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Daily News

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Amendment to National Dangerous Drugs Control Act on the cards

A discussion on the need to amend the National Dangerous Drugs Control Act to suit the current situation in the country was held under the guidance of the Minister of Justice Presidents Counsel Ali Sabry at the Ministry of Justice yesterday.

Senior officials representing the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board, Police, Attorney General's Department, Government Analyst's Department and the Ministry of Health expressed their views on the need to amend the National Dangerous Drugs Control Act to suit the current situation. In particular, there has been a strong focus on the latest form of non-traditional drugs that are becoming more prevalent in society, and how to deal with the problems associated with them and the need to regulate certain drugs.

The need to rehabilitate addicts through the Department and the Ministry of Youth Affairs in order to reduce congestion in prisons due to an increase in the number drug addicts in prisons was also discussed.

The Minister was told of the difficulties in storing drugs which are widely found in society at present. Some of it are stored by in the Department of Government Analyst and the need to formulate a comprehensive programme through the coordination of all the relevant institutions.

Giving evidence before Easter attack PCoI

ARRESTS OF HEMASIRI, PUJITH NOT JUSTIFIED, ADMITS FORMER PRESIDENT

'Many other officials responsible for not preventing attack'

SHAVINI MADHARA

Former President Maithripala Sirisena yesterday admitted that the arrest of former Defence Secretary Hemasiri Fernando and IGP Pujith Jayasundara was not justified when there were many officials responsible for not preventing the Easter Sunday bombing.

The Former President made these remarks while responding to the cross examining led by the Attorney-at-law Dilshan Jayasuriya on behalf of the former Defense Secretary Hemasiri Fernando at the Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) probing Easter Sunday Bomb attacks.

He highlighted that all officers who received the intelligence information that an attack could take place and failed to provide it on time, have to take the responsibility of this.

"If so, isn't it unfair that only the former Defense Secretary Hemasiri Fernando and the IGP Pujith Jayasundara have been remanded for four months," Attorney-at-Law Dilshan Jayasuriya asked. In response, the former president Maithripala Sirisena said it was not fair. Attorney-at-Law Dilshan Ja D S ha th at ur

Pr le fo wh m ta at

Meanwhile, during a discussion

No damage to Sinharaja rainforest by Lankagama road renovation - Johnston

SANDASEN MARASINGHE, CAMELIA NATHANIEL AND AMALI MALLAWARACHCHI

The renovation of the road leading to Lankagama would not cause any damage to the Sinharaja rainforest since the road would not be extended even by a single inch, Chief Government Whip and Highways Minister Johnston Fernando said in Parliament yesterday.

He made these observations in response to a query made by Samagi Jana Balawegaya Parliamentarian Dr Harsha de Silva. TO PAGE 02

CEA should conduct environmental assessment of Lakvijaya plant - COPE Chairman

Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) Chairman Prof. Charitha Herath highlighted that the environmental assessment of the Norochcholai Lakvijaya Power Plant done by the Environmental Authority of the North Western Provincial Council alone is not sufficient and therefore recommended to have the Central Environmental Authority (CEA) involved on such an important environmental assessment which concerns issues related to air pollution having an impact on the country as a whole.

Parliamentarian and Chairman Prof. Charitha Herath made this recommendation when the Committee on TO PAGE 02

ICG nabs SL boat with 100 Kg of heroin

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has seized drugs including 100 kilogrammes of heroin from a Sri Lankan boat.

The seizure was made south of Thoothukudi during an operation which began on November 17. Sources say that actionable intelligence led to the seizure of the drugs.

The drugs were meant to be sent to Western countries from Sri Lanka. The drugs have been transferred onto the Sri Lankan vessel by a Pakistani dhow from Karachi. The Indian Coast Guard found 99 packets of heroin of 100 kilograms, 20 boxes of synthetic drugs, a Thuraya satellite phone and five 9 mm pistols.

The officials are interrogating six crew members, including the captain of the intercepted boat, the source cited above said. The boat is said to be owned by a fisherman from Negombo. ***(One India)***

Fishing activities in the Batticaloa district came to a complete standstill yesterday due to strong winds and rough seas, brought about by the cyclonic storm. Seen here are images of fishing boats that were abandoned due to the warnings by the Met. Department not to wade out to high seas. Batticaloa Group Correspondent T.L. Jawfarkan

Cyclone 'Nivar' hovers closer to Northern coast

The Met Department has issued a 'red' alert for the Severe Cyclonic Storm 'Nivar' as it was only 220 km to the east of Kankesanturai coast, adding that the system is likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm and may move closer to the Northern coast before making landfall in Tamil-Nadu coast.

"It is very likely to intensify into a very severe cyclonic storm and expected to move closer to the Northern coast of Sri Lanka and cross Tamil-Nadu coast, India during the next 24 hours," the Department warned.

Under the influence of the aforementioned system, the Department forecasts the possibility for intermittent showers or thundershowers and sudden roughness of seas, associated with a sudden increase of wind speed up to (80-100) kmph is high over Eastern and Northern, deep and shallow sea areas during next 24 hours. "Wind speed can increase up to (50-60) kmph at times over sea area extending from Puttalam to Matara via Colombo. TO PAGE 02

All schools in Kandy City limits close

ASELA KURULUWANSA

Forty five schools in the Kandy City limits have been ordered to remain closed until 4th December, the Governor of the Central Province Lalith U. Gamage said in a directive as a measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The decision comes after a number of COVID-19 cases in Kandy has been increasing at a steady rate in the past few days. Sixteen COVID-19 cases were confirmed in the Kandy district yesterday. A total 346 COVID-19 cases in total have been confirmed from the district thus far.

The Governor said that the decision was taken following the detection of several COVID-19 positive patients, including Mahaiyawa, Akurana and the Kandy Central Market. TO PAGE 02

Over 15,400 COVID-19 recoveries

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

The number of people who have recovered from COVID-19 in Sri Lanka crossed 15,000 yesterday.

According to the statistics of the Epidemiology Unit, the total number of coronavirus recoveries reported in the country increased to 15,447 with 485 recoveries reported yesterday.

The total number of COVID-19 positive cases detected from the country reached 20,967 with 5,426 of them still under medical care.

Meanwhile, the National Operations Centre for Prevention of COVID-19 Outbreak (NOCPCO) stated that the total number of COVID-19 positive cases reported from the Minuwangoda TO PAGE 02

Mullaitivu and Jaffna Magistrates extend ban on Mahaviru commemorations

MANKULAM GROUP CORR.

The Mullaitivu and Jaffna Magistrate's Courts yesterday upheld submissions by the Attorney General's Department and ordered the prohibition of Mahaviru Commemoration ceremonies. Accordingly, the Mullaitivu Magistrate's Court yesterday extended its ban on 46 persons preventing them from holding LTTE commemoration events in Mullaitivu district till 30th of November.

Three senior attorneys from the Attorney General's Department's who were present at the hearing including and Superintendent of Police Ruwan Gunasekara, as well as the Mullaitivu District Superintendent of Police and Station Officer-in-Charge, have filed a motion to move to the court yesterday arguing that the ban should be extended.

Divi Neguma case; Order regarding request to acquit Basil and three others fixed for Nov. 30

LAKMAL SOORIYAGODA

The Colombo High Court yesterday fixed for November 30 to deliver its order regarding an application filed on behalf of former Minister Basil Rajapaksa and three others requesting to acquit them from the Divi Neguma case, without calling defence evidence.

The former Minister and three others lawyers on the basis that the prosecution evidence has failed to establish the commission of the offence charges against the accused in the indictment.

The Attorney General had filed indictments against former Minister Basil Rajapaksa, former Secretary to the Ministry of Economic Development Dr. Nihal Jayasinghe, former Director General of Divi

National List slot: UNP District Organizers endorse Ranil

SHIROMI ABAYASINGHE

A motion to appoint leader of the UNP Ranil Wickremesinghe as the party's National List Member of Parliament was unanimously agreed upon by all at the party district meeting yesterday.

New Constitution must be acceptable to all – MP Kiriella

SANDASEN MARASINGHE, CAMELIA NATHANIEL and AMALI MALLAWARACHCHI

The Government has to formulate a Constitution that could be accepted by all communities with their participation, Kandy district Opposition Parliamentarian Lakshman Kiriella told Parliament yesterday.

He made this observation joining the Committee Stage Debate on the financial heads of Foreign Affairs Ministry, Regional Cooperation Ministry and the Mass Media Ministry under the budget Proposal