

## SIL REDI CASE APPEAL

# LALITH WEERATUNGA AND ANUSHA PALPITA ACQUITTED



Former Secretary to the President Lalith Weeraratunga and TRC Director General Anusha Palpita walking out of the Appeal Court yesterday. Picture by Ranjith Asanka.

**INNOCENCE VINDICATED BY ORAL AND DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

**BONA FIDE INTENTIONS PROVED**

**GOVT POLICY DECISION ON SIL REDI TAKEN LONG BEFORE POLLS**

**LAKMAL SOORIYAGODA**  
The Court of Appeal yesterday acquitted former Secretary to the President Lalith Weeraratunga and former Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC) Director General Anusha Palpita in the controversial *Sil Redi* distribution case.  
Accordingly, the Court of Appeal ordered to set aside the conviction and the sentences imposed against both accused-appellants by Colombo High Court Judge Gihan Kulatunga regarding all three charges in the indictment.  
A Court of Appeal two-judge-bench comprising Justice Kumuduni Wickremasinghe and Justice Devika

Abeyratne made this ruling taking into consideration the appeal petitions filed by Lalith Weeraratunga and Anusha Palpita.  
Pronouncing the judgement in open court, Presiding Judge Justice Kumuduni Wickremasinghe observed that she was delivering this judgment after careful consideration and scrutiny of all evidence led in this case. Justice Wickremasinghe announced that she cannot reach any other conclusion except that of innocence of the two accused-appellants which is fully vindicated on oral and

documentary evidence.  
Justice Kumuduni Wickremasinghe further observed that the prosecution has failed to establish the ingredients of the offences laid in the indictment.  
"On the whole, having carefully perused the evidence led in the case and the submissions made on behalf of both the Attorney General and the accused appellants, I take the view that the prosecution has failed to establish the ingredients of the offences laid in the indictment. **WIN02**

## We seek investments, not loans - President tells new Chinese envoy

**China reiterates pledge to do the maximum for Sri Lanka's development**

The newly appointed Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Sri Lanka Qi Zhenhong presented his credentials to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at the President's House yesterday (19).

During the brief cordial discussion with the Chinese Ambassador following the ceremony President Rajapaksa expressed his satisfaction over the long standing and lasting cooperation and friendship with mutual benefits between Sri Lanka and China.

"China extended its support towards Sri Lanka's infrastructure development, especially after winning the war against separatism, Colombo Port City, Hambantota Port, Southern Expressway are some of such initiatives. Some



segments of society criticised this cooperation between China and Sri Lanka. Their argument was that these projects would not bear fruits. But the truth is the opposite. **WIN02**



President Gotabaya Rajapaksa arrived in Parliament to witness the ongoing debate of the Second Reading of the 2021 Budget yesterday. This was the first occasion President Rajapaksa visited Parliament after the ceremonial inauguration of the first Session of the Ninth Parliament. The vote on the Second Reading is scheduled for November 21. The President with Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa inside the Chamber. (Picture by Sagara Lakmal De Mel).

## PM initiates 16,000 houses programme

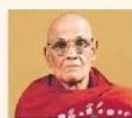
**Hundred houses in all 160 electorates**

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa on Wednesday initiated 'The Sipapaksa Housing Programme' to construct 16,000 houses in all electorates of the country.

The Prime Minister inaugurated the programme while laying the foundation stone of the Maradagahumala 'Sipapaksa Housing' project, the Prime Minister's media division said.

Under this housing programme, which is being implemented under the concept of providing a house for each family, a 100 housing unit apartment complex will be constructed at each electorate. **WIN02**

## State honours for Prelate's funeral



**ASELA KURULUWANSA**  
Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said the final rites of the Chief Incumbent of the Sri Lanka Ramana Maha Nikaya, Aagamala Pandita Napane Pemasiri Mahanayake Thera will be conducted with

state honours while adhering to quarantine instructions by health authorities.

The final rites of the Mahanayake Thera will be attended by the President, the Prime Minister, Ministers and MPs and dignitaries. **WIN02**

## HC summons Ravi, Arjun Aloysius on Feb.5

**DILSHAN THARAKA**  
The Colombo High Court issued summons on former Minister Ravi Karunanayake and PTL beneficiary owner Arjun Aloysius to appear in court on February 5, 2021.

This is over the case filed against them in connection with the acquisition of a luxury apartment in Kollupitiya.  
The case was taken up before Colombo High Court Judge Adithya Parabandi. On September 21, 2020, the Bribery Commission filed indictments consist-



ing six counts against former Minister Ravi Karunanayake and PTL beneficiary owner Arjun Aloysius in the C of High Court. **WIN02**

## Schools except WP to open on Monday



member sets due date in connection with the decision he sits.



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## Budget 2021, an impetus to mitigate poverty - Former President

**SANDASEN MARASINDE, GABELLA NATHANIEL and AMALI MALLAWARACHCHI**  
Budget 2021 has measures to mitigate poverty by encouraging national production, Polonnaruwa SLPP MP, former President Maithripala Sirisena told Parliament yesterday.  
Joining the Second

Reading debate of the appropriation bill made by the Prime Minister in Parliament on Tuesday, the former President said the government had constructive and practical means of enhancing national production and the manufacturing of various products in the country for local consumption before 1977. **WIN02**

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Attorney General Dappula De Livera will take further legal action against former GIP Puth Jayasundara and former Defence Secretary Hemasiri Fernando for failing to take measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on Sunday in 2019 despite receiving intelligence information.  
The Attorney General yesterday (19) made a written request to the Chairman of the Presidential Commission of Investigate

attacks to provide him statements and testimonies recorded by the Commission, Coordinating Officer to the Attorney General, State Counsel Nishara Jayaratne said. **WIN02**

## Police to screen 'Beggars' at traffic lights

**DILSHAN THARAKA**  
A special operation has been launched to arrest those engaging in begging as a business in the Colombo city and suburbs.

DIG Ajith Rohana said intelligence units have found out that many of these so called beggars are engaged in this as a business and those begging for a living are very few. **WIN02**



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