved and published by the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), it sheds light on the company's consistent performance and elaborates on how it seeks to broaden its ownership base, bring in more liquidity, and strengthen its brand identity through this listing.

Scheduled for 6 December 2021, the IPO will see First Capital Treasuries offering 7,695,000 ordinary voting shares at Rs. 39.00 per share to the public, for a listing on the Diri Savi Board of the CSE. An independent valuation by E&Y Transaction Advisory Services (Pvt.) Ltd. has valued the shares between Rs. 46 and Rs. 48 per share. This translates into projected gains of 15-19% on the offer price to anyone investing in the company through the

IPO. The Issue is managed by the Corporate Finance Division of First Capital Ltd.

"Government securities are the largest and most liquid asset class in the country. Given the sector's high entry barriers, viz., considerable financial strength and sound domain knowledge, we have only 10 licensed primary dealers operating in Sri Lanka. First Capital Treasuries holds a distinctive position as a non-bank primary dealer. Playing a pivotal role as a market maker for Treasury bills and bonds, we have been able to successfully deliver a five-year average Return on Equity (ROI) of 29% and a 10-year dividend payout of 50%," said First Capital Treasuries Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dilshan Wirasekara.

"As we endeavour to continuously strengthen our position in this segment further, we believe that the IPO will help us welcome a broader base of investors, gain added liquidity, and bolster our brand image. We invite the public to avail themselves of this opportunity to partake in the ownership of a licensed primary dealer like First Capital Treasuries," he added.

Contd. on page 10

## Fitch warns of growth risks due to Omicron

**F**itch Ratings (Fitch) foresees the risk to economic growth as well as policymaking globally due to the recently discovered virus variant "Omicron", which has been designated as a variant of concern (VOC) by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

A statement by Fitch Ratings said: "We currently believe that another large, synchronised global downturn, such as that seen in 1H20, is highly unlikely but the rise in inflation will complicate macroeconomic responses if the new variant (Omicron) takes hold."

The Fitch statement emphasised that the possibility of a new variant that requires significant non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs),

such as highly stringent nationwide lockdowns to contain transmission is a continuing risk to the global economy. But the experience of most large countries suggests that each successive wave of coronavirus infections has diminished growth effects as economies adapt, for example, through changes in working and consumption patterns.

Accordingly, the statement said that the mentioned factors make a repeat of 1H20's unprecedented global gross domestic product (GDP) contraction unlikely. Nevertheless, the return to pre-pandemic levels of activity in the most exposed sectors, such as tourism and international travel, will be disrupted, and

the shift back to services from goods consumption may also slow. Broader risks to growth have risen where restrictions on economic activity are likely to be more extensive.

In accordance with these circumstances, vaccination rates could be critical as evidence from Europe and the US shows vaccinations weaken the link between coronavirus infection and hospitalisation rates. Higher vaccination rates could, therefore, reduce the risk that public health systems are overburdened, which would necessitate harsher NPIs. The WHO said it is "working with technical partners to understand the potential impact" of Omicron on vaccine effectiveness, Fitch said.



## Orient Finance earns Rs. 147 m in Q2 2021/22

**I**n FY 2021/22, Orient Finance PLC posted profit before tax (PBT) of Rs. 147.8 million for the second quarter (Q2) ending 30 September 2021, reflecting a growth of 386% when compared to the corresponding period in the previous financial year and a PBT of Rs. 207.69 million for the first half (Q1) of the 2021/22 financial year, reflecting a growth compared to the corresponding period in the previous first half financial year.

Orient Finance PLC Chairman Anil Tittawella 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."

The company's net operating



Orient Finance PLC Chairman Anil Tittawella PC

income for the same period increased by 92% from Rs. 405.58 million to Rs. 777.44 million in 2021/22. This performance was secured as



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

a result of expanding the new gold loan business and reducing the cost of funds.

Contd. on page 10

## HSBC Sri Lanka gets new CEO

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

Prior to this new appointment, Mark Surgenor was HSBC's Group Head of Wealth Management, Wealth, and Personal Banking. In that role, Surgenor was serving

the wealth management needs of HSBC's clients up to the private bank across all markets in which HSBC operates.

HSBC - Asia Pacific Group Managing Director and Co-Chief Executive Surendra Rosha said: "Mark led our Global Wealth Management and also our Asian Wealth Growth programme and we look forward to Mark bringing this depth of

experience to his new role. We thank Mark Prothero for his 31 years of service to HSBC - a career that has seen him work across Asia Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and the US. His five years at the helm in Sri Lanka and the Maldives have built a firm foundation for the future, thanks to his focus on resilience and developing our people."

Contd. on page 10



# Reimagining the future of Sri Lanka's apparel industry



BY SHIRENDRA LAWRENCE

**The emergence of apparel and textiles as a significant contributor to Sri Lanka's economy began post-independence in 1948 when a few pioneering industrialists saw opportunities in its domestic market. Following the liberalisation of the economy in the late '70s, the industry ventured into exports, bringing in much needed foreign exchange, and before long, established Sri Lanka's reputation as a manufacturer of quality products.**

During the '90s, facilitated by the 200 Garment Factories Programme, manufacturing that had until then been located in free trade zones was expanded across Sri Lanka. This played a key role in the upliftment of the country's rural economies.

The last decade has seen a further evolution, focused on end-to-end partnerships and complete customer solutions. However, an in-depth assessment of the sector's strengths and competencies indicates that its full potential is yet to be realised.

With the pandemic causing significant disruption to Sri Lanka's economy, our vision of elevating the country to a \$ 8 billion global apparel hub by 2025 is now perhaps more critical than ever. This growth is envisaged through value addition and further evolving from contracted apparel manufacturing for buying offices to end-to-end solutions for leading global brands and retailers, spanning innovation to last-mile delivery.

With the pandemic gradually receding, apparel sector stakeholders have renewed collaborative efforts to achieve these goals.

## Current status

In pre-pandemic 2019, the value of global apparel exports was estimated at \$ 492 billion. Most would agree that with Sri

Lanka's contribution being just 1% of this, at \$ 5.3 billion, the industry's aspiration to grow it to \$ 8 billion is not unreasonably ambitious.

Sri Lanka enjoys a reputation as a trusted partner within the supply chains of some of the world's leading brands and retailers. The country's apparel industry comprises a few large groups, supported by a strong ecosystem of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). This is a symbiotic system; the larger players have developed meaningful customer partnerships, whilst the SMEs have created niches, including supporting the larger groups to meet their supply chain requirements.

Despite its smaller scale and Sri Lanka's apparel sector having relatively higher labour costs than some of its regional competitors, along with less preferential export market access, it has still progressed by leveraging other sources of competitive advantages. Sri Lanka ranks high in terms of reliability and product quality, which have elevated the country's reputation and overall positioning. This is best reflected in the impressive list of global brands and retailers served by Sri Lankan manufacturers, including Victoria's Secret, Marks & Spencer, Boss, NIKE, Calvin Klein, GAP, Levi's, Ralph Lauren, lululemon, Calzedonia, Intimissimi and Tommy Hilfiger.

This elevated positioning also extends to talent attractiveness, with the country's apparel sector appealing to the better professional talent, unlike some of our regional counterparts. A case in point is India, where professionals would often see other industries such as automobiles, electronics and IT as more attractive. Furthermore, the island benefits from its strategic geographical location along major shipping routes as a regional logistics hub.

From an infrastructure standpoint, fabric manufacturers, who require process water, have established their factories within the BOI-facilitated Free Trade Zones, which include advanced water treatment processes, whilst those in relatively labour-intensive apparel manufacturing have located themselves in rural areas

across the country, providing direct and indirect employment to those communities, accelerating the development of those areas.

## Leveraging on trade shifts

Whilst all of this progress has been well invested in, for the country to realise its apparel sector's true potential, it is essential to fully leverage these strengths while understanding and aligning with the trade shifts that are taking place.

Studies indicate that the impact of increasing political and economic tensions between the Far East and the West will result in the movement of significant amounts of trade from China. Whilst these movements appeared to have commenced pre-pandemic, customers in western markets have delayed this process, not wanting to add additional dimensions of risk on top of pandemic-induced challenges. However, the shift is expected to gather momentum in 2022 and beyond.

Apart from direct business migration, opportunities would include potential FDI inflows from companies in the Far East seeking to augment their existing bases by establishing manufacturing locations in South Asia to mitigate their risk of losing customers. The industry and policymakers are mindful of potential opportunities that could arise as a result. The leadership of Sri Lankan apparel companies, with the support of the industry umbrella organisation, the Joint Apparel Association Forum (JAAF), and its constituent associations, including the Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters Association (SLAEA), are reimagining the sector's future. These stakeholders are crafting strategic plans to facilitate the process of achieving the sector's vision.

## Maintaining competitive advantage

"Doing the right thing" has been the driving philosophy of Sri Lanka's apparel industry, and this was key in attracting reputed brands and private label retailers to Sri Lanka during the '80s and '90s. Marks & Spencer, in particular, saw Sri Lanka as a credible alternative for the

migration of its Western manufacturing bases at that time. This catalysed Sri Lankan manufacturers' alignment with the expectations of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production (WRAP) and other organisations and standards focused on social responsibility and differentiated us from our competitors.

Moving to the present, what were competitive advantages have today become "hygiene factors". Sri Lankan manufacturers have maintained their reputation for ethical manufacturing through environmentally responsible production, strong connections with existing and emerging organisations such as the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), and investments to reduce their carbon footprints. Significant strategic initiatives include the conversion of fossil-fuelled boilers to biomass and introducing other environmentally friendly energy sources such as solar. This also aligns the industry well with the Government's efforts to increase renewable energy to 70% of Sri Lanka's total requirement by 2030.

Sri Lankan apparel groups have also grown their businesses through geographic diversification. These efforts seek to minimise customer concerns of single country sourcing, leverage on bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and augment Asian manufacturing locations with a capacity closer to markets.

## Improved trade access is vital

Greater preferential market access to existing and identified key export markets would substantially boost Sri Lanka's apparel exports. However, it is vital to retain existing concessions under the EU and UK Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) Plus schemes while securing tariff reductions to other countries. Considering our success in penetrating key markets such as the US, where tariffs for apparel exports are as much as, or in some cases even more than 30%, there is a significant opportunity to be had if the industry were provided with tariff waivers or even reductions. Substantial opportunities also exist in

large developing nations. Sri Lanka needs to increase its export quota of eight million garment items per year to India, one of the fastest-growing regional economies. The Chinese market, too, presents vast potential.

## Need for conducive policies

While recent initiatives to modernise trade facilitation, including the digitisation of customs clearance processes and administration of payments through online gateways, are welcomed, much more policy reform is needed. For example, if Sri Lanka is to evolve as an innovative apparel hub, a safe and conducive environment for innovation is required. This is only possible if intellectual property and data protection laws are given priority. Similarly, reforming colonial-era labour laws to reflect the very different world that we live in today is essential.

Favourable policies and incentives should be provided for investments related to backward integration and automation. The Eravur Fabric Processing Park is an important development in this regard, and the industry acknowledges the contributions of multiple state agencies in this initiative.

In conclusion, evolving Sri Lanka's apparel industry will, without doubt, continue to bring benefits to the country – both directly and indirectly – increasing FDI, employment opportunities and export earnings whilst improving innovation and technology inflows.

With all stakeholders working in collaboration, the vision of making Sri Lanka a fully-fledged apparel hub is well within the country's reach.

*(The writer is an apparel industry veteran and is the Deputy Chairman of the Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters' Association. He is also an Executive Director of MAS Holdings. He holds a Mechanical Engineering [Honours] Degree from Imperial College, University of London, and is a Chartered Mechanical Engineer. He counts over 35 years of experience in manufacturing, business development and organisational leadership in the UK and Sri Lanka)*

## Contd. from page 9

### Insurance...

According to KPMG, the general insurance segment is made up of 12 players, out of which two are composite insurers who are engaged in both life and non-life insurance (Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation and MBSL Insurance Co. Ltd.).

In a recent report on the Sri Lankan insurance industry, KPMG claimed that based on 2020 data, the market leader in the general insurance segment was Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation with an 18.4% share, followed by Ceylinc General Insurance Ltd. which had a share of 17.7%, and Allianz Insurance Lanka Ltd. which had 13.2% share.

The Government has vehemently denied reports and allegations that the butane-to-propane gas compositional ratio in gas cylinders had been changed and led to these explosions.

In addition, both privately owned Laugfs Gas PLC and state-owned Litro Gas Lanka Ltd. have also denied these allegations that the explosions reported stemmed from a change in the composition of the gas contained in their cylinders.

Despite such assurances, the continued widespread reporting of explosions and fires linked to LPG cylinders has prompted not only Opposition MPs but also Government-affiliated MPs to demand for a proper investigation into the composition of the LPG cylinders as well as the quality of the cylinders.

It should be further noted that former CAA Executive Director Thushan Gunawardena had previously disclosed to us earlier this year that test samples from the 18 litre gas cylinder and 12.5 kg gas cylinder of both Litro Gas and Laugfs Gas were found to contain a 50:50 composition of butane and propane.

"This is dangerous for domestic use and we are, therefore, concerned about the safety of the public. The usual composition is 80% of butane and 20% of propane. We have informed the relevant ministries regarding the matter," Gunawardena told *The Morning* at the time.

The 18 litre gas cylinder was then removed from market circulation by Litro Gas Lanka. Gunawardena, speaking to the media recently, blamed the gas companies for the

recent kitchen explosions.

Yesterday (30 November) in Parliament, the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) party called for a criminal inquiry over the recent increase in gas explosions. SJB Leader Sajith Premadasa listed out several places where such gas explosions have been recorded and stated that there is now a growing fear amongst the people.

"There is a growing fear amongst the public now, where no one is confident to use domestic gas anymore. There have been over 11 incidents within a span of 48 hours, and this is not to be taken lightly. We strongly believe that the gas cylinder compositions have been altered and the weight has reduced as well. We request for an inquiry to be done regarding this matter," said Premadasa.

Meanwhile, Leader of the House and Minister of Education Dinesh Gunawardena suggested that a discussion be held with regard to this matter and a Special Parliamentary Consultative Committee meeting has been scheduled by Speaker of the House Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena at 9 a.m. today (1).

### CPC debt...

"Therefore, the organisation will be insuring the credit risk and thus this 7% fee will be used to fund the insurance costs as well as legal and other administrative costs," Gammanpila claimed.

Explaining further, he claimed: "Due to this 7% upfront fee, we will be receiving 93% out of 100% at an effective interest of 3.23%. Therefore, this loan is attractive from the CPC's point of view, as we are currently paying state banks an interest rate of 5.5% on the loan and the cost of this new loan is only 3.23%."

Therefore, this proposal was presented to the Cabinet of Ministers, but Gammanpila claimed that he had stated to the Cabinet, to Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) MP Dr. Harsha de Silva, as well as in a media conference on 11 October that this proposal in question was too good to be true.

He further claimed that he had, in such instances, expressed his opinion that obtaining this loan was highly unlikely due to the fact that this \$ 2.5 billion loan was offered at an interest rate of 3.23%, despite the risk existing in Sri Lanka.

"However, if I hadn't presented this proposal to the Cabinet, I would have been accused of failing to utilise an opportunity to obtain a loan at a low interest rate," he noted.

He further denied the allegation that the 7% upfront fee was a commission and claimed that it was required to insure the considerable credit risk involved. He further pointed to the fact that currently, an 8% interest is paid on Treasury bills and therefore, if Sri Lanka can obtain a loan at a 3.23% interest rate upon paying a 7% insurance charge, it is still favourable for the country.

### First Capital...

The prospectus is available online on the CSE website ([www.cse.lk](http://www.cse.lk)) and the First Capital website ([www.firstcapital.lk/fct](http://www.firstcapital.lk/fct)).

### Orient...

Notwithstanding the challenging economic conditions, the company's total assets for the period increased to Rs. 15.9 billion in comparison to Rs. 14.8 billion recorded during the corresponding period in the previous financial year.

The finance company is listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) and the Board of Directors comprises of Chairman Anil Tittawella PC, Chief Executive Officer K.M.M. Jabir, Prakash Schaffter, Minette Perera, Indrani Goonesekera, Sriyan Cooray, and Darshana Ratnayake.

Orient Finance PLC is a member of the Janashakthi Group that operates in the insurance, finance, investment, and real estate sectors.

### HSBC...

Surgenor joined HSBC in 2009 and has undertaken leadership roles in Europe, Latin America, and Asia encompassing Group, Region, and Country Head positions. Prior to HSBC, Surgenor was at the Lloyds Banking Group where he held a number of senior positions across international corporate and retail banking in the UK, the Middle East, and Asia.

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

## Sri Lanka Economic Summit announces knowledge partners McKinsey & Company

The upcoming Sri Lanka Economic Summit 2021 will host a lineup of contemporary dialogues under this year's theme "Springboard for revival: Opportunity to reset". The schedule of high-profile speakers at this year's summit will include presenters from global management consulting firm and summit knowledge partners McKinsey & Company, who will present their insights on the way forward for economic revival and development, on 6 and 7 December 2021.

Day one of the summit will feature a session titled "Public-Private Sector Collaboration in Seeking the Opportunity to Reset", presented by McKinsey & Company Healthcare, Social, and Public Sector Asia Co-Lead and Senior Partner Diaan-Yi Lin. Lin, who has worked extensively with government entities and government-linked companies across Asia, will lead the panel discussion as it explores the possibilities for greater private sector collaboration in government policy development.

The second day of the summit will see McKinsey & Company Partner Steve Saxton present a session titled "Survival to Recovery: Reviving Tourism Inflows", drawing on his wealth of experience as an acclaimed travel and logistics expert to lead the panel discussion on how Sri Lanka can reposition itself for the new normal in travel.

Combining global expertise with deep understanding of industry economics in order to create solutions that support sustainable change, McKinsey & Company's association with the Economic Summit will facilitate progressive discussion as Sri Lanka charts a course towards economic reset and revival.

The Sri Lanka Economic Summit 2021 (SLES 2021) is scheduled to be held on 6 and 7 December as a hybrid summit, catering to participants who would join online as well as participate in person at the Shangri-La Colombo.

Participants have the opportunity to register



Diaan Yi Lin



Steve Saxton

online at <https://chamber.lk> for the entire two-day summit or choose the sessions they wish to attend. The Chamber looks forward to delivering a unique, digitally transformed experience to all participants in addition to in-person participation at the Shangri-La Colombo this year. Registrations for the event are now open.

**For further information, please contact [events@chamber.lk](mailto:events@chamber.lk) or 0115588852; or [aliki@chamber.lk](mailto:aliki@chamber.lk) or 0115588805.**



# Raja Jewellers marks 93rd anniversary

**R**aja Jewellers is marking a legacy of 93 years on 4 December, having organised spectacular celebrations. To commemorate this special occasion and remarkable milestone, the “Novantre Collection” of timeless jewellery is to be introduced. As a special gesture coinciding with the anniversary celebrations, all customers who visit the Raja Jewellers showroom and purchase jewellery on 4 December will be presented with an extremely valuable gift. Moreover, Raja Jewellers is also giving customers exceptional offers on this special day – all jewellery purchased using credit cards are applicable to receive 60 months of easy payment plans.

The antecedents of Raja Jewellers dates back to 1928, when E.A. Fernando established E.A. Fernando Jewellers in Chatham Street, Pettah. Following a successful journey, his son, Raja Fernando, renamed the business as Raja

Jewellers in 1962. The third generation of the family, Ashoka Eliyapura and Athula Eliyapura, registered the company as a Limited Liability Company. The third and the fourth generation of the family is now in the business. Raja



Raja Jewellers top management: The Eliyapura family

Jewellers has been adorned with a train of awards throughout for their high-quality standards. The management of Raja Jewellery

expresses their heartiest gratitude on this memorable occasion to their valuable customers for keeping trust in them for 93 years.



From left: CBSL Deputy Governor D. Kumaratunge, Minister of Youth and Sports and State Minister of Digital Technology and Enterprise Development Namal Rajapaksa, and SDB CEO Thilak Piyadigama

## ‘LankaQR Nationwide Rollout Campaign’ moves to Tangalle with SDB

Launched by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL), the “LankaQR Nationwide Rollout Campaign” proceeded to the city of Tangalle last Saturday (27).

A continuation of the CBSL-led islandwide LankaQR promotion campaign, which witnessed the hosting of a series of events across the country in major cities including Matale, Galle, Colombo, and Kandy, the “LankaQR Nationwide Rollout Campaign” with its edition in Tangalle advanced on efforts to introduce LankaQR as the standard for mobile phone and digital payments countrywide.

Held at the Mahinda Rajapaksa Stadium in Tangalle, the event was graced by the Chief Guest, Minister of Youth and Sports and State Minister of Digital Technology and Enterprise Development Namal Rajapaksa, CBSL officials Assistant Governor including

D. Kumaratunge, together with top-level representatives from all participating banks, financial institutions, and telcos.

SDB CEO Thilak Piyadigama, the CBSL-appointed Chairman of the LankaQR Committee delivered the welcome address, pointing out the critical nature of the vision shared by all participating individuals and organisations, in advancing towards a cashless economy plus a digital-savvy country, and improved financial inclusion across Sri Lanka.

The Tangalle-leg of the “LankaQR Nationwide Rollout Campaign” furthered the programme’s wider vision of introducing digital transactions as the norm locally, an aim that is closely linked to SDB-owned mobile payment app UPay’s extensive efforts to take digital payment conveniences to each corner of the island.

## MAS bags ‘Exporter of the Year’ award for 2020/21

MAS Intimates received three top accolades at the Sri Lanka Presidential Export Awards, including the highly coveted “Exporter of the Year” award for 2020/2021. MAS Intimates was also honoured as Sri Lanka’s overall “Best Exporter in Product Diversification”, while the company’s focus on ethical and sustainable manufacturing was recognised as the overall “Contributor to Sustainable Development in Exports”.

It was an additional triple win for MAS Active and MAS KREEDA, who were honoured for their manufacturing of world class sports and performance wear for leading international brands. Their awards included the overall “Market Diversified Exporter



MAS Intimates CEO Rajiv Dharmendra, receiving the ‘Exporter of the Year’ award for 2020/21 from President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, along with MAS Holdings CEO Suren Fernando

of the Year”, “Best Performing Exporter in Emerging Markets” and the sectoral award for “Best Exporter – Apparel Large Category” for 2020/2021.

These six awards, including the “Exporter of the Year”, made MAS the most awarded conglomerate for 2020/2021.

# NDB named amongst the best corporate citizens at the CC Sustainability Awards 2021

NDB was once again honoured at the Best Corporate Citizen Sustainability Award 2020 with the “Top 10 Corporate Citizen” award for the seventh consecutive year, at the annual event organised by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

Winning this award a total of seven times to date, the bank has been recognised as an organisation that is committed to responsible business practices and sustainable value creation. Strategically aligning the



NDB SVP – Personal Banking and Customer Experience Sanjaya Perera and VP – Legal Melody Wickramanayake accepting the award from CCC Chairman Vish Gomasamy and the Guest of Honour Trine Eskedal of the Royal Norwegian Embassy

bank’s Sustainability Projects in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the bank

has trained over 110,000 women entrepreneurs under SDG 1 No poverty; over 20

hospitals islandwide, the brave frontline medical staff and the general public assisted to combat the Covid-19 pandemic under SDG 3 Good health and well-being; the facilities of the “Veheraagalaya Kanishta Vidyalaya, Matale” upgraded, including the computer lab, and donation of stationery items for the entire school of 191 students as they embarked on their new scholastic year and supporting 10 students by granting scholarships under

SDG 4 Quality education; and a water purification system donated under SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation, benefitting 211 students and teachers.

“NDB Cares”, NDB’s structured programme to support the bank’s employees, customers, and the community at large in the face of the adversities brought by the pandemic continued, with various initiatives, including donations, made to the healthcare sector.

## Dreamron Cosmetics recognised at annual BSOAB convention



Dreamron Cosmetics, together with its country partners, participated at the Beauty Service Owners Association of Bangladesh (BSOAB) convention held at Dhaka. BSOAB is Bangladesh’s largest network of Beauty Service Owners, established in 2016, and has been working for the development of the beauty industry in the country and taking it to international standards, where the government of Bangladesh has recognised the beauty industry

to be a major contributor to the country’s economy. Dreamron and Esquire Professional Cosmetics were the main sponsors of this year’s convention, for which leading professionals in the beauty industry participated. Dreamron has been recognised by the BOSAB for its continuous support. Bangladesh Government Minister of Industries Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun visited the Dreamron booth at the convention and commended

the activities carried out by Dreamron in Bangladesh to uplift the beauty industry. Dreamron Cosmetics has been available in the Bangladesh market since 2017 in both retail outlets and beauty salons. Dreamron is partnered by Esquire Professional Cosmetics (Pvt) Ltd., a leading business organisation in the country. Dreamron is presently available in the major cities of Bangladesh, and plans are being drawn to expand its business to a country-wide operation.

## ComBank honoured as ‘Leading Partner Bank in SL’

Commercial Bank of Ceylon (ComBank) has been adjudged Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) “Leading Partner Bank in Sri Lanka” at the 2021 Trade and Supply Chain Finance Programme (TSCFP) Awards.

The award was conferred upon Commercial Bank for recording the highest number of transactions in the trade and supply chain finance sphere between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021. In this period, the bank collaborated with ADB for the coverage of trade transactions of small and large deals for corporate

as well as small and medium-scale enterprise (SME) clients.

Commercial Bank was recognised for its continuous efforts to increase its trade financing capacity, operational efficiency, financial health, and risk management while strengthening customer relationships, improving service standards, delivering innovative solutions, and being resilient. Despite the many disruptions of the period, the bank achieved stellar performance in 2020-2021, the company noted.

Representatives of more than 200 partner banks

participated in the virtually conducted TSCFP Awards ceremony, at which 27 banks were recognised globally in 21 categories.

Commercial Bank entered into an Issuing Bank Agreement with ADB in February 2021, which empowered the bank to increase its credit lines, expand relationships with correspondent banks, reduce cash collateral requirements, enhance the ability to maintain and attract new clients, and provide critical support during times of crisis as an issuing bank of Letters of Credit (LCs).

## Digital instant loans revolutionised through LB CIM app

LB Finance PLC recently introduced a digital solution to boost its key Gold Loans business. With the latest solution, the company’s gold loans customers have the opportunity to avail an instant digital top up gold loan through LB CIM (Cash-In-Mobile) smartphone app. This is a landmark development, considering the lightning speed and efficiency of delivering a top up loan in mere 30 seconds, directly crediting the loan proceeds to customer’s LB CIM wallet. The move further epitomises the company’s efforts to deliver cutting edge financial solutions in a highly competitive, rapidly evolving industry, fast adapting to digital financial services.



Gold loans currently account for nearly a third of LB Finance PLC loans and advances, and serve a large and diverse group of customers spread throughout the island representing every strata of the Sri Lankan society. LB CIM, the mobile app based digital wallet by LB Finance, performs

the central role in LB customers’ digital journey in availing an array of financial services provided by the company.

LB CIM mobile wallet is a solution conceptualised and developed by LB Digital Financial Services (DFS), a specialised unit that combines the strength and heritage of a five-decade-old financial institution with the entrepreneurial spirit of a fintech start-up. LB CIM is proud to be one of the few trilingual mobile wallets available in the market and champions the concept of simplicity in its UI/UX offering.

## Homemart opens new showroom in Colombo 10



Opening of the new Homemart showroom in Colombo 10 by St. Anthony’s Hardware (Pvt.) Ltd. Chairman S.R. Gnanam and Director Shirani Gnanam

On 15 November, Sri Lanka’s one-stop, general hardware and homeware supermarket, Homemart opened a new location at the old St. Anthony’s Hardware Building at 516, Sri Sangaraja Mawatha, Colombo 10.

Homemart, a subsidiary of St. Anthony’s group is one of the oldest and largest hardware manufacturers and distributors in Sri Lanka.

The showroom was declared open by St. Anthony’s Hardware (Pvt.) Ltd. Chairman S.R. Gnanam. St. Anthony’s Hardware Managing Director Praveen Gnanam, Director Shirani Gnanam, Director Thayananthan, and Director/General Manager Sarath Gamage, were also present at the opening ceremony, along with other members of the organisation’s senior management.

Homemart offers an unprecedented selection of over 10,000 hardware and homeware products, across hundreds of

brands, in co-ordination with over 200 local and international suppliers. At Homemart one might find everything necessary for construction from the concrete for the foundation to the solar on the roof, from plumbing to paints, from roofing to machinery and tools, from electrical to everyday household consumables, from bathroom fittings to a large gardening range, to home appliance like blenders, stoves, vacuum cleaners, and water purifiers.

The Homemart under-one-roof concept sought to fill the gap in the market whereby customers were previously inconvenienced by the task of going from shop to shop in hardware-specific bazaars and districts to find specific items, without the option of comparing offerings across brands and applications.

Homemart is open seven days a week, with delivery, pre-order, or pick up at your place of employment.

## DP Logistics launches TruckBuddy platform



TruckBuddy representatives at its launch event

DP Logistics (Pvt.) Ltd. recently launched “TruckBuddy”, a web platform that offers smart transport solutions. With the expertise DP Logistics has garnered over the past two decades in the transport business, the platform is customised for multi-industry verticals such as apparel, FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods), industrial, electronics, etc.

DP Logistics is equipped with a 24/7 monitoring control centre to ensure the cargo is delivered to the destination in a safe manner, meeting the expectations of its valuable customers. Company-specific report templates and dashboards facilitate decisions based on data and real-time GPS tracking and alert system ensures

the security of the cargo until it reaches the destination.

DP Logistics also has the added edge of being able to leverage on its own extensive fleet which includes both general-purpose and specific vehicles such as cement carriers, automotive carriers, and specialised project equipment to provide customers with greater options.

Given the extremely challenging times faced by customers due to increasing freight transportation costs, DP Logistics has been focusing on ways and means of reducing expenses while increasing efficiency, and this is the second such initiative introduced in the recent past which leverages on technology.



## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"We relish news of our heroes, forgetting that we are extraordinary to somebody too."  
— HELEN HAYES



## Marilyn Manson's home raided by LA County Sheriff

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) has executed a search warrant on an address associated with Brian Warner, aka Marilyn Manson, said Deputy Eva Jimenez of the Sheriff's Information Bureau. TMZ and Rolling Stone report that Warner was not home at the time of the search. Pitchfork has reached out to representatives for Manson for comment. In February, the LASD opened an investigation into allegations of domestic violence incidents that occurred between 2009 and 2011, while Warner lived in West Hollywood.

(Pitchfork)



# the morning brunch

## ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE MAS 'OCEAN STRAINER'

BY VENESSA ANTHONY

**The MAS "Ocean Strainer" is a pilot floating trash trap installed in the Dehiwala Canal in Colombo, Sri Lanka. This 130-foot-wide barrier, made from a buoyant foam and canvas, floats across the length of the canal, and traps plastic waste before reaching the ocean through the canal mouth.**

The Morning Brunch spoke to MAS Holdings Director – Environmental Sustainability Sharika Senanayake, who explained that the waste is collected daily by an appointed resource person from the community along the canal, and their partners Clean Ocean Force and the Western Provincial Council support the collection, removal, and disposal of garbage. She also added that this particular canal was selected as it is one of the more polluted canals in the area.

### Why is MAS concerned about marine plastic pollution?

Speaking on this topic, Senanayake commented: "Hailing from a tropical island, for many of us at MAS, the issue of marine plastic waste is a personal one. These oceans protect our home, and these beaches have been our playgrounds since childhood. But today, they are littered with plastic waste and debris."

For the last five years, MAS has been working with the Sri Lanka Navy and the Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA) to address this problem. Some of the activities that she listed include conducting islandwide beach clean-ups in partnership with MEPA, Sri Lanka Navy, and Eco Spindles, investing with the Sri Lanka Navy to establish over five collection centres for recycling (Crow Island, Kalpitiya, Mannar, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya) and partnering with Eco Spindles to develop a recycled polyester yarn made with collected PET waste.

Aside from this, they also produced the Sri Lanka Cricket jersey



MAS 'Ocean Strainer' at the Dehiwala Canal



MAS and Clean Ocean Force Team at the Dehiwala Canal



MAS Team accepting the 'Best Sustainability Projects' award

for the ICC 2019 World Cup, 2020 Women's World Cup, and 2021 World Cup from upcycled fugitive PET waste; established "Plastic Chuckers" (PET collection bins) at 10 coastal locations to support the collection of marine plastic; and, with the support of MEPA and by recycling, converted 21 million PET bottles to fabric within MAS companies in 2020.

But despite the frequency of clean-ups and the magnitude of these efforts, Senayake explained that they would always see more debris on our shoreline, as inland waterways and canals pushed plastic waste along to the shore.

"Research shows that rivers and canals are the source of 80% of plastic that reaches the ocean. Therefore, we needed to address the marine plastic issue at the source, by trapping and removing the waste before it reaches the ocean," she stated, adding that therefore, their objective was to look for a solution to capture the waste at the source – this was the inspiration behind building the floating trash trap that they call the "Ocean Strainer".

### How does the Ocean Strainer work?

With 100 km of canal network in Sri Lanka, the canals provided an opportunity to develop an innovative yet simple solution that could be low-cost and easily replicated across locations to create greater impact.

Clean Ocean Force Founder and Chairman Jerome Fernando explained that their solution is a pilot trash trap that can float across narrow inland waterways like canals, trapping plastic waste along the barrier. This

solution, Ocean Strainer, is made of easily sourced, low-cost material. "The design is based on learnings from existing trash trap concepts from around the world, and has been adapted by MAS engineers, advised by MEPA officials, to fit the local canals and marine environment, while minimising the disruption to aquatic life," he commented.

MAS Holdings Senior Executive – Environmental Sustainability Uvini Athukorala stated that over the last year, between August 2020 and September 2021, they have been able to keep approximately 67,450 kg of waste from reaching the ocean.

### How is the waste collected and removed?

Fernando stated that they have identified a resident in the community who lives along the canal and equipped him with the tools and safety gear required to collect and remove the waste daily.

"This daily clean-up operation is supported and funded by our partner Clean Ocean Force. This individual collects and removes the waste daily and the Western Provincial Council and the Dehiwala-Mount Lavinia Municipality support the project by collecting and sending possible waste for recycling and disposing the remaining waste, which has disintegrated beyond use," he informed us.

According to an initial waste evaluation conducted by MEPA, during the first one to two months since installation, they have found the composition of the waste that was recovered.

### The challenges faced

When speaking on the challenges, Fernando explained that one of the main challenges lies in the scale of waste that is collected. In the initial stages, they observed an average daily collection of waste between 30-50 kg of waste, during calm weather.

However, during the onset of the monsoon season, they observed significantly higher volumes of waste, with the increased rains, winds, and flow of water. Fernando commented: "During times like this, there is over 100 kg of waste collected daily, and it is beyond the capacity that we can manage alone. Therefore, we need to employ the support of more people with the help of the Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation (SLLRDC) to remove the waste from the canal whenever it goes beyond what one individual can manage."

He stated that this is incredibly challenging, but it is a labour of love for all of them involved. If this work is not done, all that waste would have been swept to the seas and impacted our shoreline, oceans, and marine life. As key stakeholders of this project, Fernando said that they are always looking for other like minded partners to join them in supporting this mechanism and address the challenges they have such as manpower, funding, and the scaling up and replication of these solutions.

He further added that it's important that they raise awareness and educate people on proper disposal of waste, without which this issue will reach a scale that they won't be able to control.

### Plans in place to replicate and scale up the project

Senanayake also added that when they launched this pilot, the response was immense and many different institutions, companies, and even individuals wanted to support this. Recognising that this project can have massive impact if scaled up, in February 2021, they made the "Ocean Strainer" technology open source and available to any party who is interested in replicating it.

"We received over 60 queries from Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Fiji, the Philippines, etc., and we've currently got four partners who are working to replicate this in multiple canals in the Colombo, Kalutara, and Galle areas," Senanayake commented, and added that they themselves are working on replicating the solution in the Wellawatte Canal, with the support of the relevant partners and authorities.

Their long-term aim is to give new life to the collected plastic by bringing it back into our value chain through the manufacturing process. According to Senanayake, MAS has been using polyester made from recycled PET in their supply chain for several years, including for the 2019 and 2021 Sri Lanka Cricket ICC World Cup jerseys. They hope that the recovered plastic can be repurposed into fabric by their PET-to-polyester recyclers to manufacture products for their customer brands, and they are working towards making this a reality.

"Our teams are currently researching and developing a more advanced version of this solution that can be implemented in larger waterways such as rivers," Senanayake stated.

They are encouraged by the response they have been getting and they were just recently recognised by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce by receiving an award for the "Best Sustainability Projects" at their recently concluded Best Corporate Citizen Sustainability Awards 2021.

### The collaborators working together on this project

Athukorala informed us that their main collaborator in the daily operations of this initiative is Clean Ocean Force, who works together with them to employ, supervise, and address the needs of the resource person who collects and removes the trash daily. They introduced this daily clean-up operation not only to the Dehiwala canal and the Ocean Strainer, but to many polluted beaches in the area. "Without their dedication, this project could not succeed in the long run. We are also supported by the Western Provincial Council, the Dehiwala-Mount Lavinia Municipality, and the SLLRDC, who are involved in the waste removal and disposal," she stated.

MEPA supported them with the necessary approvals for the project, and the Environmental Police has also extended their support through supervision of the site. They also have our numerous partners who have shown interest and joined us to scale up this project.

## Happy Nests by Super Moms and Happy Threads Sri Lanka

BY DIMITHRI WIJESINGHE

### On turning trash to treasure

Christmas is just around the corner, and while the pandemic may have put a slight damper on the holiday spirit, it hasn't entirely deterred people from trying to have a good time.

The past year has taught us all some unforgettable lessons, especially about how we've been treating our planet and the atrocious levels of pollution that has plagued the earth.

Keeping these lessons in mind, the lovely ladies at Happy Nests by Super Moms and Happy Threads Sri Lanka – two community-based sister organisations – have taken on the initiative to create upcycled

handmade items for day-to-day use – essentially turning trash into treasure.

Speaking to the lovely ladies at Happy Nests by Super Moms, which is the newer one of the two organisations, having started only late last year, with Happy Nests having been around for some time, they shared that their two organisations were initiated by women from the international Dawoodi Bohra community. They, of course, have a global reach, and they aim to make a positive impact on the environment while also providing a source of income to its members.

Since their launch, the talented women behind the initiative have been focused on environmental protection, upcycling plastic waste to create eye-catching and practical items such as planters, bird feeders, gift bags, and even clocks. They shared that the ultimate aim is to bring awareness to the concept of sustainable living by setting positive examples of how trash can be transformed into pieces of treasure.

They shared that Happy Threads is run by a team of artisans comprising women who make wonderful crochet pieces, with a brilliant range of creative pieces that are so very varied, and for this

December, they've prepared some holiday-themed items ranging from Christmas baubles to notebooks, wind chimes, and much more.

As is the nature of the initiative, incredibly empowering to the wonderfully motivated and green-conscious ladies, it has also created the space for them all to explore their creativity, with these handmade items being nothing short of masterpieces that are eye-catching in their beauty and breathtaking in their intimacy.

Happy Nests by Super Moms and Happy Threads Sri Lanka will be holding a sale exhibition of their uniquely upcycled creations on 4 December from 11.30 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Island Market located at No.



57/03, Marine Drive, Colombo 3.

For more information, call Umama Zohair at 077 7753797 or Batul Kaizar at 077 7146775, or visit their Instagram page.

@happythreads.lk







# The power of confrontation

BY SURESH DE SILVA

*"I have, several times, made a poor choice by avoiding a necessary confrontation."*

— John Cleese

It sure is a tough and torturous feeling once someone you are close to upsets or hurts you, isn't it?

Not necessarily physically, but more where it is a much deeper, graver scarring. The kind of affront that eats at you daily, chewing away at your resolve, gnawing away at your conscience.

Letting go of those feelings becomes akin to a colossal deadweight that we tend to drag around like a shackle attached to a pyramid.

Once you are emotionally and psychologically invested in someone or something that truly disappoints you, simply getting over it doesn't always work in our favour, no? In fact, the more we try to deal with it, the more we end up thinking about it, and then the next thing we know it has spiralled into something equal to a grievous grudge or tenebrous remorse.

Be it a person you thought was a close friend who suddenly distances themselves for no apparent reason, a peer or colleague who no longer includes you in social rendezvous, or a family member who has deeply wounded you emotionally, you just tuck away your feelings until it grows into resentment.

I am as guilty of this as anyone else, and I've often wondered how much of precious moments and our valuable time we could invest elsewhere instead of doddering back and forth into some never-ending chasm that takes us in circles.

It's not easy to take the higher road and the path less traversed when it's a personal sleight.

They do say time heals all wounds. Yet reality teaches us that some wounds never truly heal.

### How, where, and why?

Having work problems? Is one of your managers constantly picking a bone with you and demotivating you?

Having relationship issues? Does your partner mean well and have supposedly good intentions but tend to embarrass you in front of others and gaslight you?

How about social trouble? Are you finding it increasingly difficult to be in the company of those who are passive aggressive and tend to humiliate you in social circles?

These are day-to-day incidents and some of them cannot be avoided. Consider them to be hurdles along our path.

Yet if you do think about us having the ability to choose the situations and scenarios we end up in, then allowing pent up feelings of insult, emotional injury, or harm to fester can result in immensely damaging consequences. Some, where there's no coming back from.

### Unresolved issues

How many of us leave unresolved issues

to accumulate?

How often do we choose to ignore a problem until it escalates and snowballs into a much grander calamity?

When you are nervous in a situation of feeling overly self-conscious, it's second nature to us to nearly always choose flight over fight – especially if it's involving someone that is particularly intimate, close, or valuable to us.

Professor Jordan Peterson says that we ought to pay more attention to the people and situation you are in, instead of focusing too much on ourselves and our insecurities at that point in time. Meaning to attend outwardly to the situation at hand instead of just coiling up inwardly and not facing the things that's stressing you out.

It's a very Sri Lankan thing to be irked with someone and instead of addressing the problem and bringing it up with them, to just avoid that person and gossip about them with others. This is terribly unhealthy overall.

It's also a very Sri Lankan thing to have strong opinions on everyone else and everything but to not like being called out for your own faeces being stinky and reeking of self-importance.

Yet this is a human attribute at large is it not? To shy away from things that we should confront. To pretend that a problem doesn't exist hoping it will evaporate and go away.

### It takes one to know one

We've often gone wax lyrical and used this phrase on someone as a diatribe at some point, right?

Yet have you ever paused to wonder how true this statement rings?

In these situations, where one lets discontent and disdain stew, I've started trying to look at not just the bigger picture but the entire frame and whatever is beyond that.

I have come to gauge that slipping into someone else's feet (mind you: 1. standing in someone else's shoes alone isn't enough and 2. you'll only begin to understand where someone else is coming from if you walk on the soles of their feet) is uncomfortable but it gives me a very different perspective to things.

For example, you come to realise that not everyone is built and wired the same way, even and especially when it comes to being attuned to themselves or those around them. Very few people are plugged into the matrix of another person's rabbit hole. For most people, their own personal demons

and peripheral issues are more than they can handle or care to tackle.

Then, problems are problems regardless of size, scale, shape, hue, nature, essence, and volume. Another human being's problem might be insignificant and mundane in your eyes, but consider that the burden of it weighs the same as the problems you are carrying and hauling around.

Some people sure do need constant reminders and consistent influence or inspiration, but remember that others will and can only change once they change their own mindset, attitude, beliefs, and life mantra. It is a fundamental crisis of existence that we keep trying to rub our ideals, beliefs and opinions on others because we assume what's best for us, is what's best for them. We see this frequently with parents projecting their expectations, misspent dreams, wasted ambitions and unfulfilled objectives on their children – under the infallible defensive stance of "we only

want what's best for them".

### The subtle art of confrontation

Yes, there is a time and place for everything. We will only know to pick a suitable moment in time to recognise when a situation arises to confront someone, if, and I do mean *IF* we first begin to listen to, understand, and grow in confidence and emotional stature with ourselves. Before we point out another person's loopholes and misdemeanours – we really need to deal with our own self-conceited pandemonium.

In life, to progress, we need to have confrontation. We cannot always let things slide and elude our grasp, hoping problems will jolly well fix themselves.

Confrontation doesn't need to be abusive, aggressive, violent, or vindictive. It can be positive reinforcement, therapeutic, and even a discussion raising a dialog and narrative that's not argumentative, but rather sensible, informative and even helpful.

Here are nine steps to master confrontation that I hope might help.

- 1. Confront yourself:** Didn't see that one coming, did you? We are our own worst enemy. The only way self-awareness and self-actualisation can exist is if you confront your own darkest self
- 2. How much does the other person mean to you?** If it's about confronting another person then you need to establish that talking to them and trying to set things right will be meaningful and worth the effort. Life's too damned short and people of value are rare
- 3. Think long and hard what you will say and how you will say it:** You can't solve problems by belittling, bullying, and chastising others. I've learned this in life being on both ends of that spectrum
- 4. Decency and due diligence:** Be respectful, be calm, be patient, and remember quite often that which you project will be reflected back at you
- 5. Find the right time and place:** Timing is everything. Clarity and sobriety as

well. The setting and atmosphere is also important. If you aren't in the right head space then you won't be able to connect with the person you are trying to talk to

- 6. Don't let problems evolve:** Issues are like opinions. Everyone has one and sometimes they grow like cancerous weeds and multiply if you let them. Nip it in the bud before it takes root and spreads
- 7. Listen as much as you are willing to talk:** Sometimes you might only need to hear the other person's side of what has transpired and their version of it might add some context. Whether it's true or not, always listen, and then share your views
- 8. It's okay to admit something is your fault first:** Admit, accept, and apologise first if it's a small misunderstanding or some silly friction caused by something not worth holding onto. Take the first step in humbleness and take the step to make amends
- 9. If it's beyond your control, let go:** Finally, and this is tough. If you've tried everything and nothing works, and there is no silver lining or even an effort made to reciprocate your own efforts at making amends, then you may just need to respectfully bow out. Sometimes cutting ties is necessary for yourself and for others to grow. A time may come in the future where you cross paths with different life experiences having changed perceptions and feelings. Or not. Get over it and move on

*(The writer is the frontman and lyricist of Stigmata, a creative consultant and brand strategist by profession, a self-published author and poet, thespian, animal rescuer, podcaster, and fitness enthusiast) The views and opinions expressed in this column are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of this publication.*

**PULSE MAGAZINE OUT NOW!**

**'Pulse' is Sri Lanka's leading lifestyle magazine - crafted for the curious Sri Lankan at heart. Flip through our latest edition for some refreshing stories that explore our bold and inspiring island.**

**NOW AVAILABLE AT CELESTE DAILY (IN STORE, PICKME MARKET AND UBEREATS), PORU FLORE (OGF OUTLET), URBAN ISLAND, DILLY & CARLO, HOME BARGAINS, COOL PLANET AND ALL LEADING SUPERMARKETS AND BOOKSTORES IN COLOMBO AND SUBURBS**

**WHATSAAPP 070 707 8573 TO RECEIVE THE E-VERSION**

**FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS AND MARKETING, CALL 077 753 8729**

VISIT [WWW.PULSE.LK/MAG](http://WWW.PULSE.LK/MAG) OR SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW THE LATEST EDITION.

## JKMR receives 'Corporate Maldives GOLD 100 GALA Award'

John Keells Maldivian Resorts (JKMR) was bestowed with the "Corporate Maldives GOLD 100 GALA Award" as one of the leading 100 companies in the Maldives for 2021. This award reflects the contribution being made by JKMR to the Maldivian economy while instilling industry leading sustainable practices in the local community.



Maldives Inland Revenue Authority Commissioner General of Taxation Fathuhulla Jameel presenting the award to Cinnamon Dhonveli Maldives General Manager Sanjeeva Perera

## ComBank donates medical equipment to Hospitals in Jaffna



The Corporate Social Responsibility Trust of Commercial Bank recently donated essential medical equipment to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital, the Tellippalai Base Hospital, and the Kayts Base Hospital. Commercial Bank donated two non-invasive ventilators to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital, multipara monitors and a kerato meter to the Tellippalai Base Hospital, and a coagulation analyser, a blood gas and electrolyte analyser, and a non-invasive bi-level ventilator to the Kayts Base Hospital.

Commercial Bank Chairman Justice K. Sripavan and Managing Director S. Renganathan with representatives of the bank, the Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Tellippalai Base Hospital, and the Kayts Base Hospital at the formal presentation of the equipment to the three institutions



# The Octa Café

## Comfort food at its best



BY VENESSA ANTHONY

**The Octa Café, located down Pietersz Place in Nugegoda, is a cosy, ambient spot for all your comfort food requirements.**

The Morning Brunch had the opportunity to indulge in some of their dishes and get a feel of the place. They offer a range of food varying from burgers, kottu, and rice to even waffles. We tried their crispy chicken, nasi goreng, and chocolate waffles. The crispy chicken is crispy fried chicken – the genre of food has

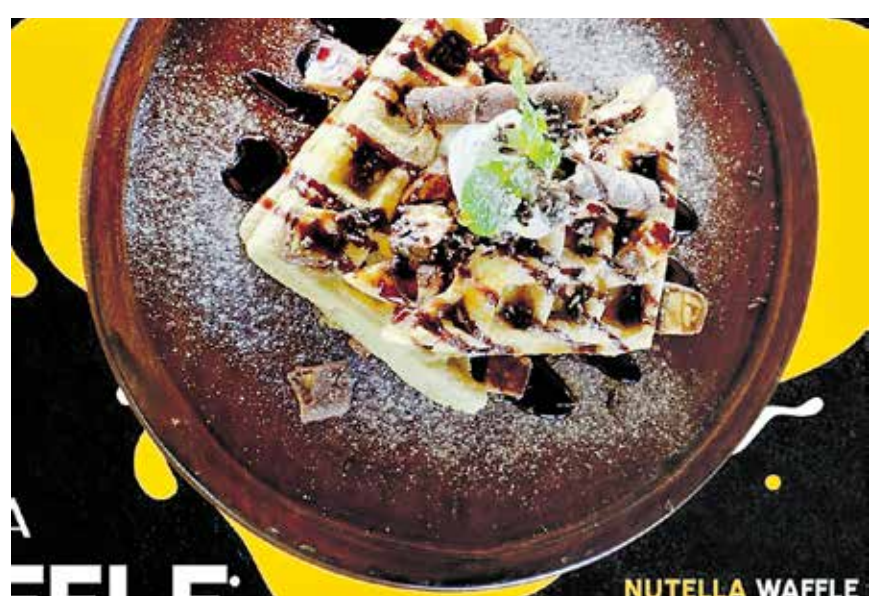
become so popular that people are forgetting there are other options out there for flavour combinations. Starting with the chicken, they had kept it light and slightly on the airy side for the batter/breading, but it still managed to stay crispy and adhered nicely to the chicken fillet. There was a light but definite seasoned flavour and just the barest touch of spicy heat. They had opted for chicken wings, instead of the usual leg or even breast pieces, which was an interesting choice, since wings don't generally have a lot of meat on them, but the balance of coating and chicken worked in their favour and left us with a nice mouthful of chicken. We

did feel that it was lacking a sauce to accompany it, though.

The Nasi Goreng or fried rice is an Indonesian food. Even though this food originally came from China, the Indonesian version is different – more spicy and varied. A nasi is usually an oily fish; surprisingly, The Octa Café had somehow balanced out the oil, and it was quite reminiscent of a typical homemade fried rice. The flavour notes were well rounded and we could taste hints of coriander and cumin. They serve their nasi goreng with a small salad of lettuce, tomatoes, and a few other veggies, as well as a slice of pineapple along with a fried egg.

We were also given prawn crackers in the rice as well as an extra portion, which was a pleasant surprise because who doesn't love some seafood flavoured crunchiness.

The most interesting factor of the dish was the chicken kebab – we've had plenty of kebabs before, but these were unique in the sense where they came smeared with actual peanut butter straight from the jar versus the usual peanut sauce that I'm not too keen on. The sweetness from this kebab worked perfectly with the



NUTELLA WAFFLE

spices in the rice and we must say, the portion size was quite generous – easily enough for two (very hungry) people. For the price, we would say it's quite worth it. Aside from the kebabs, there were bits of chicken in the rice as well, so each mouthful would give you a satisfying ratio of meat to rice.

Lastly, to complete our meal, we had a chocolate waffle. This isn't

just any chocolate waffle – it comes topped with a decadent amount of chocolate sauce and Nutella, two chocolate sticks, and some rolled oats. It was an absolutely lavish dessert and came with two waffles. So again, for the price, we would say it's worth it. The batter itself was a little thick and bordering on a bit tough to chew, but if eaten hot, it is incredibly crispy and light, and fluffy on the inside as it should be.

We recommend you try out The Octa Café and see what they have to offer. We weren't able to visit the restaurant in person, but their takeaway was just as good.

@theocta.lk



Grape Expectations Director Dilip Bhambhwani (left) and Soul Coffee Founder and CEO Rinosh Nasar (right)

## Grape Expectations and Soul Coffee join hands

Grape Expectations (a member of the Favourite Group) has been in the import and distribution business for over a decade. Soul Coffee began its journey in 2014, to be an ethical coffee brand with the simple goal of providing everyone with access to great tasting coffee, sustainably grown locally.

Soul Coffee partnered with Grape Expectations to leverage their years of distribution experience, and wide clientele covering islandwide supermarkets, hotels and cafes. Soul Coffee CEO Rinosh Nasar said: "We believe Soul Coffee and Grape Expectations are like-minded in our approach and therefore we see a lot of synergy in working together."

Grape Expectations Director Dilip Bhambhwani commented: "We are excited to partner with Soul Iced Coffee Beverages as it's a unique product and also Soul Coffee is a known name in every household of Sri Lanka. With our vast infrastructure at Grape Expectations, we are sure to do justice in distribution of this Brand and ensure Soul Iced Coffees also become an equally popular beverage."

Soul Coffee Cold Brews are available to purchase at all leading supermarkets as well as selected stores across the country. Soul Coffee can also be bought directly online at zipsip.lk.

# Baklava.bliss

## Bringing a Middle Eastern dessert to Sri Lanka

BY DIMITHRI WIJESINGHE

**We have the perfect out of the left field dessert for you this Christmas, if you want to spice up your Christmas feast and offer some exciting and different desserts, then we've got you covered with "baklava.bliss".**

As the name suggests, baklava.bliss is a place where you can get your baklava fix; baklava being the delicious layered pastry dessert made of filo pastry, filled with chopped nuts, and sweetened with syrup or sometimes honey. An incredibly popular Middle Eastern dessert, it is a delicate sweet pastry that is pretty ideal for the holidays.

Baklava.bliss Founder Marzooka Anis is a homemaker who decided this past August to really explore her passions and combine her love of family and how much she enjoys treating them to delicious food. The idea seemed to her as the perfect outlet to share her talents with the world as well.

Speaking to Marzooka, she shared that she would usually make desserts for her family whenever she would come across a good recipe, and interesting new desserts have always held a special place in this little tradition of hers. "My entire family has been crazy over baklava which my sister used to bring down from Bahrain and the last time we had it was around six years ago when my daughter brought some down from Dubai," so she said it really felt like the perfect time to step up and do it herself.

She shared that her baklava is pretty much the traditional sweet pastry dessert, filled with a blend of nuts, and soaked with her signature syrup made with an infusion of spices. She said that the first time that she made it,



Assorted box of baklava

preparing the dessert as she would have on any other day – especially for her daughter who is pregnant – everyone absolutely loved it. When her daughter posted some pictures on Instagram, in came the onslaught of questions about whether people could potentially buy it for themselves. "People started asking if we sell after my daughter posted pictures of it on Instagram and so I thought why not start doing it as a business."

What's special about Marzooka's baklava is that she

doesn't use just one type of nuts for the filling, she uses a blend of four types of nuts and when you try her version, this is very evident and it really does elevate the flavour. She also shared that they make every single element for the baklava from scratch, absolutely nothing is store bought. Even the sheets for pastry are homemade.

The signature item at baklava.bliss is their Classic Baklava with pistachios as the topping, and Marzooka shared that the response for it has been amazing, claiming



Baklava.bliss Founder Marzooka Anis

that they never quite expected so much love in such a short period of time, "And to be honest I must say it is overwhelming," she added.

With no intention of further overwhelming the wonderful Marzooka, we have to share our own love for her baklava, because it was absolutely delicious, soft and delicate, and not overly sweet, it was a real treat!

Baklava.bliss being a relatively new initiative, she shared that they are currently exploring ideas on expanding the business, although she is staying away from the standard delivery services only because baklavas are best had when they are freshly baked, if not they tend to get a bit soggy. She also noted that baklavas are slightly expensive due to its more premium ingredients so they don't want to add to the expense and make it too expensive for their customers to try it out.

If you wish to reach out and get your hands on some of Marzooka's incredible Baklava, be sure to DM her page on Instagram.

@baklava.bliss



Classic Baklava topped with pistachios



Cream Baklava



# Seventh heaven for LIONEL MESSI

● Wins men's Ballon D'Or for record seventh time as Putellas takes women's award

**L**ionel Messi won a record seventh men's Ballon D'Or award in Paris on Monday (29 November) as Alexia Putellas took the women's accolade.

Messi, who this summer left Spanish club Barcelona, where he had spent his entire senior club career, now plays for French side Paris Saint-Germain (PSG), and has so far scored once in his seven appearances for the team.

The 34-year-old, who won the Copa America this year with Argentina, had previously won the Ballon D'Or in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, and 2019 (event not held in 2020).

## Lewandowski, the runner-up

The prize was not awarded last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, meaning Messi has won it twice in a row. After winning the award, voted for by 180 journalists around the world, for a seventh time, Messi said it felt "incredible", reported the inside the games.

Polish striker Robert Lewandowski, who plays for German side Bayern Munich, finished in second place, with Italian midfielder Jorginho (Jorge Luiz Frello Filho Cavaliere), who plays in England with Chelsea, finishing third.

## Spanish midfielder Putellas plays for Barcelona

The Women's Ballon D'Or award went to Spanish midfielder Putellas, who plays for Barcelona.

Putellas helped Barcelona to a domestic double of the Primera Division and Copa de la Reina this year, and also captained the club as they won the Union of European Football Association (UEFA) Women's Champions League in 2021.

## Jennifer Hermoso second

It was the first time Putellas had been



Italian goal-keeper Gianluigi Donnarumma won the 2021 'Yachine Trophy' rewarding the Best Goalkeeper of the Year

PHOTOS © INSIDE THE GAMES



Lionel Messi won a record seventh men's Ballon D'Or title in Paris on Monday (29 November)

nominated for the award, which she claimed ahead of Barcelona and Spain teammate Jennifer Hermoso.

Third place went to Australian forward Sam Kerr, who plays in England with Chelsea. Four more awards were handed out at the ceremony, held at the Theatre du Chatelet.

## Chelsea, the Team of the Year

Polish striker Lewandowski, runner-up for the men's Ballon D'Or, won Striker of the Year while Italian goal-keeper Gianluigi Donnarumma, who plays for PSG, won Goalkeeper of the Year award.

Spanish midfielder Pedri (Pedro González López), 19, who plays for Barcelona was named the Young Player of the Year, while English team Chelsea, who won the UEFA Champions League this year, won the Team of the Year honour.



Pedri (Pedro González López), 19, was named the Young Player of the Year



Alexia Putellas, the Captain of Barcelona, won the women's Ballon D'Or trophy for the first time

# Yorkshire's unholy mess



The Yorkshire County Cricket Club (YCCC) is the most successful cricket club in the English county cricket championship. It has a rich heritage and a past that Yorkshire cricket supporters can truly be proud of.

It has produced a number of England cricket Captains. The grittiness of the Yorkshire cricketers is legendary. Geoff Boycott, one of the most successful Test batsmen the world has seen as well as Michael Vaughan, the Ashes-winning England Captain, are both from that county.

But recently it has become famous and well known for a totally different and unwanted reason.

## The Azeem Rafiq conundrum

Azeem Rafiq's complaints of racism, and not just racism but systematic racism, against the YCCC were addressed in this column a few weeks back. At the end of the column, I finished with the notion that if the report that Yorkshire themselves had commissioned was made public, it would go a long way to clearing things up.

Well, the report has now come out and, no wonder, the club did not want it to become public. In that report, Vaughan, a former England batsman, as well as some Coaches are implicated. It really has turned out into an unholy mess at the moment.

## Similar allegations before

The problem is that Rafiq is himself no ordinary player. He



Azeem Rafiq has been presented with the chance to share his experiences of racism at Yorkshire when the Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) parliamentary select committee which addressed the crisis earlier this month

PHOTO © ALLAN MCKENZIE

is a former England Under-19 Captain as well as a former county Captain. Therefore, his allegations should have been treated way more seriously than they have been at the moment.

Rafiq was left to twist in the wind after he first told Yorkshire about the bullying and racism he had been subjected to and then made his grievances public 15 months ago. His experience fits the template of other sportsmen and women who have made similar allegations.

They are made to feel like the offenders. *Pour encourager les autres*, presumably. That was evident in microcosm when it was revealed that the panel appointed to investigate Rafiq's allegations had suggested Rafiq himself might face sanction for exchanges in which he referred to his teammate, Gary Ballance, who was born in Zimbabwe, as "Zimbo".

## 'Zimbo' and 'P\*\*\*i'

The above-mentioned

Ballance is alleged to have called Rafiq, a "P\*\*\*i", a blatantly racist term. His explanation was less than satisfactory to most people, especially because of the fact that he has admitted using that term.

And, of course, the "Zimbo" revelation released a stream of putrid false equivalence that claimed one was as bad as the other. That is quite evidently not the case. "Zimbo" is the equivalent of calling an Australian an "Aussie". However, "P\*\*\*i" is one of the oldest and most pejorative racial epithets in the world. The two have no equations whatsoever.

## Unspoken apartheid

So many of the recollections of cricketers of Asian heritage growing up in Yorkshire in the 1970s and '80s, and beyond, have revolved around the "ghettoisation" of cricket there and how players were effectively barred from white-dominated

clubs as if it were some form of unspoken apartheid.

The "Born in Yorkshire" qualification was in effect until it was removed in 1992 but the mishandling of the Rafiq case has made it feel as though discrimination is still ingrained. Therefore, the club has a lot to answer for, in terms of its handling of race relations and the racist allegations.

## Vaughan's alleged remarks

It is probably made even worse by the fact that Michael Vaughan is also implicated in this episode. But he wrote a column which read as follows.

In a column for *The Daily Telegraph*, Vaughan admitted that he was the former player implicated in the investigation into Rafiq's allegations of institutional racism at Yorkshire but "completely and categorically" denied the charges and vowed to "fight" to clear his name.

## Vaughan in denial

Vaughan, who represented the county from 1991 until his retirement in 2009, apparently told a group of Asian players, including Rafiq, "Too many of you lot, we need to do something about it."

"I completely and categorically deny that I ever said those words. I have nothing to hide. The 'you lot' comment never happened," the 2005 Ashes-winning captain wrote in the said column.

## Major repercussions

But Naved Rana, the professional player for Yorkshire at the time of the alleged comments, has a different recollection. Naved said: "Yes, yes; it's true but he (Vaughan) has denied it. I'm very shocked about that. It's true what Rafiq has alleged. He (Vaughan) was there. I was there and he used those words and he denied it."

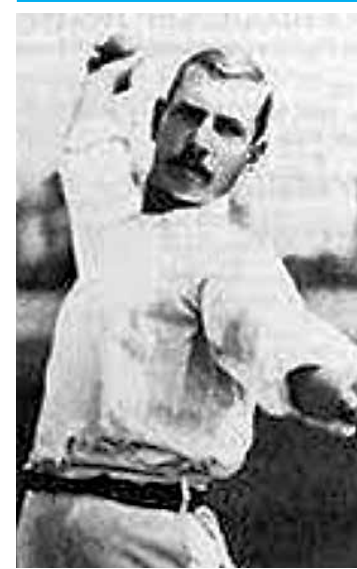
"He definitely said it, I'm sure. I was really shocked. Why is he denying these things? He was a senior player who played for England as well and he's a very responsible man. But he's denying it. Rafiq is right. That's why I'm backing him. He's right."

I'm not thinking, 'Oh I'm Asian, Rafiq's also Asian, so I'll back him'. No, I'm telling you the truth."

With sponsors walking away from the club and club officials resigning, and ministers and members of parliament expressing their disgust, this scandal looks as if it has lots of legs. This is a sorry state of affairs. The sooner they sort out this mess, it is good for Yorkshire as well as for cricket itself.

## ON THIS DAY

1 DECEMBER



George Lohmann



Colin Montgomerie of Scotland who won 'Million Dollar Challenge' in 1996

**1653** An athlete from Croydon was reported to have run 20 miles from Saint Albans to London in less than 90 minutes

**1901** The death of George Lohmann, renowned cricket player of South Africa

**1930** National Hockey League (NHL) in the US dropped 20-minute "slashing-about-the-head penalty"

**1940** Birth of Mike Denness, the England cricket captain during mid-1970s

**1941** Last day of first-class cricket in Australia for four years, due to the outbreak of World War II

**1946** Australia compiled a mammoth 645 runs versus India at the Gabba, Brisbane as Donald Bradman struck 187

**1947** India cricket team got all out for 58, versus Australia at the Gabba, as Ernie Toshack took 5/2

**1948** Birth of Sarfraz Nawaz, successful Pakistani pace-bowler 1969-84

**1956** Alain Mimoun won 13th Olympic marathon, in 2:25:00.0 seconds

**1963** Birth of Arjuna Ranatunga, the one and only International Cricket Council (ICC) World Cup-winning Captain of Sri Lanka

**1963** In New York Jets' first basketball shutout, they beat Kansas City Chiefs 17-0

**1963** NBC television network bid record \$ 401 million to capture rights to 1992 Barcelona Olympics

**1967** Wilt Chamberlain set a National Basketball Association (NBA) record of 22 free throw misses!

**1968** Birth of Anders Holmertz, the Swedish free-style swimmer who set the world record for 400 m

**1973** Jack Nicklaus became the first golfer to earn \$ 2 million in a year

**1974** Jacqueline Hansen ran the female world-record marathon, in 2:43:54.5 seconds

**1978** Test cricket debut of former Australian fast-bowler Rodney Hogg, versus England at the Gabba

**1988** NBC television network bid record \$ 401 million to capture rights to 1992 Barcelona Olympics



Happy birthday Arju! Here he is, a proud father, with son Dhyani

**1967** Wilt Chamberlain set a National Basketball Association (NBA) record of 22 free throw misses!

**1968** Birth of Anders Holmertz, the Swedish free-style swimmer who set the world record for 400 m

**1973** Jack Nicklaus became the first golfer to earn \$ 2 million in a year

**1974** Jacqueline Hansen ran the female world-record marathon, in 2:43:54.5 seconds

**1978** Test cricket debut of former Australian fast-bowler Rodney Hogg, versus England at the Gabba

**1988** NBC television network bid record \$ 401 million to capture rights to 1992 Barcelona Olympics

**1989** The US' Major League Baseball (MLB) pitcher Mark Langston signed a record \$ 3.2 million-per-year California Angels' contract

**1991** 80th Davis Cup: France beat the US in Lyon 3-1 to record their first Davis Cup since 1932

**1996** Colin Montgomerie of Scotland won "Million Dollar Challenge", the richest first-prize in golf - \$ 1 million

**1996** South Africa cricket fast-bowler Lance Klusener took 8/64 in debut Test to trounce India

**2006** 15th Asian Games started in Doha, Qatar

**2007** Death of Australian tennis player Ken McGregor, born in 1929



## IPL 2022 RETENTIONS UPDATES

The much-awaited retentions by teams for forthcoming eight-team Indian Premier League (IPL) 2022 were to be officially revealed by 9.30 p.m. yesterday (30 November).

### Most recent updates yesterday:

- **Chennai Super Kings:** Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Ravindra Jadeja, Ruturaj Gaikwad, and Moeen Ali
- **Kolkata Knight Riders:** Suresh Narine, Andre Russell, Varun Chakravarthy, and Venkatesh Iyer
- **Sunrisers Hyderabad:** Kane Williamson
- **Mumbai Indians:** Rohit Sharma and Jasprit Bumrah
- **Royal Challengers Bangalore:** Virat Kohli and Glenn Maxwell
- **Delhi Capitals:** Rishabh Pant, Prithvi Shaw, Axar Patel, and Anrich Nortje
- **Rajasthan Royals:** Sanju Samson



the morning

## Sports

## Tamil Union win SLC Major Club L/O title 2021



The Tamil Union Cricket and Athletic Club yesterday (30 November) clinched Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) Major Club Limited-Over Tournament beating Ragama Cricket Club by 26 runs. In the picture is Jeffrey Vandersay who took five wickets for the winners.

**Brief scores:** Tamil Union 181/9 in 50 overs (Santhush Gunathilake 47, Supun Kavinda 42, Sadeera Samarawickrama 34; Kalthara Senarathne 2/22); Ragama CC 146 all out in 32.4 overs (Saminda Fernando 38, Ishan Jayaratne 26; Jeffrey Vandersay 5/27, Dilum Sudeera 2/28, Pramod Madushan 2/45)

## England U-19 win first Youth ODI

Touring England Under-19 cricket team beat their Sri Lankan counterparts by 25 runs in the first Youth One-Day International (ODI) yesterday (30 November) at SSC, Colombo. The second of the five-match series will be held at the same venue on Friday (3). The photo shows hosts' skipper Dunith Wellalage who shone with both bat and ball yesterday.

**Brief scores:** England U-19 242 all out in 49.3 overs (William Luxton 44, James Rew 40; Dunith Wellalage 5/30); Sri Lanka U-19 217 all out in 47.3 overs (Dunith Wellalage 68, Ranuda Somarathne 57, Chamindu Wickramasinghe 34; Joshua Boyden 3/27, Rehan Ahmed 2/31)



## Permaul's maiden five-for derails Sri Lanka

## ● Sri Lanka vs. West Indies 2nd Test in Galle, day two report

COMPILED BY RANJIKA PERERA

**V**eerasammy Permaul starred with a brilliant five-wicket haul for the West Indies as they skittled out Sri Lanka for 204 to end the day on 69/1 before rain curtailed action in the Galle International Stadium yesterday (30 November). That was on the second day of the second cricket Test between the two countries. The hosts lead the series 1-0.

Sri Lanka dropped from a dominant position of 152/2 to 204 all out, losing eight wickets for 52 runs in less than just 13 overs as the West Indies opted for spin in a dramatic morning session of play yesterday.

## Best figures after nine years

Adding to 31-year-old left-arm orthodox bowler Permaul's 5/35, the other Windies' left-arm spinner Jomel Warrican too took 4/50.

Permaul is playing in his seventh Test to surpass his previous best bowling in an innings of a Test; 3/32 which he took against Bangladesh in



Oshada Fernando's fall saw Sri Lanka entering into an abysmal collapse where they lost eight wickets for 52 runs in less than just 13 overs

Dhaka in 2012 in his debut match.

## Oshada wicket sparks collapse

Pathum Nissanka and Oshada Fernando continued where they left off on Monday (29 November), the first day of the Test. Though runs flowed early, Sri Lanka's plans to have a challenging first-innings total were in disarray, since Fernando edged to wicket-keeper Joshua Da Silva for 18.

Angelo Mathews joined Nissanka,

To LISTEN to our sports page lead story, scan this QR code on your device



with debutant local lad Charith Asalanka (10) also being undone by Permaul.

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

Permaul would then snap up the next two wickets that of Lasith Embuldeniya and Suranga Lakmal to bring up his maiden five-wicket haul in Tests.

## Better at facing Lankan spinners

It wouldn't take long for the West Indies to wrap things up as Mathews (29) would be the last man to be dismissed. It was spun again which did the damage as Warrican celebrated the scalp.

The West Indies then headed to lunch at 2/0.

Their openers – skipper Kraigg Brathwaite and Jermaine Blackwood – batted sensibly in the second

## First-ever five-for

Spin continued to tangle Sri Lanka



The other Windies' left-arm spinner Jomel Warrican took 4/50

session, treating the deliveries on their merit. They also look relatively comfortable against the Sri Lankan spinners, a massive improvement from their performance in the first Test which they lost by 187 runs on Thursday, 25 November.

## Rain stops play

Blackwood was closing in on his half-century when Jayawickrama delivered the first blow for the hosts. A delivery pitching on middle and leg would straighten enough to trap Blackwood, who then reviewed unsuccessfully to bring an end to his knock of 44.

The heavens would then open up in Galle bringing a delay in proceedings with the West Indies at 69/1. Rain would persist for the remainder of the day, meaning no further play would be possible.

The visitors, though, would be happy with their showing in the day with a brilliant performance in the field followed by a steady outing with the bat as they now trail the hosts by only 135 runs with nine wickets intact, going into the third day today.

## SCOREBOARD

## SRI LANKA 1ST INNINGS

(Overnight 113/1 in 34.4 overs)

Pathum Nissanka lbw Permaul	73
Dimuth Karunaratne (Capt.) c & b Chase	42
Oshada Fernando c da Silva b Warrican	18
Angelo Mathews b Warrican	29
Dhananjaya de Silva c da Silva b Permaul	2
Charith Asalanka c Bonner b Permaul	10
Dinesh Chandimal (wk) lbw Warrican	2
Ramesh Mendis c Hope b Warrican	5
Suranga Lakmal c Warrican b Permaul	12
Lasith Embuldeniya b Permaul	1
Praveen Jayawickrama not out	0
Extras (lb 7, nb 3)	10
<b>Total (all out in 61.3 overs)</b>	<b>204</b>

Fall of wickets: Fall of wickets: 1-106

(Karunaratne, 30.6 ov), 2-139 (Fernando, 41.6 ov), 3-152 (Nissanka, 48.2 ov), 4-154 (de Silva, 48.4 ov), 5-169 (Asalanka, 52.6 ov), 6-169 (Chandimal, 53.3 ov), 7-178 (Mendis, 55.3 ov), 8-187 (Embuldeniya, 58.1 ov), 9-200 (Lakmal, 60.5 ov), 10-204 (Mathews, 61.3 ov)

**Bowling:** Roach 6-2-12-0, Holder 8-2-23-0, Mayers 2-0-13-0, Permaul 13-3-35-5 (1nb), Chase 14-0-64-1, Warrican 18.3-5-50-4 (2nb)

## WEST INDIES 1ST INNINGS

(Overnight 113/1 in 34.4 overs)

Jermaine Blackwood lbw Jayawickrama	44
Kraigg Brathwaite (Capt) not out	22
Nkrumah Bonner not out	1
Extras (nb 2)	2
<b>Total (for 1 wickets in 29.4 overs)</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Did not bat:</b> Roston Chase, Kyle Mayers, Shai Hope, Jason Holder, Joshua Da Silva (wk), Jomel Warrican, Veerasammy Permaul, and Kemar Roach	
<b>Fall of wickets: Fall of wickets: 1-62 (Blackwood, 27.4 ov)</b>	
<b>Bowling:</b> Lakmal 4-1-16-0, Embuldeniya 14-4-35-0, Mendis 3-0-7-0, Jayawickrama 8.4-2-11-1	

## Future rugby plan out in coming weeks: Rizly Ilyas



BY RANJIKA PERERA

As we concluded the Asia Sevens, the Sri Lanka rugby calendar for the year 2021 has come to an end.

Speaking exclusively to *The Morning Sports*, Sri Lanka Rugby (SLR) President Rizly Ilyas said: "We will be announcing our future plans in the coming weeks. We are still sorting out a few matters, and the media and the public will be notified of what we have planned for the next year."

Sri Lanka has been eagerly waiting for rugby action for many months since the pandemic affected the island in March 2020. It took a year and a half for rugby to return to the nation with the Warrior Sevens. The Sevens tournament, organised by the Police, was a real success despite the lack of two big teams, the Kandy Sports Club and the CR&FC.

There was a lot of new talent on show and the tournament was used as a qualification for the Asia Sevens



SLR President Rizly Ilyas

tournament, which took place in the UAE recently.

The selectors picked out the best players of the tournament, some of them young, exciting players.

However, at the Asia Sevens, where they met the big boys in the region, young Sri Lankans struggled.

They were only able to get one win against the Philippines whilst getting thrashed by the other opponents. Given the short preparation and the lack of experience, the Sri Lanka men's team played their hearts out. They are expected to only get better from the experience they gathered this time in Dubai, the UAE.

## Who will win the race for the Sri Lanka cricket Head Coach position?

## ● Graham Ford, Andy Flower, Naveed Nawaz, Marvan Atapattu

Four contenders are likely running for Sri Lanka cricket Head Coach position, which is to be vacated by incumbent Mickey Arthur after the ongoing Galle Test. Will it be Graham Ford, Andy Flower, Naveed Nawaz, or Marvan Atapattu?

The Cricket Advisory Committee has already spoken to Ford, *The Morning Sports* learnt yesterday (30 November).

Ford left the position as Sri Lanka Head Coach on an earlier occasion when he was placed under the purview of Asanka Gurusinha during previous cricket administration.

Gurusinha was placed above Ford then Manager and Selector reportedly for the disappointment of Ford. Notably, Ford resigned from Ireland Head Coach position recently the very day England county Derbyshire announced



Pakistan's win was made easy by Abid Ali (91, on left) and Abdullah Shafique (73)

that they are to hire Arthur as their next Coach.

Sri Lanka Batting Coach Grant Flower confirmed yesterday that he will also leave along with Head Coach Arthur adding, "We would've liked to have stayed on but unfortunately the powers that be in Sri Lankan cricket and the Technical Committee have

decided to get rid of us".

All other remaining coaching positions like bowling and fielding coaches are to be filled by locals, it is also learnt.

## Injured Mathews out of second Test in Galle

The injured Angelo Mathews will not play further

part in the ongoing Galle cricket Test between Sri Lanka and West Indies, *The Morning Sports* learnt.

## Abid, Shafique help Pakistan seal win

Pakistan sealed a convincing eight-wicket win over Bangladesh, gaining crucial International Cricket Council (ICC) World Test Championship points at Chattogram, Bangladesh yesterday (30 November).

Bangladesh claimed two big wickets but it was a mountainous task for them to deny Pakistan a deserving victory.

Two not out batters in the middle, Babar Azam and Azhar Ali, made sure there were not any more hiccups after their openers laid a solid foundation, chasing down the remaining runs in the morning session of day five, starting

from overnight 109/0.

The second and final Test will begin in Dhaka on Saturday (4 December).

## Brief scores:

Bangladesh 330 and 157 Pakistan 286 and (target 202) 203/2 (Abid Ali 91, Abdullah Shafique 73)

## Klusener to step down as Afghanistan Head Coach

Former South African all-rounder Lance Klusener has decided not to extend his contract as the Head Coach of the Afghanistan national team. Klusener took over the position in September 2019 with his contract expiring on 31 December this year. Under his tenure, Afghanistan performed reasonably well, especially at the recently concluded T20 World Cup in the UAE and Oman.

## 106TH COLOMBO CHAMPIONSHIP TENNIS

## Three in a row for Anjalika Kurera



Anjalika Kurera won her third straight Colombo Championship women's singles title yesterday (30 November) at SLTA Playing Section clay courts

PHOTO ISHAN WANNIARACHCHI

National women's champion Anjalika Kurera, who is still a schoolgirl at Ave Maria Convent, Nugegoda, beat Neyara Weerawansa 6/4, 6/0 to win the coveted women's singles crown of the 106th Colombo Championship Tennis, one

of the highest-rated (Grade 1) annual competitions in Sri Lanka, at the Sri Lanka Tennis Association (SLTA) clay courts, Green Path, Colombo yesterday (30 November).

Kurera clinched the tournament's girls' Under-

18 title as well this time.

She has now won the Colombo Championship women's singles title for three years in a row: 2018, 2019, and 2021. The tournament did not take place last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.