



Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa

## PM TELLS HOUSE RS.70,000 M ALREADY SPENT ON ANTI-COVID EFFORTS

**DAILY COVID EXPENDITURE EXCEEDS RS.50 M**

**6 PERCENT GROWTH PROJECTED BY 2025 DESPITE PANDEMIC**

**MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN A CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT**

**SANDASEN MARASINGHE, CAMELIA NATHANIEL AND AMALI MALLAWARACHCHI**  
The Government has already spent around Rs. 70,000 million for the identification of patients, quarantine activities, random testing and related welfare activities under the anti-COVID drive, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, stated in Parliament yesterday. Presenting the Appropriation Bill 2020 in Parliament, Prime Minister Rajapaksa said the Government intended to meet its economic

targets during the next few years despite the enormous costs and challenges posed by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Describing some of those challenges and steps, the Prime Minister said the hospital capacity for disease prevention, which was limited to Colombo, has now been increased to 17 hospitals in less than a year covering almost all parts of the country. "The number of special care beds for COVID-19 patients has been increased to around 600. Daily PCR test-

ing capacity for the diagnosis of the disease has been increased to an average of 7,500-10,000 tests per day with each test costing around Rs. 6,000, with the daily expenditure exceeding almost Rs.50 million. Government also spends a sizeable amount for the food and welfare of those on 14-day quarantine. In the meantime, an allowance of Rs.3,000 is granted to low income families. Apart from that, the Government is also bearing expenditures related to the payment of

### APPROPRIATION BILL 2020 PASSED WITH AMENDMENTS

**SANDASEN MARASINGHE, CAMELIA NATHANIEL AND AMALI MALLAWARACHCHI**

The 2020 Appropriation Bill was passed in Parliament without a vote yesterday (12). The Appropriation Bill was taken

up for debate yesterday morning following the budget speech presented by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Mahinda Rajapaksa. The Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill was passed

### 98 EXPAT SRI LANKANS HAVE SUCCEEDED TO COVID-19

**MAHINDA ALUTHGEDERA**  
The Foreign Affairs Ministry states that 98 expatriate Sri Lankans have died due to COVID-19 related health complications. The ministry said most of the victims were Sri Lankans working in the Middle-East.

### SELF QUARANTINE FOR THOSE WHO LEFT WP

**DILSHAN THARAKA**  
Police Media Spokesperson, DIG Ajith Rohana said that anyone who had left the Western Province (WP) after the imposition of the travel restrictions will be ordered to remain in self quarantine.

### TMVP GENERAL SECRETARY REMANDED TILL NOVEMBER 23

**SIVAM PACKIYANATHAN**  
Tamil Makkal Velaithalali Pulitai (TMVP) General Secretary and former Eastern Provincial Councillor Poonadigalli Prasanthan was arrested by the CID in Batticaloa. He was produced before Batticaloa Magistrate A.C.Rizwan who remanded him till November 23, 2020.



Environment Minister Mahinda Amaraweera and officials with the first consignment of electronic and electrical waste exported to Japan.

### FIRST E-WASTE CONSIGNMENT EXPORTED TO JAPAN

Sri Lanka's first consignment of electrical and electronic waste was exported to Japan on Wednesday.

The Environment Ministry, the Central Environmental Authority and the Posts Department jointly implemented the collec-

tion of household and electronic waste (e-waste) collected by 600 post offices during the week.

The consignment of electrical and electronic waste was exported to Japan yesterday (11) from the

Katunayake Investment Promotion Zone.

The consignment of electrical and electronic waste exported yesterday included three tonnes of printed circuit board, eight tonnes of plastic

### COVID dead: 'Health, safety practices should come first'

**ASELA KURULUWANSA**

The cremation or burial of people who die from the COVID-19 virus should be determined not by religious beliefs but by health-recommended safety practices, Asgiriya Chapter Deputy Registrar, Ven. Naranpanne Ananda Thera said yesterday.

Speaking to journalists he said that if burying the body of a deceased person is a threat to the living, the body should be



cremated leaving aside religious recommendations and it should not be questioned on the basis of religion.

### Stay indoors for Deepavali: Ministry issues strict guidelines

**ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA**

The Health Ministry yesterday issued guidelines on how to celebrate the Deepavali festival tomorrow due to the current pandemic.

The Health Ministry has also taken measures to educate the Hindu Priestry and community leaders on these guidelines to ensure the safety and security of Hindu devotees.

The Ministry urged the public to stay indoors and follow strict



rules of safety and also to have safe Diwali celebrations keeping in mind the physical

### DESTRUCTION OF MANG MUTHURAJAWELA AND I

#### MINISTER TELLS ACTING IGP TO ACT ON P

Environment Minister Mahinda Amaraweera has instructed Ministry officials to inform the Acting IGP of the failure of some senior police officials to take action on complaints regarding environmental damage in Muthurajawela and Puttalam.

Minister Amaraweera had earlier instructed senior officials at the Bopitwa Police and the Puttalam Police Headquarters to take legal action regarding the environmental damage at Muthurajawela and the destruction of mangroves in the Puttalam District, the Ministry in a media communique said.

The Minister ins fills and after witness construction debris Muthurajawela, ins officer to arrest the

The Minister also instructed the Puttalam Police Headquarters Inspector to arrest those who had destroyed two acres of mangroves in the Vriatala area in Mundalama, Puttalam.

The police has failed to take action against those responsible for the environment damage



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### Army sets up new Drone Wing under Artillery Regiment

The Sri Lanka Army in another milestone raised its newest wing, named the 15th Drone Regiment of the Sri Lanka Artillery (SLA) at the Army headquarters yesterday.

Army Commander and Chief of Defence Staff Lt. Gen. Shavendra Silva said the new wing helps to face the fast changing technological advancements and new challenges faced by the Army.

Sri Lanka Artillery Colonel Commandant and Kilinochchi Security Forces Commander, Major General Sangathu Kotawegoda traced the brief legend behind the birth of the Artillery Regiment as well as how the new Drone Regiment came into being.

The Army Commander



technical importance of a regiment of this nature in the Army, considering emerging soft operation trends in war scenarios, natural and man-made disasters, floods and other catastrophes, special emergency circumstances, chemical warfare, outbreak of community-infected epidemics, like COVID-19 etc. for exam-

### BOGAMBARA INMATES END PROTEST



Around 100 remandees at the Bogambara Old Prison staged a protest claiming that their lives were in danger after more than 30 inmates temporarily transferred there were found to be afflicted with COVID-19. Around 800 persons who were arrested by the police on various charges are being held at the Old Bogambara Prison. Other inmates charged that a majority of them had not undergone PCR tests following the coronavirus positive detections. Kandy Division SSP Sudath Masinghe said PCR tests will be done on all inmates after explaining the situation. Later the remandees ended their protest

Picture by Asela Kuruluwansa