

## COVID RESPONSE: SRI LANKA RANKS 10TH IN LOWY INSTITUTE GLOBAL SURVEY

Sri Lanka has ranked tenth in an anti-COVID Performance Index of almost 100 countries compiled by the prestigious Australian think tank Lowy Institute. It is one of the most rigorous studies of the dramatically different health impacts of the pandemic around the world.

While New Zealand took the top spot, it was closely followed by Vietnam and Thailand, which were ranked second and fourth, respectively. The next spots went to Cyprus, Rwanda, Australia and Latvia, while Sri Lanka took the 10th spot. All these countries

allowed their hundredth COVID-19 case, using data available as of January 25, 2021. The United States, with the highest number of confirmed cases, ranked 94th, with more than 11 million cases.

Brazil were placed last at 97 and 98. Sweden ranked 37th, Japan 45th and Germany 55th. The index showed countries in Asia-Pacific proved the most successful in containing the pandemic, while Europe and the United States were "quickly overwhelmed" by the rapid spread of COVID-19. **TOP PAGE 02**



# INDIA'S JABS ARRIVE

PRIORITY FOR HEALTH WORKERS, SECURITY FORCES AND POLICE

CHINA'S SINOPHARM, RUSSIA'S SPUTNIK V DOSES TO ARRIVE SOON

COVID-19 VACCINATION DRIVE BEGINS TODAY

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

With the arrival in Sri Lanka of 500,000 doses of the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine from India last morning, the islandwide vaccination drive will start today itself, the Presidential Secretariat announced.

Around 250,000 individuals from the health and Security Forces and Police sectors will be the first in line to get the vaccine, as two full doses are needed to complete the vaccination course. **TOP PAGE 02**



President Gotabaya Rajapaksa accepted the free 500,000 doses of the Oxford AstraZeneca Covishield vaccine that arrived in the country yesterday from Indian High Commissioner Gopal Baglay and handed them over to State Ministers Dr. Sudharshani Fernando and Dr. Channa Jayasumana to begin vaccination from today onwards. Minister Prasanna Ranatunga and President's Principal Advisor Lalith Weeraratna look on. Pictures by President's Media.



## Botanical Gardens to be further developed for tourism

SHAVINI MADHARA

Tourism Minister Prasanna Ranatunga noted that several programmes have been planned to promote the Peradeniya Botanical Garden as a tourist attraction for locals and foreigners.

Speaking to the media after touring at the Peradeniya Botanical Garden, Minister Prasanna Ranatunga stated that there are plans to build a car park in front of the Botanical Gardens in collaboration with the Kandy Municipal Council.

The Minister also emphasised the need to develop gardens not only in



Peradeniya but elsewhere in a manner that does not harm the environment. **TOP PAGE 02**

## MPs invited for PCR Tests in Parliament

Parliament Members have been invited to undergo PCR tests conducted in Parliament.

Sergeant-at-Arms Narendra Fernando said random PCR tests are conducted once a week for the Parliament staff at the Parliament complex and MPs are also invited to attend these PCR tests.

These tests are conducted once a week during sitting days as well as non-sitting days with the support of the Health Department.

MP Dr. Upul Galappaththi who has been identified as an associate of MP Wasantha Yapa Bandara has tested negative for COVID-19 following tests. He has volunteered to attend the Antigen and PCR tests and reports have already been submitted to the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Over 190 persons underwent PCR tests on January 25 and all of them have tested negative for COVID-19.



## Three year plan to reduce monies spent on seed imports

Rs. 2,000 mn spent annually

ASELA KURULUWANSA, Central Province Group  
MIHAL JAYAWARDENA and SHAVINI MADHARA

Agriculture Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage said Rs.2,000 million is spent annually to import agri seeds to the country and it is planned to reduce it gradually in the next three years and produce around 80% of the country's required seeds locally. **TOP PAGE 02**



## Measures to reduce traffic in major cities - Minister

The construction of roundabouts and the installation of light signal systems will be completed within six months to reduce traffic congestion in major cities.

Highways Minister Johnston Fernando yesterday said that Dr. Dimantha de Silva of the Moratuwa University is preparing a study report with a leading team of experts to reduce traffic congestion. **TOP PAGE 02**



## Officials gobble Rs. 280 mn in Anuradhapura City project

SARATH MANULA WICKREMA, Anuradhapura group corr.

North Central Province Governor Maheepala Herath yesterday said Rs.280 million has been spent on officials and consultants attached to an Integrated Urban Development Project in Anuradhapura City funded by the French Agency for Development. **TOP PAGE 02**

## Navin hopeful UNP can deliver

SHIROMI ABEYSINGHE and COLOMBO CENTRAL CORRESPONDENT

Former Minister Navin Dissanayake yesterday said the UNP's next Presidential hopeful should be a common candidate. Address-

ing a press conference held in Colombo yesterday, Dissanayake said he will definitely join with a common Opposition in forming a new future government.

"I am still a member of the UNP and I will not leave the party under any circumstances," he said. **TOP PAGE 02**

## Record 1,869 COVID recoveries yesterday

The number of COVID-19 patients who recovered yesterday was 1,869 raising the total number of recoveries in Sri Lanka to 54,435.

Meanwhile the Information Department yesterday said that the total number of positive cases reported by yesterday **TOP PAGE 02**

## Major facelift with new multi-storey for Colpetty market

DILSHAN THARAKA

On the instructions of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, the Urban Development Authority and the Colombo Municipal Council will develop the Colpetty Market as a first in the project to develop old markets in Colombo. At the request of

the shop owners of the Colpetty Market, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed recently between the Urban Development Authority (UDA) and the Colombo Municipal Council for the development of the **TOP PAGE 02**



The Colpetty market.

## Another narco peddler arrested

CAMELIA NATHANIEL

A man who was transporting a haul of tetrahydrocannabinol, commonly known as 'Hash Oil', was taken into

custody by the Organized Crimes Prevention Division (OCPD) in Pannipitiya around 4.45 on Wednesday afternoon. **TOP PAGE 02**

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