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## LEGAL DILEMMA OVER PC POLLS

**PC Act has to be passed before poll is held**

**Yahapalana Govt abolished PC elections system**

**DILSHAN THARAKA**  
Provincial Council elections cannot be held until the Provincial Council Elections Act is passed by a two-thirds majority in Parliament, Education Minister G.L. Peiris said.

He made this statement while speaking a press conference held at the Water's Edge in Colombo yesterday.

"The Yahapalana Government abolished the Provincial Council elections system. The reason was that they knew that if a PC election was held they would be utterly defeated. As a solution to this they decided not to hold PC elections. Therefore, the existing law was abolished but the abolished law was not replaced by another law," he added. **▶ PAGE 02**



## CAPITAL HEIGHTS

RS. 35 MILLION UPWARDS  
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## Online mechanism for migrant workers' complaints

**RASIKA SOMARATHNA**

The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) has introduced an online mechanism to receive migrant worker related complaints or grievances to help the country's migrant workers to deal with COVID-19 related issues.

According to the SLBFE, complaints related to migrant workers can be forwarded either by the migrant worker or a family member by accessing the 'online complaints menu' of the website of the Bureau of Foreign Employment www.slbfe.lk.

This service can be obtained by entering the passport number, name, **▶ PAGE 02**

## Tourism Industry stakeholders praise Govt's decision to revive industry

**IRANGIKA RANGE**

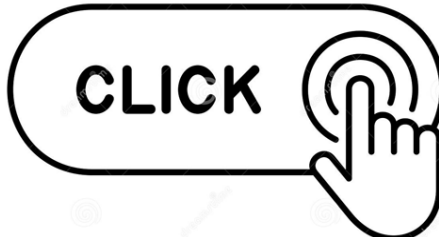
Sri Lanka Tourism Industry stakeholders yesterday praised the Government's decision to revive the tourism industry whilst conforming to health and safety guidelines issued by the health authorities.

Sri Lanka Association of Inbound Tour Operators President Thilak Weerasinghe said the Government should be commended for taking measures to protect the locals whilst opening the country to foreign tourists.

He also pledged the support of all stakeholders in the industry to the Government for its endeavours to minimise the risk to the local community and stakeholders and to revive the tourism industry as it is the worst affected industry due to the pandemic. **▶ PAGE 02**



'Galle Face Urban Forest Park,'



## Indian FM here today

At the invitation of the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka Dinesh Gunawardena, Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar will pay an official visit to Sri Lanka from today (January 5) until January 7. He will hold discussions with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and his counterpart Dinesh Gunawardena on a wide range of issues. This will be the first foreign visit by **▶ PAGE 02**



## Immunity, better way to defeat COVID-19 - Dr. Padeniya

**MAHINDA P. LIYANAGE**, Galle Central Special Corr.

Maintaining a strong immune system is the better way for protection from COVID-19 or any other communicable disease rather than relying on a vaccine, Government Medical Officers Association (GMOA) President Dr. Anurudha Padeniya asserted.

He made the above assertion delivering a lecture on the topic of "A Country free of poison and waking up tomorrow" organized jointly by the Galle District **▶ PAGE 02**



## Schools for Grade 11 students to reopen on January 25

**DILSHAN THARAKA**

Education Minister G.L. Peiris said that all schools will reopen for Grade students on January 25, as the 2020 Ordinary Level Examination (O/L) due to be conducted in March.

He said only schools located in isolated areas in the Western Province and areas would not be reopened until their notice.

He was speaking at a Sri Lanka Podu-peramma (SLPP) press conference

held at the Water's Edge in Colombo yesterday.

The dates of the GCE O/L examination have already been announced from (March 1 to March 11) and the results are to be released by end of June, he added.

He said all schools apart from schools in isolated areas in the Western Province and other areas would be reopened on January 11 for the first term for primary section and pre-schools will also reopen in the same manner. **▶ PAGE 02**

## Ven. Athuraliye Rathana Thera to be sworn in today

Ven. Athuraliye Rathana Thera will be sworn in as a Member of Parliament of the 9th Parliament today (05), Secretary General of Parliament Dhammika Dasanayake said.

The name of Ven. Athuraliye Rathana Thera for the National List Parliamentary seat won by "Ape Janabala Party" in the last General Election was announced by the National Election Commission in a Gazette Notification.



## COPE summons five institutions in January

The Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) is scheduled to summon five Government institutions in January, its Chairman Prof. Charitha Herath said.

Accordingly, officials of the Independent Television Network (ITN), Mahapola Higher Education Scholarship Fund, the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation and the Coconut Development Authority are to be summoned before the COPE.

Officials of the Independent Television Network (ITN) are to be summoned before the COPE on January 6, 2021. The Special Audit Report on Management of investment of the Mahapola Higher Education Scholarship fund will be discussed on January 8.

The Special Audit Report on the Storage and Distribution of Petroleum in Sri Lanka is to be discussed on January 19, while the **▶ PAGE 02**

## Ukrainian tourists' visit

**SHIROMI ABEYSINGHE**

The United National Party (UNP) has raised concerns over the ongoing tour by Ukrainian tourists around the country. Speaking to media yesterday former M.P. Sandith Samarasinghe accused the Government of placing the public at risk of a further spread of the COVID-19 virus by having brought tourists into the

country without following any proper procedure.

According to global health statistics, Ukraine is currently listed as the 17th worst affected country by the virus. However, the Government has chosen to ignore these concerns and proceeded with a tour organised by an individual connected to the Government. **▶ PAGE 02**



## Navy arrests four with drugs worth over Rs. 600 mn.

A special operation carried out by the Navy in the seas off Negombo yes-



## Parliament convenes today

Secretary General of Parliament Dhammika Dasanayake yesterday stated that the first sitting of the 9th Parliament for the year 2021 will convene today (05) in its full capacity.

The Secretary General stated that all departments of the Parliament are fully functioning and that Media has been facilitated to enter the Parliament premises for the purpose of covering Parliamentary proceedings, subjected to the guidelines set out in accordance with the COVID-19 health regulations.

He said that a number of PCR tests were carried out randomly

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