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Bellanwila Viharaya Chief Incumbent questions DOUBLE STANDARDS of certain animal lovers



IRANGIKA RANGE
Bellanwila Raja Maha Viharaya Chief Incumbent Ven. Bellanwila Dharmarathana Thera yesterday questioned as to why certain people who claim to profess love and sympathy for animals do not talk about the elephants that are severely injured by Hakka Patas, but rather make a hue and cry over elephants being taken care of at temples.

He said this in response to a video clip being circulated on social media on the Myan Kumara tesker who was donated to the Temple by the Myanmar Government in 2013.

He said that a certain organisation has made false allegations that Myan Kumara was brutally beaten or harassed through the video circulating on social media. It is obvious that a certain group is engaged in a conspiracy to remove tamed elephants at temples by publicizing fabricated falsehoods with the aim of destroying the Buddhist culture.

NEC proposes Amendments to Election Law

NEW PROVISIONS FOR ADVANCE VOTING

Health workers, garment workers, journalists included

National, PC and LG polls to be covered



DISNA MUDALIGE
The National Election Commission (NEC) has proposed to amend the Election Law to provide for advance voting for several categories of voters.

NEC Chairman Nimal Punitheewa told the Daily News yesterday that the Commission proposes an Amendment to the Parliament Elections Act, No 1 of 1981 to enable advance voting. "Once this Act

is amended, the said provisions can also be applied to the Provincial Council (PC) and Local Government (LG) Elections," he remarked.
He said the proposal would

Twelve FR petitions filed over EASTER SUNDAY ATTACKS fixed for argument

LAKMAL SOORIYAGODDA
Twelve Fundamental Rights petitions filed over Easter Sunday attacks were yesterday fixed for argument by the Supreme Court.
The Supreme Court seven-judge-Bench headed by Chief Justice Jayantha Jayasuriya fixed the petitions for argument on March 8, 9 and 10.
Meanwhile, the Supreme Court yesterday allowed former Chief of Defence Staff Admiral Ravindra Wijegunaratne and former Navy Commander Piyal de Silva, to file objections against the petitions. They had been named as respondents in these petitions.
Counsel appearing for Wijegunaratne and Silva sought Court's permission to file objections since the Attorney General has informed that he would no longer appear for the two respondents.
Accordingly, the court directed the two respondents to file their objections before February 8. The petitioners were directed to file their counter objections before February 15.
The Supreme Court seven-judge-Bench

APEX Health Safety powered by SimpliFying Awards

SriLankan Airlines AWARDED PLATINUM Standard status

SriLankan Airlines has been awarded the Platinum Standard status by APEX Health Safety powered by SimpliFying following a full independent audit for efforts in ensuring the highest standards for passenger safety and wellbeing during air travel, post-COVID, the company in a release said yesterday.
This status recognizes airlines that go above and beyond minimum standards required to rebuild traveller confidence and confirm commitment to the safety of both passengers and staff.
The Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) and SimpliFying have teamed up to create this health safety standard for airlines, which aims to help the industry by giving airlines a proactive role in the resumption of global travel and in creating a common standard for Health Safety.
Chairman SriLankan Airlines Ashok Pathirage stated that "The latest recognition awarded to SriLankan Airlines based on an international independent safety audit, is a definitive indication that, with the adoption of the right health and safety measures such as detailed on-board safety, hygiene, and social distancing procedures at airports, compliance with the testing and entry requirements of local authorities, SriLankan Airlines stands tall in the aviation industry in its operations under trying conditions of a global pandemic and is a source of pride to Sri Lanka." Pathirage further stated that "The Platinum Standard status



President Gotabaya Rajapaksa yesterday launched the first stage of the Park and Ride-City Bus Service at the Makumbura Multimodal Transport Centre in Kottawa. Picture shows the President on board one of the buses with Transport Minister Gamini Lokuge and State Minister of Vehicle Regulation, Bus Transport Services, Train Compartments and Motor Car Industry Dilum Amunugama. Pictures courtesy Presidential Media Division

Park and Ride-City Bus Service first stage launched

IRANGIKA RANGE
The first stage of the Park and Ride-City Bus service was launched by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at the Makumbura Multimodal Transport Centre in Kottawa yesterday.

One of the main aims of it to reduce the traffic congested on roads during the evening peak hours by offering able and safe bus services to and motorcycle riders who

Colombo in the Sri Lanka could reach routes.



Mechanism to unite all ANTI-GOVT forces - Ruwan

SHIROMI ABEYSINGHE
UNP Deputy Leader Ruwan Wijewardene yesterday said that a mechanism will be put in place to bring all forces together, against the present Government, which is heading for anarchy within a short span of time after being elected by the people with an overwhelming majority.
He said that the people no longer have faith in the Government and the UNP is mobilising the public against the Government at grass-roots level.
Addressing a group of UNP supporters at the UNP headquarters, Sirikotha yesterday, Wijewardene said that the members of the Maha Sangha and Civil Society representatives who strove to make the present Government victorious at the last election have started criticizing the Government.

Corruption CASE against Minister on cannot be maintained - HC

Anc
The Colombo High Court yesterday held that the alleged corruption case filed against Minister Johnston Fernando cannot be maintained since it had been filed contrary to the provisions of the Bribery Commission Act.
High Court Judge Manjula Thilakarathne made this order pertaining to a Revision Application filed by Minister Johnston Fernando. Accordingly, the Colombo High Court ordered the release of the accused from the corruption case and allowed the revision application.
The case was filed by the Bribery Commission during the period of the former Director General of Bribery Commission Diwakshi Dias Wickramasinghe against Minister Johnston Fernando, for allegedly causing a Rs.40 million unlawful loss to the Government by employing 153 employees of the Cooperative Wholesale Establishment (CWE) for election work during the period 2010 to 2014, while he was serving as the Cooperative and Internal Trade Minister in the then President Mahinda Rajapaksa regime.
On a previous occasion, a revision application filed by Minister Johnston Fernando challenging a Chief Magistrate's Court order that the Magistrate's Court had decided to continue the case even though his lawyers have filed a preliminary objection stating that the manner in which the case has been filed is illegal.
In this case, the Counsel for Minister Johnston Fernando raised a preliminary objection to the effect that in any event the prosecution cannot maintain the case as they had failed to comply with the mandatory provisions of Law required under the law. It was contended that the Former DG had filed

Suspect arrested with 18 kgs of ICE

CAMELIA NATHANIEL
The Colombo Crimes Division had conducted a special anti-narcotics operation at Hegalle in the Kogoda Police area around 5.30 yesterday morning and arrested a suspect along with 18 parcels of ICE. According to the detecting officers, the parcels contain approximately 18kgs of ICE with a street value of around

Ex-Agrarian Officer gets 10 years RI FOR BRIBERY

DILSHAN THARAKA
A former Agrarian Development Divisional Officer of the Ranorawa Agrarian Services Development Centre, who was found guilty of soliciting and accepting a bribe of Rs.30,000 was yesterday sentenced to 10 years Rigorous Imprisonment by the Colombo High Court.
Furthermore, he was also ordered to pay a fine of Rs.10,000 and ordered to pay Rs.30,000 that he had accepted as a bribe, as a penalty by the Colombo High Court. Delivering the verdict following a lengthy trial, Colombo High Court Judge Adithya Patabandige observed that the prosecution had proved the case beyond the reasonable doubt and sentenced him to 10 years

Special operation to bring corrupt Police officers to book

CAMELIA NATHANIEL
A special operation has been launched within the Police Department to crackdown on corrupt and undisciplined Police officers, Police Spokesman, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Ajith Rohana said.
Accordingly, the Elpitaya SSP had arrested a Police Constable on charges of extortion and the police Constable had been produced before the Elpitaya Magistrate. He had been moved for an identification parade by the Court on Thursday and remanded until yesterday (January 15).
DIG Rohana said the Police Constable was arrested on charges of soliciting a bribe of Rs.5,000 from a motorcycleist.
The Police Constable is reported to have solicited the bribe to refrain from initiating legal action against the motorcycleist who had travelled without a driver's license and revenue license.
The arrested Police officer was

Four ETI Directors GRANTED BAIL

SHAVINI MADHARA
The four former Directors of Edirisinghe Trust Investments (ETI) Finance Limited, who were arrested by the Criminal Investigations Department, were released on bail by Colombo Chief Magistrate Mohammed Mihail yesterday.
They were released on a cash bail of Rs.1,000,000 and two sureties of Rs.5,000,000 for each. The Magistrate also imposed a travel ban on them and also ordered them to report to the Criminal

Two employees of England team hotel test positive for COVID-19

MAHINDA P. LIVANAGE, Galle Central Special Court.
Two employees from the hotel in Galle where the England cricket team is staying have contracted COVID-19, health sources revealed.
The two victims, both kitchen employees, are residents of Waligama and Pathanaya