

KONE
Elevators Escalators
SCAN 0 777 777 428
Dedicated to People Flow

Daily News

100 PLUS YEARS
LAKE HOUSE
f t

SRI LANKA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER | SINCE 1918
FRIDAY JANUARY 1, 2021 | 36 PAGES | VOLUME - 103 - NO 1 | RS. 30.00 | REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER IN SRI LANKA | LATE CITY

We wish all our readers a happy and healthy 2021

Media reports on oil pipeline fake - Gammanpila

Energy Minister Maaya Gammanpila said he had never submitted a Cabinet paper for an oil pipeline project costing Rs.15 billion. He said he will institute legal action against several newspapers for fabricating a story on a purported Cross Country Oil Pipeline Project. He said he had never submitted a Cabinet paper and neither had the President sought the suspension of the said project at any time. He added that the article mentioned

that the President had involvement on the matter, and had asked for the project to be halted as it was a waste of Rs.15 billion and that a decision was taken during a Cabinet meeting to suspend the project altogether. "These are baseless allegations," he said. "In order to reject a Cabinet paper on the oil pipeline project, I have to submit a report on it which I never did. Neither have I submitted a Cabinet paper," he told

the media during a press briefing. "It was former Minister Edirisinha Fernando who presented a paper to Cabinet on the project on September 16 in 2019." He further said that the value of the project is estimated to be Rs. 9.5 billion and not Rs.15 billion as quoted in the story. "Based on the Cabinet paper submitted by the former minister, the project was estimated to cost Rs.9.5 billion and not Rs.15 billion,"



Ports Authority declared an Essential Service

The Ports Authority of Sri Lanka has been declared an Essential Service by way of extra-ordinary Gazette dated December 30, 2020.

An evolution in digital technology!
See page 7

273 RECONDITIONED SLTB BUSES TO PLY AGAIN



President Gotabaya Rajapaksa yesterday handed over 273 reconditioned SLTB buses that were not in a running condition to the Sri Lanka Transport Board (SLTB) at the Gale Face Green yesterday. The programme to refurbish these buses was launched by State Transport Minister Dilan Amunugama, under the guidance of Transport Minister Gamini Lokuge. It was mentioned that due to restrictions imposed on vehicle imports there was a shortage of buses for passenger transport. In order to overcome this situation, more buses will be reconditioned and re-used, which will also save the country on foreign exchange on importing buses. The buses lying idle from 107 depots islandwide were repaired spending Rs. 115 million. The project is being implemented by the Sri Lanka Transport Board Demul and Lalduva Engineering Company with the support of the Sri Lanka Public Transport Employees Union. Pictures by President's Media Division.

RS.1200 MN IN EPF DUES STILL BE COLLECTED

RELIEF FOR INSTITUTIONS AFFECTED BY COVID-19 - MINISTER

Labour Minister Anura Kumara Dissanayake said around Rs.1,200 million should be collected from public and private institutions as contributions to the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) up to now. As at January 1, 2020, 11,549 cases had been filed against public and private institutions for non-payment of EPF contributions and the total number of cases filed so far, including inactive cases, is 19,000, the Minister said.

The Minister said that the government is now focusing on the continued default of contributions and strict laws will be enforced against employers who default on their contributions this year. The Minister said action will be taken to amend the Employees Provident Fund Act No. 15 of 1968 to recover this amount expeditiously. However, the Labour Ministry is also considering providing a relief period to institutions affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to pay the arrears.



Rains to continue

The Meteorology Department said inclement weather may continue into the New Year. Showers and thundershowers over 50mm is expected in several places in the Western, Sabaragamuwa provinces as well as in the Galle and Matara districts. Showers will occur at several places in the Eastern, North-central and Uva provinces and in the Hambantota district. A few showers may also occur in the Northern provinces; the weather advisory read.

New Kelani Bridge ready by July - Minister



The new Kelani Bridge in Poliyagoda could be opened in July this year, Highways Minister Johnston Fernando said yesterday. The cost of the new Kelani Bridge in Poliyagoda, the first bridge to run on high-tech cables, is estimated to cost Rs. 4148.9 million. Despite the COVID-19 situation, the project is nearing completion and will be vested in the public in July. The Minister made these comments after inspecting the new Kelani bridge yesterday. It was mentioned that although the Colombo-Katunayake expressway is functioning, the capacity of the bridge is insufficient to handle another 10,000 vehicles daily.

Sri Lanka Insurance MOTORPLUS RIDER

An exclusive motor insurance designed for motorcycles

- Claims below Rs. 25,000 will be settled in 3 working hours
- Up to Rs 100,000 worth free personal accident cover for the insured
- Vast variety of payment options
- Accurate assessment and prompt settlement of insurance claims
- Best in islandwide, 24/7 service
- Pay insurance premium and renew your motor insurance via www.srilankainsurance.com and Sri Lanka Insurance mobile app
- Amazing benefits from Motor Plus Loyalty Rewards

Call us now 0112 357 357

SLIC
Sri Lanka Insurance
Like a tiger - Use a motor

Random antigen tests find COVID positive cases

A total of 940 rapid antigen tests were carried out at 11 points in the Western Province yesterday alone, out of which 16 individuals were found to be COVID-19 positive. This resulted in nearly 1% of their close associates being sent to quarantine centers.

Sajith SJB's next prez candidate - Ranjith

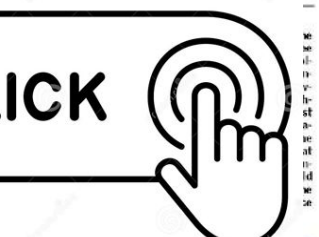
The General Secretary of Sarajit Jan Bahuwagga Ranjith Madduma Bandara said that the presidential candidate of the next Presidential election from their party will be none other than their party leader Sajith Premadasa.

One of five (treatmer)

Security Forces Division to search for who escaped with helicopter from the inmates escaped yesterday; they are narcotic; been revealed. Police Media spot that one of the in Madampe, while he was in hiding. He said Madampe police are investigating to ascertain how he had managed to come to the area and who he may have been in contact with.

COVID deaths reach 204

The total number of COVID-19 related fatalities in Sri Lanka rose to 204 with five more deaths confirmed by the Health Services Director-General yesterday (31). As per Health Ministry's Epidemiology Unit statistics, the total number of COVID positive cases detected from the country reached 42,062 and 7,880 of them are still under medical care. The total number of COVID-19 recoveries reported in the country increased to 34,023.



Army Commander General Shavendra Silva takes the salute at a ceremonial Guard of Honour held at the Army headquarters on his promotion to the rank of General yesterday. Pictures by Ranjith Gunasekera.

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2021

May this New Year bring Abundance of Good Health & Prosperity to All

Power Security Solutions | CCTV & Electronic Security Solutions | Home Wiring & Appliance Services | Cash & Valuables Collection & Transportation | Domestic & International Courier Services

24 HOUR HOTLINE 2 55 77 77

Certis Lanka Group, Certis Lanka Centre - 15, De Fonseka Place, Colombo 4, Sri Lanka | www.certislanka.com