



## FIFTH BUDDHIST ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING HELD

### Buddhist Universities to be brought under UGC

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has decided to bring the Sri Lanka Buddhist and Pali University and the Buddhavajira Bhiksu University under the purview

of the Education Ministry on the request of the Maha Sangha. The President also paid attention to the possibility of placing these two Univer-

sities under the University Grants Commission. The President instructed officials to monitor their activities in a proper manner under the supervision

of the State Minister while safeguarding their identities. This decision was taken by the President during the fifth meeting of the Bud-

dhist Advisory Council held at the Presidential Secretariat on Friday afternoon, the President's media division said. **TO PAGE 02**



# COMMISSIONS FORMED UNDER 19TH AMENDMENT, A DISASTER

## - MINISTER PEIRIS



ASELA KURULUWANSA and S.K.SAMARANAYAKE

Education Minister Prof. G.L. Peiris has said that some members of the Independent Commissions as well as the Constitutional Council who make appointments to them are more politicized than politicians and act as pawns of forces against the country.

He said that the 19th Amendment to the Constitution has enabled these people to make decisions above the President who was elected by 6.9 million people and the SLPP was given a clear mandate at the last General Election to change this situation. The minister was speaking to the media in Kandy after receiving blessings from the Deputy

Chief Prelates of Malwatta and Asgiriya Chapters.

Prof. Peiris said if people are not satisfied with the rule of the leader they can defeat him next time, but neither the people nor anyone else has the power to remove members of the Councils and so-called independent Commissions that decide even above the President. He said that even if the Presi-

dent changes, the Parliament changes or the government changes, the members of these institutions who have joined hands with the anti-national forces will not change and added that these Commissions were not divine to be worshipped as some portray them to be and stressed that these were lies fabricated to deceive the people. **TO PAGE 02**

## PM concerned over children living in prison with mothers

### Ministry directed to find alternative

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa's attention had been drawn towards the plight of 46 children, all under five, living with their mothers serving time in prisons.



After seeing a report published in a national newspaper that 46 children are living inside prisons across the country with their mothers sentenced on various charges including drug trafficking, the Prime Minis-

ter had immediately directed the minister in charge of the subject to look into the possibility of releasing the children and ways to ensure their protection and needs outside of prisons. **TO PAGE 02**

## Sri Lanka to improve two-way trade closer home - Foreign Secretary



CAMELIA NATHANIEL and SANDASEN MARASINGHE

While noting that Sri Lanka's foreign policy is in transition, Foreign Secretary Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage said the focus in future will be closer to home, mainly South and East Asia, the Middle East,

Africa with improving two-way trade and investment given precedence. **TO PAGE 02**

## UNODC ready to help Lanka combat maritime drug trafficking

DILSHAN THARAKA

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said it was ready to assist Sri Lanka in combating maritime drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism.

This was said at a discussion Attorney General Dappula De Livera and several officials of his Department had with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Country Chief and UN Maritime Expert on International Drug Trafficking Organized Crime and Terrorism on international drug trafficking, organized crimes and terrorism. **TO PAGE 02**



The leopard found dead caught in a wire trap. Pictures by Gampola group Suranga Dilhan.



## ANOTHER LEOPARD KILLED IN SNARE, EIGHTH THIS YEAR

ASELA KURULUWANSA

Another leopard was found dead caught in a wire trap in a private estate in Ambagastenna, Doluwa in Gampola, yesterday (23).

The leopard which was around four years was caught in the snare while it was roaming in the

area for food. The leopard was around five feet long. Villagers had seen that a leopard was caught in the trap around 8.00 am yesterday and had informed the Wildlife Department but officers who arrived at the scene found the leopard dead. **TO PAGE 02**

## Discussions on to admit 7,000 more to universities

LAKSHMI PARASURAMAN

The University Grants Commission (UGC) is to hold a meeting with Vice Chancellors this week, to discuss the possibility of admitting 7,000 more stu-

dents, UGC Vice Chairperson Senior Professor Janitha Liyanage said.

"The UGC has approved the enrolment of 7,000 more students compared to 2018. **TO PAGE 02**



## Drone near Temple Trees: Chinese national arrested

DILSHAN THARAKA

A Chinese national was arrested for operating a drone camera in the high security zone in the Colpetty area, Colpetty Police said last Saturday. **TO PAGE 02**

## Time to deliver on people's mandate - Minister Keheliya

SANDASEN MARASINGHE and CAMELIA NATHANIEL

Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said since the public had voted the government with a two thirds majority under the PR system it is time for the government to put the manifesto into practice without any reservations.

"So now it is our turn to deliver on this agreement between the public and us," Minister Rambukwella said speaking to the Daily News in Parliament. **TO PAGE 02**



## Four gangsters trying to flee nabbed at BIA

### Two are acolytes of 'Angoda Lokka'

CAMELIA NATHANIEL

The Colombo Crimes Division (CCD) arrested four notorious underworld gang members at the Bandaranaik International Airport while attempting to leave for Dubai, Police Spokesman SSP Jaliya Senaratne said.

They have been arrested over the charges of distributing Cannabis in Colombo. One of the arrestees has been identified as Gamage Saranga Pradeep alias 'Welle Saranga' an underworld gunman and Ranasinghe Arachchige Ishara Lakmal.

They are believed to be key Kerala Cannabis distributors in

the country. Two others have been identified as Kathaluwa Liyanage Buddhika Sanjeewa and Thabdeen Mohammed Subeer who are suspected of being acolytes of underworld kingpin Angoda Lokka.

The BIA Immigration and Emigration officers had notified CCD that these suspects were attempting to escape to Dubai and based on that information the CCD officers had arrested these suspects.

The suspects were arrested while checking in to fly to Dubai at the BIA around 2.00 am yesterday. **TO PAGE 02**

## Country records twelfth COVID-19 death

### OVER 31,000 COMPLETE QUARANTINE PROCESS

AMALI MALLAWARACHCHI

The twelfth death due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the country was confirmed by the

National Operations Centre for Prevention of COVID-19 (NOCPCC) yesterday (23).

The deceased was a 47-year-

old female from Mawathagama, Yatiwala who had recently arrived from India. **TO PAGE 02**

## TNA appoints new Spokesman, National Organiser

Northern Province Special RASULA DILHARA GAMAGE

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has decided to appoint Wannai District MP and

TELO leader Selvam Adaikalanathan, as the new party spokesperson.

M.A.Sumanthiran, who is currently holding the post, said he will resign as he

has been in the post for a long period. It has been decided to appoint PLOTE MP Dharmalingam Siddharthan as TNA party organizer. **TO PAGE 02**

## Gangster 'Chamiya' dies in shootout

DILSHAN THARAKA

Chaminda Edirisuriya alias 'Chamiya' a close associate of underworld figure 'Angoda Lokka' was killed in a Police gunfire last Saturday.

The suspect was arrested by the Western Province

North Crime Division. Following the arrest he was taken back to the Police. During the ride permission had been requested by the suspect from the officers to leave the police vehicle for a call of nature. After that, he had grabbed the

firearm of a Police officer and opened fire and attempted to escape at the Orutota area in Gampaha around 10.50 pm. However, another police officer at the scene had subsequently opened fire at the suspect. **TO PAGE 02**

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**PM concerned over...** From page 01

Issuing a media communiqué the Prime Minister's Media Division stated that Premier Rajapaksa as soon as he saw the news had directed the Prison Reforms and Rehabilitation of Prisoners State Minister Dr. Sudarshani Fernanandopulle over the phone to look into possible measures to release the children.

The 46 children, all under five, belong to women who were either imprisoned while pregnant or had newborns. They are currently in the custody of their mothers on court order.

The PM's media unit stated that when inquired from the minister about the future steps to be taken with regard to these children she had said that all information in this regard is being collected and she will soon inform Prime Minister Rajapaksa about the legal background and procedures for the release of these children.

Prisons Commissioner General Thushara Upuldeniya said information was being collected and majority of the mothers with young children are in remand prisons.

**Four gangsters trying...** From page 01

The arrested underworld gang members are 30, 32, 43 and 45 years. These suspects had been involved in large scale drug operations, illegal weapons handling, and organised crimes. They were arrested for attempting to flee the country without court permission with several cases against them

were pending in courts. The CCD had also recovered \$7900 believed to have been earned through illegal drug distribution and Rs. 1,497,000.00 from their possession. They are being held under the custody of the CCD for 72 hours for interrogation under detention orders.

**Time to deliver on...** From page 01

He said the agreement is this manifesto which the people have fully mandated. "Some people laugh at some of the areas assigned to State Ministers without fully understanding its importance of the internal arrangement that we have made. If I give you a few examples of the internal arrangement, in the early 70's the Batik industry in this country was one of the most lucrative businesses. In fact, from Colombo to Marawila, Kandy and down south there were Batik showrooms aplenty and people even converted the front portion of their homes to set up Batik shops. Some people became millionaires through the Batik trade. But, unfortunately with the print Batik entering the market Sri Lanka was not prepared to meet this situation and we suffered a set-back and that caused the death of the Batik industry in Sri Lanka."

Referring to the measures taken by Indonesia to boost the Batik industry, he said that it is thriving and as a boost to the Batik industry every Friday government servants are required to wear Batik, similar to our casual attire permitted on Fridays. "Imagine if we impose a rule that all government servants should wear Batik to work on Fridays. This will instantly create a market. There will be millions of Batik attire being sold to meet

this demand which would instantly boost the Batik industry," he said.

Minister Rambukwella also said Pre-Schools and Dhamma schools in the country have been thus far given least consideration. "Although Pre-Schools and Dhamma schools are both vital components in laying the foundation for every child's future, these were given the least prominence in the Education system and thus, no attention was placed on developing these sectors. But, under our plans you have a targeted area and these targeted areas were made purely because these areas were neglected for years. So I am sure that things will take a complete turnaround and improve for the better," the Minister assured.

Also, he said that Sri Lanka is not in isolation when it comes to COVID-19 as the whole world is affected. Recession, he said is inevitable whether we like it or not due to this. "To meet this situation there are two things we need to focus on. One being foreign direct investments and the other is local products to the export market and that is where we have concentrated on. Hence, I am sure that we will have something extremely beneficial to our expectations," he said adding that hopefully Sri Lanka will be able to turn the situation around.

**Boy runs over relative in lorry mishap**

**DILSHAN THARAKA**

In a tragic accident in the Ahungalla area on Saturday evening a 12 year old boy was killed when a lorry accidentally started by another 15 year-old boy ran over him.

The lorry driver is said to have parked his vehicle in an empty land

and had gone to a nearby location where a group of people were constructing a wall. The 15-year old boy who had seen the lorry had entered it and is said to have turned the ignition key accidentally running over the 12 year-old boy who was riding a bicycle. The victim had succumbed to

injuries upon admission to the Balapitiya Hospital.

The two boys are said to be close relatives. The deceased child was a student at a school in Ahungalla and other boy involved in the accident is a student in a college at Galle town. Ahungalla Police are investigating.

**Commissions formed under...** From page 01

Peiris said that the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was a disaster for this country and as a result the country could be in a state of anarchy.

He said that the 19th Amendment to the Constitution had created a situation where there was no one responsible for the security of the country and that the people

had paid with their lives for it. He added that this has created impediments to the President from holding any Defence or any other Ministry.

He said that after making necessary changes to the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, a new Constitution will be brought to suit the country and that the

48-year-old J.R.Jayawardene's Constitution was not something etched in stone. The Education Minister said a lot of changes have taken place in the country during the past 48 years and that a new Constitution should be introduced after a proper study to identify new trends. MP Udayana Kirindigoda was also present.

**Country records twelfth...** From page 01

Upon the arrival on August 20, 2020, the patient was diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus and was treated at the Iranawila Treatment Center before being transferred to the Infectious Diseases Hospital (IDH) in Angoda yesterday night (22) for further treatment.

According to the NOCPOC, the deceased woman had travelled to India to receive medical treatment for cancer. She had also been suffering from diabetes and was a heart ailment. The funeral was held at the Kotikawatta public cemetery yesterday evening.

Meanwhile, the NOCPOC confirmed that six new COVID-19 cases were reported by yesterday (23) morning. One of these six patients has arrived from the United Arab Emirates and is presently receiving treatment from Mul-laitive quarantine center monitored by the Sri Lanka Air Force. Two more have returned to the country from Kuwait and are treated at Eco-Safari in Tissamaharama and GSH Hotel in Colombo. Another patient is a returnee from the United States of America who is presently cared at Rajagiriya Ayurveda quarantine center. Two other persons who returned from India are

quarantined at the Waskaduwa Citrus hotel.

As at yesterday morning (23), the total number of infected persons quarantined at the Kandakadu and Senapura drug prevention, treatment and rehabilitation centers is 629, the NOCPOC also said. Meanwhile, the total count of coronavirus cases reported in the country is at 2,947.

NOCPOC also said 110 persons were brought back from Nairobi to Sri Lanka yesterday morning. Another 31 arrived from Dubai, 19 from Doha, 14 from Chennai and 238 from Sydney, Australia arrived in Sri Lanka. Arrangements have been made to direct all those who arrived to be quarantined at the quarantine centers controlled by the armed Forces.

One hundred and sixty one (161) persons were scheduled to complete their quarantine and return home yesterday (23) through the quarantine centers maintained by the three forces, NOCPOC also stated.

Accordingly two persons from Biyagama Village Quarantine Center, two persons from the Mount Lavinia Hotel Quarantine Center, 89 persons from Diyatalawa Holi-

day Quarantine Center, 10 persons from Biyagama Sports Complex Quarantine Center and 58 from Jetwing Beach Quarantine Center were to complete their quarantine period.

As of yesterday (23), 31,173 persons have completed the quarantine process and left for their homes. 7,304 persons are being quarantined in 52 quarantine centers controlled by the three forces as of yesterday (23).

1,710 PCR tests have been carried out on Saturday (22) and so far 202,907 PCR tests have been conducted in Sri Lanka.

Nine persons have been discharged from hospitals by yesterday morning (23) and one of them was a foreign national and the remaining eight were identified locally and are reported as inmates at the Kandakadu Treatment and Rehabilitation Center and their close associates.

Accordingly, 597 persons who were attached to Kandakadu Treatment and Rehabilitation Center have been discharged from hospitals. At present, the total number of Covid-19 infected people being treated at the center is 32.

**TNA appoints...** From page 01

Kilinochchi District MP S.Sridharan was the Chief Organizer of the Tamil National Alliance previously. The decision was taken at a special meeting of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) in Colombo after the swearing in of the new parliamentarians. With the allocation of

the TNA National List seat to Thavarasa Kalai- arasan of the Eastern Province, TELO and PLOTE have allegedly protested against it for a series of reasons including the argument that the decision was not legal as it was decision made outside the party's

central committee. TELO and PLOTE during the local government election had even decided to leave the TNA due to controversial decisions taken outside the TNA Central Committee. The rift between these political parties ended when a group of Tamil

intellectuals intervened and resolved the issue and took steps to reunite them. Representatives of other Tamil political parties in the North say that these positions were given to the two said parties to stop them from leaving the alliance.

**Sri Lanka to improve...** From page 01

"Sri Lanka's Foreign Policy is in transition now because the President and the new government is determined to make things better for the country. "So, we have a 'Sri Lanka First' approach, not dependent on any country. But, also, we want to shift our focus closer to home, mainly South Asia, the Middle East, East Asia and Africa. We want to shift the focus mainly on trade related and investment matters and how best we could benefit from two-way trade with these countries. Its not one-way trade like we used to do before with imports having the Lion's share and exports taking a backseat. We want to improve exports and mini-

mize imports. The President is very determined and he gives a lot of importance to the South Asia and BIMSTEC Bay of Bengal region. That is why we have a State Minister for Foreign Relations purely focussing on the South Asian, BIMSTEC and even Middle-East regional affairs. Also the State Minister will focus on economic development."

Speaking to the Daily News in Parliament he said the mandate that the President received at the Presidential election and at the Parliamentary election is basically a mandate to work for the people. "We don't want Sri Lanka to be subjugated by another country. We

are a small country but we are a big player in the game. We want to stand firm and don't want anyone to put us down. We are a proud nation and we want to maintain that pride and our focus would be shifting towards achieving that."

When asked what Sri Lanka's stand would be at the upcoming UN General Assembly sessions Colombo said, "We will make our case heard and of course next year again the UN Human Rights Commission will come up and

we will state our case. Earlier we even co-sponsored the UN resolution, but now we have withdrawn from it. We maintain that we have not done anything wrong so we are not going to be part of that resolution and we will face it. We will counter it with our deeds. When we deliver something to our people, I think that is where the answer is. Whether it is a Sinhala, Muslim, or Tamil or whatever religion or race, the basic needs are the same. They need jobs, housing, health and education for your children and also the security or the freedom to live peacefully and securely without being persecuted because you are from a minority. These five factors are common to all our people. Hence, the President and the government is determined to meet these basic five requirements. Once we meet these five requirements we can achieve much better cohesion, reconciliation etc. Reconciliation is not something that can be poured down the throats of the people. It has to evolve through society and the people. Therefore, this is where we are headed at the moment."

Hence, he assured that the country could expect to actually see a huge shift in Sri Lanka's foreign relations with a grand focus on economic development.

**NOTICE TO STUDENTS**

**(Third Year and Final Year Students - Faculty of Engineering, Ariviyal Nagar, Kilinochchi Premises - University of Jaffna)**

Third year and final year batches of students of Faculty of Engineering are hereby informed that the normal academic activities will commence on **26th August 2020 (Wednesday)** at Faculty of Engineering, Ariviyal Nagar, Kilinochchi Premises, University of Jaffna. Third year and final year students of Faculty of Engineering are expected to be present at Ariviyal Nagar, Kilinochchi Premises, University of Jaffna and attend the lectures and other academic activities from that day onwards. Students who are given hostel accommodation should report to respective hostels on 25th August 2020 (Tuesday).

Registrar  
22.08.2020

**Discussions on to...** From page 01

However we want to hear from the vice chancellors about the capacities of their universities and come to a conclusion by this week," she said. Health concerns will also be taken into account.

The UGC is still waiting for the results of the aptitude exams for universities for nearly thirty courses, though some exams have not been held due to the pandemic. "As soon as those universities release their results we hope to proceed with the 2019 intake by this October," Prof Liyanage said.

However now the UGC has made available online courses for English Language and the

IT studies for the students and before they enter universities they will be coached online. "We expect them to enter the universities with a certain standard of English and IT. The UGC has held discussions with the People's Bank and the Treasury to grant a loan for the students who are eligible for the 'Mahapola' scholarship to buy a laptop."

Meanwhile the World Bank has approved a loan to establish computer centres in the Arts faculties, which will benefit new Arts students. This follows a request from President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to enhance the IT knowledge of these students.

**Buddhist Universities to...**

From page 01

The President said he will present the action taken by the Government and their progress pertaining to the proposals and advice given by Maha Sangha at four previous meetings at the next session. Pointing out that advice of the Buddhist Advisory Council have been used while formulating the structure of the State Ministries President said he expects the Maha Sangha to continue to guide the Government in policy preparations. He further said Dhamma Schools, Bhikkhu Education, Privenas and Buddhist Universities were brought under the direct supervision of a single State Ministry for their advancement.

Maha Sangha commended the President for his efforts to address the issues pertaining to Piriven education and endeavours to improve Dhamma school education by implementing a systematic procedure and regulation.

Anunayake of the Malwatta Chapter, Most Ven. Vithasiri Nayaka Thera stated that the approach used to institute officers that of the Opposition Leader in the parliament was exemplary. The Thera added that the people were repulsed by how the predecessors made appointments to the same offices.

Anunayake of the Asgiriya Chapter, Most Ven. Anamadawe Dhammadassi Thera noted that the decision to minimize ministries will assist in saving taxpayers' hard-earned money.

Additionally, Mithirigala Aranya Senasanadhipathi, Ven. Udairiyagama Dhammajeewa Thera mentioned the importance of "virtuous mind" (Yahapath Sitha) in life and highlighted the significance of introducing it to the classroom.

Ven. Prof. Induragare Dhammarathana Thera highlighted the requirement of initiating an insurance scheme resembling the Agrahara Insurance plan for Bhikkhu teachers, their parents, and siblings in their times of need, when they are hospitalised.

Most Ven. Diviyagaha Yasassi Nayaka Thera pointed out the importance of introducing a procedure to give marks for Certificates of Dhamma School Final Examination and the Dharmacharya Examination when applying for government jobs. Most Ven. Prof. Kotapitiye Rahula Thera suggested that a discussion on Bhikkhu Education and Buddhist Education or a Sangayana on Theravada Buddhism is needed.

The Maha Sangha representing the Buddhist Advisory Council, officials including Principal Advisor to President, Lalith Weeraratne, Secretary to the Ministry of Education Prof. Kapila Perera, Secretary to the Ministry of Buddha Sasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs, Prof. Kapila Gunawardena and Buddhist Affairs Commissioner General Sunanda Kariyapperuma participated in this meeting.

**UNODC ready...** From page 01

Attorney General's Coordinating Officer State Counsel Nishara Jayaratne told the media that, on the sidelines of these discussions, they also discussed about the issue of international drug trafficking and related issues, as well as related issues to terrorism and other organized criminal activities and related legal issues affecting region. During those discussions, the Attorney General has paid close attention to the dangers and implications of international crimes against Sri Lanka, she said. Further, she added that the European Union (EU) and Germany are also ready to provide financial assistance to Sri Lanka to combat maritime drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism.

**Another leopard...** From page 01

Seven leopard deaths including the death of a rare black specimen have been reported this year alone. According to regional Wildlife officers, around 40 leopards have been killed in the last five years in the Gampola, Nawalapitiya and Nallathanniya areas. There are less than 1000 leopards in the country.

**Obituaries**

**DENZIL - ALGAMA (D.F.D)** (Former Superintendent Transport, Lake House) - Precious husband of Noeline (nee Kaluarachchi), loving father of Sherwin, father-in-law of Amali, grandfather of Ashani (Australia) and Shalini, youngest son of late Simon Appuhamy and Juliana, son-in-law of late Andrew and Nita Kaluarachchi, brother of late Stella, late Walter, late Stanley, late Therese and Anthony, brother-in-law of late Godfrey Silva, Felicia, Wimala, late Noel Samaranyake, Indrani, late Stanislaus, late Daphne, late Oswald, late Winston, late Hugh, Christine (Australia) and late Maryze. Cortege leaves residence. **No. 84, Averiawatte Road, Wattala** on Monday the 24th August 2020 for burial at around 4 p.m. at RC burial grounds, Wattala. 047953

**FERNANDO - SUNILA** (nee AMARASURIYA) - Beloved wife of late Dr. Marcus Fernando, loving mother of Dinesh Fernando, beloved sister of Asha Jayawickrama and late Lalaka Amarasuriya, mother-in-law of Deepthi Fernando and loving sister-in-law of P.A. Jayawickrama, Dr. Joe, late Therese, Alwin and Matilda. Remains lie at "The Restpect", **483, Baudhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 08**. Cortege leaves the parlour after religious service at 3.00 p.m. on Monday, 24th August, for cremation at the General Cemetery Kanatte at 4.30 p.m. 047955

**FERNANDO - WARNAPURAGE PRINCIE LEELARATHNE** - Beloved wife of late P.E.P Fernando, Senior Deputy Commissioner of Prisons, mother o Ruwan Premasinghe and Dilrukshi, mother-in-law of Gayani and Priyalal, grandmother of Kulesha, Malika Gayanthi Dineru Rajith and Mahima passed away on 23rd od August 2020. Remains lie at **146/4B, Caldera Gardens, Dutugemunu Street, Kohuwala**. 047957

**4th Year Remembrance**



**Late Mrs Gunawathie Weerasooriya**

There will be an all night Pirith Chanting at "Gunawathi Weerasooriya Paya" and an almsgiving to Maha Sangha on the following morning and noon, to mark the 4th year remembrance of our beloved mother.

*Sweet memories of you are still with us.*  
May you attain the supreme bliss of Nibbana  
Your sons and daughters who always remember you.

**Drone near...**

From page 01

The 40-year-old suspect was arrested while videographing the Temple Trees area in Colpetty using a drone camera, Police said. He was produced before the Colombo Magistrate's Court yesterday and Colpetty Police are investigating.

**Gangster 'Chamiya'...**

From page 01

An officer of the Peliyagoda Police also sustained injuries during the shootout and he is currently receiving treatment at the Gampaha Hospital. Police said the 41 year-old suspect is said to be the chief gunman of dead gangster 'Angoda Lokka'.



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Registrar  
22.08.2020

**In Loving Memory Of Our Parents**



**JOSEPH GREGORY EMMANUEL WICKRAMASINGHE**

Died 24th August 1968  
52nd Death Anniversary



**VETA GERTRUDE CHRISTINE WICKRAMASINGHE**

Died 25th July 2005  
15th Death Anniversary

*"We have loved them in life, let us not forget them in death"*  
St. Ambrose

Fondly remembered by your loving children & grandchildren  
Sunil & Sharmalle (Australia), Priya & Diane (Australia),  
Preethi & Terrence, Priyanshi & Bryant (Australia),  
Lucky & Thilitha (Australia), Lalith & Wendy,  
Asha & Asoka (Australia),  
Karen & Aaron, Nigel & Darnell, Shehara & Jerry, Shane,  
Sharon Ryan & Dylan, Marlon & Michell, Craig & Mark, Natasha

KEGALLE

# Itukama Fund surpasses Rs.1,567 million

Following corporate, individual donations and direct deposits, 'ITU-KAMA' COVID-19 Healthcare and Social Security Fund balance has now surpassed Rs. 1,567 million.

Dhanuka Nadiranga Rs. 2,500, Attorney-at-Law S.K.W. Gunawardena Rs. 50,000, L.N.K.P. Jayakody Rs. 1,000 and W.D. Devdunu Chamikara Rs. 603 donated to the Fund. These donations were handed over to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa by Prime

Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa at the Presidential Secretariat. In addition, a group of Sri Lankan expatriates returned from Korea donated Rs. 112,800, W. Sisira Goonetilleke Rs. 25,000, the Office of

Missing Persons Rs. 473,870.82, Priyantha Kalubowilage Rs. 15,000, Anuradhapura District Secretariat Rs. 696,297.01. K. Dissanayake, a Specialist Doctor at the Sri Lanka National Hospital, Rs. 177,000, Chairman of

the Finance Commission U.H. Paliakkara Rs.50,000 and Member of the Finance Commission V. Kanagasabathary Rs.50,000 donated to the Fund. Manelwatte Vihara Chief Incumbent Ven.Bodagama Chandima Thera

donated Rs 10 million to the 'ITU-KAMA' COVID-19 Healthcare and Social Security Fund. The donation was handed over to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at the Presidential Secretariat yesterday (21).

## Sri Lankan patient in coma from Saudi Arabia stable – Doctors

MOHAMMED RASOOLDEEN

Doctors are hopeful that the Sri Lankan coma patient who was ferried to Colombo by a special jet, will recover soon from the present state, according to a family member of the sick person.

Saudi Arabia repatriated the patient in a special jet at a cost of Rs 10.7 million at the request of his family members since he was in a coma.

Andrew Rohan Saudranayagam, 59, from Kadawatha, had been working in Riyadh as Sales and Marketing Manager of the Gulf West Company in Riyadh for the past 13 years, and he entered into a coma when he suddenly fell ill two months ago.

The patient was ferried to Colombo airport in a special aircraft equipped with a team of medical and paramedics. The patient was flown to Colombo on Thursday morning, and he is ward at the Quarantine ward of a private nursing in Colombo to continue his treatment.

Speaking to the Daily News, Margret, wife of Saudranayagam said a team of doctors headed by Neurosurgeon Dr. Sunil Perera is treating the patient, and he is hopeful that the patient will regain his consciousness soon.

She also thanked the CEO of the Gulf West Company, Idris Mustafa, for making the necessary repatriation arrangements to Colombo. "The company has also given an advanced payment of Rs 1.5 million for his hospital bills," she said.

Margret also said that her husband's company is in touch with her for daily updates of the progress of medical treatment. "The company's concerns have not stopped even after the patient is repatriated, for which we are ever thankful to its management," she said, pointing out that even the relatives are not allowed to see the patient, since he is under mandatory quarantine following his arrival from Saudi Arabia.

## Two-day Orientation Workshop in Parliament on August 25 and 26

Secretary General of Parliament Damika Dasanayake has informed the Members of the Parliament to take part in the two-day Orientation Workshop on August 25 and 26.

The workshop will be conducted each day from 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. at the Com-

mittee Room 1 in Parliament. Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa will be the Chief Guest. Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardane and Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa will attend the workshop, a communiqué issued by the Parliament Media Unit said.

## Industrialists' Day re-commences

The Industries Ministry said that the Industrialists' Day, a concept of the Industries Minister Wimal Weerawansa, will restart today.

The Industrialists' Day will be held every Monday from today at 73/1, Galle Road, Kollupitiya, at the Ministry.

On this day, industrialists will have the opportunity to discuss their issues directly with Minister Wimal Weerawansa and come up with solutions. The discussions will be held from 10 am.

After assuming duties as a Cabinet Minister prior to the recently concluded General Election, Minister Weerawansa introduced the concept. It was briefly stopped during the General Election.

## Central Yanmar Workshop commences

The newly setup Yanmar Workshop of the North Central Naval Command was declared open by Commander North Central Naval Area at SLNS Pandukabhaya on August 18.

The new facility will be of great value to undertake major overhauls, breakdown repairs and TOP overhauls of craft equipped with Yanmar engines. To coincide with the inauguration, the Yanmar workshop, the reconstructed Security Office of SLNS Pandukabhaya was too declared open on the same day.

Deputy Area Commander of North Central Naval Area, Departmental Heads, Commanding Officer SLNS Pandukabhaya and a group of officers and sailors from the command were present.

## Unemployed graduates/Diploma holders Employment Program

### Applicants not been called for training asked to submit appeals

Public Services Ministry Secretary J.J. Ratnasiri said that steps will be taken to provide opportunities to qualified applicants who have not been called for trainee training due to their membership in the Employees Provident Fund and employments to submit their appeals and to call for the training if qualified.

The Secretary to the Ministry of Public Services, Provincial Councils and Local Government further instructs the applicants to apply as per the advertisement on the official website of the Public Services Ministry, Provincial Councils and Local Government at www.pubad.gov.lk and to submit their appeal to the Divisional Secretariat before 15.09.2020.

## President meets Maha Sangha

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa visited Dharmapalarama Vihara in Mount Lavinia last Saturday and called on the Chief Incumbent of the temple Uththarithara Mahanayake of the Sri Lanka Amarapura Maha Nikaya Aggamaha Pandita Mahopadhyaya Most

Ven. Kotugoda Dhammawasa Thera. The President inquired into the wellbeing of the Maha Nayake Thera and engaged in pleasantries.

Later, the President visited Vidyalankara Pirivena in Peliyoda and called on the Vidyalankara Parivenadipathi, Chancellor of

the University of Kelaniya and Chief Sanghanayake of Colombo and Chilaw Districts Most Ven. Velamitiyawe Kusaladhamma Thera.

Ven. Kusaladhamma Thera apprised the President the status of the construction works of the International Buddhist

Conference Hall being built at the Vidyalankara Pirivena.

President Rajapaksa promised the Thera that he will take measures to fast-track the construction works of the project.

President Rajapaksa, who visited the Dharmavijayaloka Temple in Kot-

tawa, called on the Mahanayake of the Kotte Sri Kalyani Samagri Dharmamahasangha Sabha of Siyam Maha Nikaya and Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayawardanapura Most Ven. Dr. Itapana Dhammalankara Thera and received the blessings.



### Nabbed with venison

The Buttala Special Task Force acting on a tip-off arrested a suspect with 62.4 kg of venison from the Kumbukkana area in the Moneragala Police Division.

The suspect along with the venison was handed over to the Moneragala Wildlife office.

The suspect is a 33 year-old resident of the same area.

### Held over drugs

Dehiwala Police acting on a tip-off arrested a suspect with six kg of canna-

bis mixed with mawa from the Dehiwala area.

The suspect is a 23 year-old resident of the same area.

He was produced before the Mount Lavinia Magistrate's Court yesterday. Dehiwala Police are investigating.

### Arrested with ammunition

Two suspects were nabbed with two foreign-made firearms of 12 bore, a local 12 bore firearm, 20 bullets and 32 empty bullet shells in the Oluvil area in the Akkaraipattu Police Division.

The raid was carried out on a tip off by the officials attached to the Kalmunai Special Task Force.

The suspects are between the ages of 22 and 55 and residents of Ashroff Nagar and Oluvil.

They were remanded until August 25 after being produced before the Akkaraipattu Magistrate's Court last Saturday. Akkaraipattu Police are investigating.

## Suspect arrested with two ivory amulets

AMALI MALLAWAARACHCHI

The Department of Wildlife recently arrested a suspect, while he was trying to sell two ivory amulets for Rs. 85,000 via social media. The suspect was nabbed by the Wildlife Department in Kegalle.

The suspect had displayed an ad on Facebook that he has two ivory amulets for sale. The DWC arrested the suspect after monitoring the sales attempt. The suspect was produced before the Kegalle Magistrate and was released on surety bail of Rs. 100,000. The two ivory amulets were handed over to the National Museum for

a forensic report. The case will be heard again on December 12.

The DWC raid unit led by B.S. Sumanaratne, M.P. Jayaratne, S.A.N.S. Nisansala, W.R.S. Perera, H.R. Hettiarachchi, T. Dhammika, Eranda Bandara and driver L.C.K. Perera arrested the suspect.



The amulets

## Haputale Customer Centre

**Mr. Ashan Wijesundara (Manager)**

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YOUR PARTNER IN PROGRESS

CAMELIA NATHANIEL

Vice Admiral Nishantha Ulugetenne assumed duties as the 24th Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy on July 15 after being elevated to the rank of a three-star Admiral. He is a proud product of Royal College, Colombo, where he was also a member of the Cadet Platoon and went on to win the Hermann Loos Trophy twice, in 1981 and 1982.

Vice Admiral Ulugetenne specialized in the fields of gunnery and missiles and was a key member of the pioneering team that introduced missiles to the Navy fleet. He also held a range of sea as well as shore appointments during his illustrious career spanning over 35 years.

The senior officer served aboard many fast attack craft and commanded the prestigious 4th Fast Attack Craft Flotilla, at the height of the war. He also commanded the SLNS *Nandimithra* in 2009, aboard which he was privileged to be its first Weapons Officer and Executive Officer, earlier.

Apart from that, Vice Admiral Ulugetenne held office as the Director Naval Intelligence for over three years. He also held appointments as Director Naval Weapons, Deputy Area Commander (North), Director General (Services), and Commander Southern Naval Area, Commander Western Naval Area, Commandant Volunteer Naval Force and Deputy Chief of Staff prior to being appointed as Chief of Staff of Sri Lanka Navy on May 4, 2019.

In an interview with the *Daily News*, Vice Admiral Ulugetenne spoke of his journey to the top in the Navy, including his achievements and horrifying experiences during the war.

Following are excerpts of the interview with Navy Commander Vice Admiral Nishantha Ulugetenne.

**Q** Tell us about your family and early childhood.

**A.** Both my father and mother were police officers. My father worked in the fingerprint department of the CID. My mother is no more, but my father lives with me in Rukmalgama. During my youth, we lived at the Field Force Headquarters in Colombo. My elder brother has a Chemistry special degree from the Colombo University and is residing in the USA where he works for a pharmaceutical company.

**Q** How did you find your way into the Navy?

**A.** I joined Royal College, Colombo in 1971 and sat for my A/L examinations in the Math stream in 1983. I left school in 1984. I joined the school Cadet Corps as a junior cadet in 1979 and remained a cadet until I left school in 1984. I reached the highest level possible for a cadet and participated in two Independence Day parades. Back then, the Cadet Corps was the last unit of the Army Volunteer Force. During one of these Independence Day rehearsals at Galle Face, our Cadet Platoon was slotted right next to the Navy and seeing the Navy officers in their crisp white uniforms and the Navy boats, I was determined to join the Navy someday.

I joined the Sri Lanka Navy as an Officer Cadet of the 13th Intake in 1985 and underwent basic naval training at the Naval and Maritime Academy, Trincomalee. Upon successful completion of training, I was commissioned as a Sub Lieutenant on January 7, 1987. Having proved my abilities, I was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral on June 1, 2015. Admiral Jayanath Colombage was my Training Officer during my cadet training.

**Q** What did you specialise in and what are the posts you have held in the Navy?

**A.** I specialized in the fields of gunnery and missiles and was a key member of the pioneering team that introduced missiles to the Navy fleet. I have also held several sea as well as shore appointments during my career spanning over 35 years. I served aboard many Fast Attack Craft and commanded the 4th Fast Attack Craft Flotilla, the teeth arm of the Sri Lanka Navy fleet.

In 2006, I was handpicked by the then Navy Commander Vice Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda to head the Fast Attack Craft Flotilla. I also commanded the SLNS *Nandimithra* in 2009, as its first Weapons Officer and Executive Officer of the same ship, earlier. In 1992, I commanded my first fast attack craft, P464 and in 1997, I commanded the P481. Then I was appointed as the first training officer of the Fast Attack Squadron where I was responsible for fire-fighting and lifesaving.

We were trained in fire-fighting and first aid by the US Navy Seals. Apart from that, I held office as the Director Naval Intelligence for more than three consecutive years just after the Humanitarian Operation. I also held the post of Director Naval Weapons, Deputy Area Commander (North), Director General (Services),



SLNS *Nandimithra*

# At the helm of the Navy

Vice Admiral Nishantha Ulugetenne speaks of his career at sea and the challenges he now faces as he steers the Navy in the 21st century

**'My plans are to enhance the night capability and sensors of the Navy. I am also trying my best to acquire suitable forward weaponry for two newly acquired ships and we are in the process of establishing a Navy Air Wing.'**

and Commander Southern Naval Area, Commander Western Naval Area, Commandant Volunteer Naval Force and Deputy Chief of Staff prior to being appointed as Chief of Staff of Sri Lanka Navy on May 4, 2019.

I earned three Master's degrees from Kings College, London, Wollongong University, Australia and Chennai University, India. I attended the Advance Command and Staff Course at the Joint Service Command and Staff College, United Kingdom and was conferred with 'psc' qualification and Master of Arts in Defence Studies. I also obtained my Master's degree in Maritime Policy from Wollongong University, Australia. I also graduated with a Master of Philosophy in Defence and Strategic Studies.

**Q** You played a vital role in preventing human smuggling operations, especially to Australia, by sea. Your comments?

**A.** While I was in charge of Naval Intelligence between 2010 to 2013, people smuggling was rampant with the use of multi-day fishing trawlers to smuggle people illegally, especially to Australia.

However, together with the assistance of other local and Australian agencies, we managed to greatly reduce the people smuggling operations. As a result of our success in preventing the human smuggling operations, the Australian government gifted two vessels to the Sri Lanka Navy.

However, unlike back then, now human smuggling is carried out on a smaller scale to Reunion Island in France and to Madagascar. In the past, these crafts were loaded with over about 70 persons so we knew they were being smuggled. But now they take these groups in smaller numbers of less than around 10, so it's hard to determine if they are being smuggled or if they are crew members of a vessel.



Navy Commander Vice Admiral Nishantha Ulugetenne. Picture by Rukmal Gamage

**Q** You have earned two gallantry medals for bravery for your participation in the war. Can you explain what these medals were for?

**A.** I earned the Rana Sura Padakkama (RSP) twice. The first one was for my participation in Operation Balawegaya when the LTTE sieged Ele-

phant Pass. We were tasked with taking the Army troops and my boat was in the first wave. The second instance was in November 1993 when I was posted as the officer in charge of a small naval base in Nagathivanthurai and the LTTE launched a simultaneous attack on all the government troop camps in Pooneern.

My camp came under attack and realising we had no backup I took the decision to withdraw at sunset with 67 of my men of which 17 were casualties. We removed all essential components of the communication sets and other vital weapons. During sun-

set, we crawled into the lagoon and made it with just our heads above the water and after around 12 hours we reached Elephant Pass where the helicopters were sent to rescue us. Moreover, the only compass we had with us was dropped into the lagoon by one of my men due to exhaustion.

So we had no way of knowing the direction towards which we were heading. Then I realised that in an intermittent flash I was seeing at a distance the artillery fire from Elephant Pass to support the military camps under siege. So, I directed my men towards the flash which could be seen every 15 to 20 minutes and managed to reach our destination safely. I also earned the Vishista Seva Vibhushanaya (VSV) and Uththama Seva Padakkama (USP) for exemplary conduct during my naval career.

I was awarded the Deshaputhra Medal for sustaining injuries while on active duty. The LTTE had laid sea mines and my fast attack craft got entangled in one of them in the Keeramalai area in Kankesanthurai and my boat was thrust into the air and when it landed, I was thrown and my neck had got entangled in something and I was injured. I was taken to Kankesanthurai and felt numbness in the left side of my body. I was treated at the Army Hospital and thankfully survived to talk about it.

**Q** What is the most memorable incident you experienced during the war?

**A.** During the withdrawal from the Nagathivanthurai camp while we were under fire, we could only carry our essential equipment and had to leave behind most of our belongings. I did not realise it, but I had misplaced my service ID at Nagathivanthurai and



The commissioning of the 4th Fast Attack Flotilla in Trincomalee.

Vice Admiral Ulugetenne served aboard many fast attack craft and commanded the prestigious 4th Fast Attack Craft Flotilla, at the height of the war.

after 11 years I was contacted by an Army officer dealing with de-mining who notified me that they had found my service ID while de-mining the area.

**Q** The biggest challenge facing the Navy right now is preventing drugs being smuggled into the country by sea. As the 24th Navy Commander, how do you see this challenge?

**A.** The operations are carried out purely on intelligence. Without intelligence, drug smuggling operations cannot be detected. However, we also monitor any suspicious movements using our radar stations installed along the coastal belt. In addition, now we possess advanced offshore patrol vessels (OPV) such as *Sayurala*, *Sidurala*, *Gajabahu*, *Parakramabahu*, *Sayura*, *Samudura*, *Sagara* and *Jayasagara*. We use them to patrol the Economic Zone to detect any operations where larger vessels bring these drugs and transfer them onto smaller boats to be smuggled ashore.

We also work in close cooperation with the CID, TID, Police Narcotics Bureau and STF to counter these drug operations. We share intelligence and do our best to prevent these drugs being smuggled into the country by sea. All our officers are trained to detect any suspicious craft and we search such vessels.

**Q** Currently, with the threat of Covid-19 there are reports of refugees being smuggled into the country from India. How does the Navy handle the issues of illegal fishing, smuggling of Kerala cannabis and also smuggling of refugees to the country from India?

**A.** Yes, this is a big challenge currently and even when we seize Kerala cannabis or other drugs we have to handle it properly and handle those who are arrested very carefully not compromising the safety or exposing our personnel. It is also a big issue when we arrest persons at sea as we are uncertain if they are infected with Covid-19 or not. However, we have taken all possible precautions and we hand them over to the ground authorities such as the police who then put them through a quarantine process.

**Q** During your tenure as the Navy Commander, what plans do you have to improve the capabilities and functions of the Navy?

**A.** My plans are to enhance the night capability and sensors of the Navy. We still do not have proper forward guns for the two newly acquired ships. So I am trying my best to acquire suitable forward weaponry for these ships and we are in the process of establishing a Navy Air Wing.

At the moment we have eight ships which can carry helicopters and facilitate helicopter landings and take-offs. We have commenced discussions with the Air Force and tested landings at sea as well. Discussions are progressing well and the Air Force has also responded positively to this proposal. Our officers are actively engaged with the Air Force in this regard.

Further, in addition to the two underwater museums in Galle and Trincomalee, we have also proposed two more in Tangalle and Pasikudah which will certainly be a boost for the tourism industry. We intend to establish these two in shallow depths to make diving easier.

In addition, there are many Navy personnel who contributed during the war and who are either retired, disabled and discharged or some who have passed away, but their families require help and we must take care of them. We have already commenced a programme where those who require medical supplies from the Navy Hospital no longer need to come to Colombo for their supply of medication, but we take the medicines to them as a welfare measure, wherever they are in the country.

# Three-year national programme to uplift agriculture – Aluthgamage



Agriculture Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage in discussion with the officials.

A three-year national programme has been prepared to uplift agriculture and will include plans to develop export crops including spices, Agriculture Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage said.

He said that the Government led by the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa is paying special attention to uplift export crops. Many problems have

arisen because of the independent functioning of government institutions related to agriculture, he said.

"There should be proper coordination between these institutions and a collective effort was needed," he said.

Minister Aluthgamage was participating in an inspection tour of government institutions related to agriculture in

the Kandy District last Friday.

After inspecting the activities of the Department of Agriculture, the Hadabima Authority and the Department of Animal Production and Health, the Minister visited the Department of Export Agriculture in Getambe.

Minister Aluthgamage said that the development of the export agro-sector will

be included in the national programme.

"You must all work to make a tangible difference in the country's export agro-sector within the next three years," he advised the officials.

Export Agriculture Director General Dr. A. P. Heenkenda said that 55 per cent of the export crop income comes from cinnamon. "Although the price of pepper has come down,

it has earned an export income of Rs. 63 billion last year," he said.

"We expect to increase export earnings to 100 billion by 2025. A number of new programmes are already underway in this regard. Financial assistance of Rs. 85,000 per hectare of pepper and Rs. 75,000 per hectare of cinnamon is already provided to farmers," the Minister said.

"Despite the global epidemic of COVID-19, this year's export earnings have increased compared to 2019. We will get good prices for export agricultural products in the future," he added.

## SLFP Youth Front President resigns

S.M.WIJAYARATNE,  
Kurunegala Daily News Corr.



Kurunegala District Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) and Sri Lanka Freedom Party Youth Front President Parliamentarian Shantha Bandara has decided to relinquish the SLFP Youth Front Presidency.

He has informed the SLFP Central Working Committee his decision on August 20, when the SLFP Central Working Committee met at the SLFP Headquarters.

He told the *Daily News* that he served his maximum period and decided to resign to give someone else a chance to hold the post.

## Cab collides with train, seven injured

B.W.D DHARMAKEERTHI,  
THALAWA GROUP Corr.

Seven persons were injured when a cab collided with the Talaimannar night mail train that was plying from Talaimannar to Colombo in the Ariyagama, Pindikulam, Thabuttigama area last Saturday around 1.30 am.

Thambuttigama Police stated that the accident has happened because of

the cab driver's negligence. The railway gatekeeper was not present at the time of the accident, police said.

The injured have been admitted to the Thambuttigama Base Hospital. Five injured have been admitted to the Anuradhapura Teaching Hospital later, hospital sources said.

Thambuttigama police are investigating.



The smashed cab.

## Suspect arrested with 48.29 grams of heroin

DILSHAN THARAKA

A suspect was arrested along with 48.29 grams of heroin by the Western Province- North Crime Division last Saturday.

He was handed over to the Peliyagoda Police.

A 48-year-old suspect is a resident of Dutugemunu Street, Peliyagoda. He was produced before the Hulftsdorp Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Peliyagoda Police are investigating.

## Two women arrested for murder

RASULA DILHARA,  
North Special Corr.

Two women were arrested by Mannar Police in Delft, Jaffna on Saturday for allegedly killing a woman who was found dead a few days ago near a salt pan in the South Bar area in Mannar.

One woman is the sister of a deceased, and it has been revealed that she had killed the woman with the help of another woman and thrown her body into the sea.

According to information received from a woman, the two had killed the woman and

taken her away in a three wheeler and dumped her body into the sea.

A special police team began investigations after a 21-year-old woman named Torica Julian was found dead in Mannar.

The two suspects involved in the incident have been arrested after checking CCTV camera footages at several locations outside the Mannar South Bar Salt Lake. The two suspects are being questioned and will be produced at the Mannar Magistrate's Court.

**SUPER BALL** Draw Number: 1196  
Draw Date: 22.08.2020 Saturday

Winning English Letter and Numbers: T 15 59 62 76

Total Value of Prizes: Rs. 4,607,260/-

Next Super Jackpot: Rs. 52,441,650/-

Development Lotteries Board, 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 02

**ADA KOTIPATHI** SATURDAY Date: 22.08.2020 Draw No.: 1018 Colour: YELLOW

Total Value of Prizes: Rs. 5,461,420/-

Winning Numbers: 50 52 67 69 English Letter: K

Winnings: 3720 (Rs. 500/- cash prizes), 855 (Rs. 100/- cash prizes)

Development Lotteries Board, 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 02

**ඔබේ වාසනාව** Draw No.: 3354 Date: 22.08.2020 Colour: GREEN

Next Super Jackpot: Rs. 37,489,548/-

Winning Numbers: 26 58 62 73 English Letter: Y

Total Value of Prizes: Rs. 5,394,820/-

Development Lotteries Board, 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 02

**කොවිසිනි වාසනාව** English Letter & Winning Numbers: I 05 52 70 71

Draw No: 614 Date: 21 August 2020 Colour: Green

Next Super Jackpot: Rs. 81,195,185/-

Development Lotteries Board, 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 02

**සුවර්ධන වාසනාව** Development Fortune

Date: 21-08-2020 Draw Number: 360 Colour: Red

Super Jackpot: Rs. 10,521,044/-

English Letter: L Winning Numbers: 34 54 70 Fate Number: 5

Total Value of Prizes: Rs. 4,023,920/-

Next Super Jackpot: Rs. 10,697,696/-

Development Lotteries Board, 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 02

**වෙණ වාසනාව** Lagna Wasanawa

Date: 21-08-2020 Draw Number: 2898 Colour: Dark Blue

Super Jackpot has been won: Rs. 2,770,278/-

Winning Numbers: 39 42 44 46 Gemini

Total Value of Prizes: Rs. 12,156,738/-

Development Lotteries Board, 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 2

**වෙණ වාසනාව** Lagna Wasanawa

Date: 22-08-2020 Draw Number: 2899 Colour: Light Blue

Super Jackpot: Rs. 2,000,000/-

Winning Numbers: 19 30 47 49 Pisces

Total Value of Prizes: Rs. 9,161,220/-

Development Lotteries Board, 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 2

**ඔබේ වාසනාව** ADA KOTIPATHI

FRIDAY Date: 21.08.2020 Draw No.: 1017 Colour: PURPLE

Total Value of Prizes: Rs. 4,868,580/-

Winning Numbers: 12 29 35 49 English Letter: R

Winnings: 1383 (Rs. 500/- cash prizes), 900 (Rs. 100/- cash prizes)

Development Lotteries Board, 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 02

**Bank of Ceylon**

The New Limited Service Branch (Cash Collection Counter) of the Bank of Ceylon, affiliated to Kurunegala Super Grade Branch opens today at the premises of Kurunegala Municipal Council

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and at the following locations:

- Ratnapura Road, Bendaluwa, Parakaduwa (Near 77th km post).
- No. T210/3, Middleton Bazaar, Nuwara Eliya Road, Thalawakele.
- No. 369 E, Colombo Road, Embilmeegama, Pilmatalawa.
- No. 12, St. Thomas' Mawatha, Mataara.
- No. 689, Anuradhapura Road, Dambulla.
- No. 774 A, High Level Road, Panagoda, Homagama.
- No. 91, Kandy Road, Medawachchiya.
- Hambantota Road, Tissamaharama (In front of the Filling Station).
- Pothuvti Road, Siyambalanda (Near Bank of Ceylon).
- No. 81 C, Colombo Road, Wariyagoda, Alawwa.
- No. 03/M, Negombo Road, Rendapola, Mirigama.
- No. 43, Chilaw Road, Anamadawa.
- No. 175, Karaypokku Junction, A9 Road, Kilinochchi.

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RITWIJA DARBARI

# South Asia: Best place in the world for adventure tourism

## India's adventure tourism circuit with Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka can boost the sector

As Europe's journey with the Covid-19 pandemic enters its next phase, many have embarked on their summer adventures to Greece, Italy or Spain, riding the wave of optimism offered by EU recommendations on opening borders. Even though a majority of the countries in Europe are past their Covid-19 peaks for now, there have been spikes and fears of a second wave and people find themselves checking government travel advisories with trepidation, almost on a daily basis, to see whether their plans will follow through.

This uncertainty and the related travelers' anxiety will be the hallmark of travel and tourism in the age of Covid-19. Given the varied recovery trajectories for countries across the world, reopening and revival strategies will have to be tailored to the specific context. So what is in store for this sector in South Asia and what can the path to recovery of the industry look like in the region?

According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), the travel and tourism sector accounted for 10.3 per cent of the global GDP and 330 million jobs in 2019. The sector has seen high growth in the last 10 years, which can be largely attributed to factors such as rising disposable incomes, the emergence of low-cost carriers, ease of travel through internet-based services and relaxation of visa regulations.

In South Asia, WTTC estimates that the sector contributed \$234 billion or 6.6 per cent of the region's GDP in 2019. Within the region, the pandemic could not have come at a worse time for Nepal's tourism industry, which has almost entirely shut down since the outbreak. The government had declared 2020 as the Visit Nepal Year, announcing a national campaign with an annual target of achieving two million tourist arrivals. With the country's borders closed to adventure-seeking mountaineering crowds, the direct actors along in the tourism value chain (tour operators, trekking agencies, mountain guides, and sherpas) have lost their only source of income.

Similarly, the Republic of Maldives is uniquely vulnerable to external shocks, and tourism constitutes a third of the country's national revenue in this small island state. Neeza Imad, Minister of State for Economic Development of Maldives, says, "Covid-19 has had a devastating impact on our economy, particularly in relation to SMEs that account for most of the tourism related employment." As a result of the ongoing crisis, the International Monetary Fund has projected that the country's economy will contract by 8.1 percent in 2020.

After four months of lockdown, the Maldives opened to welcome tourists back to its resorts and hotels, with a comprehensive sector reopening strategy, aimed towards building trust and credibility among potential tourists. Neeza Imad signals a strong welcome message to the international tourist community: "We welcome back tourists as resorts opened on July 15, 2020. Tourists can be assured that the government has put into place strict safety and hygiene standards to ensure the safe reopening of the country to tourists from around the world when travel restrictions begin to ease."

Globally, in an effort to establish a harmonised approach towards setting guidelines around the reopening of the sector, WTTC launched the 'Safe Travels' stamp that has been designed to allow potential travellers to recognise establishments around the world which have adopted standardised health and hygiene protocols. Backed by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the stamp may be used across the travel and tourism value chain to certify hotels, restaurants, airlines, cruise lines, tour operators, restaurants, outdoor shopping, transportation and airports. Since its launch on May 27, 2020, the WTTC established protocols have been adopted by destination countries and cities around the world such as Turkey, Egypt, Portugal, Seville and Cancun.

### Regional cooperation towards restoration

Based on current trends and survey studies of consumer preferences and behavioural patterns, projections on resumption of travel indicate that



White water rafting



Dining out takes on a new meaning



Hiking

recovery will be proximity-based, gradually moving from domestic to regional and lastly intercontinental. As part of the institutional response to the Covid-19 crisis, the World Economic Forum regularly convenes a multistakeholder community of prominent experts, policymakers and businesses from the region. The Regional Action Group for South Asia held a virtual meet in July to discuss the impact of the pandemic on the travel and tourism industry and the measures that need to be adopted to support recovery efforts.

Public sector representatives and businesses from the region agreed that domestic tourism will lead the way in this recovery journey. This puts countries such as India that have a large domestic market at an advantage since they will be able to create more favourable fiscal conditions for stimulating growth in the sector while actively promoting local and regional tourism.

As a first step towards recovery, the possibility of establishing travel bubbles or corridors that would allow countries in the region to put in place protocols for opening up channels for air travel on a reciprocal

basis was also discussed among members of the Forum's Regional Action Group for South Asia. Establishing these safe zones bilaterally or among a group of countries with similar recovery trajectories would build focused capacities to safely manage the flow of tourists and allow testing of the framework for reopening on a larger scale at a later stage.

This approach would also permit a higher degree of control over a smaller tourist flow, which would enable faster rollback of open channels in the event of unanticipated spikes in

the number of infection cases. Most recently, India and Maldives have announced that they will be establishing a travel bubble to strengthen connectivity and tourism ties. Such agreements are likely to come up with other countries in the region as terms and conditions of establishing these safe travel zones are negotiated.

The World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report published in 2019 attributes natural and cultural diversity along with price competitiveness for the

emergence of South Asia as an attractive tourist destination. This is where the region can leverage regional cooperation towards building a sector revival strategy. For example, India could explore an Adventure Tourism circuit with Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka, where travelers get to experience the enthralling Himalayan landscapes, followed by a trip down south to explore some of Sri Lanka's best surfing spots. Similarly, a Spiritual Tourism circuit could offer the international traveler a well marketed package to discover the historical monuments of faith systems that bind the region together.

An opportunity that can be explored to bring back the international traveler to India is the niche segment of medical, wellness and Ayurveda tourism. Had the Covid-19 pandemic not erupted when it did, the medical tourism space would have touched the \$9 billion-mark in 2020. "India has been a long-preferred destination for medical tourism but with the Covid-19 pandemic, this sub-sector is now one of the worst-hit." Explains Shobana Kamineni, executive vice-chairperson, Apollo Hospitals Enterprise,

India. "As restrictions on international air travel begin to ease from select countries, adequate support from the government will be needed to further facilitate medical travel, with SOPs and safety protocols across each stage of patients' care continuum. We will have to actively promote India's role in serving those international patients that urgently need our care and help build trust that Indian hospitals, as well as health tech companies, are ready to welcome them again."

### Long-term measures to build resilience

In an effort to build back better in the post-Covid world, it would be critical to retain and inject capital investment in the sector so that it can achieve its true potential as a vehicle for growth and development. In June this year, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) announced that it is making a \$175 million investment in John Keells Holding. This will go towards expanding the company's supermarket chain in Sri Lanka and helping fund the development of hotel properties in Sri Lanka and the Maldives, making it IFC's largest-ever investment in Sri Lanka and the first supporting investments in the Maldives in a decade.

Krishan Balendra, Chairman, John Keells Holding, shares his views on the potential of this sector in the country: "We believe the tourism growth opportunity for Sri Lanka is immense as the number of arrivals is small compared to other countries. We are catching up after many years of war and we intend to build our brand and service levels to be on par with the best in the world."

Bhutan, which is the only South Asian country to have zero Covid-19 related fatalities to date, is also looking into how it can take this pivotal moment in the region's shared history to strategise growth in the sector. The country's 'High Value, Low Volume' tourism policy anchored in promoting sustainable tourism makes it a unique and exclusive travel destination. While commenting on the present situation in the country, Ugyen Dorji, Minister of Labour and Human Resources, Government of Bhutan, shared that "Though well managed in Bhutan, the Covid-19 pandemic has of course still had a negative impact on key national earnings from tourism. The Government of Bhutan is working on strengthening the tourism infrastructure, developing new tourism products and services and increasing entry points for tourists. This investment will go a long way in building the required ecosystem to support the intra-regional demand for tourism and promote sustainable job creation in the sector."

As South Asia continues to face the challenges posed by the Covid-19 crisis, it is evident that there is immense potential in the travel and tourism sector, which can be harnessed to contribute to the region's economic recovery.

Further investments in the physical as well as technological infrastructure will be required to enhance the competitiveness of the sector in the region to generate more income and employment opportunities along the travel and tourism value chain. The sector must find innovative means to bounce back and build future resilience as composite lockdowns get graded relaxation.

Based on experiences in regions where this journey has already begun, greater public-private cooperation will be needed to establish and comply with health and safety standards, and protocols while communicating those with clarity and consistency to potential travelers to rebuild their trust and confidence. Close coordination among sectors such as aviation, railways, hospitality and insurance will be needed to adapt to the evolving health situations in particular countries.

Travellers will also have to do their bit by preparing to deal with the uncertainties while ensuring that they comply with changing regulations that help countries manage fluctuations in the number of Covid-19 cases, which will undoubtedly arise as borders open up and the world becomes more mobile again.

(Ritwija Darbari is Community Specialist, Business Engagement, India and South Asia, World Economic Forum. Views are personal.)



Whale watching



Surfing

# Van falls into precipice killing three persons

G.I.R GARUSINGHE, WELLAWAYA SPECIAL Corr.

Three persons died when a van veered off the road and fell into a precipice near the Ravana Falls on the Wellawaya-Ella Road on Saturday (22).

Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) Uva Branch Electricity Superintendents W. A. Subasinghe and T. G. Udaya Kumara, residents of Maussagolla, Passara and Galle and the van driver, H. M. Wimalasena, died

in the accident. Three others in the van were injured and hospitalised. The driver had fallen asleep resulting in the accident, police said.

A large number of people, including Army and Police attempted to rescue the victims who were trapped in the toppled van.

A crane was deployed to lift the smashed van from the precipice. Ella Police are investigating.



The van is lifted by a crane.

# Residents seek doctor for Kokkavila dispensary

PRASAD POORNAMAL, PUTTALAM GROUP Corr.

People in Kokkavila, Chilaw and suburbs are undergoing great difficulties as the Kokkavila dispensary has not been issuing medicine for five months. The doctor there has been temporarily deployed at the Iranawila

COVID-19 Treatment Centre, residents said.

Puttalam Health Services Deputy Director Dr. Dinusha Fernando said that the doctor has been deployed at the Iranawila COVID-19 Hospital temporarily.

The residents of the area said that this is the first

time the dispensary has not been issuing medicine.

Patients from over 20 villages including Kokkavila, Karavitigara, Mugunuwatana, Wilaththawa and Mahagama seek medicine from the dispensary. They have to go to the Bingiriya or Chilaw Hospital because of this reason.

About 1,000 clinical patients also receive medicine from the dispensary. Until last month, the clinic had been treating patients, but from this month, it has been discontinued.

Although the dispensary has no doctor, its staff is present, the residents said.

**ආදිධ සමච්ච** NLCB

**OFFICIAL RESULTS** Draw No: 1048 Date: 2020.08.22

Winning Letter: **B**

Winning Numbers: **0 8 6 2 2 4**

Right to Left Prize Structure		
01 Prize	0 8 6 2 2 4	Rs. 2,000,000.00 Prizes: 1
02 Prize	8 6 2 2 4	Rs. 100,000.00 Prizes: 2
03 Prize	6 2 2 4	Rs. 10,000.00 Prizes: 31
04 Prize	2 2 4	Rs. 1,000.00 Prizes: 321
05 Prize	2 4	Rs. 50.00 Prizes: 3,096
06 Prize	4	Rs. 20.00 Prizes: 29,425
Left to Right Prize Structure		
07 Prize	0 8 6 2 2	Rs. 10,000.00 Prizes: 2
08 Prize	0 8 6 2	Rs. 1,000.00 Prizes: 28
09 Prize	0 8 6	Rs. 100.00 Prizes: 287
10 Prize	0 8	Rs. 50.00 Prizes: 3,049
11 Prize	B	Rs. 20.00 Prizes: 33,496
12 Prize	Missing the 6 winning numbers in any order	Rs. 200.00 Prizes: 126

Total Prizes Won in This Draw: **Rs. 4,098,570.00**

Winning ticket will be valid only for 6 months from the date of draw. Prizes of and above Rupees 5 Lakhs are bound to government tax rules. Producing the National Identity Card is a must when collecting the prizes.

Next WEDNESDAY Super Prize: **Rs. 11,887,246.50**

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**NEEROGA** LAGNA JAYA

Draw Number: 696 Date: 2020/08/21

**OFFICIAL RESULTS**

Zodiac: **Scorpio**

Winning numbers: **18 39 69 72**

PRIZES STRUCTURE	PRIZE MONEY	NUMBER OF WINNERS
1st prize: If 4 numbers are correct	Rs. 1,000,000/-	-
2nd prize: If 3 numbers and the zodiac are correct	Rs. 10,000/-	06
3rd prize: If 3 numbers are correct	Rs. 2,000/-	70
4th prize: If 2 numbers and the zodiac are correct	Rs. 200/-	305
5th prize: If 2 numbers are correct	Rs. 100/-	3,422
6th prize: If 1 number and the zodiac are correct	Rs. 60/-	4,618
7th prize: If 1 number is correct	Rs. 20/-	49,639
8th prize: If only the zodiac is correct	Rs. 20/-	18,204

Total Prize Money won in this Draw: **Rs. 2,237,140.00**

The Next Super Prize: **Rs. 17,000,779.50**

PRIZES OF FIVE LAKHS OR OVER ARE LIABLE TO GOVT. TAXES. WINNERS MUST PRODUCE NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD TO RECEIVE PRIZES.

Winning tickets are valid from the day of the draw for a period of six months only.

NATIONAL LOTTERIES BOARD  
32, Deshamanya N. W. J. Mudalige Mawatha, Colombo 01. Phone: 0114 607 000, 0112 324 324 Fax: 0114 663 416 Web: www.nlb.lk

**21.08.2020 & 22.08.2020 - TOTAL PRIZE WINNERS PRODUCED BY NATIONAL LOTTERIES BOARD 1,437,851**

**TOTAL PRIZE MONEY DISTRIBUTED AMONG WINNERS 60,018,070.00**

Rs. 2,000,000.00 PRIZES 03 Rs. 1,000,000.00 PRIZES 03 Rs. 100,000.00 PRIZES 57

**Govisetha** OFFICIAL RESULTS

Draw Number: 2517 Draw Date: 22.08.2020

English Letter: **E** Winning Numbers: **24 35 51 72**

COMBINATION	PRICE	NO. OF WINNERS
1 PRIZE IF ALL 4 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 1,000,000.00	01
2 PRIZE IF LETTER & ANY 3 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 100,000.00	06
3 PRIZE IF ANY 3 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 2,000.00	183
4 PRIZE IF LETTER & ANY 2 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 1,000.00	404
5 PRIZE IF ANY 2 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 100.00	10024
6 PRIZE IF LETTER & ANY NUMBER CORRECT	Rs. 40.00	6524
7 PRIZE IF ANY NUMBER CORRECT	Rs. 20.00	164836
8 PRIZE IF ONLY THE LETTER IS CORRECT	Rs. 20.00	30073

TOTAL WINNERS OF THIS DRAW: **212,051**

TOTAL PRIZE MONEY WON IN THIS DRAW: **Rs. 7,531,540.00**

SUPER PRIZE FOR THE NEXT DRAW: **Rs. 61,544,944.00**

Winning tickets are valid for a period of six months from the date of the draw. Prizes of Rupees Five Lakh and above are liable to government taxes. To obtain prizes, Presenting National Identity card is a must.

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**Govisetha** OFFICIAL RESULTS

Draw Number: 2516 Draw Date: 21.08.2020

English Letter: **L** Winning Numbers: **09 19 32 77**

COMBINATION	PRICE	NO. OF WINNERS
1 PRIZE IF ALL 4 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 1,000,000.00	01
2 PRIZE IF LETTER & ANY 3 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 100,000.00	09
3 PRIZE IF ANY 3 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 2,000.00	184
4 PRIZE IF LETTER & ANY 2 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 1,000.00	450
5 PRIZE IF ANY 2 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 100.00	10899
6 PRIZE IF LETTER & ANY NUMBER CORRECT	Rs. 40.00	7180
7 PRIZE IF ANY NUMBER CORRECT	Rs. 20.00	178792
8 PRIZE IF ONLY THE LETTER IS CORRECT	Rs. 20.00	32790

TOTAL WINNERS OF THIS DRAW: **230,305**

TOTAL PRIZE MONEY WON IN THIS DRAW: **Rs. 8,326,740.00**

SUPER PRIZE FOR THE NEXT DRAW: **Rs. 61,237,352.80**

Winning tickets are valid for a period of six months from the date of the draw. Prizes of Rupees Five Lakh and above are liable to government taxes. To obtain prizes, Presenting National Identity card is a must.

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**Mega POWER** OFFICIAL RESULTS

Draw Number: 589 Date: 2020.08.22

English Letter: **Z** Super Number: **20** Winning Numbers: **14 15 24 49**

PRIZE STRUCTURE	PRIZE MONEY RS.	NO. OF WINNERS
1st PRIZE: If all 4 Numbers are correct	1,000,000.00	01
2nd PRIZE: If only 3 Numbers with English Letter is correct	100,000.00	06
3rd PRIZE: If all 3 Numbers are correct	1,000.00	143
4th PRIZE: If only 2 Numbers with English Letter is correct	500.00	319
5th PRIZE: Only 2 Numbers are correct	100.00	8,093
6th PRIZE: If only 1 Number with English Letter is correct	40.00	5,326
7th PRIZE: Only 1 Number are correct	20.00	134,470
8th PRIZE: Only English Letter are correct	20.00	24,453

**BIGGEST PRIZE IN SRI LANKA** NEXT MEGA SUPER PRIZE: **Rs. 230,173,953.95**

NEXT POWER SUPER PRIZE: **Rs. 11,277,588.80** NEXT GRAND SUPER PRIZE: **Rs. 10,400,400.00**

Total Prizes Won in This Draw: **Rs. 6,303,300.00**

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**Mega POWER** OFFICIAL RESULTS

Draw Number: 588 Date: 2020.08.21

English Letter: **I** Super Number: **16** Winning Numbers: **13 32 57 75**

PRIZE STRUCTURE	PRIZE MONEY RS.	NO. OF WINNERS
1st PRIZE: If all 4 Numbers are correct	1,000,000.00	-
2nd PRIZE: If only 3 Numbers with English Letter is correct	100,000.00	06
3rd PRIZE: If all 3 Numbers are correct	1,000.00	162
4th PRIZE: If only 2 Numbers with English Letter is correct	500.00	363
5th PRIZE: Only 2 Numbers are correct	100.00	8,907
6th PRIZE: If only 1 Number with English Letter is correct	40.00	5,874
7th PRIZE: Only 1 Number are correct	20.00	145,409
8th PRIZE: Only English Letter are correct	20.00	26,597

**BIGGEST PRIZE IN SRI LANKA** NEXT MEGA SUPER PRIZE: **Rs. 230,051,154.35**

NEXT POWER SUPER PRIZE: **Rs. 11,154,789.20** NEXT GRAND SUPER PRIZE: **Rs. 10,277,600.40**

Total Prizes Won in This Draw: **Rs. 5,419,900.00**

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**MAHAJANA SAMPATHA** OFFICIAL RESULTS

Draw Number: 4221 Date: 21-08-2020

Winning Letter: **B** Winning Numbers: **3 3 9 6 7 8**

PRIZE STRUCTURE - from right to left	PRIZE MONEY	NO. OF WINNERS
1st Prize: 3 3 9 6 7 8	Rs. 2,000,000/-	01
2nd Prize: 3 9 6 7 8	Rs. 100,000/-	12
3rd Prize: 9 6 7 8	Rs. 10,000/-	107
4th Prize: 6 7 8	Rs. 1,000/-	1,071
5th Prize: 7 8	Rs. 100/-	10,810
6th Prize: 8	Rs. 20/-	107,053

PRIZE STRUCTURE - from left to right	PRIZE MONEY	NO. OF WINNERS
1st Prize: 3 3 9 6 7	Rs. 10,000/-	13
2nd Prize: 3 3 9 6	Rs. 1,000/-	98
3rd Prize: 3 3 9	Rs. 100/-	1,089
4th Prize: 3 3	Rs. 50/-	10,715
5th Prize: B	Rs. 20/-	42,692

Value of prizes won in this draw - **Rs. 10,289,550.00**

The Super Prize of next draw: **Rs. 24,210,370.00**

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**MAHAJANA SAMPATHA** OFFICIAL RESULTS

Draw Number: 4222 Date: 22-08-2020

Winning Letter: **O** Winning Numbers: **4 9 5 5 0 3**

PRIZE STRUCTURE - from right to left	PRIZE MONEY	NO. OF WINNERS
1st Prize: 4 9 5 5 0 3	Rs. 2,000,000/-	01
2nd Prize: 9 5 5 0 3	Rs. 100,000/-	11
3rd Prize: 5 5 0 3	Rs. 10,000/-	105
4th Prize: 5 0 3	Rs. 1,000/-	1,005
5th Prize: 0 3	Rs. 100/-	9,979
6th Prize: 3	Rs. 20/-	99,069

PRIZE STRUCTURE - from left to right	PRIZE MONEY	NO. OF WINNERS
1st Prize: 4 9 5 5 0	Rs. 10,000/-	12
2nd Prize: 4 9 5 5	Rs. 1,000/-	97
3rd Prize: 4 9 5	Rs. 100/-	982
4th Prize: 4 9	Rs. 50/-	9,889
5th Prize: O	Rs. 20/-	39,650

Value of prizes won in this draw - **Rs. 9,736,930.00**

The Super Prize of next draw: **Rs. 24,790,264.00**

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**ආදිධ සමච්ච** OFFICIAL RESULTS

Draw Number: 1528 Date: 22/08/2020

Super Number: **07** Winning Numbers: **14 39 59 60**

PRIZE	PRIZE MONEY	NO. OF WINNERS
1 PRIZE: ALL 04 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 500,000.00	01
2 PRIZE: SUPER NUMBER & 03 NUMBER CORRECT	Rs. 15,000.00	11
3 PRIZE: 03 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 1,000.00	115
4 PRIZE: SUPER NUMBER & 02 NUMBER CORRECT	Rs. 200.00	347
5 PRIZE: 02 NUMBERS CORRECT	Rs. 100.00	5034
6 PRIZE: SUPER NUMBER & 01 NUMBER CORRECT	Rs. 60.00	4497
7 PRIZE: 01 NUMBER CORRECT	Rs. 20.00	62762
8 PRIZE: ONLY THE SUPER NUMBER IS CORRECT	Rs. 20.00	15761

TOTAL PRIZES WON IN THIS DRAW: **Rs. 3,193,080.00**

Winning tickets are valid from the draw for a period of six months only. Prizes of Rs. Five Lakhs or over are liable to Government tax. Winners must produce National Identity Card receive prizes.

SUPER PRIZE OF THE NEXT DRAW: **Rs. 20,701,199.08**

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**DHANA NIDHANAYA** Official Results

Date: 2020/08/21 Draw Number: 305

English Letter: **N** Winning Numbers: **42 53 62 65**

PRIZE	COMBINATION	PRIZE	NO. OF WINNERS
1st Prize	If all 4 numbers are correct	Rs. 1,000,000.00	-
2nd Prize	If English Letter and 3 numbers are correct	Rs. 100,000.00	04
3rd Prize	If any 3 numbers are correct	Rs. 3,000.00	63
4th Prize	If English Letter and 2 numbers are correct	Rs. 1,000.00	158
5th Prize	If any 2 numbers are correct	Rs. 100.00	3,940
6th Prize	If English Letter and 1 number is correct	Rs. 60.00	2,552
7th Prize	If 1 number is correct	Rs. 20.00	66,910
8th Prize	If only English Letter is correct	Rs. 20.00	12,450

Total prize money won in this draw **Rs. 2,881,320.00** Number of Prize Winners in this draw: **86,077**

Next Draw Super Prize: **115,127,985.44**

Prizes of Over Rs. 3 lakhs or more are subject to the government tax regulations. Winners must produce National Identity Card to receive prizes. Winning tickets are valid from the draw for a period of 6 months only.

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# Daily News



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Monday, August 24, 2020

## The message from the North

The 2020 General Election was unlike any other election in recent memory, in that it completely changed the existing political dynamics centred on the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). Both these national parties took a severe beating at the polls, getting just one seat each, though 13 more SLFP candidates who contested through the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) entered Parliament.

While the polls pundits were more or less focused on this debacle of the two main parties and the emergence of the SLPP and Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) in their place, only a few focused their attention on the North, where too the traditional dynamics were nowhere to be seen. In fact, the only seat the SLFP won directly was from the North, where the young SLFP organiser Angajan Ramanathan made a good impression on the voters.

But this tells another story as well – that the traditional, ethnically-oriented Tamil parties are no longer the hot favourites in Jaffna and elsewhere in the North. Our sister paper *Sunday Observer* carries an interview with Co-cabinet Spokesman and Energy Minister Udaya Gammanpila, who notes that the General Election is a clear reflection that the people in the North have moved away from the TNA and embraced alternative political parties such as the SLFP, SLPP, EPDP and the TMVP.

“We should read the message by the Northern and the Eastern voters properly. The simple message is that they need development instead of more devolution,” the Minister was quoted as saying by the newspaper. Minister Gammanpila said the South in general and the Government in particular, should understand this strong message and embrace the Northern and Eastern brethren warmly and join hands with them to develop their areas.

This can be read in several ways. The TNA itself saw a split, with moderates in the party who had wanted to part ways with separatist sentiments on one side and the more radical elements on the other. However, there is no doubt that the TNA has been weakened, perhaps irreversibly. They had 16 seats (and for a time, the Opposition Leader's post) in the previous Parliament, whereas in this one they are down to 10. This is a serious slide, given that the Northerners used to vote for the TNA en masse. While some voters have indeed preferred the even more radical new Tamil parties, the real focus should be on how many did not.

These voters have instead kept their faith in traditional mainstream and dare we say, the so-called ‘Sinhala’ parties such as the SLFP, SLPP and UNP, though none of these parties is actually ethnic-centred. This is a radical departure from the usual voting patterns in the North, where politics was dominated by traditional Tamil, though secular, parties. But it is not only in the North that we witnessed this trend – many Tamil and Muslim voters around the country seem to have rejected the ethno-religious parties and opted for mainstream parties such as the SLPP and the SJB. Moreover, most Tamils and Muslims who contested from the mainstream parties fared really well. Even among the Sinhalese, a party helmed by Buddhist monks garnered less than 80,000 votes and the current battle underway among its leaders for the single National List seat has probably led those voters too to regret their decision.

In the meantime, the message from the North is loud and clear: the voters are fed up with separatist sentiments and ideology. Any right thinking person knows it is a non-starter, especially so with this Government with its steadfast commitment to the country's national security, territorial integrity, unitary status and sovereignty. They would rather live peacefully in a unitary Sri Lanka, enjoying the fruits of peace and development that people in the other eight provinces enjoy. The North lags behind development by around three decades – the very time period that the war raged on there – so it should come as no surprise that the people want to see accelerated development and livelihood expansion in their areas. Some of the Tamil parties realised this rather too late in the day, having focused their energies only or mostly on the ethnic question and devolution of power. Yes, devolution of power is part of the equation in that more power should be given to the local level representatives in the peripheries to tackle various problems. But the powers that be in the Northern Provincial Council squandered this opportunity and wasted a few valuable years, which earned the ire of the public.

In any case, the time has come to stop the registration of any more parties that carry ethnic or religious monikers which are inimical to the very concept of reconciliation and national harmony. All political parties registered henceforth must be secular, multi-ethnic and open to all. The voters in the North have already given a clear signal in this direction.



# TOWARDS A MORE EFFICIENT PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICE

## Now and Then

NADIRA GUNATILLEKE

**Y**ou should remember very well the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) May Day rally held at Galle Face in 2017 and the Local Government Election held on February 10, 2018. You must remember how the so-called ‘majority’ in the Parliament made people suffer for four and half years. Then you should not forget the petrol and diesel queues.

We must remember those incidents in addition to the islandwide blackouts that started on 24th March 2019 (last year) and continued for a month. This so-called ‘majority’ only had Sri Lankan people's real mandate only for two and half years (from August 2015 to February 2018) and the rest of the one year and nine months they ruled the country without a people's mandate and made people suffer against their will. The Sri Lankan people clearly rejected the 2015 Government on February 10th in 2018. But this so-called ‘majority’ made the people suffer.

This group which is clearly against the majority of the people of Sri Lanka learned an excellent lesson during the recent Presidential Election and then the General Election. But they still think they have the right to make people suffer. It was revealed from recent news items published in several newspapers and websites. It said they now demand 60 percent from the time allocated for debates in the Parliament. The people of Sri Lanka wonder what this group has to say now spending 60 percent of time allocated for debates. People have already witnessed their nakedness for a period of four and half years and what they did to make people suffer in the hands of political crooks and NGO agents.

They have nothing to say now because the country is now walking forward with a crystal clear plan and all know what to do, when to do and how to do because everything is mentioned in the plan, President's Policy Document, ‘Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour’. There is no conflict whatsoever because everything is clearly defined and allocated separately for relevant departments, institutions and individuals (Ministers). Now what is left is putting this plan into action with dedication and honesty.

But as Sri Lankans we cannot expect everything to be smoothly implemented because in the past decades we saw how individuals with hidden agendas blocked the country's progress and halted the people's wellbeing, going against the mandate given by the people. Some of those are spies and henchmen of defeated politicians and some are after money and nothing else. Those types of individuals are everywhere in Sri Lankan State and private institutions. They continue their journey no matter how hard the Government tries to serve the people despite their ‘work’.

First of all Cabinet Ministers and State Ministers need to accurately identify those individuals in their respective Ministries, departments and all the other institutions. Action needs to be taken against those who made people suffer in the past. Otherwise they will continue their machinations.

Those individuals wear patriotic masks, obey the Minister very well without any invitation. They show their ‘artificial colours’. They pretend that they were there from the beginning. They say they did all past crimes because of the pressures put on them by the previous regime. But



Public/private buses and SLR trains should be cleaned regularly to offer a better service to the public

we all should not forget that there are heroic members of our Armed Forces who went into prison without telling lies and without bowing down in front of traitors of Mother Lanka.

The real face of these two-faced individuals can only be revealed by tracing their secret mobile telephone calls, secret private unnoticed meetings etc. They act as spies and agents of defeated politicians and corrupt officials belonging to the previous Yahapalana regime. There is another easy and short way of revealing their true face. It is revealing what they posted in social media, etc before November 16th in 2019 (last year).

Bureaucracy is another obstacle that stands in the way of fast development and fast uplift of people's welfare. Some officials in almost all State and private institutions have their own political view, their own religion, their own (other) private income generating avenues in addition to their formal job, etc. Saving public money, accelerating work and quality assurances etc are not in their mind. It seems almost all sectors in the country are in their clutches, especially the electricity generation and supply.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa advised relevant authorities to commence upgrading and offering a good transport service to the public by washing and cleaning the buses. But the President, the Cabinet Ministers or State Ministers cannot wash every single bus run in Sri Lanka. It should be done by relevant workers in the State sector and bus owners, drivers and conductors in the private sector etc. It is the responsibility of the commuters to

make sure that they obtain the due service for the fare they pay. Otherwise no one will clean buses and trains because there is no demand for clean buses and trains.

The current situation of buses and trains, (the public transport service) is very pathetic. Only the buses run by Sri Lanka Transport Board (SLTB) are tolerable to a certain extent and the situation of the rest of the public transport service is far below the minimum standard. The most affected condition is the hygiene or rather the lack of it. There is no hygiene in the Sri Lankan public transport service at all. It is inadequate for the demand and therefore people cannot pay attention to their personal hygiene while traveling in public transport services. Especially during this COVID-19 season, people cannot keep at least a one millimetre distance, leave alone one metre, between them while traveling.

Buses and trains are very dirty. They are full of garbage. Sri Lankan passengers dispose of their garbage inside buses and trains without any discipline and there is no way of taking action against them due to lack of modern technology such as security cameras etc. Buses and especially trains are full of broken windows, seats, etc and there are no belts to hand to hold onto while standing and traveling inside trains. With very little money the relevant authorities can provide a very comfortable public transport service to the Sri Lankan public. The human resources involved in the private sector are hopeless. Passengers are being treated as beasts and not human beings.

The problems do not end there.

No trains and buses have run on time in Sri Lanka since the inception of the public transport service. Some bus drivers and engine drivers wait at bus stops and train stations for hours until their relations, friends and mistresses get dressed and turn up. They cancel trains whenever they want. They run express trains behind slow trains and waste people's valuable time by halting slow trains on the way for a long time. They delay trains as long as they wish without informing the public.

A simple public announcement is not made when they delay trains exactly stating the time of delay. The announcement is made with words such as ‘the train will be delayed for a short time...some time and long time etc’. The people wonder why they cannot say for how long the train is delayed.

It is the same with all the other sectors in Sri Lanka. Innocent poor patients die in the hands of some health staff members due to negligence because the incidents are being investigated by a team of their friends who will never ever put their friends in trouble. These systems should be changed. The friends of the culprits should not be appointed to investigate incidents. For an example when a doctor or a nurse does something bad, the investigation should be carried out by a team without doctors and nurses in it.

The public servants get paid no matter whether they serve the public or not. Knowing this fact, they have no fear of refraining from carrying out their duties properly. It is not so in the private sector and not doing the job properly will have a definite negative impact on their employment. Therefore the employees make sure that they do their job properly without any delay. Therefore a system needs to be established for the public sector for monitoring and taking action against delays and other shortcomings of the employees.

‘Silverfish’ is everywhere. We have to control them and destroy them when required. Otherwise they eat and destroy the entire wardrobe. It is because of their nature. It is the same with the public sector. We need to identify all ‘silverfish’ accurately and quickly and control and destroy them in order to propel the country forward. We cannot let silverfish rule the country any longer. They ruled the country for a period of over seven decades. Enough is enough. Now is the time to use camphor.

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Good government is good politics.  
Richard J. Daley

# India: Pivotal need to improve ties with Sri Lanka, Bangladesh

P.K. BALACHANDRAN

**P**lagued by conflicts with neighbouring China, Pakistan and Nepal, India is showing renewed interest in forging close ties with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka which, despite the existence of contentious issues, remain India's only friends in South Asia.

In the absence of a reasonably good relationship with these two countries, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Neighborhood First" policy will have gone kaput.

Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla's two-day unofficial visit to Dhaka to hand over a message from Modi to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and to meet a cross section of opinion makers, gave an opportunity to discuss some contentious issues.

Likewise, Indian Foreign Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar's telephonic conversation with his Sri Lankan counterpart Dinesh Gunawardena helped open a dialogue on some issues which have soured bilateral relations.

While key issues like the sharing of Teesta waters, killings of Bangladeshis by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and anti-Bangladesh and anti-Muslim utterances by leaders of the Bharatiya Janatha Party remain, Shringla and Hasina agreed that the special relationship between the two countries should be upheld as a matter of priority.

It remains to be seen if the ruling Bharatiya Janatha Party, which wants to capture West Bengal in the 2021 Assembly elections, will show restraint in making comments about Muslims, Bangladesh and the so called illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

Vis-à-vis Sri Lanka, New Delhi appears to have no alternative to working with the nationalistic Government of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, which is commonly seen as pro-China.

The Rajapaksa's Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) romped home with a two thirds majority when the Parliamentary Elections were held this month. As in the case of Bangladesh, many issues in Indo-Lanka relations remain to be settled.

This can only be done diplomatically, taking into consideration each other's legitimate concerns. India can no longer apply the kind of pressures it did in the past because, since 2010, there is another powerful player in the region - China.

Indo-Bangla relations, which had been very cordial and fruitful since 2008, hit a bad patch with India declaring 1.9 million people in Assam as non-citizens and as illegal migrants from Bangladesh. The Indian Home Minister, Amit Shah, described them as "termites" to be got rid of. Bangladesh denied that they were Bangladeshis.

Bilateral tension led to Bangladesh cancelling some important high level visits to India. Recently, the Bangladeshi newspaper Bhorer Kakoj and the Indian daily Hindu carried a story saying that Bangladesh Prime Minister Hasina had not given an appointment to the Indian High Commissioner Reva Ganguly for four months.

There were also reports in the Pakistani media that the Pakistani High Commissioner had met the Bangladeshi Foreign Minister and that this signalled a thawing of ties with Pakistan to India's detriment. This caused ripples in New Delhi.

But after a period of suspense-filled silence, Bangladesh let it be known that due to COVID-19, Prime Minister Hasina had not



The Proposed East Container Terminal at the Colombo Port.



The Kushinagar International Airport

met any foreign envoy, and not just the Indian envoy. The Bangladeshi Government described its relations with India as "rock solid" and the media reports to the contrary as "speculative".

To end speculation the Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla visited with a message from PM Modi to Sheikh Hasina. It is understood that, among other issues, the two discussed the difficulties encountered in some India-financed projects due to problems of mobilization of resources and sourcing of material for the projects.

Both countries know that it is not easy to break India-Bangla ties. This is partly because they share an intense antipathy to Pakistan. Indians should note that Bangladesh has made it clear Pakistan that there can be no normalization with it until Islamabad tenders an unqualified apology for its atrocities prior to independence in 1971.

Furthermore, Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia. India's exports to Bangladesh for financial year 2018-19 (April-March) stood at US\$ 9.21 billion and imports from Bangladesh for the same period stood at US\$ 1.22 billion. India has

ensured duty-free access of Bangladeshi goods to the Indian market, especially ready-made garments.

Energy cooperation between the two sides has also shown a lot of positivity with the Indian state of Tripura supplying 160 MW of power to Bangladesh in addition to the 500 MW the country is receiving from West Bengal since 2013. India has a transit agreement with Bangladesh which allows its goods to travel across Bangladesh from West Bengal to Tripura cutting the travel time significantly.

On August 18, Indian External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, spoke to his Lankan counterpart, Dinesh Gunawardena, to congratulate him on his reappointment as Minister of Foreign Relations and say that he looked forward to working closely to take India-Sri Lanka partnership to greater heights.

The Indian side said that the strong mandate received by the Sri Lankan Government in the Parliamentary Elections would play a key role in strengthening the commitment on the part of both countries to take the bilateral relationship forward.



Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar with Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena.

**On August 18, Indian External Affairs Minister, Dr. S Jaishankar, spoke to his Lankan counterpart, Dinesh Gunawardena, to congratulate him on his reappointment as Minister of Foreign Relations and say that he looked forward to working closely to take India-Sri Lanka partnership to greater heights. The Indian side said that the strong mandate received by the Sri Lankan Government in the Parliamentary Elections would play a key role in strengthening the commitment on the part of both countries to take the bilateral relationship forward.**

India has many economic issues pending, such as its participation in running the Colombo port's East Container Terminal (ECT), and the Trincomalee oil tanks, as well as more than a dozen projects for which MoUs were inked in 2017. But of late, India has put emphasis on the Buddhist links between the two countries.

The present Indian High Commissioner Gopal Baglay is spearheading this. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has invited Sri Lanka to operate the first international flight from the new international airport at Kushinagar, a town in Uttar Pradesh associated with the Buddha.

India's using Buddhism to firm up ties with Buddhist-majority Sri Lanka is significant because both China and Pakistan have started harking back to their Buddhist past to buttress ties which have so far been based on other considerations such as investments and aid in the case of China and military sales in the case of Pakistan.

China, especially, is investing quite manifestly in soft power to give its economic clout a human face. Pakistan is trying to create the impression that it is not a country of Islamic extremism but a tolerant one which is proud of its Buddhist past.

However, there are bread and butter issues like Colombo Port's Eastern Container Terminal (ECT) and the Trincomalee Oil Tanks

which have to be taken up. A Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) had been signed on the ECT according to which the Terminal Operations Company to be formed would be jointly owned by the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (51% shares), Japan (34%) and India (15%). While India has been seeking a presence saying that 70% of Colombo port's business is trans-shipment to and from India, a section of the Lankan Government and the port workers' unions do not want the operation of the port to be given to any foreign entity.

The Rajapaksa Government will have to take a call on this quickly as a miffed India could choose another hub for the trans-shipment of Indian cargo, depriving Colombo port of 70% of its business.

The case of the Trincomalee oil tanks is also pending apart from about 15 other projects. In 2003, India was given the 99 oil tanks in Trincomalee for refurbishment and use. But only 15 tanks are being used. The Sri Lankan Government had wanted 16 of the remaining 84 tanks to be handed over to it. Finally it was decided that the 84 tanks will be jointly developed. But the matter is at a standstill. On the other joint projects the Rajapaksa Government said that it would go ahead with some and opt out of others. But there is a standstill here too, partly due to COVID-19. (The Citizen)

## Switch off the lights

RAVI PERERA

**O**ne wonders what the response of a Japanese oligarch would have been, had the organisation he leads failed to prevent a country-wide power failure that went on for nearly half a day, turning the



lives of 22 million people into a sweltering misery, wiping out millions of rupees from an economy already reeling from the effects of the Covid-19 virus and making a country aspiring for a resurgent status, a laughing stock.

Electricity today is as important as the air we breathe. Cut it off, and everything comes to an abrupt halt. Without electricity very little can be done; schools close, offices cannot function, factories stop production, hospitals cannot operate, denied the guidance of the traffic lights chaos descends on the roads; the country comes to a grinding halt.

The very evening of the blackout, the Chairman of the Ceylon Electricity Board went public, interpreting and also explaining the mishap that befell the country. He said hundreds of technical officers were working on the problem, even going without their lunch. Reference to that enormous sacrifice, set the tone of the defence. Technical terms were freely thrown in, 'high voltage network', 'national grid', 'power outage', words offering little relief to the millions sweating in the unremitting heat.

Apparently, it is important to locate power stations at sites with long names; Norochcholai, Kerawalapitiya; placed before the impressive length of these names, a people's ire recedes into insignificance. A person's temper may rise or fall; but Norochcholai, Kerawalapitiya has a



permanency to its tone, both compelling as well as unmoving, the Chairman intoned these place names.

If the problem could be identified before the very evening was over, was it beyond the capacity of the Electricity Board to have anticipated its occurrence? If anticipated, could this massive loss have been avoided? As if one disaster justifies the second, an earlier power outage (2016?) was brought up defensively. These are only episodes one and two, the people must expect a whole series of breakdowns.

Power generation is easily the nation's highest expenditure, every citizen carrying a proportionate bur-

den of the import cost of the raw material. When power is generated, the citizen also pays for the service, by way of his electricity bill. Despite the well regulated work routine at the Electricity Board, including the set lunch hour, our power generation is not competitive, being one of the most expensive power suppliers in the region. Naturally, the country's national cost of production is also uncompetitive.

It is unanimously accepted that our so called power sector is riddled with corruption. The old cocktail: shadowy operatives (to call them entrepreneurs, is to diminish the concept) representing foreign suppliers of coal,

oil or turbines, corrupt our public officials, to make the foul-smelling concoction, leaving the country in a permanent state of a hangover. Neither these nation's blood suckers nor the government officials selling their souls, can explain their assets and income, so gained. As usual, the law enforcement agencies, including the Inland Revenue Department are deaf and blind, too busy chasing the small businessmen in the village.

Nature has bestowed to us the Sun, the rain and the wind, more than generously. We are told these are uneconomic assets, it is through the imported fuel and coal that we can see the 'light'. These modes of power generation are easier to establish; there are several foreign companies eagerly targeting corruptible Third World countries for their greedy schemes. There is money in them. They can turn public officials of the poor Third World, to act against their own country. On the other hand, nature friendly, renewable energy sources are initially expensive, and their promoters by and large, are less sleazy.

To a man, from the primary stage to the university, sometimes even to the post graduate level, the engineers at the Electricity Board are beneficiaries of our free education system. Thereafter, their working life has been in the public sector, a service not distinguished for its efficiency or economy. To make matters worse, the Electrici-

ty Board is a monopoly, a culture and training which gives the engineer an idea that he is of godly status; answerable to none.

Of course, the whole thing is a fantasy. What we have is a weak and corrupted structure, open to any and every trespass. If the Easter Sunday (2019) bombs shattered the pretence of peace, August 17 (2020) dented the claims of efficiency, ease of doing business and the reliability of services. The country reaffirmed its inabilities.

It is imperative that the State asserts its seriousness of purpose. A holder of high public office may rightly claim credit for the organizations' achievements, however, he must also take the rap for its failings. It is very possible, that he is not directly responsible for the failing, but on account of the elevated responsibility he carries on behalf of the entire population, must answer for any lapses during his watch. Sadly, in Sri Lanka, success has many fathers, but failures are orphans.

The consequences of disasters such as the Easter Day bombings and the island-wide blackout are too grave to be restored by working without a lunch break. Somebody must accept responsibility.

In Japan, if such an event were to happen, the person formally responsible would have fallen on the sword, at least, figuratively. But then, Japan, is another country.

Renewable energy:

# Duminda charts plan to achieve Govt. target

NIMAL WIJESINGHE

Anuradhapura Additional District Corr.

Solar, Wind, Grid Power Generation Projects Development State Minister Duminda Dissanayake said that there will be a well-designed far-sighted plan for utilising renewable energy resources to achieve President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's target of using 80 percent of renewable energy in the national grid within the next 10 years.

Dissanayake was speaking when he inspected the Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority (SLSEA) and Sri Lanka Atomic Energy Board recently. The State Minister held discus-

sions with the Chairman of the SLSEA L.H. Ranjith and the Board of Directors with regard to the ongoing power generation projects and the future plans to develop the sustainable energy sources.

The State Minister said that the Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority and the C.E.B. will work in close collaboration and with mutual understanding in fulfilling the country's total energy requirement. He requested the officials to look into the possibility of commencing solar energy generation projects by using the roofing of the country's school buildings.

"There are a large number of mushroom solar power production companies and most of such companies showcase their out-of-date technologies to update and thus, the sector is losing credibility among customers.

This situation shall be remedied to attract the public to confidently depend on sustainable energy sources, especially solar power. I am prepared to make necessary changes in the provisions of the Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority Act No. 35 of 2007 to overcome the challenges and to encourage new entrepreneurs," Dissanayake said.



State Minister Duminda Dissanayake exchanging views with the officials of the Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority and the Sri Lanka Atomic Energy Board.

## 'President's vision is to develop local economy'

ARIYAPALA WANSHATHILAKE

Kurunegala Central Spl. Corr.

The country cannot progress without developing the local economy, Batik, Handloom Fabrics, and Local Apparel Products State Minister Dayasiri Jayasekara said in Hettipola recently.

State Minister Jayasekara was accorded a warm welcome by SLPP supporters who were celebrating the massive victory of the SLPP at the polls and were grateful for the State Minister's vast contribution to the development of the NWP. State Minister Jayasekara said he was satisfied with the portfolio given to him by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa



State Minister Dayasiri Jayasekara

and he would do his best to achieve what the President expects from him.

"The development of one of the most important industries in the country had long been neglected.

"The government has embarked on a programme to uplift local industries which had not been given priority," he said. "Local apparels was one of the most powerful industries during the times of our

ancient kings who ruled in Sri Lanka. The President's vision is to uplift these industries," Jayasekara said.

He said Salusala could be utilized to create a point of sale for batik and handloom fabrics and apparel.

## Wayamba farmers to get sufficient water

ARIYAPALA WANSHATHILAKE

Kurunegala Central Spl. Corr.

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa along with officials recently inspected the Wayamba Ele project in the North Western Province.

The people requested the Premier to provide a permanent solution to the water shortage for their farmlands, which has been a long-standing problem.

The Prime Minister said canals would be constructed to channel the water of the Kurunegala district towards Polpithigama, Ahatuwewa, Galgamuwa and Mahawa.

The government plans to renovate 353 tanks in the North Western Prov-

ince. Under this project, 12,500 farmlands could be irrigated in both seasons, the Premier said.

The people of Wayamba not only suffered from a lack of water for cultivation, but they were also subject to kidney disease on account of a drinking water shortage.

The people who will be displaced due to the Wayamba Ele project will be given lands as compensation and the selection of these lands would be carried out by the project officers of the area and the Commissioner and divisional secretaries, the Premier said.

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa also instructed the Road Development Authority to repair the rural roads in the province.

## Police nab 'Egodauyana' Janiya

KAPILA SOMARATNE

Panadura Group Corr.

Moratuwa Magistrate Kosala Ramanayake issued a four-day detention order to interrogate a suspect on drug trafficking in the Egodauyana area.

Egodauyana OIC Inspector Anil Masakorala with a police party arrested the suspect 'Egodauyane' Janiya who was on bail in connection with a murder case pending before court.

Police told court that on August 21, Janiya was arrested with possession of five grams of heroin. On interrogating the suspect, police also recovered Rs. 1 lakh in cash when they searched the garbage bin of the house.

## Aged man dies in accident

KAPILA SOMARATNE

Panadura Group Corr.

A retired civil servant was killed when the motorcycle he was riding collided head on with another motorcycle on the Moragahahena - Padduka road last Thursday.

The victim Gallage Rathnasena of Millewa (76) was on his way to visit his daughter at the time of the accident.

Inquirer into Sudden Deaths Udaya Kumara recorded a verdict of accidental death at the inquest.

## 2014 landslide victims to get houses

NAVARATNA BANDARA

Mahaweli Systems Group Corr.

A housing programme has been approved for Miriyabedda landslide victims who found themselves homeless after the disaster which occurred on the estate of Koslanda, off Hal-dummulla in the Haputale electorate on October 29, 2014.

It will be executed by the Badulla District Secretariat while the Hal-dummulla Divisional Secretariat will be coordinating the work at the field level.

Funds of Rs. 1,200,000

will be utilized in carrying out a house building project for each of the families benefitting from the programme, who have waited long for alternative housing.

At 7:30 in the morning of October 29, 2014, a landslide triggered by continuous rainfall for three consecutive days affected a whole community of estate workers on the estate of Koslanda in the Haputale electorate, off Badulla.

Sixteen deaths were confirmed, 192 people were believed to be missing and about 150 homes were buried, according to a fact file.

## Five dead in Alawwa accident

M. MAHARUF

Kurunegala South Group Corr.

Five young persons died instantly when the car they were travelling in collided with a tipper at Walakumbura, Alawwa, along the Colombo - Kurunegala main road at around 4.00 am on Saturday.

Of the five youths, three were working at the construction company MAGA.

The group was returning home after attending a funeral in Warakapola on Friday night. They were identified as Mihiri Sachitra Pathirana (29) of Ibbagamuwa, Charitha Koushalya (25) of Pannala, Ibbagamuwa, Charith Dilshan Jayasanka (28) of Nelundeniya, Srimal Manoj Mallawarachchi (25) of Welimada and Tharuka Adeesa (23) of Kottukachchiya.

The driver of the tipper is in custody. Alawwa Police are conducting further investigations.



The car which was involved in the accident. Picture by M. Maharuf

## Cardamom stolen from estate

J.M. HAFEEZ

Akurana Group Corr.

Panvila Police arrested four people on suspicion of stealing cardamom from the Kelebokka State Plantations cooperative estate in Panvila, on August 19.

The suspects appeared before Teldeniya Magis-

trate Sanaka Kalansooriya and were released on a personal bail of Rs. 100,000 each.

The suspects had entered the cardamom plantation area of the Kelebokka estate and stolen the spice, weighing about 20 kg.

Panvila Police also said that a conflict arose between the four suspects on sharing the quantum of spice stolen.

## Over 360 sailors pass out



At the passing out ceremony.

Three hundred and sixty two (362) regular and volunteer recruits of the 240th intake of Sri Lanka Navy, after completing their basic training, passed out in a colourful ceremony held at the parade ground of SLNS Nipuna in Boossa on August 21.

The ceremony held in accordance with naval traditions was graced by Director General Training, Rear Admiral A.A.R.K. Perera, as the chief guest.

During the passing out ceremony, those recruits who were outstanding in the basic training period received awards in recognition of their performances.

Recruit E.A.C. Rohitha was adjudged the Best Recruit and Woman Recruit K.M.S.K.K. Chandrasekara won the award

for the Recruit with the Highest Aggregate in all subjects.

Meanwhile, Recruit K.R.E.K. Perera secured the title as the Best Marksman and Recruit L.G.S.D. Kumara and Woman Recruit G.B.H.B. Dharmashri won the awards for Best Sportsman and Best Sportswoman respectively. The 'Mihikatha' Division was selected as the Best Division of the 240th intake.

Southern Naval Area Commander, Commandant of SLNS Nipuna, senior and junior officers from the Navy Headquarters and Southern Naval Command, senior and junior sailors as well as parents of the newly passed out recruits attended the ceremony.

## No TV signal, say residents

AJITH GANGODA

Udadumbara Group Corr.

The residents of Gomagoda, Digana, complain that the television signals in the area are poor and they cannot watch TV. The reception for Rupavahini too is poor with little or no signal at all.

A resident of the area Kumari Deegala said that some residents use dish antennas which also do not function well.

She said the residents had complained about this matter but had not received a positive response from relevant authorities.

The residents also said that all mobile network coverage is also poor in the area and therefore they have to walk a long distance to make a call. They request the relevant authorities to look into this matter.

## Arrested with heroin

AKURANA GROUP CORR.

Kandy Ambakottai Police Special Task Force (STF) arrested seven youths for possession of heroin in a house in the Katugastota area last Thursday.

Police said the suspects were between 20 and 25 years old. The detainees were handed over to the Katugastota Police for further action.

When the Katugastota Police produced the suspects before a Kandy magistrate, two of the suspects were placed on a restraining order and the other five were released on cash bail of Rs. 7,500 each.

## Nabbed after hiding for 10 years

KAPILA SOMARATNE

Panadura Group Corr.

A convict in a murder case concluded at the Embilipitiya High Court was arrested by the Bandaragama Police on August 16, while he was hiding in a house in Kindellapitiya, Wellmilla.

Police investigations revealed

that the accused Kithulmullagama Samankumara was the brother of Wambotta, the leader of an underworld gang in the South.

He was sentenced to death by the Embilipitiya High Court in 2010 when he was found guilty of committing a murder.

The case was heard in absentia

of the accused as he had been absconding for the last 10 years.

Bandaragama Police received information about the accused and he was arrested by the Police. He was produced before the Panadura Additional Magistrate and ordered to be produced before the Embilipitiya High Court.

## Mimosa cuts off water supply

NAVARATNA BANDARA

Mahaweli Systems Group Corr.

Part of the reservoir of Bandarawewa in the Walala area, off Kundasale is thickly overgrown with giant mimosa (locally known as yodhanidikumba).

A rice field of about 150 acres around it has been affected as a result, for it has been not able to be irrigated properly.

A group of farmer families around the reservoir lament that their effort to get rid of the invasive 'giant' has been futile.

It is expected that the Agrarian Development Department will look into the matter which is of concern to most farmers in the areas of Dambaraawa, Hambeamuna, Hurikaduwa, Kithulethena, Rathmaloya, Walala and Wihaaravala, growing rice who depend on the Bambarawewa for irrigation.



The giant mimosa

# President seeks more effective system to end human-elephant conflict

**NIMAL WIJESINGHE,**

Anuradhapura Additional District Group Corr.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has instructed wildlife conservation authorities to take steps soon to control and abolish the human-elephant conflict.

The Wildlife Conservation Department, therefore, is planning a more comprehensive system in this regard now.

Anuradhapura Government Agent R.M. Wanninayake has brought to the notice of wildlife authorities that the Anuradhapura District needs a 850 km long electric fence as per the requests by 22 Divisional Secretaries and the farmer organisations in the district.

According to the Wildlife Conservation Department sources, since 2010 to mid-2020, about 2,635 wild elephants

had perished and 685 persons died. However, human deaths or killings of wild elephants were not reported in 2010 and 2011 from Anuradhapura, Uva, Kilinochchiya, Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Puttalam.

Dr. Pruthawiraj Franando, an NGO member, said that all efforts by the Wildlife Department during the last 75 years to control the conflict seemed

utter failure since 70 per cent of the wild elephants live outside the wildlife reservations.

"The main reason for the conflict has been the unlimited and careless clearing of jungles where wild elephants roam to set up development projects mainly for agriculture purposes," he said.

An elephant needs 50 - 600 square kilometers for roaming.

## PC members elected to Parliament felicitated

**NADIRA GUNATILLEKE**

Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) founder Basil Rajapaksa handed over a memento to SLPP MP Sarath Kumarasiri at a ceremony held recently to felicitate SLPP Provincial Council Members who were elected as Parliamentarians at the General Election.

The event was held at the Grand Monarch Hotel on August 21 under the patronage of Presidential Task Force on Economic Revival and Poverty Alleviation Chairman, Basil Rajapaksa.

In addition to the ex-MPs in Badulla, Puttalam and Polonnaruwa, the remaining newly elected MPs in the three districts are former SLPP Provincial Councillors. Among



SLPP MP Sarath Kumarasiri receiving a memento from SLPP founder Basil Rajapaksa.

the newly elected MPs are former Chief Ministers, Provincial Ministers and Provincial Councillors.

Fifty Eight SLPP provincial council members contested the General Election, and 28 were elected to Parliament.

## TNA meets Indian High Commissioner

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) members met the Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and his Senior Officials at the India House on Saturday and discussed the Tamil people's post General Election issues among others.

The High Commissioner congratulated the TNA on being returned to Parliament

and assured India's commitments to finding a resolution to the Tamil national question in Sri Lanka.

TNA leader R. Sampanthan, Mavai Senathirajah, Dharmalingam Siddarthan, Selvam Adaikalanathan and M. A. Sumanthiran were present, a TNA press communiqué said.

## ACMC removes Sammanthurai PS Chairman

**AMPARA DISTRICT GROUP CORR.**

The All Ceylon Makkal Congress (ACMC) has announced that the party has removed former Chairman of Sammanthurai Pradeshiya Sabha (PS) A.M.M. Naushad from all posts and responsibilities he held in the party.

Naushad had resigned from the chairmanship on August 4 during the Parliamentary election campaigns saying that his res-

ignation will be effective from August 10.

There was allegation against him that he was not supporting the ACMC, which contested the Parliamentary Election for the first time under peacock symbol from the Digamadulla District

He has been suspended for acting against the interests of the party and violating the ethics of the party. His speeches and activities during the last



A.M.M. Naushad

General Election were unfavorable to the party, an ACMC press release said.

Naushad contested under ACMC and elected as Sammanthurai PS Chairman at the last Local Government election.

## CAA raids 14 salons in Puttalam

**S.M.WIJAYARATNE,** Kurunegala Daily News Corr.

The Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) of the Puttalam District raided 14 salons in Puttalam on August 22 and seized harmful ointments and other substandard cosmetics.

The estimated value of

the ointments and other cosmetics is about Rs. 500,000, a CAA official said. These have been imported from India and Pakistan.

Eight suspects were arrested, and they will be produced before the Puttalam Magistrate tomorrow, the official said.

## Suspect with toy pistol arrested for making death threat

**MAHINDA P. LIYANAGE,** Galle Central Special Corr.

Hikkaduwa police arrested a suspect for making death threat to a person with a toy pistol.

The suspect, a resident of Dodanduwa, Galle had returned from Italy recent-

ly, police said. He had argued with a man over a money transaction at a villa in Dodanduwa and threatened him pointing a fake pistol which he had brought from Italy, police said.

Hikkaduwa police are investigating.

## 'School curriculum to be changed'

**S.M.WIJAYARATNE,**

Kurunegala Daily News Corr.

The school curriculum will be changed as per a decision by Education Minister Prof. G.L.Peiris, Education Ministry Secretary Prof. Kapila Perera said.

Therefore, school heads, teachers, education directors, parents, and civil

organisations have been asked to forward their views and opinions in this regard.

He also said that A/L students will be provided with a career guidance to select their study streams and free text books as well. The Minister will submit a Cabinet paper in this regard very soon, he said.

## Arrest warrant on monk for molesting law student

**SHAVINI MADHARA**

Colombo Chief Magistrate Lanka Jayaratne ordered the OIC of the Children and Women's Bureau of the Maradana Police to arrest and produce in court the monk who allegedly molested a law student at an office of the Supreme Court on August 7.

The victim's counsels had earlier told the magistrate that the OIC of the Bureau had failed to arrest the suspect and produced him before Court although the senior Western Prov-

ince DIG had issued an order in this regard.

The Children and Women's Bureau informed court that statements had been recorded from the victim. Although the location where the suspect resided was searched, the Bureau failed to arrest the monk, the Children and Women's Bureau stated.

Counsel Achala Siriwardena, Colombo Chief Magistrate's Court Lawyers' Association President Sanjaya Anthony and few others appeared for the victim.

## GMOA lauds President for banning palm cultivation



Dr. Senal Fernando

**NADIRA GUNATILLEKE**

The Government Medical Officers' Association (GMOA) lauded the decision by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to ban palm cultivation in Sri Lanka, GMOA Secretary Dr. Senal Fernando said.

He was addressing a press conference at the GMOA Headquarters in Colombo yesterday.

The GMOA requested

the President to ban the import of palm oil to promote coconut cultivation and the coconut oil consumption to reduce the Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in Sri Lanka, he said.

NCDs such as cancer, heart diseases, diabetes and hypertension are accountable to over 75 per cent of deaths in Sri Lanka. About 96 per cent

of the COVID-19 deaths have been recorded among patients with NCD related complications. Palm oil consumption increases the risk of having NCDs, he said.

An expert committee should be appointed to study the impact that palm oil makes on health and draft legislation to ban the import of palm oil, he said.

## State Minister Jayantha Samaraweera assumes duties

**DILSHAN THARAKA**

State Minister of Warehouse Facilities, Container Yards, Port Supply Facilities and Boat and Shipping Industry Development Jayantha Samaraweera assumed duties at the Ministry of Ports and Shipping giving priority to the religious observances on Friday.

After assuming the duties, the State Minister

thanked President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and the Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa for naming him to the post and said that he would do his utmost to uplift the ports and maritime sector.

He said that a number of initiatives such as the development of local ports, strengthening import and export systems and constructing new container

yards will be set up in the future.

Ports and Shipping Minister Rohitha Abeygunawardena congratulated State Minister Samaraweera for being elected as the State Minister in his Ministry. The Minister said he was happy to have a young person from his own district for the post.

Energy Minister Udaya

Gammanpila, Port Authority Chairman General Daya Ratnayake, Ports and Shipping Ministry Secretary U.D.C. Jayalal, Additional Secretary Kumari Somaratne, Vice President and Managing Director W.S. Weeraman, Additional Managing Director Upali de Soysa, executive officers, unions representatives, politicians and Port Authority officials were present.



New office-bearers of the Mahara Lions Club assumed duties at a ceremony held at the Royal Grand Paradise Hotel, Galedanda, Gonawala recently. Former Governor Nimal Senadeera lighted the oil lamp along with President Senaka Perera, Secretary Surendra Wijeratne, Treasurer Rohitha Ranatunga, Directors Chandrasena Hettige and Ranjith Jayasekara. Picture by Mahanama Vithanage, Malwana Group Corr.

## Mahaweli zones will be turned into fulltime worksites - Gamlath

Mahaweli Zones, Waterways, Settlements and Public Infrastructure Development State Minister Siripala Gamlath said that the Mahaweli zones will be turned into fulltime worksites and supports will be extended to strengthen the national economy through them.

The Minister said that every inch of land in the Mahaweli zones should be used to produce food to strengthen the lifestyles of the Mahaweli residents.

Minister Gamlath was addressing the progressive committee meeting at his ministry on August 18. Officers of the Mahaweli Development Authority participated.

The Minister said that it should be reviewed whether the targeted productivity is achieved by the investors who have already obtained Mahaweli lands. He said that priority will be given to set up projects in the Mahaweli zones on the sideline of the 'Vision of Prosperity' of the President.

"When Mahaweli lands are released for investment, a study should be conducted to ascertain to what extent such projects would be important to bring benefits to the settlers. When land is released for some investment,

the main purpose of it is the prospective benefits that it creates for the Mahaweli settlers and its share for the national economy. Suitable projects should be selected for implementation in the area accordingly," the Minister said.

Mahaweli Development Authority officials will be instructed to ascertain whether the targeted productivity is achieved by the investors who have already obtained Mahaweli lands and set up projects, the Minister said.

The Minister said that systematic food production in the Mahaweli areas will be maintained with the blessings of Irrigation Minister Chamal Rajapaksa.

The minister said the wild elephant threat has also become a menace to the Mahaweli settlers. The matter will be discussed with the line ministries and find a solution, he said.

Irrigation Ministry Secretary Anura Dissanayake, Mahaweli Zones Development State Ministry Secretary S.Senayake, Mahaweli Development Authority Director General Sunil S Perera and several officials of the Mahaweli Development Ministry and Mahaweli Development Authority participated.



State Minister Siripala Gamlath is in discussion with the officials.

## 'Guidelines to look after tamed elephants'

**S.M.WIJAYARATNE,** Kurunegala Daily News Corr.

Tourism Minister Prasanna Ranatunga said that a set of guidelines will be brought in to look after the tamed ele-

phants and provide them to annual processions of historic temples. These guidelines will be forwarded to the Cabinet approval before implementation, the Minister said.

## SPC promotes Ayurveda

**P.P.G. SUGATHADASA,** Thihagoda Group Corr.

The Health and Indigenous Medicine Ministry of the Southern Provincial Council (SPC) has taken steps to promote ayurvedic medicine.

Workshops and awareness programmes have been conducted in most parts of the region in this regard. Subjects on preventing diseases are taught at these programmes and events. Infrastructures at

ayurveda hospitals and central dispensaries will be developed.

Herbal gardens will be set up and ayurvedic treatment methods, panchakarma therapy and ayurvedic central dispensaries will be set up in the region.

In addition, Ayurveda hospitals and medical centres will receive modern equipment and ayurvedic drugs and medicine will be produced in modern ways, ministry sources said.

## Two suspects arrested with heroin

**KAPILA SOMARATNE,** Panadura Group Corr.

Kalutara Division Crime Investigations Branch officials arrested two suspects who were transporting three grams

of heroin in two packets in a vehicle on Saturday. They have been in the venture for a long time, police said.

Investigations are continuing.

# World virus deaths top 800,000 as nations ramp up measures

The global death toll from the new coronavirus has surpassed 800,000, according to an AFP count on Saturday, with numerous countries ramping up restrictions in an effort to battle an eruption of new cases.

Western Europe, particularly Spain, Italy Germany and France, has been hit with infection levels not seen in many months, sparking fears of a fully-fledged second wave.

And in Asia, South Korea became the latest country to announce it would boost restrictions to try to stem a new outbreak, after largely bringing the virus under control.

Across the world, the number of deaths has doubled to just over 800,000 since June 6, with 100,000 fatalities in the last 17 days alone, while more than 23 million cases have been reported.

Latin America is the region the most affected, while more than half the global fatalities have been reported in the hardest-hit United States, Brazil, Mexico and India.

The surging numbers come after the UN health agency said Friday that the world should be able to rein in the pandemic in less than two years.

World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus sought to draw favourable comparisons with the flu pandemic of 1918 which cost the lives of as many as 50 million people.

"We have a disadvantage of globalisation, closeness, connectedness, but an advantage of better technology, so we hope to finish this pandemic before less than two years," he said.

"(By) utilising the available tools to the maximum and hoping that we can have additional tools like vaccines, I think we can finish it in a shorter time than the 1918 flu." The WHO also recommended children over 12 years old now wear masks in the same situations as adults as the use of face coverings helps stop the virus spread.



**Holidaymakers returning from Sardinia by ferry, wait outside their vehicle near a police officer (2ndL) to undergo a compulsory drive-through swab test on August 23, 2020 at the port of Civitavecchia, northwest of Rome, during the COVID-19 infection, caused by the novel coronavirus. Italy has recorded 1,071 new cases of coronavirus in the last 24 hours, breaking the symbolic barrier of 1,000 cases per day for the first time since May 12, according to an official report published on August 22, 2020. "61% (of these new cases) are linked to holiday returns," and more specifically 45% (97 cases) concern returns from the island of Sardinia, which had been spared by the first wave of the virus but where the comings and goings of careless tourists and revellers have contributed to the spread of the virus. (AFP)**

**'Very precarious stage'** With no usable vaccine yet available, the most prominent tool governments have at their disposal is to confine their populations or enforce social distancing.

South Korea announced ramped up restrictions on Saturday, after 332 new cases were reported in the past 24 hours – the highest daily figure since early March.

"We are at a very precarious stage where we could see the beginning of a nationwide second wave," Health Minister Park Neung-hoo said at a press briefing.

The expanded measures include restrictions on gatherings and activities including professional sports, which will be played behind closed doors again, while beaches nationwide will close.

**'Don't feel invincible'** Italy – once the European epicentre of the virus – said Saturday it had regis-

tered more than 1,000 new infections in the past 24 hours, the highest level since the end of a punishing lockdown in May.

The story is similar across Spain, Germany and France. The Rome region also said it had recorded a record number of cases in the past 24 hours, a rise health officials blamed on people returning from holiday.

Most of those infected are young people who are not showing symptoms, the Italian capital's health official Alessio D'Amato said, warning them to stay at home.

"Don't feel invincible," he urged them.

In Germany, a university launched a series of pop concerts under coronavirus conditions, hop-

ing the mass experiment with 2,000 people can determine whether large events can safely resume.

**'Coronavirus catastrophe'** Elsewhere, Lebanon launched two weeks of measures on Friday including nighttime curfews, as the country is still dealing with the fallout from a huge explosion in Beirut that killed scores of people.

"What now? On top of this disaster, a coronavirus catastrophe?" said 55-year-old Roxane Moukarzel.

Officials fear Lebanon's fragile health system would struggle to cope with a further spike in COVID-19 cases, especially after some hospitals near the port were damaged in the explosion.

The Americas have borne the brunt of the virus in health terms, accounting for more than half of the world's fatalities.

"We lead the world in deaths," Joe Biden said Thursday while accepting the nomination to be the Democratic party's candidate in the US presidential election. The country has seen 176,332 deaths out of 5.7 million infections.

He said he would implement a national plan to fight the pandemic on his first day in office if elected in November.

New daily US cases have been trending down for weeks – but experts are unsure if Americans will have the discipline to bring the epidemic under control. Latin American countries are counting the wider costs of the pandemic – the region is not only suffering the most deaths, but also an expansion of criminal activity and rising poverty.

Without an effective political reaction, "at a regional level we can talk about a regression of up to 10 years in the levels of multidimensional poverty", Luis Felipe Lopez-Calva of the UN Development Programme told AFP. (AFP)



# Baltics link arms again in solidarity with Belarus

Three decades after their gesture of defiance against the Soviet Union, Baltic residents are linking arms once again on Sunday in solidarity with the people of Belarus.

On August 23, 1989 millions formed a human chain through the three Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to express their desire for independence.

On Sunday, thousands are expected to join a human chain stretching some 30 kilometres (19 miles) from the Lithuanian capital Vilnius to the border with Belarus.

Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, the opposition figurehead who fled from Belarus to Lithuania in the aftermath of a disputed presidential election, has said she may turn out.

"It means a lot not only for me but all Belarusian people and they feel this support... It's very beautiful," she told AFP in an interview on Saturday.

Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda, who took part in the original Baltic Way human chain, is also expected to attend the demonstration starting at 1600 GMT.

"Today is the time for our Belarusian brothers to express their desire for freedom. The Freedom Way is our extended hand for them," he told AFP.

Organisers say some 50,000 people are expected.

Smaller human chains are also planned in Latvia on the border with Belarus and in the Estonian capital Tallinn and in other countries once under the Soviet yoke.



**Protesters form 'solidarity chains' to condemn post-vote crackdown in Belarus (france24.com)**

In the Czech capital Prague, protesters are planning to link arms along the iconic Charles Bridge.

The Baltic Way human chain of 1989 has inspired similar initiatives by freedom-seekers the world over even in recent years – from Hong Kong to Catalonia to Taiwan.

The original was 600 kilometres long and sent the strongest signal to date that the Soviet-occupied Baltic states were on the road towards restored independence, which they all won two years later.

All three are now EU and NATO members.

The Lithuanian human chain will start in Cathedral Square and end at the Medininkai border post.

Kiryl Krivicki, a 20-year-old Belarusian student living in Vilnius said the event "could become the same metaphor of freedom" as the one in 1989.

Tatsiana Chulitskaia, 44, a Belarusian researcher at Vytautas Magnus University, said: "It is important, even if it is a symbolic support."

"It is essential for Belarusians not to feel alone." (AFP)

# West African delegation 'very hopeful' after meeting Mali junta

A West African delegation visiting Mali to push for a speedy return to civilian rule following a coup said it was "very hopeful" on Saturday after meeting with the country's military junta and the president it ousted.

The head of the delegation from the regional ECOWAS bloc, former Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan, said that detained Malian president Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was doing relatively well.

"We saw him, he's very fine," said Jonathan, who had earlier met for half an hour with the soldiers who seized power on Tuesday, including new strongman Colonel Assimi Goita.

Jonathan told AFP that negotiations were going well and he was "very hopeful".

Rebel soldiers seized Keita and other leaders after a mutiny on Tuesday, dealing another deep blow to a country already struggling with a brutal Islamist insurgency and widespread public discontent over its government.

Mali's neighbours have called for Keita to be reinstated, saying the purpose of the delegation's visit was to help "ensure the immediate return of constitutional order".

ECOWAS Commission chief Jean-Claude Kassi Brou said late Saturday that the talks took place in a "very open atmosphere and we felt a real desire to move forward".

"We hope to be able to finalise everything by Monday," he added.

Ismael Wague, spokesman for the junta which calls itself the National Committee for the Salvation of the People, also said the negotiations were going "very well". A source



**Mali coup leader - Col. Assimi Goita (thetop10News.com)**

close to the junta said the ECOWAS envoys had made a "good impression".

"We understand that heads of state, like Ivory Coast's Alassane Ouattara, are working for an easing of tensions, for a peaceful solution, even if they have firmly condemned our seizing power. We are open to discussion," the source told AFP.

The envoys also visited the Kati military base outside the capital Bamako where the coup began and which has become a new centre of power, the source said.

President Keita has been held at the base since the coup, along with prime minister Boubou Cisse and other high-ranking government figures.

**'We won'** Thousands of jubilant Malians took to the streets of Bamako on Friday to celebrate the toppling of Keita, who was reelected in 2018 but became the focus of widespread discontent. The rally, originally organised as an anti-Keita protest by

a loose coalition that has led months of mass rallies against him, was recast to "celebrate the victory of the Malian people".

"I am overjoyed! We won," said Mariam Cisse, 38.

But it was a different story on Saturday, when several dozen people who tried to rally in Bamako were dispersed by police.

"We are here this morning to show that we do not agree with the coup. But people attacked us with stones, then the police took advantage of this aggression to disperse our supporters," said Abdou Niang, an activist of a pro-Keita party.

There has been international pressure to restore order, the United States on Friday suspending military aid to Mali, with no further training or support of the country's armed forces.

The ECOWAS delegation will meet with the ambassadors in Mali of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council – Britain, China, France, Russia and the US – on Sunday morning, according to the programme seen by AFP.

**Fractured nation** Keita won election in a landslide in 2013, presenting himself as a unifying figure in a fractured country, and was re-elected in 2018 for another five-year term.

But he failed to make headway against the jihadist revolt that has left swathes of the country in the hands of armed Islamists and ignited ethnic violence in the country's volatile centre.

Thousands of UN and French troops, along with soldiers from five Sahel countries, have been deployed to try to stem the bloodshed. (AFP)

# South Africa retailers feel pain from Coronavirus pandemic

South Africa's retail industry is feeling the pain from the coronavirus pandemic on two fronts – store closures during lockdown and the sharply reduced purchasing power of households.

South Africa, the continent's most industrialised economy, went into strict lockdown at the end of March, with people only allowed to shop for essential items such as food, medicine and winter clothing.

It is also the African country that has been hardest hit by COVID-19, with more than 600,000 cases and at least 2,500 deaths.

Restrictions have been gradually rolled back since June. Alcohol and tobacco sales were allowed to resume this week and, generally, business is now almost back to normal.

Nevertheless, retailers are reeling from the economic effects of months of suffocating restrictions.

South Africa's Massmart – majority-owned by US giant Walmart – said on Thursday that it expected half-year losses to widen by as much as 42 percent as a result of the nationwide lockdown.

Massmart was already in dire straits before the pandemic and closed a 23-store electronic retail chain and 11 wholesale outlets shortly before the lockdown came into effect.

"Retailers that were already taking the strain" in an economy that was contracting even before the outbreak have found themselves vulnerable to the virus fallout, said Casperus Treurnicht, portfolio manager at Gryphon Asset Management. And even as the economy reopens, shops will contin-



**South Africa went into strict lockdown at the end of March, with people only allowed to shop for essential items such as food, medicine and winter clothing.**

ue to enforce such measures in order to protect both staff and customers.

Investment analyst Lulama Qongqo suggested that customers were likely to favour stores with visible hygiene measures.

"Retailers who cannot signal that it's safe to shop in their locations are probably going to lose, and perhaps those are the ones more likely to be plagued by the question: 'Can we survive?'," Qongqo told AFP.

But the measures come at a cost.

Since the start of lockdown, South Africa's second-largest supermarket chain Pick n Pay has had to budget for protective equipment, a voluntary severance programme taken by 1,400 of its 9,000 employees and bonuses for front-line workers.

The company, which has a market

capitalisation of over \$1.2 billion, warned that its profits in the first half could be halved as a result of the fall-out from coronavirus.

The central bank has slashed lending rates by 300 basis points since January to boost spending, but economists fear it will not be enough.

"The consumer will be trading down and the operator with the best price and ease of buying will come out on top," said Treurnicht of Gryphon Asset Management. On the other hand, digital services and e-commerce are booming. South Africa's largest online shopping platform Takealot, which had estimated sales of around one billion rand (\$57.9 million) per month between January and March, recently reported a surge in demand. (AFP)

# Turkey's maritime doctrine author has dire warning for France

The father of Turkey's controversial new maritime doctrine told AFP that France's decision to send warships to help Greece out in its Mediterranean standoff with Ankara was adding "fuel to the fire".

While he might be retired, the "Blue Homeland" vision that Rear Admiral Cem Gurdeniz helped craft over a decade ago is being turned into reality by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan today.

A 62-year-old Francophile, Gurdeniz received AFP at a gorgeous wooden summer house on one of Istanbul's Prince's Islands in the Marmara Sea. As warships from France, Greece and Turkey converged on a disputed patch of the eastern Mediterranean Sea, Gurdeniz looked at ease while criticising French President Emmanuel Macron.

"I'm fed up with Macron's everyday verbal threats," Gurdeniz said in English.

"For many Turks now, France is acting like an 'enfant terrible'. Can you imagine, they are threatening Turkey?" he asked.

"If France continues such provocative actions... that would not serve regional peace and stability – that would add fuel to the fire and France should avoid that." The discovery of major natural gas deposits in waters surrounding Cyprus and the Greek island of Crete have triggered a scramble for energy riches and revived old regional rivalries.

The biggest tensions are between historically uneasy NATO allies Turkey and Greece, which almost went to war over some uninhabited islets in the Aegean Sea in 1996.

These have been growing progressively more serious as Erdogan lays claim to waters designed to turn Turkey into the maritime powerhouse Gurdeniz envisioned from the start.

EU foreign ministers convened an emergency video conference last week after Greek and Turkish warships collided in hotly disputed circumstances.

"If Greece pulls the trigger, it will be the end of NATO," Gurdeniz said, implying that Turkey would then withdraw from the Cold War-era military alliance.

"European countries should put pressure on Greece so that it abandons" some of its maritime claims, he said.

**'Cold blood'** Erdogan has tempered his heated rhetoric with calls for talks, which have been

spearheaded with sporadic success by German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Gurdeniz agreed, saying: "We should think with cold blood, soberly, prudently." But he saw no need for outside mediation, suggesting that hostilities will only end when Greeks and Turks sit down and frankly talk their problems out.

Gurdeniz overwhelmingly approves of Erdogan's tough line, but also regrets Turkey's growing diplomatic isolation in the increasingly volatile region.

He called Turkey's decision to rupture its relations with Egypt following the army's ouster of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013 "a mistake".

"Turkey could have won over Egypt. Also, starting with Egypt, we

could have made some gains with Israel too," Gurdeniz said.

But his eyes lit up and his easy smile broadened when talking about the "growing interest of young people" in Turkey's maritime claims.

"I do a lot of interviews with YouTubeers," said the retired admiral, pointing out that the annual enrolment of new cadets in navy schools is steadily rising.

He also pointed out that the Mediterranean accounted for just "one percent" of the world's oceans and seas.

"I always stress that Turkey should go beyond this one percent: the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea and the Atlantic," Gurdeniz said.

"Turkey should have a presence down there. This is the reflection of a growing power." (AFP)



**Rear Admiral Cem Gurdeniz (news.yahoo.com)**

# SHORT CUTS TO VACCINES: MORE HARM THAN GOOD



When Moscow announced on 11 August it had registered the first vaccine against Covid-19 and was naming it Sputnik V, the message was hard to miss. Back in 1957, the Soviet Union had launched the Sputnik satellite and won the race for space. Now, Russia was saying it was pushing the boundaries of medical science.

But critics claimed it was pushing too hard. And the scepticism with which the announcement was met is a reminder of intense international competition. In this race, there have been accusations of short-cuts, espionage, unethical risk-taking and jealousy, amid talk of "vaccine nationalism".

A Covid-19 vaccine is one of the most valuable and eagerly sought-after medical prizes in modern times. This is not just because of the life-saving benefits, but also the promise of ending disruption, and the glory and validation for those who succeed.

"I have never seen the political stakes for a medical product being so intense," says Lawrence Gostin, professor of global health law at Georgetown University in the US. "The reason the Covid-19 vaccine has taken on such political symbolism is that the superpowers have seen the vaccine as projecting their scientific prowess, actually validating their political system as superior."

There are currently about half a dozen leading candidates in late-stage trials according to the World Health Organization (WHO), including three in China; one in the UK; one in the US, and a German-US partnership.

It normally takes years to develop a

vaccine. And while all developers are seeking to speed things up, Russia's registration of Sputnik has raised concerns about short-cutting the normal process.

In July, the UK, US and Canada accused Russia's spy agencies of hacking into vaccine research, something the Kremlin denied. The suggestion from intelligence sources at the time was that this was about stealing data rather than disrupting development.

The following week, the US Department of Justice accused two Chinese hackers of targeting vaccine development on behalf of Beijing's intelligence services. China has strongly denied this and has said it has shared information about the virus and co-operated with foreign partners.

The greater concern is about cutting corners in the normally slow, thorough world of medical testing.

"There have been short cuts taken for sure, particularly in the Russian case," says Thomas Bollyky director of the global health program at the Council on Foreign Relations. "It is not hard to develop a vaccine. It is hard to prove that a vaccine is safe and effective. And if countries are only interested in the former they can take short cuts."

Russia's decision to register the Sputnik vaccine before large scale late-stage trials, without publishing research data, led to criticism in the West. Dr Anthony Fauci, one of the most prominent members of the White House's coronavirus taskforce, said he "seriously doubt[s]" the Russians had proven their vaccine to be safe and effective. In Moscow, such concerns



COVID-19 Vaccine

were dismissed as "jealousy". Those behind the vaccine say they will soon publish data in a major international scientific magazine.

Meanwhile, China has also fast-tracked some of its development. Chinese pharmaceutical companies have said senior executives have been given shots to "pre-test" their vaccine, a move intended to show willingness of those in charge to take risks and make sacrifices. In Russia, Vladimir Putin said his own daughter had been given a dose of the Sputnik vaccine.

And reports that both countries plan to test the vaccine on their armed forces have led to ethical concerns, since those individuals may not be able to give proper consent. A vaccine being developed by Chinese firm CanSino, working with the People's

Liberation Army, was approved for use on military personnel in June, before late stage "Phase 3" trials had been started.

"We have a set of ethical norms for human participant research designed to protect against abuses," argues Prof Gostin.

### Fuel for anti-vaxers

Given such unprecedented public demand for a vaccine, shouldn't a little corner cutting be expected?

Failing to put a vaccine through full trials, and rushing it out, could lead to over-confidence from the public and so to the further spread of Covid-19. Alternatively, a drug which turns out to have serious side effects could fuel anti-vaccination movements.

Most vaccine development programmes are commercial ventures and often based on international collaboration. But that has not stopped governments seeing them as a symbol of national prestige and scientific prowess and a means of countering criticism about how they have dealt with the crisis.

"What has driven some countries to be particularly competitive about the development of a vaccine are largely domestic concerns around the perception of how they have performed in this pandemic," says Mr. Bollyky.

The Trump administration in the US has been under intense pressure in an election year. Like Moscow it has not been shy of space-based comparisons, naming its project to deliver a vaccine Operation Warp Speed - a reference to the TV series Star Trek.

In the UK, a successful home-grown vaccine would boost Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government which has also come under fire. His Health Secretary, Matt Hancock, has said "Britain continues to lead the world" on vaccine development. The UK, like others, has hedged its bets by securing contracts to buy other vaccines in case they prove successful. But that has raised concerns about another aspect of the race.

### Vaccine nationalism

"There is vaccine nationalism for sure among western countries," says Thomas Bollyky. "The form... you are seeing in the US and UK is about locking up large initial doses of supplies of

vaccines." Of course, nationalism was rising even before coronavirus reached its head. But the disease has strengthened those forces.

The initial rush to get hold of ventilators and personal protective equipment saw countries outbid each other with cash at airports to secure shipments, highlighting dependencies on foreign supplies and spurring a drive for more domestic capacity.

For all the talk about a vaccine being internationally distributed, those that develop it first may be able to ensure they have priority to save lives and get their economies moving. Likewise, failing to secure supplies could lead to public anger and questions about competence.

The head of the WHO issued a renewed call on 18 August for richer countries to join a global programme to share vaccines with poorer nations. "We need to prevent vaccine nationalism," he said.

Countries may also be tempted to offer access to vaccines to other countries as a tool of diplomacy, to curry favour and build support.

Mr. Bollyky believe "every government with early supply will ultimately keep some of those supplies for a form of diplomacy".

Being first to market does not necessarily mean a vaccine will be the most effective and experts caution that this is not a race where there will be a single winner or finish line. That means the rivalries over developing and supplying vaccines may only just be beginning.

(BBC)

## Covid-19: Symptoms return in cured patients

As more patients recuperating from the deadly virus return to what they hoped would be some form of normalcy, it's becoming increasingly apparent that long-term symptoms could accompany them. Lasting effects from COVID-19 including symptoms such as loss of the sense of smell, a dry cough, a flu or fever, shortness of breath, nausea and chronic fatigue, Business Insider reported.

One young patient who had

improved after three weeks of rest saw symptoms return sporadically over the past five months.

The emphasis was initially placed on speedily saving patients' lives amid the pandemic. As doctors gradually learned more about the coronavirus and lowered mortality rates, however, scientists and medical experts have shifted their focus to the 23 million people worldwide who have survived the infection.

While prolonged recovery times were not out of the ordinary for patients hospital-stricken by pneumonia, many clinicians say that the number of COVID-19 patients with lingering issues is much higher than is seen with other viral illnesses, The Economist reported.

As if that weren't enough, the problems patients experience are also more complex and varied, including heart, lung and psychological symptoms.

Additionally, some underlying

issues may be "unmasked" by the disease, depending on the severity of the infection, according to Scientific American.

While much remains unknown to doctors fighting the disease, coronavirus hallmarks such as lung damage, breathing problems, blood clots, heart inflammation, headaches and other neurological issues and extreme fatigue may help them identify additional treatment options.

(Business Insider)



Aedes albopictus

## Biden says would shut down country if scientists recommend



Joe Biden

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden said, if elected, he would be willing to shut down the country again should there be a second wave of Coronavirus in the US and scientists recommend the move to slow its spread.

"I would shut it down. I would listen to the scientists," the former vice president told ABC News' David Muir during a joint interview with his running mate Sen. Kamala Harris set to air in full Sunday night.

Biden said he would "be prepared to do whatever it takes to save lives, because we cannot get the country moving until we control the virus."

He called it the "fundamental flaw" of the Trump administration's handling of the pandemic, which has claimed the lives of more than 175,000 Americans.

"In order to keep the

country running and moving, and the economy growing, and people employed, you have to fix the virus," Biden told ABC. "You have to deal with the virus."

On Saturday evening, Trump responded on Twitter and mischaracterized Biden's remarks, not mentioning Biden's qualification that he would shut down the country if scientists made the recommendation.

"Despite biggest ever job gains and a V shaped recovery, Joe Biden said, 'I would shut it down', referring to our country. He has no clue!" Trump said.

Biden and his campaign have continued to hammer President Donald Trump's response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

"The President keeps telling us the virus is going to disappear. He keeps waiting for a miracle," Biden said in his accept-

ance speech during Thursday's Democratic National Convention. "Well, I have news for him: no miracle is coming."

Biden has also called for governors to implement mask mandates for the next three months.

His proposals also include hiring 100,000 people for a national contact tracing effort and pouring \$25 billion into the manufacturing and distribution of a vaccine.

Trump responded to Biden's proposals by accusing him of rejecting a "scientific approach in favor of locking all Americans in their basements for months on end."

"At every turn, Biden has been wrong about the virus, ignoring the scientific evidence and putting left-wing politics before facts and evidence," Trump told reporters at the White House last week. (CNN)

## COVID not transmitted by insects

Although COVID-19 cases continue to spike across the country this summer, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention just clarified that there's one way you definitely can't contract coronavirus in warm weather: From being bitten by mosquitoes or ticks.

On Friday afternoon, the agency tweeted a linked to its FAQ page, which states, "At this time, CDC has no data to suggest that this new coronavirus or other similar coronaviruses are spread by mosquitoes or ticks. The main way that COVID-19 spreads is from person to person."

The CDC says that person-to-person spread happens primarily in these ways:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about six feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or

possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

- From people who may or may not be showing symptoms.

According to the National Pest Management Association, "vector pests" like mosquitoes and ticks play a critical role in the transmission of several serious viral illnesses worldwide, including malaria, Zika virus, West Nile Virus and yellow fever. But COVID-19 is different than those diseases. It's caused by a "zoonotic coronavirus" which jumped the species barrier from its original animal hosts to humans. That means that mosquitoes and ticks can't spread it.

Although COVID-19 isn't a risk related to those bugs, it's still important to be vigilant about protecting yourself from mosquito and tick bites.

- To protect yourself against mosquitoes and ticks,
- Use an EPA-registered insect repellent. These contain ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535 or oil of

lemon eucalyptus. For a full list click here. If you wear sunscreen, apply that first and insect repellent second.

- Wear long sleeves and long pants when outdoors
- Use window screens; ensure they don't have rips or holes
- Regularly empty any sources of standing water indoors or outdoors—those are mosquitoes' preferred breeding places
- After spending an extended period of time outdoors, check your skin for ticks. If you discover one, remove it completely with tweezers or consult your healthcare provider. How to stay safe from COVID-19

As for protecting yourself against the coronavirus, the best strategies include wearing a face mask consistently, washing your hands thoroughly and frequently, maintaining a social distance of at least six feet from people you don't live with, and avoiding large gatherings (especially bars and indoor parties). (Yahoo)

## AC rooms help spread COVID-19

Dry air and air-conditioned rooms can help spread the coronavirus, according to an Indian-German research team that looked at the role of relative humidity in the transmission of infections.

For office workers and students worldwide, the findings are important as they head back to their desks after months in lockdown.

"The role of humidity seems to be extremely important to the airborne spread of COVID-19 in indoor environ-

ments," the researchers reported, on the website of Germany's Leibniz Institute for Tropospheric Research (TROPOS).

The scientists, who reviewed 10 international studies of swine flu and other infectious diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, found humidity affects a virus in three ways: droplet size, how droplets float and how droplets land on surfaces.

In more humid rooms, virus

droplets become heavier and fall faster in higher humidity, "providing less chances for other people to breathe in infectious viral droplets," the team wrote, according to DW, a German news website.

Dry air makes the droplets shrink and hang around, becoming what the scientists describe as an "optimal route" for transmission.

Low humidity also dries out mucous membranes in the nose, making an easier way in for the coronavirus, they

wrote. Rooms should have a relative humidity of 40% to 60% — open the windows, the researchers urge — to keep a virus from spreading and governments should include the recommendation in any public health guidelines, the team found.

Besides raising the relative humidity and wearing face masks, the scientists are urging businesses and schools to not pack their rooms with people.

(NY Post)



An air-conditioned room

# Coronavirus vaccine alone won't end pandemic: WHO

The World Health Organization said Friday that a vaccine will be a "vital tool" in the global fight against the coronavirus, but it won't end the Covid-19 pandemic on its own and there's no guarantee scientists will find one.

World leaders and the public must learn to manage the virus and make permanent adjustments to their daily lives to bring the virus down to low levels, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said during a news conference from the agency's Geneva headquarters. "At the same time, we will not, we cannot go back to the way things were."

Throughout history, outbreaks and pandemics have changed economies and societies, he said. "In particular, the Covid-19 pandemic has given new impetus to the need to accelerate efforts to

respond to climate change," he said. "The Covid-19 pandemic has given us a glimpse of our world as it could be: cleaner skies and rivers."

The virus has infected more than 22.7 million people worldwide and killed at least 794,100 in more than seven months, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. There are at least 30 potential vaccines currently in clinical trials, according to the WHO, but there is no guarantee they will be safe and effective, he said.

Even though human trials for potential vaccines are progressing, scientists say key questions remain. Covid-19 was discovered in December. While numerous research papers and studies have been produced on the virus, scientists still don't fully understand

how it affects the body or how well someone is protected from reinfection after recovering.

Earlier this month, Tedros said there was no "silver bullet" to the coronavirus and "there might never be." He said world leaders can stop new outbreaks by practicing the "basics" of public health and disease control. "Testing, isolating and treating patients and tracing and quarantining their contacts. Do it all. Inform, empower and listen to communities. Do it all," he said Aug. 3.

Tedros said Friday that "every single person" can make a difference in the pandemic.

"Every person and family has a responsibility to know the level of Covid-19 transmission locally and to understand what they can do to protect themselves and others," he said. Dr. Maria Van Kerkhove,

head of the WHO's emerging diseases and zoonosis unit, said it's "very important" for the public to learn "how to live with this virus." That will help "continue to suppress transmission, identify cases and clusters that pop up so we can quickly put those out and minimize as many deaths as possible," she said. "In doing so, some countries may need to implement some measures again."

Van Kerkhove said some countries, using data, are now choosing to implement social distancing measures in areas where there is a high level of transmission.

"What we are seeing now is a targeted approach to adding interventions that need to be put in place to get outbreaks under control and reduce the number of infections that are happening," she said. (CNBC)



Dr. Anthony Fauci

## US can learn from Asia - Dr. Fauci

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, delivered some blunt messages to the public during an online video interview. There are three key reasons why many island nations and Asian countries, such as New Zealand, Singapore and South Korea, have managed to control the coronavirus, he said. Aside from social distancing and masks, he said these countries took many correct approaches to deal with their respective outbreaks and, as a result, have created the right environment to begin opening up their economies again. Public health and economic health are not mutually exclusive, he added, or a matter of either/or. This, Fauci said, is what we can learn from those countries:

**1. Outdoors is better than indoors:** In a recent interview on Instagram (FB) actor Matthew McConaughey asked Fauci if certain smaller island nations have more successfully battled coronavirus because residents spend more time outdoors. He replied, "It's conceivable that that's the case." Fauci added that outdoors is preferable for sports, restaurants and school classes.

Fauci also said that aiming for 100% herd immunity — as Sweden attempted — instead of closing schools and businesses to flatten the curve of new cases of COVID-19, would have dire consequences for the American people. "If everyone contracted it, a lot of people are going to die," the doctor said. "The death toll would be enormous and totally unacceptable."

Anders Tegnell, the Swedish epidemiologist who masterminded the plan, admitted the country made a mistake. "If we were to encounter the same illness with the same knowledge that we have today, I think our response would land somewhere in between what Sweden did and what the rest of the world has done," he said in June when the country hit the highest death rate in Europe.

In a separate Facebook Live chat with Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo, Fauci said windows should remain open on school buses, and students should wear their masks as much as possible. "If you look at the super-spreader events that have occurred, they're almost always inside," he said, citing major outbreaks at nursing homes, meat-packing warehouses, prisons and weddings.

**2. Shut down decisively to stop outbreaks:** And asked why so many Asian countries have had relative success in controlling outbreaks of COVID-19, Fauci said, "When they shut down, they shut down like, 'Bang!' When we shut down, it was never in the level that the Asian countries

did." Fauci said the stop/start and disparate approaches to shutting down in the U.S. has not worked out as well.

Fauci also said it's not a simple choice between public health and economic health. "The quicker you pull together and get it down, the quicker you get back to normal. We're all in this together. Unless we do this together, we're not going to get this under control," he said. "To think that you can ignore the biologic and get the economy back, it's not going to happen. You have got to do both."

The U.S. cannot afford a prolonged resurgence of the virus now or in the fall, health professionals say. For one, it's harder to get people to practice social distancing and stay home again, especially after they've already abided by stay-at-home orders in the early part of the first wave of the virus. South and Western states have experienced a spike in cases after relaxing measures.

Secondly, the effect on the economy could push the U.S. into a prolonged recession, even greater than the one already predicted by some economists. Thirdly, the flu season will already be upon us in the winter and those symptoms are easily confused with those of COVID-19. Fourthly, too few people will be immune to COVID-19 after this first wave ends to support herd immunity.

Actor Matthew McConaughey interviewed infectious-disease specialist Dr. Anthony Fauci on Instagram.

**3. Contract tracing helps stop community transmission.** Fauci said it's crucial to create the conditions

to allow authorities to conduct contact tracing, and prevent community transmission. He used sports as an example. "If you're in a red zone where the level of virus is so high, sure you can try to do sports normally, but the chances are you're going to get people infected," he said.

Young people who play or attend sports events are more likely to become "super spreaders" and behave as if they don't have the virus and be the source of community transmissions, Fauci said in the 40-minute interview. "Many of them are going to be young, so they're not going to get sick. They go out into the community." At that point, he said, the origin of the spread is much harder to trace.

Countries like South Korea, New Zealand and China — where the virus is believed to have originated in a food market in Wuhan late last year — appear to have had more success in beating back COVID-19. Earlier this week, for example, New Zealand moved fast to lock down Auckland after the return of COVID after 102 days of reporting no new infections. (MSN)



An asteroid

## Asteroid to fly past Earth on Nov 2

Well, 2020 keeps getting better all the time.

The celestial object known as 2018VP1 is projected to come close to Earth on November 2, according to the Center for Near Earth Objects Studies at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Its diameter is 0.002 km, or about 6.5 feet, according to NASA's data. It was first identified at Palomar Observatory in California in 2018.

NASA says there are three potential impacts, but "based on 21 observations spanning 12,968 days," the agency has determined the asteroid probably — phew! — won't have a deep impact, let alone bring Armageddon.

The chance of it hitting us is just 0.41%, data show.

At 6.5 feet in diameter, it is not considered a "potentially danger-

ous" near-Earth object (NEO), but the space agency is keeping its eye on it and other asteroids like it, nonetheless. It was first observed on Nov. 3, 2018, and last observed 13 days later.

There are reported to be three potential impacts based on the 21 observations NASA has made of the asteroid. However, the likelihood of direct impact is less than 0.41%, NASA noted.

Fox News has reached out to NASA with a request for comment. On Aug. 16, an asteroid of similar size, 2020 QG, became the closest space rock ever recorded to fly past Earth. NASA was unable to see it, as it flew past the Earth from the direction of the sun.

A NASA spokesperson told Fox News that "similar asteroids" to 2020 QG "would have disintegrated

in Earth's atmosphere had they impacted." The spokesperson added that the agency is working on a "space-based infrared telescope that will have better capability to identify similar asteroids."

"Potentially hazardous" NEOs are defined as space objects that come within 0.05 astronomical units and measure more than 460 feet in diameter, according to NASA. According to a 2018 report put together by Planetary.org, there are more than 18,000 NEOs.

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bility to identify similar asteroids."

This is not the first time in recent memory that NASA has missed a NEO similar to 2020 QG. In February, researchers in the Netherlands discovered 11 "potentially hazardous objects" that are not on NASA's list of "potentially hazardous" near-Earth objects, using advanced artificial intelligence.

NASA unveiled a 20-page plan in 2018 that details the steps the U.S. should take to be better prepared for NEOs, such as asteroids and comets that come within 30 million miles of the planet.

A recent survey showed that Americans prefer a space program that focuses on potential asteroid impacts over sending humans back to the moon or to Mars. (Fox, CNN)

## Ozone across Northern Hemisphere increased over the past 20 years

In a first-ever study using ozone data collected by commercial aircraft, researchers from the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES) at the University of Colorado Boulder found that levels of the pollutant in the lowest part of Earth's atmosphere have increased across the Northern Hemisphere over the past 20 years. That's even as tighter controls on emissions of ozone precursors have lowered ground-level ozone in some places, including North America and Europe. Tropospheric ozone—ozone between Earth's surface and 12 to 15 kilometers above Earth—is a greenhouse gas and air pollutant that, at high levels, can harm people's lungs and damage plants.

In a study published today in the journal *Science Advances*, the team found an overall increase in ozone levels above the Northern Hemisphere. "That's a big deal because it means that as we try to limit our pollu-

tion locally, it might not work as well as we thought," said Audrey Gaudel, a CIRES scientist working in the NOAA Chemical Sciences Laboratory and the study's lead author. She and her colleagues documented the greatest ozone increases in the tropics, Gaudel said, noting that ozone exported from the tropics may be driving increases above other areas of the Northern Hemisphere.

Gaudel and her co-authors, CIRES scientists in NOAA and international colleagues, also found the most striking increases in areas where ozone levels were once lowest: Malaysia/Indonesia, Southeast Asia and India, for example. Those regions had very low ozone values between 1994-2004, and very high levels in recent years, between 2011-2016.

Previous studies could not draw firm conclusions on Northern Hemisphere ozone trends, according to Gaudel, because there are too few

long-term monitoring locations and because new satellites with near-global coverage have provided conflicting results on ozone trends.

So the researchers turned to aircraft data from Europe's In-Service Aircraft for the Global Observing System (IAGOS) program. "Since 1994, IAGOS has measured ozone worldwide using the same instrument on every plane, giving us consistent measurements over time and space from Earth's surface to the upper troposphere," Gaudel said. Between 1994 and 2016, commercial aircraft captured 34,600 ozone profiles, or about four profiles each day.

Gaudel and her colleagues used these measurements to calculate changes in tropospheric ozone from the mid-1990s to 2016 above 11 regions in the Northern Hemisphere. They found an overall increase in ozone in all regions where they looked, including four in the mid-

latitudes, two in the subtropics, two in the tropics and three equatorial regions. On average, median ozone values had increased by 5% per decade. In the so-called "lower troposphere," which is closer to Earth's surface, ozone has decreased above some mid-latitude regions, including Europe and the United States, where ozone precursor emissions have decreased. The researchers found those reductions were offset by increases higher in the troposphere—with the net result being an overall ozone increase from the surface to 12 km.

To understand what was causing the observed ozone changes, the researchers looked at the emissions inventories of one of the main ozone precursors—nitrogen oxides (NOx)—used as input for the global chemistry transport model MERRA-2 GMI, which reproduces accurately the IAGOS measurements. (Phys.org)

## Tiny meteorite may hold clue to life on Earth

A Costa Rican meteorite may contain answers to the biggest questions of how life started on planet earth. Scientists at the Central American School of Geology are studying parts of a 2019 meteorite that impacted Aguas Zarcas, a village in Costa Rica's tropical rainforest, described as being "more valuable than gold." The Costa Rican meteorite could yield a cosmic library of new information about how life began on earth billions of years ago.

According to a 2017 paper by scientists at McMaster University and the Max Planck Institute, life on earth began between 3.7 and 4.5 billion years ago after a series of meteorites packed with essential chemical elements crashed into ponds of warm liquid. A series of wet and dry cycles then bonded together the basic molecular building blocks of life in these nutrient-rich ponds. And then

miraculously our planet's first self-replicating RNA molecules emerged, providing the first lines of genetic code that would ultimately evolve into all life on earth. A Science Mag article states that on 23 April 2019, just after 9 pm, a "fiery emissary," the so called Aguas Zarcas meteor, streaked across the skies of Costa Rica in a trail of unearthly orange and green light. This interstellar visitor was described as being the size of a washing machine. It fragmented as it passed through earth's protective atmosphere and crashed into the jungle. This Costa Rican meteorite is composed of the same chemical elements that hit the earth's crust just before life began billions of years ago. Scientists collected a total of 60 pounds (27 kilograms) of meteorite fragments in Aguas Zarcas, the largest piece weighed about 4 pounds (1.8 kilograms). According to the

researchers, the carbon within this meteorite was "formed from nuclear fission in stars and its origin." And trapped within this "rock" were molecular fragments of water, nickel and sulfur, the same isotopes that form the sun. Currently, these cosmic hot rocks are being analyzed. This research may lead to a clearer understanding of how exactly life formed on earth and confirm or refute the Big Bang theory. How The Costa Rican Meteorite Fragments Were Found

Every year, tens of thousands of meteorites pass through the earth's atmosphere and 99% of them fragment into molecular dust. However, some pieces do make it to earth. To date, more than 60,000 have been found and classified by scientists. But meteor strikes that have been witnessed are exceptionally rare. Science Mag stated that only "1,196 have ever been recorded."

The 2019 Aguas Zarcas' impact event was witnessed by many people and one woman found a piece just after it landed.

According to Science Mag, Marcia Campos Muñoz was in her pajamas on the couch just after 9 pm, when she heard "a foreboding rumble." Her heart pounded and her animals panicked as the meteor "rattled the house to its bones." As the smoke cleared, she found "a grapefruit-size hole in the corrugated zinc roof and a smashed-up plastic table" and below this mess the charred black meteorite scattered across the floor. Not scared of radiation poisoning, unlike typical movie scenarios, Marcia picked up the biggest fragment. She said it was still warm to the touch. Within hours a local journalist visited the house and streamed videos of the cosmic damage and evidence on a live Facebook video. (Ancient Origins)

Vantage FFSL President's Cup

# Police SC face acid test against Colombo FC

ALTHAF NAWAZ

Local football's greatest extravaganza, the inaugural "Vantage FFSL President's Cup", will reach its final stages with two quarter finals matches, involving four top teams, to dribble it out for supremacy at Sugathadasa Stadium today. First match is scheduled to kick-off at 4 p.m.

Reigning F.A. Cup champions Police Sports Club will take on another high riding team the Colombo Football Club in the first match. Police coached by Mahinda Galagedera will face an acid test against their rivals. The Cops won two games while losing one match before they qualified for this stage.

According to their team sources a few of their key players are injured, but they are pretty confident of covering it up with the reserve players who are on the bench. They possess a mix of talented players including the under-19 pool players. Their main success story is their fitness, which has contributed immensely. It has to be mentioned their coach Mahinda Galagedera has worked indefatigably, with his players to mould



**B.M.C.B. Ratnayake**  
(Colombo FC Captain)



**Chamika Kumara**  
(Police SC Captain)

them as a unit to achieve great success.

Their rivals Colombo FC is another big competitor in the local football arena, who cannot be underestimated in any circumstances. According to their coach Hassan Roomy, they are injury free and will be at full strength, after the return of the four rested players in their last encounter. As per Roomy the morale of the side is pretty high, with a four-day camp held at City Football League

grounds. They have a well-balanced side and are pretty pumped up for the big occasion to go all out to secure a much needed victory.

In the second match at 7 p.m., Red Star Football Club will take on Serendib Sports Club in the second quarter final. Red Star from Dharga Town created several upsets before reaching this stage of the tournament. They field a young set of players who are gaining experience match by match. They started

from Division 2 FFSL tournament and later emerged champions in the

top division to qualify for this tournament. As per their team sources they are injury free and will go all out in this match, where they are confident of turning tables.

Serendib SC from Mawanella, is another team that cannot be underrated. They ousted some big teams in the fray including the likes of Ratnam Sports Club. They gave a torrid time to the Police SC in their last encounter, which they lost 1-2 after a gallant performance. Their team is coached by former national player Kasun Jayasuriya, who took over proceedings just before the tournament who, has turned this side to a force to be reckoned with.

Their players are injury free and are eagerly awaiting to add another win to their fold and to reserve a berth in the semi-finals to be held on 27 of this month at the same venue.

The FFSL is conducting this tournament after obtaining special permission to play behind closed doors which has been a tremendous success so far.



**M.M.M. Asair**  
(Serendib SC Captain)



**M.H.M. Rameez**  
(Red Star FC Captain)

**Police SC** - W.K.A.Chamika Kumara(Captain.), D.L.K. Lankeshwara, A.Dumith Shashika, R.P.S.Nilantha Pathirana, R.P.D.Sampath Pathirana, A.NicholasT.M.S.K.Kandepola, D.Mahendran Dinesh, K. S. G. N. S. K u m a r a , S.M.M.Ashan Siriwardena, A.Daniel, W.Chathura Gunarathna, M.J.R.Mohamed, M.S.M.Sufaik, M.M.M. Imran, J.A.I.Danusha Perera, M.I.M.Ijaz, S.Tamil Selvam, Arjunan Praveen, A.H.T.Shihan

**Colombo FC** - B.M.C.B. Ratnayake (Captain), M. Rawme Mohideen, H. Niran Kanishka, M. Zarwan Johar, M.N.M. Rilwan, M. Nazeer Imran, M.N. Mohamed Fazal, M.N. Afeel Mohamed, N.A.M. Adhil, K.A. Buddhika Perera, A.R. Ahamed Shazny, M. Siraj Jain, M. Safran Sattar, M.F. Mohamed Aakib, M.S.M. Shakeer, Shabeer Razoniya, M. Haleem Rumbalan

Prabudda, T.K. Bandara Abeykoon, Umeer Safekdeen, Kelvin Ugochukwu Kanu.

**Red Star FC** - M.H.M. Ajmal, M.H.M. Rameez, (Captain.), N.C.M.Rahman, M.M.M.Nusky, M.R.M.Rilhad, M.J.M.Badran, P.J.Chaminda, M.A.F. Basith Ameer, S.D.Wjiesinghe, Ogu-dugu Ismaila Abumere, M.A.M.Mubarak, A.I.M.Niyab, M.R.M. Atheef, Farhan, M. Fahri Mohamed, Nimesh Salinda, Cooray,M.A. Hasan, Mohamed Husni, J. Andrew Dilakshan, M.H.M.Hasni, A.J.M. Rifasdeen, M.S.M.Shahim, Mohamed Rikas, M.M.M.Hasir

M.I.M. Musharaf, S.N.M. Abdul Basith, K. Dinesh Suren, T.F. Bodric Dimitri, Y.S.J. Furic Momas, M. F. Ashim

**Serendib SC** - M.N. Riyas Mohamed, L.A.T.L. Madushanka, M.L.N. Ameer Ali, M.F. Munshif Mohamed, M.F.M. Famil, M.M.M. Asair(Captain.), B.G.D.J. Hemantha, S.K.G. Nishan, Raveendran Jegadeesh, M.N. Salman Ahamed, H.M. Amith Kumara, A.B. Riyas Ahamed, Jukathewaran Amalraj, R.A.C. Madushan, M.F. Mohamed Rashan, M.S.A. Aseez, W.M.T. Rukshan, M.N.M. Shifan, M.I.M. Ijas, T.M. Faleel Asrudeen, Vijekumar Vignesha, M.N.M. Shakeel, Evans Asante

# AASL will give more opportunities for athletes to gain Olympic qualification

DHAMMIKA RATNAWEERA

"Our aim is to give more opportunities for athletes to gain Olympic qualification said, Athletic Association of Sri Lanka President Major General Palitha Fernando. We are expected to send 15 athletes for Asian Youth Athletic Championship and 25 athletes for Senior Asian Championships in China next year. 2021 is going to be a very busy year for athletics. In February Asian cross country championships will commence followed by Asian Marathon, Asian Youth (boys) athletic championship, Asian relay championship, 24th Senior Asian Athletic championship, Tokyo Olympics(July), World Junior Athletic championships (August) and 3rd Asian Youth Games (November). However due to unexpected Coronavirus epidemic all plans were hampered and International events had to be postponed.



Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa and Senior officials of the AASL having a discussion at the Sports Ministry last week.

Meanwhile Athletic officials and the new Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa had a successful discussion last week at the Sports Ministry. The Athletic Chief made a special request to the Minister to build a track in Nuwara Eliya. The Sports Minister pledged to build a track for the high-altitude training. The proposed track will be built on a land near the highest mountain Pidurutalagala rising over 7000 feet. This track will be 600metres long and will be made of gravel. The athletic officials also pointed out the recent success of Sri Lanka athletes. Especially they pointed out, most of the Interna-

tional medals were won by the athletes. The Minister also promised to give his fullest support to uplift athletics by providing more facilities. The Athletic Chief who was appointed Secretary of State Ministry of Wild life and Forest two days ago said that Sri Lanka had high hopes in 2020, especially with the Asian Junior Championship where Sri Lanka had formed a pool of athletes since 2019.

Also, with their fine performance at SAG they were prepared to send selected athletes for international competitions during the early period of 2020 to gain qualification for the Tokyo Olympics. But Covid19 hampered Sri Lanka's plans as the world went into

lockdown, cancelling meets such as the Asian Junior Championship where Sri Lanka could have won several medals.

Nevertheless, Athletic Chief said the lockdown also came as a blessing in disguise as all the National athletes recovered from injuries they sustained, and are now ready to compete.

Meanwhile AASL has scheduled National trials to be held from 23 to 25 October, which is an open event to be conducted following Covid-19 health guidelines and social distancing. "Actually we wanted to conduct selection trials according to our future plans and already we have discussed with Health Ministry through the Sport Ministry. It may

be three day trials or may exceed for more than three days depending on the health regulations," the Athletic Chief further added.

The athletic chief also said, "We have earmarked a few events where we are within reach of Olympic qualification and give them more training. The events are women's marathon, 4x100 men's relay, 4x400 mixed relay, 800m (men's and women's), long jump (men's and women's), Triple jump (men's

and women's) and women's 3000m steeple chase. However none of the athletes so far had not reached Olympic qualification but 3000m steeple chase women's athlete Nilani Ratnayake is very close to qualification. Hiruni Wijayarathne the marathon champion who is training in USA has improved a lot to reach the qualification standard and she has a good chance to take part at the Asian marathon. Sri Lanka's 4x 100 men's relay team is also in good form." said the Athletic Chief.

# Praveen Nimesh a fine all rounder

DILWIN MENDIS

Moratuwa Sports Special Correspondent

Fourth year coloursman, captain of the first eleven team, all rounder, right hand bat, left arm medium pace bowler, safe fielder in any position Thalpa Hewa Praveen Nimesh de Silva will bid adieu to his Alma Mater Gurukula Vidyalaya after a successful cricket career.

He commenced his cricket career from Pagnnananda Vidyalaya, Raddoluwa and played for them in the under 13 division two in 2012 and passed the 300 run mark and claimed 12 wickets and in the following year too he got 300 runs and 21 wickets and in his final year also he passed the 300 run mark and got 30 scalps. Playing in the under 15 team he scored 250 runs and captured 30 wickets and in 2010 he scored 386 runs and bagged 16 wickets and with these performances under his belt he joined Gurukula Vidyalaya, Kelaniya.

His first year in the first eleven team was in 2016 and he passed the 300 run mark with two fifties and claimed 40 wickets including a Hat Trick against St. Sylvester's College,



Gurukula Vidyalaya, Kelaniya First Eleven Cricket Pool 2019/20  
Back Row Standing L/R - Janith Mahesh, Chamara, Rashmika Mevan, Mevantha Madushanka, Kemira Nayanatharu, Likshan Sasanga (Vice Captain), Sasitha Ashan, Abishek, Sithija Chamod, Madushan Risitha, Front Row Standing L/R - Sankalpa, Oshada, Vihanga, Dilip Chamara, Malshan, Neluka Heshan, Praveen Nimesh  
(Picture by - Dilwin Mendis, Moratuwa Sports Special Correspondent)



Praveen Nimesh

Kandy. In his second year he passed the 500 run mark with a century against Royal College, Colombo and three half centuries and captured 35 wickets and played in the Big match and the limited over matches. In 2018 he scored 550 runs which included a century versus St. Joseph Vaz College and took 30 wickets and played in the Big Match and the One Dayer. His last season

was in 2019/20 and collected 576 runs with five fifties and bagged 40 wickets with a match bag of 10 for 25 (9/3 and 1/11) against St. Servatius College, Matara and the best innings analysis being 9 for 13 against them. In the same season in the two day tournament Gurukula beat formidable S. Thomas College, Mt. Lavinia on their home grounds to qualify for the quarter finals and in the one day tournament they lost to Mahinda College, Galle. Praveen is the first ever skipper to lead Gurukula Vidyalaya to victory over S. Thomas College in any format during their school cricket history. He was coached by Lal Senaratne and Rithika Dinesh. Both of them are past cricketers of Gurukula. He was selected for the District Tournament in 2016/17 and 2017/18 and was selected for the under 19 team to play against visiting Australian Schoolboys His dream of captaining his Alma Mater in the Big Match and the Limited Over match against their arch rivals Dharmaloka Vidyalaya, Kelaniya was shattered due to Covid 19.

# New Jersey for Addalaichenai Faina Sports Club.

Text and Picture by: ADDALAICHENAI CENTRAL CORRESPONDENT

The Addalaichenai Faina sports club has introduced the new Jersey for the year 2020 at a ceremony held at the Addalaichenai Ashraff Memorial Public Play Grounds recently. The event was presided over by Addalaichenai Faina Sports Club President A.C.Safeelur Rasath, club officials participated as the Guests on this occasion and intro-

ducing the new jersey. This was sponsored by former Parliamentarian A.L.M.Nazeer.

Addalaichenai Faina Sports Club players received the jerseys from the Addalaichenai Faina Sports Club President A.C.Safeelur Rasath and club officials at the event. Faina Sports Club officials and players were present on this occasion.



Addalaichenai Faina Sports Club President A.C.Safeelur Rasath handing over the jerseys

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Vantage FFSL Presidents Cup 2020

# Java Lane SC down Defenders SC 3-1 makes its way to semi final

ALTHAF NAWAZ

Some superb display of goal keeping by Ashfaq Ayub guided Java Lane Sports Club to outsmart Defenders Sports Club by 3 goals to 1 in penalty shootout in their inter club quarter final soccer fixture played for the 'Vantage FFSL President's Cup' at Sugathadasa Stadium yesterday.

After a scoreless full time, the game went into tie breaker, where Ashfaq Ayub was instrumental in saving four penalty kicks while displaying some sensational goal keeping skills to enable them to notch up a convincing win, assuring them a place in the semifinals next Thursday.

The Java Lane lads held the upper hand on the game from the start whistle and dominated the entire first half.

They were quite dangerous in loose play and made some teasing moves, which were well defended and equally saved by the rival goalie M.S.R. Jayasekara. While their strikers were dominating



Yesterday's action of the first quarter final at the Sugathadasa stadium between Java Lane SC and Defenders SC. Picture by Hirantha Gunetilleke

their backs were equally into the task.

They executed a solid defense wall depriving the opponent's players surging

ahead. On the other hand, the high riding Defenders SC had an off day on the field. Due to their play makers were well marked

by the rival's players and they found it difficult make some penetrative moves to make inroads.

In the 34th minute of

the first half L.C.S.K. Mendis's almost scored a goal for them through a 30 meter left footed kick which just brushed aside

the opponent goal cross-bar went to the dead area of the ground.

The situation remained unchanged as both teams went for lemons without a scoreless first half.

After the turn around both teams changed tactics. Defenders intended to play an offensive game of football while imposing enormous pressure on their rivals.

The first 25 minutes of the first half was dominated by them, hunting for a scoring opportunity, which ultimately became an uphill task.

Java Lane lads stormed into the game in the last 15 minutes, after missing scoring on five occasions. After some anxious moments both teams failed to make an impact on the score line as the game ended nil all by the full time, resulting in judging the winner by a penalty shootout.

Malaka Perera, Mohamed Najabdeen, and Francis Chikebura scored for winners while Supun Dayawansa booted the goal for losers.

## Zaheer Abbas, Kallis, Sthalekar inducted into ICC Hall of Fame

**SOUTHAMPTON:** Pakistan batting great Zaheer Abbas, outstanding South Africa all-rounder Jacques Kallis and Australia women's star Lisa Sthalekar were all inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame on Sunday. Zaheer, 73, a prolific run-scorer during the 1970s and 1980s with both Pakistan and English county side Gloucestershire, was nicknamed the 'Asian Bradman' in honour of Australia's Don Bradman, widely regarded as Test cricket's greatest batsman of all time.

"I feel privileged and truly humbled to be inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame of the class of 2020," said Zaheer, a former president of the global governing body and the only player from Asia to have scored a hundred first-class hundreds.

### 'Final recognition'

Zaheer scored a double-century and a century in the same first-class match on a record four occasions and was the first batsman to score three successive centuries in one-day international cricket.

"I would like to say a special thanks to my family, my country Pakistan, my county Gloucestershire and many fans worldwide who helped me achieve and fulfil my dreams by

playing this great game at the highest level," he said. "Thank you, ICC, and the members of the jury, for this special honour. It is a final recognition for any cricketer. This great game has made me the person I am." Kallis, 44, is the only player to score at least 10,000 runs and take at least 250 wickets in both Test and ODI cricket.

"It is something that I never expected when I started playing," said Kallis, the most capped South African player in both Test and ODI cricket. "I only wanted to win the games for whoever I was playing for."

### 'Pantheon of greats'

India-born off-spinner Sthalekar, 41, was the first woman to achieve the double of 1,000 runs and 100 wickets in ODI cricket.

She was also a member of the Australia teams that won the ICC Women's World Cup in 2005 and 2013 and the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2010 and 2012. ICC chief executive Manu Sawhney: "These are all players with a legacy that will continue to inspire future generations for years to come."

"I congratulate Zaheer, Jacques and Lisa on their inclusion in the pantheon of cricket greats." AFP

## Murray makes good start at US Open

**NEW YORK:** Britain's Andy Murray made a triumphant ATP comeback Saturday, defeating Frances Tiafoe 7-6 (8/6), 3-6, 6-1 in his first match of 2020 at the Western and Southern Open.

The 33-year-old Scotsman advanced in hot and humid conditions to a second-round date with German fifth seed Alexander Zverev at the COVID-19 quarantine bubble that will also be used for the US Open, which starts on August 31.

Murray won the 2012 US Open as well as the 2013 and 2016 Wimbledon titles plus the 2012 and 2016 Olympic gold medals.

Former world number one Murray, now ranked 129th, suffered a pelvic injury at the Davis Cup last November and that, combined with the pandemic shutdown, kept him out of competition until he faced 22-year-old Tiafoe in a meeting of wild-card entrants.

"I thought I moved well today," Murray said. "That

was probably the thing I was most happy with and probably the thing I was most apprehensive about going into the match.

"My tennis could have been better. I did some things well at the end, but I could definitely improve in terms of my game." Murray broke Tiafoe for a 2-0 lead in the third set when the American missed a volley, broke again to 5-1 with a backhand return winner and held at love to finish matters after two hours and 28 minutes.

Murray was the 2008 and 2011 winner in this Grand Slam tuneup event, usually staged in Cincinnati but moved to New York due to the COVID-19 pandemic that wiped out much of the season, including Wimbledon.

He rallied from 2-5 down in the first set tie-breaker to gain the upper hand. But Tiafoe gained the first break of the match for a 5-3 lead in the second and held to force a third set. AFP



Andy Murray of Great Britain celebrates match point against Frances Tiafoe during the Western & Southern Open at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York City. AFP

## Smith admits he'll miss jeering English fans

**SYDNEY:** Steve Smith Sunday said he'll miss being jeered and heckled by English crowds during their upcoming limited-overs tour, admitting the booing motivates him to do better.

The master Australian batsman bore the brunt of the hostile English fans on their trip there last year after returning from a ban for ball-tampering.

But he thrived on the taunts and potshots, scoring an incredible 774 runs in four Tests, at an average 110.57, including twin centuries on his Test return at Edgbaston.

"I do like batting there,

unfortunately there's going to be no crowd there to egg me on and give me a bit more motivation," he said at Sydney airport en route to Perth, from where the team will fly to England.

"Still, there's going to be plenty of eyes on the TV and it is going to be great to be back out there playing." Australia's 21-man squad will initially quarantine in Derby due to the coronavirus pandemic before the first of three Twenty20s in Southampton on September 4 in empty stadiums.

They also play three ODIs at Manchester, with both venues having hotels attached so they can remain in bio-secure bubbles. "I'm looking forward to getting back into it, obviously it's going to be a bit different than what we're used to being in a bubble and playing with no crowds," Smith said.

"That presents a challenge in itself, but one we're looking forward to. "We're lucky to be able to go and play, we'll just do what we need to and play it day by day, stick together as a bunch and help each other out," added the former captain. AFP

## 'Super-fit' Australia ready to hit ground running in England

**SYDNEY:** Justin Langer said his Australia squad are super-fit and ready to hit the ground running ahead of departing Sunday for a white-ball tour of England, their first cricket since March.

The 21-man squad gathered in Perth before taking a direct flight after which they will face several days of isolation in Derby due to coronavirus restrictions. Training will be permitted during their lockdown and they will play four inter-squad warm-up games to get match-ready after nearly six months of inaction since the pandemic brought sport to a halt.

They will head to a bio-secure hub in Southampton for the first of three Twenty20s on September 4 against an England side who have been back in action since early July.

Three one-day interna-

tionals against the 50-over world champions follow in Manchester.

Australia are taking a larger-than-normal squad, partly because they will not be able to call up anyone into the touring party under the bio-security protocols, but also to ensure they have enough players to field two teams in warm-up games.

"The reason we're taking 21 is so we can play some good practice games over there," said Langer.

"The guys have done plenty of technical work, they're all super-fit so when we arrive in England, we get straight into match practice.

"That's what we've asked the boys to be ready for, that they can start playing games and, hopefully, because we've got 21 very good players coming with us, we can have some

really high intensity practice games." Skipper Aaron Finch, who will open alongside David Warner, with Steve Smith batting at three followed by Marnus Labuschagne, said close attention will be paid to mental health inside the bio-secure bubble, with a sports psychologist travelling with the team.

"That's going to be something that's going to be a real issue, it's going to be something to monitor heavily," he said, with players not allowed out even to go for a meal.

Finch skips a squad that includes three uncapped players in Daniel Sams, Riley Meredith and Josh Philippe, with an eye on the T20 World Cup next year in India then on home soil in 2022, ahead of the 50-over showpiece a year later. AFP



England's James Anderson (2nd R) celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of Pakistan's Asad Shafiq on the third day of the third Test cricket match between England and Pakistan at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton, southern England on August 23, 2020. AFP

## Pakistan struggles 101-5 as rain curtails play on day three

The second session on day 3 got underway after early lunch was taken at the Ageas Bowl with Pakistan on 41/4. In the first session, James Anderson did not waste time and struck in his second over of the day to take down Pakistan's fourth wicket. Losing three wickets early on at the start of first innings, trailing by 558 runs, is not the position the visitors would want to be in. But that is their reality for now and Pakistan captain Azhar Ali will have to fight hard on

Day 2, to ensure that his side can at least bring some contest. Also, keep

an eye on James Anderson who is four wickets away from 600 Test scalps. AFP

### SCORECARD

ENGLAND 1ST INNINGS	
R.J. Burns	c Shan Masood b Shah Afridi . . . 6
D.P. Sibley	lbw Y Shah st M Rizwan . . . . . 22
Z. Crawley	b Asad Shafiq . . . . . 29
J.E. Root	c M Rizwan b N Shah . . . . . 26
O.J. Pope	b Yasir Shah . . . . . 3
J.C. Butler	c&b Fawad Alam . . . . . 152
C.R. Woakes	c Yasir Shah b Fawad Alam . . . 40
B.M. Bess	not out . . . . . 27
Total (154.4 Overs)	
8 wks dec.	. . . . . 583
Fall of wickets:	1-12 2-73, 3-114, 4-127, 5-486, 6- 530, 7-547, 8-583
Bowling:	Shaheen Afridi 33.4-5-121-2, Mohammad Abbas 33-8-82-0, Yasir Shah 39-3-173-2, Naeem Shah 27-6-109-1, Fawad Alam 12-0-46-2, Shan Masood 3-1-11-0, Asad Shafiq 70-24-1 Pakistan 1st innings 101 for 5 wks

## India ready to host England Tests in February - Ganguly

**NEW DELHI:** India are committed to hosting England in February next year ahead of the 2021 Indian Premier League season, the country's cricket chief Sourav Ganguly said.

England's original white-ball tour to India in September-October was a casualty of the coronavirus pandemic.

According to the International Cricket Council's Future Tours Programme (FTP), India

are scheduled to tour Australia in December and host England for their last five world Test championship matches in early 2021.

Ganguly, president of the Board of Control for Cricket in

India, said in an email to state associations: "The BCCI and the Indian cricket team will continue to fulfil its FTP commitments."

"The senior Indian men's team will travel to Australia for

its series starting in December this year, and will come back to the country for a series against England starting February next year," Ganguly said in the letter seen by AFP.

AFP



# Finance

Business: 0112 429221 / 0112429299 Fax: +94112343694 email: business.dailynews@lakehouse.lk www.dailynews.lk

## Belgium, Singapore, Japan and Korea signal willingness to invest in Port City

ANANDA KANNANGARA

"Many investors from Belgium, Singapore, Japan, and Korea have pledged their willingness to commence various trade activities in the Colombo Port City (CHEC Port City Colombo), Public Relations Head Kassapa Senarath said. He said that they expect many other countries including Pakistan and Bangladesh to invest in this project.

He expressed these points during a media session held to create the awareness of Sri Lanka Press Association on the current progress of the Port City Colombo development project.

Senarath further said that the Port City is a mixed development project

and currently around 4,000 employees are working in construction work and in various other work capacities. He also mentioned that local workers and engineers are getting a good experience in massive construction work while working with Chinese workers and engineers.

He also said in the first 10 years around 10,000 Sri Lankans will be directly employed with the Port City in various employment categories after establishing new ventures with foreign investors.

After completing the entire project the total project is expected to provide 83,000 direct and indirect employment



opportunities. The Port City investor Project which is being constructed in a land area of 269 hectares completed the project study in September 2014.

The construction work commenced jointly with the initiative of the then

President Mahinda Rajapaksa and President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping.

Port City Colombo (CHEC) will have over USD 5.5 billion FDI in the next five years and already USD 500

million of this has been invested. CHEC commenced its first investment to the tune of USD 1 billion for the construction of a high rise building for the proposed International Financial City, a mixed development project to be implemented in two phases. Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM) of the US was awarded the design contract of the building. The first phase is for US dollars 400 million and the second for US dollars 600 million.

In addition, two top Chinese investors will invest a sum of US\$ 4.5 billion during the next five years. These investments are for a 'Marina Bay', 7-star hotel complex and a super luxury

residential complex and other infrastructure. Port City Colombo is a brand new city development built as an extension of the existing Colombo CBD, with an initial investment of US\$1.4 billion and an expected US\$15 billion overall investment when completed.

Spanning 269 hectares, it is a sea reclamation project connected to the current central business district.

Port City Colombo is made up of 5 precincts: a financial district, central park living, international island, the marina, and island living. When completed, Port City Colombo is estimated to have 5.7 million square meters of built space.

## Lanka Sathosa posts record Rs.17.62 bn revenue in 1h 2020

To revolutionize retail sale in Lanka with Raja Wasala concept

SHIRAJIV SIRIMANE

Lanka Sathosa hopes to break even by the end of 2020 and earn net profits from the year 2021, Lanka Sathosa Chairman Nushad Perera said.

Launching their online goods delivery portal which could be accessed from anywhere in the world at Colombo Hilton last Thursday he said that the State-owned retail chain recorded an all-time historic revenue of Rs.17.62 billion from January to June. This is a 23% increase in revenue and they plan to better this and break-even by the end of 2020 with revenue of Rs.30 billion."

He said that the main reason for the swell in revenue was the increase of the customer's basket items in the value from around Rs. 800 to Rs. 1,250 and also several prudent measures that were adopted from last December. "We have been looking and doing things differently and moved away from the traditional methods of doing business. There is a huge mindset change and this is reflecting positively for our profits," he said.

Perera said that with an economist like Minister of Trade Bandula Gunawardane



Trade Minister Bandula Gunawardane, State Minister of Co-operative Services, Marketing Development and Consumer Protection Lasantha Alagiyawanna, and Lanka Sathosa Chairman Nushad Perera launching the Lak Sathosa online store at the Hilton Colombo. Picture by Saliya Rupasinghe

taking over the Ministry more could be done towards elevating Lanka Sathosa to the next level.

He said these profits were not achieved by jerking up prices. The same milk powder imported from New Zealand is sold by us and a competitor using a blue colour pack. Our 400-gram pack is Rs. 50 cheaper than the blue card box selling competitor."

He said that in the future they are keen to use local milk powder.

Planned for Sathosa is also a massive expansion drive out of Colombo, while efforts are being taken to ensure the rural populace gets improved access to food and hygienic items.

He said that despite the COVID pandemic 26 new outlets have been opened and they hope to open more mini outlets in plantation areas using converted containers. He said that the website and the payment gateway were designed locally with SLT and purchases could now be made online creating a historic landmark for the institution.

Minister of Trade Bandula Gunawardane said that they will join with other State institutions like Pharmaceutical, Cashew, Palmyrah, and State Trading Corporations to sell all products under one roof in an initiative called 'Raja Wasala'. This will commence from the Fort Railway Station soon.

## First Capital posts PAT of Rs. 1.46 bn in Q1 2020



Chairman Nishan Fernando and Director/CEO Dilshan Wirasekara

First Capital Holdings PLC (the Group) the only listed investment bank in Sri Lanka continued its growth momentum into the first quarter of 2020 (Q1 2020) recording a Profit After Tax of LKR 1.46 billion for the quarter ended 30 June 2020, compared to Rs. 581.96Mn in the corresponding period of the previous year.

The results are reported on the back of a robust performance for year 2019/20, where the Group posted a Consolidated Profit after Tax of LKR 1.07 Bn for the year. First Capital, with an impressive history of over 35 years, currently has total assets of LKR 32.5Bn and Equity of

LKR 4.9Bn. "Reflecting on the past 3 months, what stands out most is the Group's record-breaking performance, making it without a doubt, the best year to date", commented Chairman, First Capital Holdings PLC, Nishan Fernando.

The Group's Primary Dealer operations were positively impacted by the CBSL's efforts to revive the economy through monetary policy easing measures to counter the COVID-19 pandemic impact, with the business reporting a Profit after Tax of LKR 1.36Bn for the quarter (2019/20 - LKR 562Mn). The Corporate Finance division too recorded notable

results, mobilizing LKR 3Bn for its clients through structuring and placement of corporate debt securities, generating a fee income of LKR 25Mn for the quarter (2019/20 - LKR 31Mn).

The Wealth Management division of the Group delivered a strong performance reporting a fee income of LKR 17Mn for the quarter (2019/20 - LKR 11Mn) amidst challenges faced during the COVID-19 lockdown period.

The division showed growth in assets under management to end with LKR 27.9Bn as of 30 June 2020 (31st March 2020 - LKR 26.4Bn).

Despite the setback experienced in the first quarter of 2020, with the CSE remaining closed for 7 weeks, the Group's Stock Brokering division recorded revenue of LKR 14Mn for the quarter (2019/20 - LKR 06Mn).

"Given that COVID-19 is still an ongoing situation, we expect the government would continue with its current accommodative monetary policy stance for the year 2020", commented Director/Chief Executive Officer, First Capital Holdings PLC, Dilshan Wirasekara.

## Lanka has seen faster recovery than regional peers-Economist Kaushik Das

DINESH PERERA

Sri Lanka has seen a faster recovery than its regional peers in both economic activity and mobility of its populous following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sri Lankan mobility as measured by an index using Google's data was 5 in April and has rebounded to 81.8 in August. The base figure for the index was February with a value of 100. In May the index was at 40 and by June it had improved to 60. India is struggling to open up its economy.

The country is expected to have a negative GDP growth rate of -2.5 percent in 2020. Sri Lanka experienced negative growth of

10 percent between April and June while India experienced negative growth of 20 percent.

These figures and forecasts were presented by Deutsche Bank's Director and Chief Economist India and Sri Lanka Kaushik Das on August 21 to the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka.

Globally only China is expected to have positive economic growth. Inflation in Western countries is expected to be well below 2 percent allowing for extremely low-interest-rate regimes. The price of oil is expected to remain below US\$ 60 till at least 2023. Global stock markets have rebounded but this was yet

to be seen in the real economy. Das said "It is good that parliament and the President are under one party. The government can focus on an economic agenda and this will add to investor confidence. The election results have been positive."

Das expects the government to shortly present a fiscal roadmap and suspects that Sri Lanka will engage with the IMF for a program considering the high debt servicing requirements in the medium term. The Rupees are expected to depreciate slightly and foreign investors are expected to return to the domestically denominated government securities market shortly.

GDP growth is expected to be 3.5 percent in 2021. Das expects inflation to not be problematic and expects the Central Bank to lower the policy corridor by 50 basis points in October/November. As fiscal space is limited Das predicts that the Central Bank will have to work towards providing the economy with monetary stimulus.

Bank transmission of monetary policy remains a concern. The Central Bank recently issued caps on rates for consumer borrowing on credit cards and pawning advances. Das said about the Central Bank "Hold interest rates down for a time to give support to the economy."



Deutsche Bank's Director and Chief Economist India and Sri Lanka Kaushik Das

Government revenue has fallen by 24.7 percent and tax revenue has fallen by 22 percent. Capital investment in the economy has been cut by 39 percent. The Debt to GDP ratios has risen. At the event, businesses were advised to look into reallocating their insurance coverage as high health coverage for employees may not be required under the current economic environment.

## ComBank named Best Bank in SL in 2020 by Euromoney

The Commercial Bank of Ceylon has been crowned the Best Bank in Sri Lanka in 2020 by Euromoney, one of the world's leading financial magazines, at its Asia Awards for Excellence.

This is the sixth time that Commercial Bank has been honored with this prestigious accolade by Euromoney.

The Euromoney awards are based on detailed submissions from market participants and extensive year-round research into the banking and capital markets in the region by the magazine's editors, journalists and research team.

Other criteria included the size of the organization, although the size was not the emphasis, profitability, the ability to demonstrate growth, an outperformance against peers, and the ability to adapt to changing market conditions and client needs.

Each Bank was required to highlight its perfor-

mance over the 12 months in consideration and its demonstrated ability to meet strategic targets, and provide updates on reaching milestones in previously announced initiatives.

Alongside financial performance, banks were asked to include details of their digital banking strategies and their approach to issues such as cybersecurity and corporate social responsibility.

Contributing factors to Commercial Bank's win included the Bank ending 2019 with total assets of Rs 1.4 trillion, gross income of Rs 150 billion, a net profit of Rs 17.4 billion, a deposit base of Rs 1.07 trillion and net loans and receivables of Rs 930.7 billion.

Commercial Bank also achieved the highest profitability, highest credit rating, highest deposit base, largest lending portfolio, and the highest return on average shareholders' funds amongst all private sector banks in Sri Lanka.

## Acorn Travels buys 80% of Hemas Travels

In one of the most significant management buy-outs in recent history, 80% of the outbound travel, destination management, and aviation services (excluding Emirates GSA) portfolio of Hemas Holdings PLC was bought over by the Acorn Group in March this year. The pioneering outbound travel company, Hemas Travels will now operate under the Acorn banner as Acorn Travels.

Speaking on the significant change within the organization, Chief Executive Officer of Acorn Group, Malinga Arakularatne noted, "The Acorn Group is made up of travel and aviation professionals who are driven to take the industry to the next level. Through the management buyout, Hemas Travels will now operate as Acorn Travels under the same legal entity focusing on the Outbound Travel sector which is a key vertical in our portfolio of businesses".

"Hemas Travels holds 40+ years of travel experience with the distinction of being a pioneer in the industry. We have been trusted by generations of business and leisure travelers alike to provide the gamut of travel-related services with excellence, and we want to provide our customers the assurance of superior quality, service excellence



Managing Director for Acorn Travels Hussain Habeeb



Chief Executive Officer of Acorn Group Malinda Arakularatne

and delivery by Acorn Travels", added Hussain Habeeb, the Managing Director for Acorn Travels.

Accredited by IATA, Acorn Travels will strive to create Inspiring Journeys for all travelers, be it business or leisure, its employees and all who interact with the organization. The dedicated and experienced staff of Hemas Travels who have been with the organization for many years will continue to provide the highest quality of service under the Acorn Travels banner with added technological advancements to processes, thereby providing a better customer experience.

Plans are also in the pipeline to add new services as travel itself evolves globally with an emphasis on specific destinations, sports tours and medical tourism etc.

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# SLASSCOM expresses confidence in new Government to realise IT-BPM sector vision



Chairman SLASSCOM  
- Channa Manoharan

SLASSCOM, the national chamber for the knowledge and innovation industry in Sri Lanka, active in facilitating trade and business, education and employment, research and innovation to support the creation of a progressive national policy framework in the interest of the IT-BPM industry congratulates the new government and looks forward to continuing its partnership in growing Sri Lanka into a premier destination for IT and BPM businesses and the No. 1 export revenue earner for Sri Lanka.

The knowledge and innovation services industry has been identified as a thrust industry by the government, with a vision to achieve USD 5 billion in exports while creating 200,000 highly skilled workforce and facilitating 1,000 startups by 2025.

"It is important that all stakeholders work together towards the common goal set out in the National Exports Strategy (NES). There are several

impactful programs initiated by the President to grow the economy, such as the Re-imagining Education program of the Ministry of Education, aimed at building capacity and future-ready talent in Sri Lanka. The mandate was given to the Government at the recently concluded elections will ensure that these programs will continue and we look forward to engaging with the Government in putting in place the necessary policies and investment required to drive the economy towards achieving these targets" said Channa Manoharan, Chairman SLASSCOM.

## Raising industry visibility in global markets

One of the key industry requirements is raising Sri Lanka's IT-BPM sector visibility in priority markets and attracting foreign direct investment into the sector. The industry seeks funding and government support to accelerate

growth prospects in key markets and convince large MNCs to set up their R&D and delivery centers in Sri Lanka.

Hitherto, in collaboration with EDB, SLASSCOM has initiated and promoted the Sri Lankan knowledge and innovation sector under the brand of Island of Ingenuity ([www.islandofingenuity.com](http://www.islandofingenuity.com)). To provide Sri Lankan companies access to markets SLASSCOM works together with BOI, EDB, ICTA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Sri Lankan foreign missions to assist companies to promote themselves and Sri Lanka as a niche IT-hub.

## Building future-ready workforce

A key ingredient to success is a highly skilled workforce in technologies that are transforming industries and nations.

This requires significant investment in upskilling existing workforce and

reforming secondary and tertiary education streams. This will enable the industry to achieve the target of creating 200,000 highly skilled workforce by 2025 required to position Sri Lanka as the destination of choice for knowledge and innovation.

SLASSCOM at present works collaboratively with the government, academia (State and non-state) and policy-makers to influence reform in the General Education, Higher Education and Professional and Vocational Education sectors in order to build the required capacity and skills.

## Developing skills in Emerging Technology & Innovation

Developing capacity and skills in key emerging technologies such as AI, ML, Data Science, IoT, Drones Robotics and RPA, is imperative for Sri Lanka to be a niche player.

Support is required for our Knowl-

edge and Innovation companies to offer high value products and IP generation.

Investment in accelerators and Centres of Excellence is required to encourage and catalyze such initiatives and early innovators. Increasingly global organizations are also looking at countries that offer niche skills to locate their innovation labs. The industry urges the government to create an enabling environment for venture capital investments and facilitate innovative financing from the banking system. Furthermore, policies enabling industry research and development and commercialization is required.

## Startup Friendly Nation

With the onset of the fourth industrial revolution and pace of change, the market opportunities and gaps can be best addressed by new exciting busi-

ness models; fueled by innovation and entrepreneurship and Sri Lanka can be a driver of this change in the Asian region. This calls for Sri Lanka to position itself on the global landscape with a differentiated position for startups that are backed by the right enabling fiscal and regulatory environment for innovation, investment, and exits.

Industry seeks the governments support to remove factors that inhibit the realization of the vision of Sri Lanka to be a Startup Friendly Nation. These include delays in Intellectual Property/Patent registrations, government procedures, coordination and cohesion in programs, regulatory barriers, lack of LLP structures and a conducive tax regime. A unique selling point of Sri Lanka is that startups can use the island as a test bed for their ideas and innovations to enter into the other South Asian markets. International startups venturing into Sri Lanka are positive indicators of our ecosystem's potential.

## Key reforms in consolidating NBFi sector comes under the spotlight



SANJEEVA BANDARANAYAKE

The Non-Banking Financial Institutions (NBFi) sector has evolved over the past years to be a stronger force in the finance industry in Sri Lanka. Unfortunately, the public only remembers NBFIs in light of unethical practices of non-regulated finance companies. But NBFIs account for many heart-touching, unsung narratives while working with less privileged people and this sector has empowered many with financial assistance and has assisted in eradicating poverty. It is the NBFi sector that has laid the foundation for many people to become entrepreneurs and that is why this sector is of utmost importance to the finance industry. There are two segments within NBFIs as regulated and non-regulated, and recent years saw a lot of issues and disputes related to Non-regulated finance companies which is one of the main reasons to emphasize on some essential reforms to consolidate the NBFi sector.

### Reforms needed in the Consumer Credit Act

A key amendment is required in the Consumer Credit Act which currently allows both non-regulated finance companies and regulated Finance companies to carry out hire purchase services. This situation has led to a lot of issues over the past years, so enacting the proposed Money Lending and Microfinance Acts and making it unlawful for any person or institution to engage in lending activities without being registered under the proposed act is the ultimate solution for these long-standing issues.

### The need for the viability of regulations for both customers and Finance companies

NBFIs specifically cater to the people at the bottom of the pyramid, SMEs and micro-businesses, so there is a huge risk involved within financial services. The accounting rules, legal framework, and central bank regulations need to tally and be interconnected with each other without relying primarily on strict regulations. This means the regulations need to be impartial to both customers and finance companies as well as focus on mitigating the risk to both parties.

### Favorable environment for all NBFIs irrespective of size and assets

NBFi sector operating within the country are of large, medium and

small sizes, but they all contribute to the country's economy at the end of the day. The present scenario offers an edge towards large finance companies over medium and small companies which need to be addressed.

Therefore a favorable environment needs to be created where all finance companies irrespective of size and location are able to thrive. These reforms will also contribute to the economic revival of the country in the long run.

### Streamlining the grievance handling process

Every finance company has a grievance handling process where customers can resolve their issues by discussing with the officer mandated with the process. This is a formal process and finance companies are bound to investigate the issues put forward by the customers. Customers can even complain to the CBSL if the finance company does not properly carry out the investigations. This process will help many and avoid any disappointment on the part of the customer if it is well maintained.

### Regionalizing the Financial Ombudsman services

Another suggestion is to regionalize the Financial Ombudsman Service in order to handle customer complaints and disputes. This service is currently available in Colombo and customers from outstations are deprived of it, so appointing Financial Ombudsmen to all other regions is of utmost importance for the finance industry. A financial Ombudsman is a person of high repute with experience in Banking and Financial Services. He is selected and appointed by a panel of representatives from the Central Bank, the Securities Exchange Commission, the Institute of Chartered Accountants, the Bar Association, the Organization of Professional Associations and a representative of the participating financial institutions.

### Importance of a regulated environment

In case of an issue faced by a customer who obtains a service from a Non-regulated finance company, that customer has no power over the finance company, so the importance of a regulated environment yet again comes to the fore and it is highly important that people embrace the services of RFCs.

If it is a regulated environment, even the CBSL can intervene and make sure that the customer's issues are resolved. The above-mentioned reforms will further, strengthen the NBFi sector and allow the customers to obtain financial services with faith, in the comfort of a regulated and safer environment.

The writer is the Senior DGM - Operations at People's Leasing & Finance PLC with 28 years of experience in the Finance industry.

## ASPI Gains ~120 Points to Hit 5-Month High

The Bourse ended the week on a positive note as the ASPI increased by 120.39 points (or +2.29%) to close at 5,382.38 points, while the S&P SL20 Index also increased by 74.08 points (or +3.19%) to close at 2,394.18 points.

### Turnover & Market Capitalization

JKH was the highest contributor to the week's turnover value, contributing LKR 2.03Bn or 18.39% of the total turnover value. Commercial Bank followed suit, accounting for 14.34% of turnover (value of LKR 1.59Bn) while Access Engineering contributed LKR 0.97Bn to account for 8.78% of the week's turnover. Total turnover value amounted to LKR 11.06Bn (cf. last week's value of LKR 11.43Bn), while the daily average turnover value amounted to LKR 2.21Bn (-3.18% W-o-W) compared to last week's average of LKR 2.29Bn. Market capitalization meanwhile, increased by 2.29% W-o-W (or LKR 56.66Mn) to LKR 2,533.14Bn cf. LKR 2,476.49Bn last week.

### Liquidity (in Value Terms)

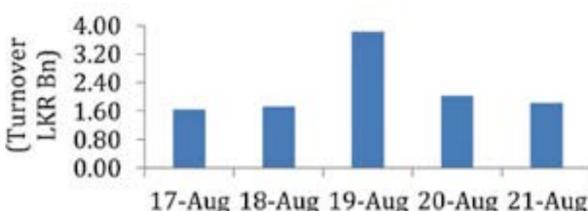
The Banks Industry Group was the highest contributor to the week's total turnover value, accounting for 30.76% (or LKR 3.40Bn) of market turnover. Industry Group's turnover was driven primarily by Commercial Bank, DFCC Bank, Sampath & HNB which accounted for 87.53% of the sector's total turnover. The Capital Goods Industry Group meanwhile accounted for 30.40% (or LKR 3.36Bn) of the total turnover value, with turnover driven primarily by JKH & Access Engineering which accounted for 89.38% of the sector turnover. The Diversified Financials Industry Group was also amongst the top sectorial contributors, contributing 11.56% (or LKR 1.28Bn) to the total turnover, with turnover driven primarily by LOLC Holdings accounting for 49.12% of the total turnover.

### Liquidity (in Volume Terms)

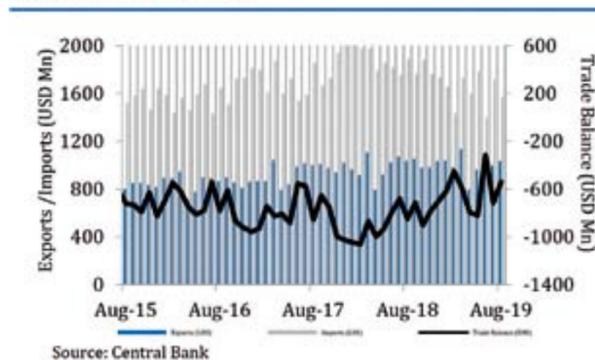
The Food Beverage & Tobacco Industry Group dominated the market in terms of share volume, accounting for 28.07% (or 161.89Mn shares) of total volume, with a value contribution of LKR 1.18Bn. The Capital Good Industry Group followed suit, adding 12.82% to total turnover volume as 73.95Mn shares were exchanged. The Industry Group's volume accounted for LKR 3.36Bn of total market turnover value. The Diversified Financials Industry Group, meanwhile, contributed 64.56Mn shares (or 11.19%), amounting to LKR 1.28Bn.

### Top Gainers & Losers

Industrial Asphalt was the week's highest price gainer; increasing 50.0% W-o-W from LKR0.20 to LKR0.30 while Tess Agro (+25.0% W-o-W), Commercial Leasing & Finance (+24.1% W-o-W) and Anilana Hotels



### Export & Trade Balance



(+22.2% W-o-W) were also amongst the top gainers.

Blue Diamond [NV] was the week's highest price loser, declining 33.3% W-o-W to close at LKR0.20. Amana Life (-22.2% W-o-W), Soflogic Capital (-16.7% W-o-W), and Autodrome (-10.2% W-o-W) were also amongst the top losers over the week.

Foreign investors closed the week in a net selling position with total net outflow amounting to LKR 1.50Bn relative to last week's total net outflow of LKR 2.87Bn (47.8% W-o-W). Total foreign purchases decreased by 6.9% W-o-W to LKR 0.67Bn from last week's value of LKR 0.72Bn, while total foreign sales amounted to LKR 2.17Bn relative to LKR 3.60Bn recorded last week (-39.6% W-o-W). In terms of volume, Sampath, Maskeliya & Distilleries foreign purchases while Dialog, Peoples Leasing & Commercial Bank led foreign sales. In terms of value, Sampath, Haycarb & Tokyo [NV] led foreign purchases while JKH, Commercial Bank & Central Finance led foreign sales.

### Dividend Announcements

Company DPS (Rs.) Type XD Date  
RAIGAM WAYAMBA SALTURNS 0.10 Final 02-10-2020 SPEN PLANTATION MGT 2.00 Final 21-09-2020 LANKA MILK FOODS 2.50 First & Final To be notified LANKA IOC 0.75 First & Final To be notified CIC HOLDINGS 1.00 Second Interim 28-08-2020 SAMSON INTERNATIONAL 1.00 Final 27-08-2020 ELPITIYA PLANTATIONS 0.75 First & Final 21-09-2020.

Key Economic Indicators June; Prime Lending Rate- 8.78%, Ave. Wtd. Deposit Rates-7.38%, Ave. Wtd. Fixed Dep. Rates-9%, CCPI Inflation Y-o-Y % (Base 2013) 3.9%.

### Point of View

Domestic equities maintained its upward trajectory yet again this week amid strong retail-driven momentum and better-than-expected corporate earnings results while the CBSL decided to maintain its accommodative policy stance this week. Markets began the week on a negative note, losing ~10 index points on Monday as selling pres-

the remaining corporate earnings releases for the Jun'20.

### Policy Rates Held Steady in Aug'20

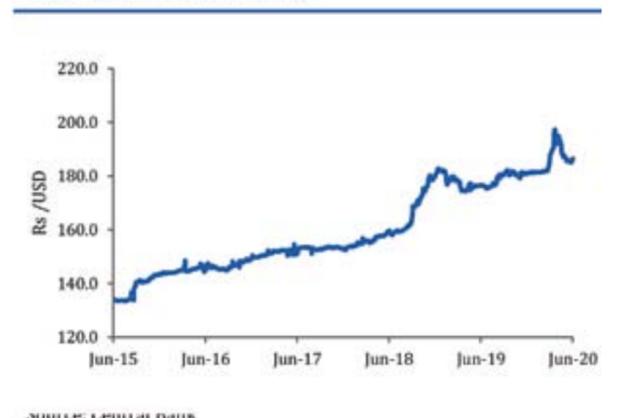
The CBSL on Thursday decided to hold policy rates steady (SLFR - 5.50% and SDFR - 4.50%), as market lending rates have yet to reflect rate cuts implemented so far this year. Therefore, the Monetary Board also stated that it would implement targeted measures to reduce interest rates of certain financial products believed to be excessive. Consequently, the Board decided to lower the caps of interest rates on credit cards (18% p.a.), pre-arranged temporary overdrafts (16% p.a.), and pawning facilities (10% p.a.). Meanwhile, private sector credit growth decelerated further in Jun'20 with growth falling to 4.3% Y-o-Y relative to 6.4% Y-o-Y in May'20. However, the CBSL expects private sector credit growth would begin to pick-up amid positive business sentiment, better political stability, declining market lending rates, and rising credit disbursements as a result of the concessional credit schemes offered to sectors affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CBSL added that these factors would also support a rebound towards Q4'20 despite the substantial impact of the pandemic on economic activity during Q2'20. GDP growth contracted to 1.6% Y-o-Y in Q1'20 with sharp contractions in agriculture and industrial activity amid an island-wide curfew imposed during the last 2 weeks of Mar'20.

The CBSL also noted that the country's external sector remained resilient amid the pandemic outbreak as the trade deficit narrowed in H1'20 supported by a notable contraction in imports relative to the decline in exports due to import restrictions and low global oil prices. Consequently, the trade deficit contracted to \$3.3Bn during H1'20 cf. \$3.6Bn in H1'19. Although workers' remittances improved marginally during Jun'20 due to festival allowances received by workers in the Middle East, remittances for H1'20 declined by 8.9% Y-o-Y to \$3.0Bn. Meanwhile, the tourism sector recorded a sizeable decline of 49.7% Y-o-Y as earnings from tourism remained at \$956Mn in H1'20 (cf. \$1.9Bn in H1'19). Depreciation of the LKR against the USD was limited to 1.3% so far this year despite a steep drop during Mar-Apr'20 while gross official reserves have risen to \$7.1Bn in Jul'20 cf. \$6.7Bn in Jun'20.

Sources: CBSL

### Exchange Rate, Rs. vs. US\$



# Chartered Accountants felicitate Minister Cabraal

As a prequel to the launch of his book about the Bond Scam cover-up in Sinhalese, State Minister for Finance, Capital Market and State Enterprise Reform Ajith Nivaard Cabraal, in a recent wide-ranging interview gave his views on the tasks at hand for the new government in handling the economy, and the current situation in the country.

He was speaking to a delegation, including the President and Fellows of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, who expressed their support for him, a fellow Chartered accountant, in his future endeavors in the legislative body.

Cabraal was also President of ICA and the South Asian Federation of Accountants. Cabraal said that the SLPP is a party that has already identified the people's pressing needs and issues, and are not 'suppliers of jokes and tall stories' as the past so-called Yahapalana regime was.

He said that the frivolous Yahapalana period can now be seen as an asset for the new government's project, because the people have given value to what he and the government of the day did for a Suba Anagathayak — prosperous future — prior to 2015, by contrasting that time with what the failed Yahapalana did.

Cabraal in the context of the book launch, in particular, stated that the JVP or many of the others who were slandering him on the pre 21015 bond issues in the Central Bank (CBSL), and other matters concerning his time at the helm of the bank are unable to meet him and ask him any real questions based on the allegations they make.

He said that he has always been in the country and has gone



Dinesh Dharmadasa, Manil Jayasinghe, State Minister Cabraal, Indrajith Fernando, and Shirantha Peiris

nowhere into hiding, but still finds that those who point their fingers are unable to come up with one credible allegation that he is unable to answer to, or disprove.

On the contrary, he said, the people who come up to him at various forums and meetings, tell him that they now have a better appreciation of what the Central Bank did in his tenure during the Suba Anagathayak regime, in contrast to what the Central Bank was up to in the tenure of the disastrous failed Yahapalana government.

"The people tell me that the rupee was doing better, that the interest rates were much more positive to economic growth etc, higher and sustainable growth rates, unemployment lower and plenty more opportunities than in the Yahapalana interregnum," he said.

A Sinhala translation of the book, The Bond Scam Cover Up — the Mother of all Cover-Ups will be launched soon. Among other things, the book exposes how the so-called forensic audit was commissioned by the perpetrators of the scam as yet another 'investigation' that was aimed at exonerating the same perpetrators of the scam.

Moreover, the Forensic audit so-called set back the Sri Lankan taxpayer by a staggering Rs. 1500 million.

Certain Assistant Governors of the CBSL aligned to the former premier assisted in the task of trying to obfuscate the issue, and attempted to lay blame for imagined failures of the CBSL, on former governor Cabraal.

Almost all members of the former Monetary Board are compromised and may in some way be involved with the cover-up of the bond scam, by acts such as commissioning the so-called 'Forensic audit', the author writes.

Cabraal has some choice words for the so-called Bond Commission as well, and states that its members denigrated officers of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka Ceylon, when they had in fact been whistleblowers who protested vehemently and wrote copious reports, all in a vain attempt to ensure that the bond scam did not take place, or was covered-up.

Minister Cabraal in no uncertain terms explains why all actors who were part of the scam should be brought to book, and not just those of Perpetual Treasuries. He also

states unequivocally that monies embezzled should be recovered.

Cabraal is a Past President of CA Sri Lanka, South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA) and has been an active member of the Confederation of Asia Pacific Accountants (CAPA), International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) and The Organization of Professional Accountants Sri Lanka (OPA). He was the pioneer in the all Corporate Governance initiatives in Sri Lanka and encompassing and the State sector initiatives too.

CA Sri Lanka is the leading Body of Professional Accountants in Sri Lanka, a member of SAFA, CAPA, IFAC. In its capacity as the National Professional Accountancy Organization in the country, CA Sri Lanka continuously focuses on enhancing the professional skills of its members, and ensuring that they continue to play a significant role in partnering businesses and the state sector.

The organization thereby contributes to the success of the profession as well as the public, and private and state sectors, and strengthens the national economy of Sri Lanka.

# NDBIB named 'Sri Lanka's Best Investment Bank' by Euromoney

This marks the ninth consecutive year NDBIB has been bestowed with this prestigious award in recognition of its leading position in equity raisings, debt capital markets and mergers and acquisitions (M&A) transactions in the country. The Bank was adjudged as 'Sri Lanka's Best Investment Bank' at the Awards for Excellence 2020 by Euromoney Magazine.

Darshan Perera, Chief Executive Officer of NDBIB, commenting on the award stated, "It is a great achievement to be awarded as the best by Euromoney and we take pride in being able to consistently maintain our winning traits for nine consecutive years".

NDBIB recorded a commendable performance for 2019 having structured debt and equity fundraising transactions valued at approximately LKR 62.0 Bn, despite facing challenging capital market conditions and macro-economic headwinds during the year.

Kaushini Laksumanage, Chief Operating Officer of NDBIB stated, "We were successful in exploring opportunities in raising dollar-denominated debt and more structured debt options to move away from the highly competitive plain vanilla local currency fundraising."

NDBIB's transaction execution expertise was well demonstrated with multiple debt raising deals being

completed in and during the COVID-19 lockdowns in the country.

NDBIB also experienced heightened activity on the M&A front where it acted as the Exclusive Financial Advisor to over four transactions including non-bank financial services, technology, and agribusiness sectors. The acquisition of Hatten Plantations PLC by Lotus Renewable Energy, a subsidiary of Singapore based G&G Group was a case in point where NDBIB came together with its ultimate parent NDB Bank and sister company, NDB Securities to go beyond handling the M&A process to include acquisition funding and transaction execution services.

Nilendra Weerasinghe, Chief Corporate Advisory Officer, commenting on the performance, stated, "We managed to demonstrate two important factors in 2019; first is our strength as a financial services group being able to offer a total solution to our clients and the second is our regional presence which generates a deal flow to offset volatilities in our home market."

The recent strategic M&A transaction involving a leading confectionery player, Daintee (Pvt) Ltd, where NDBIB acted as the Exclusive Financial Advisor to the divesting family shareholders, adds to a large array of strategic M&A transactions executed by NDBIB to



Nilendra Weerasinghe - Chief Corporate Advisory Officer



Darshan Perera - Director/CEO



Kaushini Laksumanage - Chief Operating Officer

assist family-owned entities to transition to the next phase of growth.

Euromoney's Awards for Excellence was established in 1992 and was the first of its kind in the global banking industry.

# Central Bank extends application deadline for 4% Working Capital Loan Scheme

The Monetary Board decided to extend the deadline of 4% Working Capital Loan Scheme, at its meeting, held on 19th August 2020. Accordingly, COVID-19 affected businesses and individuals can submit their

loan applications under the Saubagya COVID-19 renaissance facility to respective licensed banks until 30th September 2020.

Meanwhile, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka surpassed the mil-

lions of Rs. 100 billion loans on 18th August 2020, approving Rs.100,017 million worth of loans submitted by 36,489 applicants under the above facility.

Out of approved loans, licensed banks have already disbursed

more than Rs. 68.5 billion among 25,365 affected businesses and individuals island-wide as of 18th August 2020.

Out of Rs. 100 billion approved under the Scheme, 50 percent has been provided to

businesses in the services sector, led by trade services, while distributing 34 percent and 16 percent among businesses in the industry sector and the agriculture sector, respectively.

The Central Bank of Sri

Lanka, in consultation with the Government of Sri Lanka introduced the Saubagya Covid-19 Renaissance Loan Scheme Facility in 3 phases to provide working capital loans at the interest rate of 4% per annum,

with a repayment period of 24-months, including a grace period of 6-months, to businesses, including self-employment and individuals, adversely affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

# Chamber Academy and Facebook host webinar on digital payments



Jayantha Fernando, Legal Director of ICTA

Rajendra Theagarajah - MD/CEO Cargills Bank

D. Kumaratunge, Director Payments and Settlements of CBSL

Senura Abeywardena - Public Policy Manager

Channa de Silva, Chief Executive Officer of Lanka Clear

The Chamber Academy of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Facebook will be conducting an informative webinar on Digital Payments on Wednesday 26 August from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm.

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) announced 2020 as the Year of Digital Transactions. However, with the impact of COVID-

19, this theme is even more relevant as businesses are now adopting more digital models for survival and growth. As such this timely webinar will see how this policy initiative is being implemented and the necessary policy framework required for digital payments.

This discussion will pave the way for industry experts to share

their experience and views on the use of digital platforms and technology to ease ways of conducting business post COVID-19.

The panel discussion will focus on how digital payments can be further facilitated, how it can be integrated into systems, enhancing the role of digital wallets and how SMEs can grow in this payment ecosystem.

The eminent panel will include Mr. D. Kumaratunge, Director Payments and Settlements of CBSL, Channa de Silva, Chief Executive Officer of Lanka Clear (Pvt) Ltd., Jayantha Fernando, Legal Director of ICTA, Senura Abeywardena - Public Policy Manager- Sri Lanka and the session will be moderated by Rajendra Theagarajah- MD/CEO Cargills Bank Ltd.

# Central Bank Financial Consumer Relations Department established

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) established a new department named "Financial Consumer Relations Department" (FCRD) with effect from 10.08.2020 to serve as the single point of contact to handle all external complaints and grievances directed to CBSL on entities regulated by CBSL under the provisions of Section 33 of the Monetary Law Act No. 58 of 1949, as amended.

Addressing complaints and grievances of financial consumers is an objective of financial market regulation and long term finan-

cial system stability. With the increasing competition amongst Financial Service Providers (FSPs) in providing financial services, the need arises for a suitable mechanism to safeguard the interests of the users of financial services and thereby to safeguard the stability and integrity of the financial system.

Recent reports on financial consumer experience in the Sri Lankan financial markets show that even the most financially literate consumers have become victims to inappropriate market conduct by some FSPs regulated by CBSL as well as Informal

Financial Service Providers (IFSPs). Initially, FCRD will focus on financial consumer complaints and grievances on FSPs regulated by CBSL. At a later stage, it is expected to expand the scope to cover areas such as monitoring of market conduct, consumer empowerment, financial consumer education, monitoring of unfair competition among FSPs. The ultimate objective of this initiative is to establish an independent authority to safeguard the rights of consumers and investors in the financial industry in Sri Lanka.



DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA

## ISSUE OF TREASURY BILLS

**Rs. 40,000 million Treasury Bills are to be issued through an auction on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

The Details of Treasury Bill issues are as follows:

Maturity Period	91 Days	182 Days	364 Days	Total
ISIN*	LKA09120K277	LKA18221B263	LKA36421H272	
Amount Offered (Rs. Mn.)	5,000	15,000	20,000	40,000
Maximum yield rate for acceptance (%)**	4.59	4.71	4.90	

Date of Auction : 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020  
 Date of Settlement : 28<sup>th</sup> August 2020  
 Date of Issue : 28<sup>th</sup> August 2020  
 Closing date and time of bid submission : Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 11.00 a.m.  
 Minimum amount of a bid : Rupees five million (Rs. 5,000,000/=) and multiples of Rupees one million (Rs. 1,000,000/=) there onwards.

Bids are invited from the Primary Dealers in Government Securities. Bids should be made only through the electronic bidding facility provided by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL).

The CBSL may accept a higher or lower amount than the offered amounts for each maturity by reallocating amounts between the maturities, depending on the market conditions, but without exceeding the total amount on offer at this auction.

**The general public is invited to purchase Treasury Bills from the following Primary Dealers or any other Licensed Commercial Banks**

Acuity Securities Ltd.	2206297	NSB Fund Management Co. Ltd.	2425010
Bank of Ceylon	2541938	People's Bank	2206783
Capital Alliance Ltd.	2317777	Sampath Bank PLC	2305842
Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC	2332319	Seylan Bank PLC	2456340
First Capital Treasuries PLC	2639883	WealthTrust Securities Ltd	2675096

\* International Securities Identification Number  
 \*\* The rates specified may be subject to adjustment in the event of policy decisions and publicized accordingly in the CBSL web advertisement.

M.Z.M. Aazim  
 Superintendent / Registrar of Public Debt

### Issuing Office

Public Debt Department

**CENTRAL BANK OF SRI LANKA**

30, Janadhipathi Mawatha, Colombo 1.

Telephone: +94 112477011 Fax: +94 112477687

Web: www.cbsl.gov.lk

# Dialog Axiata's Ideamart partners Hutch to expand subscriber reach

Ideamart, a global award-winning platform for developers and content providers presented by Dialog Axiata PLC, partnered Hutchison Telecommunications Lanka (Hutch) to enable over 18,000 Ideamart app developers to access Hutch's Network Infrastructure through APIs (Application Programming Interfaces).

Ideamart enables any developer, technopreneur or entrepreneur with an idea to join, use unutilized telco assets, create their own mobility services, and monetize them with zero risks with no up-front fee.

Following the integration of Hutch 072 & 078 Network Infrastructure, Ideamart will now provide Sri Lankan Developers, access to over 18 million subscribers across Dialog, Hutch and Airtel Mobile Networks.

This partnership will enable Hutch subscribers to avail thousands of applications, development infrastructure and value-added services available on the platform and the integration is set to greatly benefit the Ideamart developer community (Asia's largest digital services ecosystem) through the expansion of the market place for their innovations and services.

Commenting on the partnership, Anthony Rodrigo, Group Chief Innovation Officer and Chief Architect at Dialog Axiata PLC said, "We are pleased to have partnered with Hutchison Telecommunications Lanka to empower thousands of Sri Lankan entrepreneurs with a developer platform to bring their ideas to life and to deliver exceptional services and experiences to millions

of subscribers across the nation."

"We are extremely delighted to support budding entrepreneurs with our state-of-the-art network infrastructure. We consider that digital inclusivity is of utmost importance at present and as mobile-telco providers, we need to collaborate and carry out more initiatives to create a solid market place for app developers," shared Thirukumar Nadarasa, Chief Executive Officer of Hutch.

Ideamart will continue to deliver a host of new Mobile Network APIs, providing a platform for increasingly advanced levels of application development and service functionality. This historic partnership will open up more avenues for Hutch and Dialog Ideamart to empower entrepreneurs and encourage them to come up with innovations.



**Kasun Withanarachchi** Assistant Manager Ideamart Operations, Dialog Axiata PLC, **Viranga Seneviratne** General Manager IdeaMart, Dialog Axiata PLC, **Anthony Rodrigo** Group Chief Innovation Officer and Chief Architect, Dialog Axiata PLC, **Thirukumar Nadarasa** Chief Executive Officer, Hutch, **Yarthav Mathiparanam** Assistant General Manager Data, VAS & Digital, Hutch, **Madreek Naotunna** Manager VAS, Hutch

## Huawei wins two EISA awards for "Best Smartphone Camera"



Huawei Consumer Business Group (CBG) recently received two awards from the European Image and Sound Association (EISA), a group comprising 55 of the world's most respected consumer electronics magazines.

HUAWEI's P40 Pro was named "EISA Smartphone Camera 2020-2021" by the Association, alongside the Huawei Watch 2, which won the accolade of "Best Smartwatch 2020-2021."

The EISA called out the Huawei P40 Pro as being "a true champion in its class," praising the phone's camera capabilities, display technology and luxurious design. High praise was also shared for the Huawei Watch GT 2, with the association claiming that thanks to the watch's smart design and host of fitness features, "a modern classic is born."

"We are thrilled to continue our winning streak with EISA and pleased with the recognition of two of our standout products, the Huawei P40 Pro and HUAWEI WATCH GT 2," said Kevin Ho, President of Handset Business, Huawei Consumer Business Group. "With every device, Huawei is committed to bringing new and exciting experi-

ences to consumers, from a smartwatch that can push your workout limits with the HUAWEI WATCH GT 2 to a smartphone that is breaking boundaries of smartphone photography with the Huawei P40 Pro."

The EISA recognizes the "luxurious designed" Huawei P40 Pro as the perfect companion for those who use their smartphone for taking stunning photos on a daily basis, believing the phone marked yet another impressive advance in mobile photography.

"This award was won as a result of the unmatched photography capabilities of the Huawei P40 Pro, from the primary 50-megapixel Ultra Vision Camera with phase detection auto-focus and optical image stabilization and its 12-megapixel periscope telephoto lens, allowing for 5x optical zoom, to the incredible 40-megapixel Ultra-Wide Cine Camera for advanced video capture."

EISA members include expert media across the full spectrum of consumer electronics from 29 countries, and each member contributes to one or more of EISA's six Expert Groups.

## Tharuki Construction and Investment expands to Piliyandala

ANANDA KANNANGARA

Tharuki Construction and Investment Pvt. Limited opened their fourth branch at Piliyandala, recently expanding its footprint across the country.

Chairman, Tharuki Construction and Investment, W. G. Nihal Kumara said they now have branches in Kottawa, Ingiriya and Palawatte. "We hope to open two more in Gampaha and Meegoda this year and also increase staff strength to 100."

Starting from a humble beginning from Matugama, Tharuki Construction has now increased their land bank to over 100 acres and are looking at acquiring more from the outskirts of Colombo. "We offer buildable land outside the city limits of Colombo mainly targeting the middle-income families."

He said that Tharuki Investment Pvt. Limited was added to their portfolio since there were many requests from buyers to offer them installments to purchase land and also to build their own houses in them. "Today we released land to a buyer on an installment basis after a small down payment and will go a step further to offer them another loan to build a house in the same land."

Through Tharuki Construction, (an ICTAD certified company,) we will also build the customer's house according to their design



One of the fully furnished houses built by Tharuki Construction



Invitees at the opening of their Piliyandala branch

or from architectural plans from us, using our own high quality building material and staff. Today we have built around 50 fully furnished houses and will build 50 more mid next year.

He said that 70% of their customers could have never gotten a 'loan' or land from banks or Real Estate Companies due to lack of collateral. "We keep minimum collateral and provide credit or land for less than 4% interest. Also, the customer who seeks credit from us could get it in less than two hours and a housing loan in less than 24 hours."

He said that they did approach the Central Bank two years ago seeking registration but the feedback and the rules and regulations shun them away from obtaining a registration. "We then registered Tharuki Investment as a company and are paying all taxes including income tax."

Nihal Kumara said that they were not into leasing, pawing, accepting savings or fixed deposits.



Chairman, Tharuki Construction and Investment, W. G. Nihal Kumara accepting a deposit

## Tokyo Cement gifts clean drinking water to three villages in Poonakary

Three villages in Poonakary (also known as Pooneryn) in the Kilinochchi District were gifted with purified drinking water facilities by Tokyo Cement Group in partnership with Re-Awakening Lanka.

Over two thousand residents in Veravil, Valaippaadu and Veerapandiya-munai, in Ponnaveili Grama Niladhari Division within the Poonakary AGA Division in Kilinochchi will now gain access to clean drinking water thanks to this project. The project was carried out under the patronage and guidance of the Poonakary Divisional Secretariat.

Director, Tokyo Eastern Cement Co./General Manager, Power & Energy E. Kugapriya led the Tokyo Cement Team who implemented the water purification solutions. This included refurbishing three existing wells and installing water pumps and tanks to store water for purification.

St. Anthony's Hydro Division supported the project by designing a customized water purification solution after studying hydrology of the area. Based on the technical evaluation of groundwater quality, three Pure Hydro water purification solutions with Reverse Osmosis Technology were implemented at the three locations.

As part of this far-reaching humanitarian project, Tokyo Cement will also undertake to maintain and service the water purifica-



tion plants during the first three years of installation by working closely with a community representative to ensure the sustainable upkeep of the system. The drinking water facility gifted to the people of Veravil, Valaippaadu, and Veerapandiya-munai fulfils a much-needed basic requirement of the thousands of people in the area.

Tokyo Cement Group sponsored the project with Appé Lanka, a rural development project by Re-Awakening Lanka involved in numerous social upliftment and village empowerment programs mainly focused on women and children in the North and East. This was possible because so many people and organizations contributed in numerous ways to make it possible." The three villages, Veravil, Valaip-

paadu and Veerapandiya-munai has over 2000 residents belonging to 500 families whose livelihood is based on fishing and farming. A fresh-water Well situated in each village was used for cooking and cleaning purposes, fulfilling only a part of the water requirement of the people and that too was not available during the dry season.

Salinda Kandapola, Manager Corporate Sustainability at Tokyo Cement Co. (Lanka) PLC., commenting on this benevolent project said, "Water is one of the basic human needs and since most parts of our country is blessed with good quality drinking water, we tend to take it for granted. However, there are thousands of people who do not have access to potable water to fulfill even their basic requirements."

## Asiri Laboratories wins Merit accolade at National Quality Awards 2019

Asiri Laboratories was once again recognized for demonstrating leadership, quality and service excellence among the private medical laboratories in the country with the National Quality Merit Award, organized by the Sri Lanka Standards Institution.

Asiri Laboratories received this coveted award under the 'Health-care sector-Large category' and notably, this is the first time any private medical laboratory in Sri Lanka was recognized for high quality standards and honored at this level.

The Sri Lanka National Quality Awards is an annual program that recognizes Sri Lankan organizations for Performance Excellence. Winners are evaluated on criteria based on the world-renowned Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award of the USA. Over 80 countries globally employ this eminent quality framework to recognize organizations with

the highest standards of performance excellence.

A rigorous site visit and review process was conducted by the examiners to ensure the organization is aligned to the aspects of performance excellence.

Commenting on receiving the award, Group Chief Executive Officer Dr. Manjula Karunaratne said, "We are extremely proud that Asiri Laboratories is the recipient of this prestigious award. We are continuously dedicated to ensuring that we provide the highest levels of service for the nation."

"Globally accepted advanced diagnostic tools and state-of-the-art technology is used to conduct all our tests," Dr. Karunaratne added.

This year's accolade reinforces the organization's impeccable track record. "Our goal is to aim for the pinnacle of the National Quality Award in 2020," N P John, Group Laboratory Director, said.



## Lanka IOC rewards high servo Lube distributors



Lanka IOC rewarded all its top-performing Lube distributors with a Motor Bike, along with trophy and certificate of merit based on their performance during 2019-20.

The following Lube distributors were the recipients of recognition, first rank Nathan Hardware, Jaffna, second rank Hameed Transport, Trincomalee and third rank Ismail Stores, Batticaloa

The other distributors were also rewarded for their valued contribution with a certificate of merit.

Lanka IOC Managing Director, Manoj Gupta in his address, advised all the channel partners to have a customer-centric approach and ensure increasing the secondary sales.

He further urged all the distributors to come forward and explore the possibility of marketing LIOC Bitumen and Petrochemicals. Gupta also elaborated on future expansion plans and investments in Sri Lanka. Lanka IOC is already gearing up to fast-track the completion of the upcoming 3000 Mt Grease

plant to help start manufacturing the greases locally in Sri Lanka by end of 2020.

Substitution. Besides, the company has undertaken various value engineering initiatives that are environmentally friendly. This also includes the automation for blending & filling operations. The objective of the Listed Company is to save precious foreign exchange & create more employment and new business opportunities for the SME segment.

Servo Industrial distributor Mihir Lanka, proprietor Sudath and Priyanthi appreciated this knowledge sharing the initiative of LIOC which will go a long way in building brand loyalty with customers.

Lanka IOC, Sri Lanka's No. 1 listed Energy Company, markets, and sales its Servo - World Class Lubricants thru a strong network of twenty-six Lube distributors island-wide. The company has plans to increase this distributor network to 30 Nos in the next couple of months.

# Town & Country

To re-ignite the passions of town & country folk

FEATURES EDITOR: (011) 242 9216 Fax: (011) 234 3694 E mail: features.dailynews@lakehouse.lk

## HONEY 'BEATS ANTIBIOTICS' FOR CURING COUGHS OR COLDS

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## OUTSMARTED!

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# The Dark, Strange, Other Side

ADITHA DISSANAYAKE

Some books are like people. The more you get to know them the more you like your cat.

This April, during the lock-down, my love affair with the title of Haruki Murakami's 2002 novel, 'Kafka on the Shore' reached a tragic milestone. As far as titles go, I had listed 'Kafka on the Shore' among the top titles I have ever seen on the cover of a book. In my eyes, it had all that a title should ever possess; it was attractive and tantalizing in exactly the right amounts. In short, 'Kafka on the shore' felt like an equivalent in the book world of a young Daniel Day Lewis in a Steven Scorsese movie.

The images the title conjured in my mind stretched all the way back to Shakespeare and evoked lines of Neruda's 'Blue Shore of Silence.' I dreamed of meeting Franz Kafka on every page and tried to figure out what he would be doing on a beach. Perhaps he was waiting for someone, or watching a storm, a shipwreck, or daydreaming. And knowing Murakami, perhaps Kafka would meet Caliban and Prospero on that beach in Japan.

Then, one sunny day in April, like Willy Loman, I fell. I can't remember now on which page of the copy of Murakami's book that a friend so generously let me borrow even before he had read it himself, that I realized, 'Kafka on the Shore' had nothing to do with the dark haired, brooding novelist of the early twentieth century. It took me almost two days to recover from the shock of knowing Kafka is, in truth, Kafka Tamura, a fifteen-year-old Japanese boy afflicted with the Oedipus myth. Also 'Kafka on the Shore' is the fictional title of a song.

Yet, even in the glare of blinding disillusionment I confess I found the book an interesting read, not as someone who enjoyed the storyline but as one translator reading the work of another translator. I realized Philip Gabriel 'Americanized' the translated text, no doubt with the intention of bringing readers closer to the story, while at the same time distracting those of us who were trying to guess what the Japanese equivalent might be for exclamations like "Jeez Louise!" Though there is no way of proving it is exactly how the original author intended it to be, Gabriel clearly succeeds in giving two different voices to the two protagonists, Kafka and Nakata as he guides the reader through the maze Murakami creates.

Of the two threads in the plot I like the first, which dealt with the plight of Kafka Tamura who

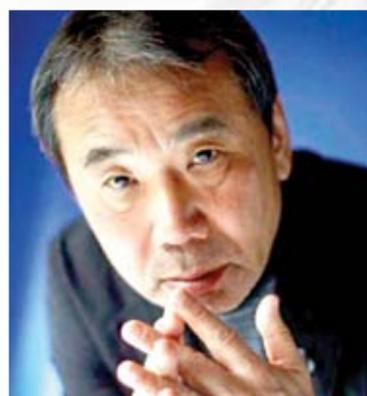


runs away from Tokyo and his father to kill time in a private library in a tiny island in Shikoku called Takamatsu. It is in the library that Kafka meets the librarian, Oshima, and its owner, Mrs Saeki, whose fifteen year-old-self will soon appear in the form of a ghost.

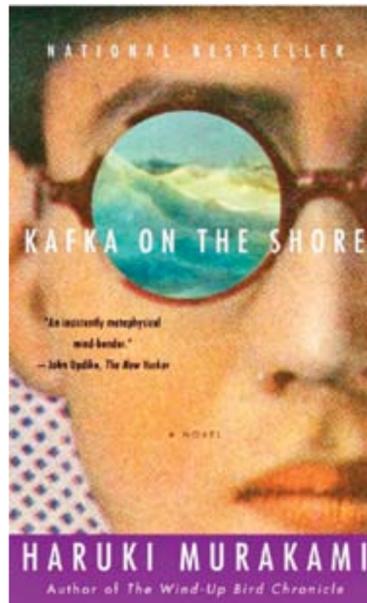
It was the second thread that baffled me and made me wish I could rewrite the whole story myself eliminating the passages about the arrival of a UFO in the Shikoku mountains during the Second World War that leaves a group of school children unconscious for several hours. They all recover, except for one boy, Nakata, who remains in a coma for some weeks before waking up, as he says, "not very bright", but with the power to talk to cats.

If you have not read the book yet, and if you are irritated with me for giving the story away, forgive me. But, in truth, there's really no story to give away. By the time you reach the last sentence on page 615 you would still not have tied up any of the many loose ends that dangle from almost every chapter and thankfully not because you and I are dim-witted but because Murakami wanted it that way.

And so, the UFO is never explained. There's no way of knowing if Mrs Saeki is Kafka's mother (The answer, given to Kafka, is "you know the



Haruki Murakami



answer"). Is Sakura, the girl Kafka meets at the beginning of the story, really his sister? And who is the Boy Named Crow? Is he Kafka's friend or his superego or a version of his older self? And why is there a giant evil slug crawling across a Takamatsu apartment, and why do so many fish rain from the sky?

After four months of trying to find the answers, a few weeks ago while roaming through on-line literary magazines I realized there are really no answers. Because, (once again), Murakami wanted it that way. As he explains to Deborah Trisman in the New Yorker, he is not aware of the unreal elements in his books because they all seem real. "If there is a door and you can open it and enter that other place, you do it. It's just curiosity. What's inside? What's over there? So that's what I do every day. When I'm writing a novel, I wake up around four in the morning and go to my desk and start working. That happens in a realistic world. I drink real coffee. But, once I start writing, I go somewhere else. I open the door, enter that place, and see what's happening there. I don't know—or I don't care—if it's a realistic world or an unrealistic one. I go deeper and deeper, as I concentrate on writing, into a kind of underground. While I'm there, I encounter strange things. But while I'm seeing them, to my eyes, they look natural."

If this is unnerving, there's comfort in the familiar. For 'Kafka on the Shore' has all the familiar elements of other Murakami novels. Semi-orphaned teenagers; protagonists on quests for lost women; paranormal experiences; violence; references to jazz and classical music.

Plus the cats. A Murakami novel is an oasis for cat-lovers. Reading about the impressive cat Mimi, and Kafka's habit of petting every cat he sees, one would think Murakami himself has many cats at home. **But when the New Yorker asked him how many cats he has, he had this to say.** "None at all. I go jogging around my house every morning and I regularly see three or four cats—they are friends of mine. I stop and say hello to them and they come to me; we know each other very well."

In the light of all the strange things that happen in his books this disillusionment too, comes as no surprise.

But 'Kafka on the Shore' even with all the warts exposed, continues to hold a significant place in my heart. Such are the illogical ways of love.

aditha.dissanayake@gmail.com

A Murakami novel is an oasis for cat-lovers. Reading about the impressive cat Mimi, and Kafka's habit of petting every cat he sees, one would think Murakami himself has many cats at home. But when the New Yorker asked him how many cats he has, he had this to say. "None at all. I go jogging around my house every morning and I regularly see three or four cats—they are friends of mine. I stop and say hello to them and they come to me; we know each other very well."



# Amazing benefits of listening to music

If we take a music lesson or two, that musical training can help raise our IQs and even keep us sharp in old age. Here are amazing scientifically-proven benefits of being hooked on music.

### Music Makes You Happier

Research proves that when you listen to music you like, your brain releases dopamine, a "feel-good" neurotransmitter. Valorie Salimpoor, a neuroscientist at McGill University, injected eight music-lovers with a radioactive substance that binds to dopamine receptors after they listened to their favorite music. A PET scan showed that large amounts of dopamine were released, which biologically caused the participants to feel emotions like happiness, excitement, and joy.

### Music Enhances Running Performance

Marcelo Bigliassi and his colleagues found that runners who listened to fast or slow motivational music completed the first 800 meters of their run faster than runners who listened to calm music or ran without music. If you want to take your running up a notch, listen to songs that inspire you.

### Music Lowers Stress and Improves Health

Listening to music you enjoy decreases levels of the stress hormone cortisol in your body, which counteracts the effects of chronic stress.

To stay calm and healthy during a stressful day, turn on the radio. Be sure to sing along and tap your feet to the beat to get the maximum healing benefit.

### Music Helps You Sleep Better

If you're having trouble sleeping, try listening to a little Bach or Mozart before bedtime to catch some Zs.

### Music Reduces Depression

The next time you feel low, put on some classical or meditative music to lift your spirits.

### Music Helps You Eat Less

"Research at Georgia Tech University showed that softening the lighting and music while people ate led them to consume fewer calories and enjoy their meals more. If you're looking for ways to curb your appetite, try dimming the lights and listening to soft music the next time you sit down for a meal.

### Music Elevates Your Mood While Driving

A study in the Netherlands found that listening to music can positively impact your mood while driving, which can lead to safer behavior than not listening to music. The next time you feel frustrated in traffic, turn up the tunes to improve your state of mind. It won't hurt your driving performance - it may even help you drive more safely.

### Music Strengthens Learning and Memory

Researchers discovered that music can help you learn and recall information better, but it depends on how much you like the music and whether or not you're a musician. Subjects memorized Japanese characters while listening to music that either seemed positive or neutral to them. The results showed that participants who were musicians learned better with neutral music but tested better when pleasurable music was playing. Non-musicians, on the other hand, learned better with positive music but tested better with neutral music.

Memorize these results. You now have a strategy to study more effectively for your next test.

-lifehack.org



The organizers of Arise Sri Lanka and some of the artistes who will perform on that day

# ARISE SRI LANKA POISED TO TAKE SRI LANKA TO THE WORLD

Details of Sri Lanka's first ever Telethon in aid of the frontline health workers who are relentlessly battling to contain Covid 19, was presented to the media at Galadari Hotel recently.

Welcoming the well attended gathering, Richard de Zoysa who is the architect of the event, outlined the manner in which the government together with the armed services, the medical and health officials combined to control the pandemic. He said that their exemplary actions deserved global recognition and he was determined to create an avenue where not only all Sri Lankans but the rest of the world would be made aware of how governments could face a crisis of this nature by being decisive and resolute.

"ARISE SRI LANKA A Telethon, would be telecast and live streamed to the whole world in order to portray our success in combating Covid 19". De Zoysa stressed the fact that without the dedicated support of his core team comprising Sohan Weerasinghe, Benjy Ranabahu, Ivan Alvis together with Noeline Honter and anchored by Thushi Weerasinghe, this project would have been an uphill task.

The Primary individual sponsor of this extravagant musical entertainment is Dr. Walter Jasinghe the renowned, iconic personal-



Sohan



April Shockman



Dr Nilanka



Marlon

ity who resides in California. De Zoysa made special mention of his generous contribution which lessened his burden of bearing the costs. A few other close friends in the corporate sector have also come forward to support the event with noteworthy contributions.

The Telethon will be presented by Elite Promotions and Entertainment together with Real and Kiss FM along with Siyatha TV, X'Periments, Mirage and Aquarius will back the artistes who include Damien, Bonnie, Ranil Amirithi, Bonnie of Crossroads, Rukshan and Melantha

Perera, Umara, Corrinne Almeida, Shiyam and Shamistar, April Shockman, Jackie and Ishini Fonseka, Marlon, Shafi and Sherriden, Rajitha of Misty, Treshelle and Marizelle will all perform at what will probably be the best ever event to be held in Sri Lanka in appreciation of our real heroines and heroes.

One of the main purposes of bringing all this talent together was also to complement their performances with images of how our frontline workers combated the pandemic and also to encourage foreign travel-

ers to visit our country when our points of entry open up.

De Zoysa who is the Producer and Director of ARISE SRI LANKA is working together with the World Health Organization on this project.

Sohan and Noeline who will emcee the concert which is limited to just 100 invitees, also performed at the Press Briefing along with up and coming performers April Shockman and Jackie.

The highlight of the Telethon will be a song composed very specially for this event by Noeline and Melantha.

"These efforts will come together in solidarity to fulfill one of the main objectives of this event which is to raise funds for the frontline health workers. This will be facilitated during the concert and thereafter for a period of 3 days where any person who wishes to contribute can do so."

In his vote of thanks De Zoysa acknowledged the Ministry of Defence, Covid 19 Prevention Center, DG Health Services, the officers at Nelum Pokuna as well as General Manager Galadari Hotel, Sampath Siriwardena.

-AD

## MARMADUKE



"Oh, get in. The water isn't that deep."

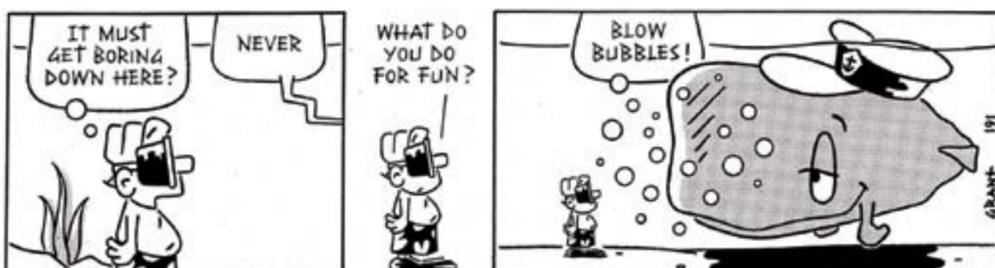
## MUTT AND JEFF



## ARCHIE



## FISH TALES



## UP & RUNNING



# A green garden, your wealth

## Choosing what to grow

ISHARA JAYAWARDANE

The Daily News speaks to District Agriculture Instructor and Deputy Provincial Director of Agriculture Ratmalana K.N.K. Jayathilake, on what crops you should grow in your home garden, so you can enjoy a daily balanced and healthy diet.

Choosing which crops to grow in your home garden is the next most important step. Of course, we know that vegetables and fruits provide an array of health benefits. We know that different members of the family may have different health requirements. But overall, what we want from a home garden is a source of healthy and nourishing food that is free from chemicals, that will fill our bellies and appeal to our palates. Also, another vital factor that we need to take into account is the age of the family members.

"I feel you should grow as many vegetables and fruits as possible in your home garden. The more the variety, the more balanced and healthier your diet will become. Also, if there is a variety of vegetables on your dish the tastier the meal is," said Jayathilake.

Jayathilake pointed out that since you need to grow as many crops as possible, you need to systematically arrange your garden in such a way where you can utilize sunlight and shade. There are tolerant shade loving vegetable plants to put in shady corners of the garden such as Lettuce, Spinach, Broccoli, Cabbage and Turnip. Then there are vegetables that can be grown in just about any garden spot. Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Peppers and Beans, benefit from being grown in areas with full sun. Carrots, Radishes, Beets and other root vegetables require at least half a day of sun to thrive.

### Number of family members

Another factor is the number of family members. There are many options when it comes to determining the vegetable and fruit garden size. Every family has different needs and preferences when it comes to food.

Also, plants vary in size, so it depends on what vegetables and fruits you

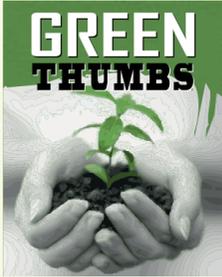


K.N.K. Jayathilake



grow. Carrots are heat sensitive, which is why they go well with tomato plants that can provide them a bit of shade. It is advised that Carrots should be planted near onions. Radishes can also be planted among cucumbers. Beets, cabbage, carrots, lettuce can also be planted alongside onions. Size matters a lot in a home garden. 10 feet of beets spaced two to three inches apart provides enough beets for one person. If all four family members want beets, a 40-foot row should provide enough beets for the family.

By the time the Corona Virus hit Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan home gardeners already knew the tricks. You won't really know how many vegetables to plant for your family until you've got some experience under your belt.



Climatic conditions

Climatic conditions in the Hill country are ideal for crops such as carrot, leek, cabbage, cauliflower, salad leaves, beet, bean, bell pepper, and salad cucumber. The low country is suitable for a variety of vegetables ranging from green chili, red onion, pumpkin, bitter gourd, melon.

"Diversity is essential in a home garden. In Sri Lanka there are *Up country crops*, *Mid country crops* and *Low country crops*. Up country vegetables are basically cabbage, leeks, carrots and beetroot. They need a low temperature. But carrots and cabbage can be successfully cultivated in low country as well. When it comes to low country vegetables you can cultivate Chilies, Capsicum, tomatoes (up to a certain extent), Winged Bean (Dambala), Long Bean (Ma), Luffa (Watakolu), Bitter Gourd (Karawila), Pathola, and leafy vegetables (Kang kung and Gotukola). Tomato can be grown in Up country, Low Country Wet Zone and Dry Zone," explained Jayathilake.

Amongst some of the most popular vegetables, *Kang Kung* is a rich source of vitamins (particularly A, B and C), iron, protein, calcium, amino acids and anti-oxidants. *Gotu Kola* is frequently made into a breakfast soup called *Kola Kanda* - it is thought to cleanse the blood. 100g of Bitter Gourd provides 140% of your Vitamin C (RDA). Curry leaves contain calcium, phosphorus, iron, magnesium, copper, and minerals. High in vitamin content, they contain nicotinic acid and vitamin C, vitamin A,

vitamin B, vitamin E, antioxidants, and amino acids.

### Variety

"If you want to spice your food up then there are also many types of chilis you can grow in Sri Lankan home gardens - *Malu miris*, *Varaniya miris* and *Kochchi miris*. When it comes to long term harvesting, *Kochchi miris* is ideal. All these vegetables come in bright striking colors which beautify the home garden. If you can grow four of each variety, then that is enough for your home garden. If you take *Bandakka*, around 10 of those is enough for the home garden," pointed out Jayathilake.

He also pointed out that Yams is another essential crop that must be grown in a home garden. Sri Lanka is a country that has a considerable number of edible and non-edible roots and tuber varieties. This important resource is commonly known as '*yams*'. Potato is a Yam which is an upcountry vegetable. It is as popular as Manioc, Raja Ala and Sweet Potato. This up-country crop is high yielding. Yam is a good source of energy - 100 g provides 118 calories.

"Aloe Vera is another plant that needs to be grown. There are many varieties of Kola Kanda that we can prepare. Some are -Hathawariya, Wel Penala, Iramusu, Monarakudumbiya, Polpala, Kohila, Karapincha (curry leaves), Elabatu Kanda, Gotukola, Mukunuwenna," said Jayathilake.

When it comes to fruits, one can grow - papaya, pineapple and banana in the home garden.

# Honey 'beats antibiotics' for curing coughs or colds

## New research shows it is more effective than medication

It has long been a folk remedy for an irritating cough, sore throats and the common cold. But research now shows that honey is more effective at treating these ailments than antibiotics or over-the-counter medication. Experts at Oxford University said doctors should tell patients to have a spoonful of honey rather than prescribing antibiotics which can fuel antimicrobial resistance.

They reviewed studies which compared the effectiveness of honey against cough suppressants, antihistamines and painkillers when treating upper respiratory tract infection (URTI) symptoms - which include a cough and cold.

Overall, honey was found to be 'superior' at relieving coughs, sore throats and congestion - and unlike other medications it had no harmful side effects.

Honey was on average 36 per cent more effective at reducing cough frequency than common medications and it cut cough severity by 44 per cent more.

Not all old wives' tales stand up to scientific scrutiny. But a spoonful of honey really does seem to relieve a cough.

This is firstly because it contains hydrogen peroxide which gives it anti-microbial properties. Due to this, it has been used in traditional medicine as a topical antibiotic for centuries.

And secondly, because it is thick and sticky, honey has a soothing effect on the throat that can reduce irritation and help relieve a dry, tickly cough.

In addition to eating it straight out of the jar with a spoon, honey can be served with lemon in tea.

There was also evidence honey reduces the time it takes to recover from URIs by up to two days.

"Honey was associated with a significantly greater reduction in combined symptom score, cough frequency and cough severity," the study in the British Medical Journal said.

It added that the so-called 'nectar of the gods' is cheap, readily available and has virtually no side effects. The authors also said using honey for infections could reduce the overprescription of antibiotics, which is fueling a crisis of antimicrobial resistance.

Experts are increasingly worried that doctors too often dole out antibiotics for coughs and colds, for which they are rarely necessary because most of these are caused by viruses.

The researchers said: 'Honey was superior to usual care for the improvement of symptoms of URIs. It provides a widely available and cheap alternative to antibiotics. URIs are the most frequent reason for antibiotic prescription. Since the majority of URIs are viral, antibiotic prescription is both ineffective and inappropriate.'

'Given that a lack of alternative therapies and desire to preserve the patient-doctor relationship are two key contributors to antibiotic overprescription by GPs, our finding that honey may be effective is important. Honey is a reasonable alternative.'



Honey has long been used as a home remedy and two years ago the UK's medical watchdog included it in official guidelines for treating coughs.

But there were limited reviews on its effectiveness in treating URIs. The Oxford scientists reviewed 14 studies, with 1,761 participants, to determine the impact of honey when treating upper respiratory tract symptoms.

The 14 studies compared treating patients with honey against 'usual care' - such as cough medicines and painkillers.

They found that honey was more effective at improving symptoms - especially the frequency and severity of coughing. In the case of the antihistamine diphenhydramine, honey was 'significantly better' as it reduced cough severity by 50 per cent.

Two of the studies showed symptoms lasted one to two days less among those treated with

honey. But the researchers cautioned that honey is a complex substance so different types could have different effects.

The study concluded: 'Honey is commercially consumed and is safe for use by the majority of the population, apart from allergic individuals and infants under one year of age.'

'Honey is a frequently used lay remedy that is well known to patients. It is also cheap, easy to access and has limited harms.'

'When clinicians wish to prescribe for URIs, we would recommend honey as an alternative to antibiotics. It is more effective and less harmful than usual care alternatives and avoids causing harm through antimicrobial resistance.'

Honey should not be given to children aged under one year old due to the risk from bacteria that can produce toxins in a baby's intestines, leading to potentially fatal infant botulism.

-Daily Mail.uk



# My Spy Outsmarted!

RUWINI JAYAWARDANA

For many, 'My Spy' was probably the last film to be witnessed on the wind screen before COVID-19 shut down the world – including movies theaters. Therefore it feels good to reflect on this action comedy which reminds us a bit about the evergreen 'Home Alone' series which became blockbusters in the past.

'Get Smart' and 'Naked Gun 33 1/3: The Final Insult' director Peter Segal is written by Eric and Jon Hoeber. The film is based on a big and beefy guy meeting a sweet and cheeky kid. This brings to mind other similar tales – especially the recently released 'Playing with Fire'. However what sets this film apart from the previous production is the bond between its two main characters which are given life by Dave Bautista and Chloe Coleman.

Bautista is brilliant as a former Army Ranger in the CIA's employ, on sur-



veillance of a mother and her 9-year-old daughter as punishment for botching a mission. As the daughter whose loneliness as the new kid in school is achingly poignant, Coleman is the perfect foil to Bautista, the perfect picture of innocence. Coleman can't weigh more than 40 pounds, yet she's well matched to Bautista.

The other fact which works in favour of the film is the realistic manner in which the characters are portrayed. We see the vulnerable side of Bautista's JJ when he is injured while the happy go lucky Sophie possesses wisdom beyond her years when called to take immediate action during desperate circumstances.

Another plus point is the humour which will make you keep watching what turns out to be a predictable storyline. The spy training is hilarious without being over the top, and the rapport between these two actors is adorable.

The 'big man and little kid' formula has been a winner throughout the years. Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson had his turn with 'Tooth Fairy' while John Cena did his time in 'Playing with Fire'.

However Bautista engages in far more serious acting than both of them for this role. In 'Guardians of the Galaxy' his stoicism was put to good use as the vengeful warrior Drax, and he turned in a stunning dramatic performance during a brief appearance in "Blade Runner 2049." But his last few films, including "Stuber," have let his talents go to waste.

Therefore it is good to see him given a role with more flesh.

However the real star of the film is young Coleman who keeps in line with Bautista's performance step by step and at times outperforms him.

'My Spy' is a genuine charmer that could keep the whole family laughing from beginning to end.

This is a welcome distraction for everyone to keep their minds engaged from the tension and chaos from the real world.

# Reel rejoice!

CHANNA BANDARA WIJEKOON

“People commonly interact as groups in their day-to-day lives. This ‘collective human happiness’ which is an essential trait that drives a society was busted by Covid 19 pandemic.”

Confining to their homes was a torturing experience for the public. In the wake of the pandemic, Scope Cinemas and Sarasaviya tabloid of Lake House teamed up with a few innovative cinema artistes to hold a different film festival branded as 'Scope – Sarasaviya Cinema Happiness' that will showcase five brand new Sinhala films awaiting screening”, said the award winning film director Jayantha Chandrasiri at a press briefing held at Scope cinemas to announce an upcoming event.

He said this initiative would make cinema-goers happy and also revitalise the country's cinema industry.

Scope cinemas the country's leading movie theatre franchise revealed the details of the exciting five-day film festival scheduled to take place from September 4 to September 8. Tickets for 'Scope – Sarasaviya Cinema Happiness' are priced at 350 LKR and can be reserved online at [www.scopecinemas.com](http://www.scopecinemas.com)

Set to be held at the Scope Cinemas Liberty complex, the film fete will celebrate the diverse landscape of Sri Lankan cinema, bringing to the big screen a selection of first-rate films made by country's most acclaimed artists and filmmakers intended to entertain, engage, and inspire. This is done months in advance of these movies' official releases, also benchmarking with global marketing tactics to exploit market opportunities.

Cinema-goers will be given the opportunity to mingle with directors, producers, and most importantly with the Film Stars of each movie from each day's final screening shedding light on star-studded evenings.

NFC has offered its fullest blessings for the event.

The film fest will start with Jayantha Chandrasiri's 'Midunu Wishwaya' and flamboyantly end with the screening of Udayakantha Warnasuriya's Gindari 3.

Warnasuriya said, when compared with the rest of the world Sri Lanka is on a winning streak as the country has gotten rid of Covid 19. He said what people need now is some stimulation to be awakened from their prolonged hibernation. “We as filmmakers identified their need thus we embarked on this collaborative effort of holding 'Scope-Sarasaviya Cinema Happiness'. We offer five brand new films of diverse genres for the enthusiastic cinemagoer. All these films are must-watch ones for any Sri Lankan cinemagoer. The tickets are offered at a concessionary price at this glamorous festival”, he said.

Scope Cinemas Director/CEO Thushan Meemanage said all film circuits would benefit from this joint initiative as a vibe would be created on these yet-to-be-screened films showcased at the festival.

“The organisers are working

to create a most memorable experience; a film-fest vibe, attended by some of Sri Lanka's well-known film personalities and celebrities”, he said.

Speaking of the hygienic aspects Meemanage said, “Scope Cinemas will take steps to ensure that the venue and all operations adhere to public health and safety guidelines pertaining to the containment of COVID-19, promising a healthy, safe, comfortable, and up-to-the-minute experience for all guests. In addition to implementing a number of basic safety controls such as temperature checks and mandatory mask wearing, the management is also enforcing stern social distancing measures and disinfection of each cinema between screenings. All these measures are taken in hassle-free manner for the patron”.

'Sarasaviya' chief editor Aruna Gunaratne said, Sarasaviya tabloid has closely associated with Sinhala cinema for over five decades. “Sri Lankan film industry would flourish once again if commercial films are made to suit the tastes of the new generation. 'Scope-Sarasaviya Cinema Happiness' will showcase five such brand new films”, he said.

Marketing and production manager of Scope Cinemas, Jayaratna Galagedara coordinated the press event.

## Film line-up

The list of films scheduled to be showcased artfully curated for the festival, includes productions across a wide spectrum of genres. Director Jayantha Chandrasiri's Midunu Wishwaya, that will be screened on September 4 is a tale of time-travel, revolving around the complex love of two people from entirely different eras.

Kathuru Mithuru directed by Giriraj Kaushalya is the tale of a friendship developed between a tailor and barber over a common tool.

Director Channa Perera's Yugathra tells whimsical story of a young man and his quest to discover the secret behind the mysterious girl of his dreams.

Miss Jenis, a light-hearted comedy by Director Susirinda Silva revolves around the desperate pranks of a middle-aged man who has resorted to disguising himself as a woman in order to sustain his family.



Gindari 3, a comedy/mystery film by Director Udayakantha Warnasuriya follows the strange results of when supernatural and real lives collide. Three ravishing she-devils invading the human world to abduct Tikiri aka Gindari's son Supiri makes the story.

## Scope Cinemas - a force to reckon with

Scope Cinemas was founded in 2017 with the refurbishment of the iconic Liberty Cinema. The multi-sensory luxury entertainment company has now expanded into the country's first international standard cinema chain, having developed Sri Lanka's first six screen multiplex with 4K projection technology and latest Dolby Atmos surround sound systems.

Scope Cinemas is confident that the upcoming film festival 'Scope-Sarasaviya Cinema Happiness' will serve as the perfect platform for cinema-goers to appreciate contemporary Sri Lankan film.

The event would also build optimism and spirit as a recovery medium for the industry.

Movie	MOVIE FEST SCHEDULE Date/time	Director
Midunu Wishwaya Genre - Drama	Sept 4 10 am 1.30 pm 7 pm	Jayantha Chandrasiri
Kathuru Mithuru Genre-Comedy	Sept 5 10 am 1.30 pm 7 pm	Giriraj Kaushalya
Yugathra Genre- Drama/Fantasy	Sept 6 10 am 1.30 pm 7 pm	Channa Perera
Miss Jenis Genre- Comedy	Sept 7 10 am 1.30 pm 7 pm	Susirinda Silva
Gindari Genre- Comedy/ Mystery	3 Sept 8 10 am 1.30 pm 7 pm	Udayakantha Warnasuriya



# FATAL attractions

Chandana Edirisinghe and Pujitha Gunathileke's co-direction 'Sheelena' will begin screening at LFD cinema halls islandwide from August 21. The film will be released in Sinhala and Tamil languages.

The film stars Jeewan Kumarathunga, Dineth de Silva, Amanda Silva, Anuj Ranasinghe, Veena Jayakody, Rohan Wijethunga, Manohari Wimalathunga, Rohitha Dias, Dayasiri Hettiarachchi, Sanjula Divaratne and others. Niranga Sanjeeva is the cinematographer. Tharaka Adhikari handled the make up department. Janaka Pradeep Kumara Seneviratne is the art director. The choreographer is Ramod Malaka. Sumudu Amalka is the fight director. Dilan Gunawardena handled the editing, sound control and colour mixing. Lasantha Weerasooriya is the music director for the project. Indika Ruwan, Ranga Prasad, and Resanjini Thamo-dya Edirisinghe have rendered their voices for the songs. The film is produced by Pujitha Gunathileke on behalf of Sheelena Films.



'Paranormal Activity: The Ghost Dimension' will have limited screenings at Scope Cinemas at Colombo City Center, Liberty Cinema, Majestic Cineplex, and PVR

# Farwell to all that

In the six years since the original 'Paranormal Activity' became a sleeper sensation, the franchise has done an impressive job squeezing every bit of juice that it can out of a fiendish gimmick.

With 'Paranormal Activity: The Ghost Dimension', the fifth film in the series (not including 2014's spinoff 'The Marked Ones'), it's clear this haunted-

house conceit can't go on forever, however, so it's probably just as well that the producers have insisted this will be the final chapter.

If this indeed is 'Paranormal Activity's' send-off, this wobbly, consistently mildly unsettling sequel possesses enough of the attributes that will remind the faithful what made these films reliably clever Halloween staples. *Screen Daily*