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Central Expressway third stretch to open before March 31



IRANGIKA RANGE
The third stretch of the Central Expressway from Meerigama to Pothuhera will be vested with the public before March 31, 2021, Highways Minister Johnston Fernando said.

design of the third stretch. Although then President Mahinda Rajapaksa laid the foundation stone for this section in 2014, the former Yahapalana Government did not continue the work, he said.
"We were planning to complete the entire Central Expressway project by 2019 and vest it with the public. If this target was achieved, there would have been a massive development in the country. But, we could not achieve anything due to the failure of the former Government."
"The Government has allocated the largest amount of funds for the Highways Ministry. We expect to complete the tasks in the coming years. **TO PAGE 05**

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INBOUND TRAVELLERS' PROCEDURES REVISED



The procedure for inbound travellers to Sri Lanka, in place since March 2020 has been revised, based on a joint decision made by the Foreign Ministry, the Department of Immigration and the Civil Aviation Authority and as agreed by the Presidential Task Force for Economic Revival and Poverty Alleviation.
The Government has thus initiated several procedures which will take effect from

December 26, Sri Lanka, For Operation Cent 19 Outbreak (arrange special Government quarantine with for migrant short term visit military official

CHANGES TO TAKE EFFECT ON DECEMBER 26



Except schools in Western Province and isolated areas

Govt schools for primary students to re-open on Jan. 11



The Education Ministry yesterday decided to re-open Government schools for primary students from Grade 1-5, except schools in the Western Province and isolated areas, on January 11.
The third term of Government schools that had already been opened will end on

December 23 and academic activities of these schools for 2021 will begin on January 11.
According to Education Minister Prof. G. L. Peiris, permission has already been granted for the reopening of pre-schools and day care centres in all provinces except Western Province on January 11. **TO PAGE 05**

PM opens new Sangamittarama Silmatha Training Institute

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa declared open the new Sangamittarama Silmatha Training Institute in Arippuwa, Anuradhapura yesterday.
This facility designed to accommodate around 30 Sil Mathas over a seven day training period was set up with the aim of developing the knowledge of the Sil Mathas on the *Tripitaka Dhamma*.
All lectures, supervision of the course and operations would be conducted by the Bhikkhu lecturers of the Anuradhapura Bhikkhu University. All other facilities for this programme would be provided by the Buddhist Affairs Department.
During this programme, Ven. Kadawala Nandarathana Thera and Kotmale Kumara Kassapa Thera handed over 30 Tabs containing electronic Tripitaka and Tripitaka handbooks to the Prime Minister to be used by the trainee Sil Mathas.



Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa declared open the new Sangamittarama Silmatha training institute in Arippuwa, Anuradhapura yesterday. Here, Ven. Kadawala Nandarathana Thera and Ven. Kotmale Kumara Kassapa Thera handing over a Tab containing electronic Tripitaka and Tripitaka handbooks to the Prime Minister for the use of trainee Sil Mathas. (Picture courtesy Prime Minister's Media Division)

Members of the Maha Sangha and State Ministers Duminda Disسانayake, Bikkunis' were present on this occasion. Minister S.M. Chandrasena, Shehan Semasinghe and Channa Jayasumana were also present.

Special traffic operation until January 6

CAMELIA NATHANIEL
The special traffic operation for the festive season which was initiated on at 6 a.m. on Sunday (20) morning will continue for a period of two weeks until January 6, 2021.
Police Media Spokesman DIG Ajith Rohana said: "We have arrested 113 drunk drivers and deployed 9,000 Police officers to detect persons who violate road rules. In addition to that we have seized 113 vehicles, including 73 motorcycles, 26 three wheelers and other vehicles in respect of drunk driving offences."
He said that these vehicles will not be released at the local Police in respect of drunk driving and negligent or reckless driving offences and the suspects would be produced before the Magistrate's Courts. **TO PAGE 05**

Irresponsible behaviour could lead to COVID-19 spread, warns GMOA

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA
The Government Medical Officers Association (GMOA) yesterday warned that the spread of COVID-19 could increase if people continue to act irresponsibly during the upcoming holidays.
"If the pandemic grows beyond control the country would not be able to implement its plans for year 2021,"



GMOA Editor Dr. Haritha Aluthge said.
"During the last weekend we noticed how people acted in an irresponsible manner by going on trips, visiting relatives and so on. This situation could worsen during the Christmas and New Year holiday season. Therefore, the Government should implement a proper plan to manage this situation," the GMOA Editor said. **TO PAGE 05**

Media should ensure rights of all citizens - Media Minister

CHAMINDA PERERA
Mass Media Minister Kehelya Rambukwella yesterday stressed that the country should strive for the kind of media freedom that ensures the rights of each and every citizen.
"We should go for a mechanism that can be acceptable to all," Minister Rambukwella said.
The Minister said he will have to intervene on behalf of the people, if the media is targeting any individuals personally. **TO PAGE 05**



Climate Change could force 63 mn from homes in South Asia by 2050

The growing impacts of climate change have already pushed more than 18 million people to migrate within South Asian countries, but that could more than triple in three decades if global warming continues on its current path, researchers warned yesterday.
Nearly 63 million people could be forced from their homes by 2050 in the region as rising seas and rivers swallow villages. **TO PAGE 05**

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