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CABINET NOD FOR COVAX COVID VACCINES

LANKA'S ELIGIBILITY CONFIRMED

PRIORITY FOR HEALTH WORKERS, TRI-FORCES AND POLICE

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

The Cabinet of Ministers yesterday approved Health Minister Pavithra Wanniarachchi's proposal to enter into an agreement to receive COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX facility, which Sri Lanka has already joined.

COVAX is a co-initiative of the World Health Organisation (WHO), Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI). It brings together governments and manufacturers to ensure equal distribution of vaccines among emerging countries. The WHO has confirmed that Sri Lanka is eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccines through this facility.

The production and development of vaccines for COVID-19 are being accelerated worldwide and COVAX will ensure that the vaccines eventually reach every country in an equitable and timely manner.



Eligible countries have been procurement applications under the vaccine(s) including info priority target groups, cold chain and other technical information

these applications on time well before the December 7, 2020 deadline. The second part of the process regarding the procurement of vaccines and the compensatory agreement has to be submitted before January 9. The proposal tabled by the Health Minister says



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Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar arrived at the Bandaranaike International Airport in Katunayake yesterday afternoon on a three-day visit, marking the first arrival of a high-level foreign dignitary in Sri Lanka in the New Year. He was welcomed by Regional Co-operation State Minister Tharaka Balasuriya, Foreign Ministry Secretary Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage and Indian High Commissioner Gopal Baglay. The visit is arranged through the air-bubble concept. He will have bilateral meetings with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena. (Picture by Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka)

Ban limestone quarrying near Victoria - Experts

No threat to reservoir dams from tremors

The Experts Committee that studied the minor tremors in Kandy has recommended a ban on limestone quarrying within 100 meters of the Victoria Reservoir Dam.

The report of the expert committee appointed to conduct a scientific study on the minor earthquakes reported from the areas around the

Victoria Reservoir in the Kandy District was handed over to Environment Minister Mahinda Amaraweera yesterday.

The committee chaired by Geological Survey and Mines Bureau Chairman Anura Walpola consisted of professors with expert knowledge of geology. **TO PAGE 02**



Geological Survey and Mines Bureau Chairman Anura Walpola handing over the report on earth tremors to Minister Mahinda Amaraweera.

PMB to buy paddy at guaranteed prices

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

The Cabinet of Ministers approved Agriculture Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage's proposal to implement the Paddy Purchasing Programme of the Maha Cultivation Season yesterday. **TO PAGE 02**



Ven. Athuraliyage Rathana Thera of the 'Ape Janabala Pakshaya' (Our Power of People Party) took oath as a Member of Parliament (MP) before Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardane yesterday. (Picture by Parliament Media)

Mawanela statue vandalised by drug addict - Police

DINULI FRANCISCO

Investigations have revealed that there is no extremism or terrorism linked to the Mawanela Buddhist Statue vandalism which occurred on December 28. **TO PAGE 02**



Strict health guidelines to resume commercial flights

All international airports will be opened for foreign tourists and returning Sri Lankans from January 21 under strict health guidelines, Tourism Minister Prasanna Ranatunga said.

The Minister said that he expects that the resumption of commercial and charter flight operations will be back to normal gradually by January 23. Addressing the media in

Colombo yesterday, the Minister said this decision was taken as part of the Government's programme of reviving the tourism industry in the country which was badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

He added that nearly 3 million people are dependent on the tourism industry and they were adversely affected due to the pandemic. **TO PAGE 02**



Govt has facilitated 61,000 employed overseas to return - Minister

SANDASEN MARASINGHE, CAMELIA NATHANIEL and AMALI MALLAWARACHCHI

The government while combating the COVID-19 pandemic, took measures to repatriate 61,000 Sri Lankans employed overseas into the country, Leader of the House and Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena told Parliament yesterday. **TO PAGE 02**

Laws to destroy narcotics in full public view soon

SANDASEN MARASINGHE, CAMELIA NATHANIEL and AMALI MALLAWARACHCHI

Laws are being formulated to destroy narcotics that are seized by law enforcement bodies in view of the public, Public Security Minister Rear Admiral (Rtd) Dr. Sarath Weerasekera said.

Responding to a question raised by Opposition MP Chaminda Wijesiri, he said that discussions in this regard were held with the Attorney General. **TO PAGE 02**

Four arrested over abduction, murder of monk

Killed over personal dispute with novice

SHAVINI MADHARA

Four individuals including a female have been arrested over the abduction and murder of a monk at the Kodikanda Aranya

Senasanaya in Thummodara, Hanwella. Police Media Spokesperson DIG Ajith Rohana said the charred body of the monk was recovered on Monday at the Nawana Cemetery in Kotadeniyawa. Four suspects including the parent of a novice monk at the monastery have been arrested over the incident. **TO PAGE 02**

Three Swarnamahal Jewellers directors arrested for misappropriation

DILSHAN THARAKA

The Criminal Investigations Department arrested three directors of Swarnamahal Jewellers yesterday on the instructions of the Attorney General. They are Jeevaka, Asanka and Anjali Edirisinghe. Attorney General Dappula

de Livera yesterday directed the Inspector General of Police (IGP) to arrest the Directors of Edirisinghe Trust Investments. **TO PAGE 02**

SEE PAGE 21 for a special report by Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman) Justice K.T. Chitrasiri on obtaining relief for injustices caused by executive and administrative decisions.

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