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INOCULATION OF PUBLIC BEGINS

■ 12-WEEK GAP PROPOSED BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND DOSES

■ COVAX VACCINES ON THE WAY

■ JABS FOR ALL ABOVE 30

LAHIRU FERNANDO AND TARAKA DILSHAN

The second dose of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, which is currently being used in Sri Lanka could be postponed for 10 to 12 weeks from the first dose as the transmission capacity of the pandemic has now been reduced, State Minister of Primary Health Care, Epidemics and COVID-19 Disease Control Dr. Sudarshani Fernandopulle told the *Daily News* yesterday. Earlier, the gap between the two doses was deemed to be four weeks.

According to her, the National Advisory Committee on immunization which has the authority to

decide on the vaccination periods would make the final decision in that regard tomorrow (17). Several other countries have already adopted this approach successfully.

If this decision is approved, there is a possibility of vaccinating a total of 500,000 individuals with the entire bulk of Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine received from India last month, she said.

As per a press release issued by the Department of Government Information, a total of 189,349 individuals, mostly health staff and Armed Forces/Police members had been vaccinated by the end of Sunday (14). According-

ly, another 300,000 individuals could be vaccinated in the coming days.

Meanwhile, the Government commenced vaccinating the public with the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine yesterday, starting with essential workers. As the first batch, the refuse collectors of the Colombo Municipal Council (CMC) were vaccinated yesterday.

Fernandopulle also said the public in high-risk areas, especially in the relevant Grama Seva areas in Colombo and Gampaha districts will be given priority. **TO PAGE 02**

COVID-19 vaccine for Prison Officers

BUDDHIKA IMBULANA

The COVID-19 Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine will be given to Prison Officers from today (16) onwards, Prison Media Spokesman Commissioner Chandana Ekanayake said.

Under the first stage, the vaccine will be given to nearly 5,100 officers of all the prisons in the Western Province. Officers of the Prisons in other areas will be vaccinated thereafter. **TO PAGE 02**

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Unity the way forward for Govt. - Prof G.L. Peiris

AMALI MALLAWARACHCHI

The Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) will amicably resolve any conflicts of opinion in the party through internal discussions and will not let such disagreements in any way affect the Government, SLPP Chairman and Education Minister Professor G.L. Peiris said yesterday.

Professor Peiris made this observation during a SLPP press briefing

at Water's Edge in Battaramulla.

Professor Peiris pointed out that the Opposition will not be allowed to take any advantage from such situations and reminded that it is important to rally together to protect the Government which was formed after numerous hardships. **TO PAGE 02**



President launches Kekulu Tharu Udanaya programme for Grade One students

Around 350,000 trees to be planted annually

LAHIRU FERNANDO

The *Kekulu Tharu Udanaya* Children's Tree Planting National Programme was inaugurated by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, at the Atabage Wimaladharmas National School premises in Gampola yesterday.

The number of children entering Grade One in schools every year is close to 350,000. The objective of this programme is to groom them to be eco-friendly citizens and to ensure a secure ecosystem for future generations in line with the Sustainable Environmental Policy introduced by the National Policy Framework, "Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour".

The President as well as the Ministers and MPs took part in the programme by planting saplings together with the children.

State Minister Shashindra Rajapaksa said that the central theme of this concept is to create a sound mentality by encouraging the students, who are in



President Gotabaya Rajapaksa launched the National Tree Planting Programme for Children *Kekulu Tharu Udanaya* at the Atabage Wimaladharmas National School in Gampola yesterday. Here, the President presents a sapling to a Grade One student. (Picture courtesy President's Media Division)

an examination mindset, to cultivate. The Ministries of Agriculture and Education will jointly implement the

tree planting scheme. The *Kekulu Tharu Udanaya* programme, which commenced yesterday and con-

tinues year after year. The Government aims to add 1.7 million trees including jak fruit. **TO PAGE 02**

Transparent procedure to recruit new Samurdhi Beneficiary families

LAHIRU FERNANDO

Considering the various shortcomings, the Government has introduced an advanced and transparent procedure to nominate new Samurdhi Beneficiary families from this year. As per a Circular issued by the State Minister of Samurdhi, Household Economy, Micro Finance, Self-Employment and Business Development Shehan Semasinghe on February 11, the selection of the new beneficiary families will be made immediately based on the existing quota at Divisional Secretariat Divisions level. **TO PAGE 02**



Easter attacks PCoI Report to be handed over to Cardinal after Cabinet presentation - Lansa

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa will hand over the final report of the Presidential Commission (PCoI) appointed to investigate the Easter Sunday Attacks to the Archbishop of Colombo His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith after its presentation to the Cabinet.

State Minister Lansa expressed these views while answering questions raised by journalists while vesting the Divulapitiya Road Development Programme with the public on Saturday. **TO PAGE 02**



All parties in Govt. working for country's betterment - Ranatunga

IRANGIKA RANGE

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa intervened to resolve the issue of opinions expressed by Industries Minister Wimal Weerawansa, Tourism Minister Prasanna Ranatunga said yesterday.

"There may be personal views within the members of the Government on various matters, but there is no internal clash in the Government," he added.

Minister Ranatunga said the coalition partners of the Government cannot go on a mission on their own and they all have to work with the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) for the betterment of the people and the country. He was speaking to reporters after opening the 'Be Sri Lankan Buy Sri Lankan' exhibition held at the BMICH last Friday. "We do not have any personal grudges with Minister Wimal Weerawansa but we were against one of the statements he had made," he said.



We will protect the Rajapaksas - Johnston

IRANGIKA RANGE

We will not let anyone from within or outside our parties attack the Rajapaksas, Highways Minister Johnston Fernando said.

"Some people within and outside our parties are trying to break up the Rajapaksa family. **TO PAGE 02**



Writ petition seeks new Constitution for SLC

LAKMAL SOORIYAGODA

The Court of Appeal yesterday issued notices on Minister of Sports, President of Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) and several others, returnable for March 15 in connection with a Writ Petition filed seeking an order to formulate a new constitution for SLC. A Court of Appeal two-judge bench comprising Justice (President) Arjuna Obeyesekere and Mayadunna Corea made this order consequent to a writ petition filed by a group of prominent individuals including former professional cricketer Muttiah Muralitharan. **TO PAGE 02 (See also page 12)**

Colombo faces COVID-19 spread risk due to variant - GMOA

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

The Government Medical Officers' Association (GMOA) yesterday said that the risk of the COVID-19 virus spreading

in the Colombo District has risen again with the detection of the new COVID-19 variant.

Speaking to the media, GMOA Editor Dr. Haritha Aluthge said

that the number of Coronavirus patients reported from the Colombo district had been reduced to 40 percent during past two weeks. **TO PAGE 02**

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Condolence Messages for former Speaker W.J.M. Lokubandara

Exemplary citizen and a veteran politician - President

I wish to express my deep sorrow over the demise of W.J.M. Lokubandara, an exemplary citizen and a veteran politician.

He has etched a memorable mark in the Sri Lankan society as a former Speaker of Parliament, a Cabinet Minister and a Governor. His political role was much respected among his supporters as well as opponents as he kept close attention to the aspirations of the people, states President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in a condolence message.

The message: "An outstanding scholar of Sinhala language and culture, he was a devoted lover of the language. He instilled the love for the Sinhala language in the country and society through the linguistic organisation, the HelaHawula.

"Mr.Lokubandara enriched Sinhala literature by contributing several outstanding works. With his mastery over the language and erudite delivery, he won the attention of the masses. His vision and esteemed knowledge of religion made him a vivid example of a traditional lifestyle of a Sinhala Buddhist for others to emulate.

"The footsteps he left behind as a people-centric politician, literary figure, critic and an intellectual will provide topics for societal dialogues for a long period to come.

"I pray my friend W.J.M. Lokubandara attain the Supreme Bliss of Nibbana".



Lokubandara always upheld public service in high esteem - PM

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa in a special condolence message on the death of W.J.M. Lokubandara said that W.J.M. Lokubandara rendered an invaluable service to literature as a literary supporter of the 'Hela Hawula' and served his country with absolute dedication, as a politician.

"He always upheld public service in high esteem and Lokubandara's name will certainly be etched in our memory for generations to come. The political orientation of Lokubandara always held the country in high esteem. I still remember how he worked with me not only as a politician but also as a close friend. Lokubandara will never come back for a tasteful debate of our glorious past, but his memory will definitely remain in the hearts of people of this country as a much loved Speaker, politician and literature expert."

"May he attain the Supreme Bliss of Nibbana!"

Writ petition seeks new... From Page 01

The petitioners are; Muttiah Muralitharan, Kushil Gunasekera, Sidath Wettimuny, Michael Tissera, Justice (Retd) Saleem Marsoof PC, Dinal Phillips PC, Rienzie Wijetilleke, Thilana Wijesinghe, Vijaya Malalasekera, Ana Punchihewa, Somasundaram Skandakumar and Dr. Palitha Kohona. The petitioners were represented by President's Counsel Sanjeewa Jayawardena.

The petitioners stated that ad-hoc reforms short of a new Constitution for SLC would be a cosmetic exercise, during these dire times for Cricket in Sri Lanka. The petitioners stated that generic solutions amending the Sports Act of Sri Lanka cannot improve the Governance standards of SLC. Cricket in Sri Lanka is a million dollar business unmatched by any other sport in the country. Cricket is the most popular sport in the country, which has won two World Cups. The petitioners said they are expecting to form an independent committee of governance

experts to draft a brand new Constitution for SLC with input from the International Cricket Council (ICC). We also wish to have this new Constitution passed as an Act of Parliament to avoid any dilution or compromises at the hands of vested interests, the petitioners said.

The petitioners further stated that from 1st January 2016 to 31st January 2021, Sri Lanka has lost 118 out of all 194 international matches played, for a dismal winning percentage of 30.92%.

The petitioner said the current constitution of SLC has given birth to a system of politically motivated "Honorary office bearers" who come through a divisive election process.

They further said for a population of 22 million, Sri Lanka has 24 first class clubs. Comparatively, for a population of 25 million, Australia has just six first class clubs and England with a population of 56 million has just 18 first class clubs.

President launches... From Page 01

bread fruit, coconut and mango to the environment within the next five years under the supervision of children.

Children living in urban areas will be provided with small plants that are suitable for their environment while children living in flats will be provided with potted plants.

The distribution of plants is done by the State Ministry of Agriculture and it is also planned to prepare an annual report on the child and the plant through Agricultural Research Officers of the Department of Agrarian Services.

The President symbolically distributed saplings among the children.

Symbolizing the admission of children to Grade One in the year 2021, the President registered the name of a child entering the Atabage Wimaladharmaya Vidyalaya and made a note in the school log book.

Central Province Governor Lalith U. Gamage handed over the cheque for Rs. 63 lakhs collected by the Central Provincial Department of Education for the COVID-19 Fund to the President.

President Rajapaksa presented certificates of appreciation to three teachers who donated their monthly salaries to the COVID-19 Fund.

Principal, Ven.Rupaha Sonuthara Thera together with the staff and the students of the school presented a Felicitations Memento to President Rajapaksa to mark his visit to the school.

The President, Ministers and MPs posed for a photograph with the Grade One students and prefects of Wimaladharmaya National School.

Anushka Imeshan, a student of the school, presented the President a portrait of President Rajapaksa, painted by him.

The President, who arrived at the Udagama Public Grounds to attend the event engaged in a conversation with the people gathered at the venue and inquired about existing short-

Inoculation of public... From Page 01

Officers will also be given the vaccine from today onwards, the State Minister said. The State Minister also said Sri Lanka is hopeful of receiving the first bulk of the Covid-19 vaccine ordered from the World Health Organisation (WHO) under the COVAX facility within the next two-weeks. The vaccines currently on the market

The employees of the private healthcare sector, airports, ports, prisons and immigration/emigration points will also be given priority for vaccination, the State Minister said.

Also, Members of Parliament and the whole staff of the Sri Lanka Parliament will be vaccinated within three days from today (16) at the Sri Lanka Army Hospital in Colombo, she said. Prison

have not been recommended for young children, schoolchildren and pregnant women.

"Sri Lanka has ordered 18 million doses of the vaccine and 50 per cent of the entire population could be vaccinated with it," she added. "All those who are above age 30 will be vaccinated."

"Currently there is a

high competition for purchasing the vaccine among various countries. Due to that reason, it is not certain whether Sri Lanka will be able to obtain the entire order at once," she added.

State Minister Fernando said Health Minister Pavithra Wanniarachchi who contracted the virus recently is receiving treatment at the IDH Hospital and is recovering gradually.

Unity the way forward... From Page 01

islandwide. It was like a miracle."

Professor Peiris observed, "The new political party emerged as the strongest political force. There were various ideologies in our alliance. A similar situation arose when the 20th Amendment was proposed. We were able to reach an agreement through discussions. That is the way we hope to run in the future."

Professor Peiris said, "All our leading figures have great political experience. We unequivocally accept the principle of collective responsibility within the

Cabinet and the Government. One government is definitely one voice. When the Cabinet decides on an issue, it shall be a collective decision. Any violation of this policy will lead to many consequences. Investors should not be discouraged. It could cause great damage to the country's economy. Today we have the weakest opposition in the political history of Sri Lanka."

Professor Peiris continued, "There is no need to give any advantage to the Opposition through simple matters in our opinions. Our alliance has a mechanism to

discuss and resolve such issues. Our leaders have discussed the Sri Lankan government's position before the Geneva Council on several occasions during the past two weeks. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and President Mahinda Rajapaksa participated in the discussion. There is no need to make things more difficult. We now have a strong government with a 2/3 majority in Parliament. If unity and cooperation could be maintained, it would be not difficult to achieve any goal. Support is needed from all supportive parties to protect the Government we have formed through many hardships."

Easter attacks... From Page 01

He further said the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) is not an extremist or racist party. It is a party that unites and works for all races. It is a party closely associated with the villagers. As such, the SLPP is gaining popularity day by day.

The newly appointed backbenchers of the Sri Lanka People's Front have joined as a group with the approval of the party leadership.

This is how they have come together to present their issues to the President, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet of Ministers and work on behalf of the people.

In every Government there were mulberry groups like this. State Minister Lansana further said that this group of the Sri Lanka People's Front really came together to strengthen the Government and the President.

PUCSL nod for... From Page 01

chairman of the PUCSL Janaka Ratnayake had said adding that the PUCSL recommended the inclusion of 18 amendments which were not included in the previous power purchase agreement submitted for approval, and the CEB and Lakdhanavi have agreed to include those favourable terms.

"Accordingly, the agreement approved by the PUCSL is more favourable to the consumers, the Government and the Ceylon Electricity Board. The CEB will purchase electricity for 20 years under this agreement," says Janaka Ratnayake, Chairman of Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka.

The unit price of electricity supplied by this power plant is Rs. 14.98. Both diesel and LNG fuels can be used to generate electricity, and the initial phase of generation will continue to use diesel fuel until LNG or natural gas supply begins. The CEB sought the approval of the PUCSL for the tendering of this LNG power plant on November 15, 2016, and the PUCSL approved the process within two days (November 17, 2016).

Following the completion of the tender process and the selection of the eligible party, the relevant purchase agreement was submitted for the approval of the PUCSL on October 9, 2020, by CEB.

However, it was revealed that there were discrepancies between the new agreement submitted by the CEB and the original agreement approved by the PUCSL. In particular, the 18 amendments contained in the original agreement were not included in the final agreement submitted for approval. The PUCSL recommended to the CEB to re-include these conditions in the agreement as the removal of these conditions will be detrimental to the consumer, the government and the CEB. Subject to those amendments, conditional approval for the final agreement was granted on November 25, 2020. Following the recommendations of the PUCSL, the CEB amended the final agreement and submitted the final agreement for the purchase of electricity on December 1, 2020, for approval. However, by the time of the submission of the final agreement, the then members of the Commission had resigned from their posts.

COVID-19 vaccine for... From Page 01

Ekanayake said. The vaccination of prison officers has been prioritized considering the risk they are facing while engaging in their duties and travelling by public transport.

"The COVID-19 prison cluster had increased to 4,700 by yesterday," he added.

Transparent procedure... From Page 01

Once an application is sent by a low-income family to the area's Samurdhi Development Officer, it will be considered by the Rural Committee and the qualified will be shortlisted. The Rural Committee consists of a religious representative, field officers of the area, a local political representative and a civil society representative.

The Divisional Secretary of the area has been entrusted with powers to take the final decision on the suitable applicants based on the list forwarded by the Rural Committee.

However, in case an applicant is not satisfied with the rejection of his or her application, an appeal could be made to the District Director of Samurdhi, District Secretary or the Additional Director General of Samurdhi and finally to the Director General of the Samurdhi Development Department.

Colombo faces COVID-19... From Page 01

and with the detection of the highly contagious new variant of the Coronavirus found in the UK, the number of daily positive cases in the Colombo district has again risen to 60 per cent.

He further said that the number of new cases reported outside the Colombo Municipal Council area has increased. The country is now recording over 800 COVID-19 cases on a daily basis with 238 of new cases reported on Sunday from Colombo with 108 of them from the Colombo suburbs. The risk of the virus spread in Maharagama has increased and 18 new cases were reported on Sunday.

"The positive test percentage of the country which was reduced to 6-7 per cent has again reduced to five per cent. This is a good trend. The country is now conducts over 15,000 PCR tests daily," Dr. Aluthge added.

The total number of COVID-19 positive cases reported so far in February is around 11,463 and there is a slight increase of new cases when compared to January this year. He further said that the World Health Organization has announced that the confirmed number of COVID-19 cases worldwide has seen a 17 per cent increase. But, there is no change in the number of deaths. It will take around two weeks to see a change in the number of deaths recorded.

Dr. Aluthge predicted that it will take a few more months to see a reduction in the number of new cases in Sri Lanka since there is a four month gap between the country's pandemic situation and global pandemic situation.

"Therefore, we have to wait till the beginning of April to see a positive change in the country's pandemic situation," he said.

We will protect the... From Page 01

The Opposition, international forces and the Tamil Diaspora all want to do this. We should not allow this if we want to exist," he said.

"This Government is strong. We all should be alert about people with ulterior motives trying to create a wedge in the Government," he added.

"President Gotabaya Rajapaksa was elected President when the country was facing

near destruction in every possible way. The country's economic growth rate had plummeted during the previous Government's rule. Colossal amounts of funds which belonged to the people were stolen during the rule of the previous Government through the Central Bank Bond scam. The situation that the country faced during the Yahapalana Government's rule created anarchy," he said.

Obituary Notice



It is with great sadness that the family of **Mrs Podimanike Athauda Seneviratne** announces her passing away on 15th January 2021 at her residence at the age of 88 years.

Mrs. Athauda Seneviratne, would be greatly missed and lovingly remembered by her beloved husband, Mr Athauda Seneviratne (Former Cabinet Minister and Parliamentarian), Sons, Mr Buddhi Keerthi Athauda (Former Ambassador to France and the Netherlands), Architect, Dr Malalsiri Athauda (Australia), Dr Kalyana Parakrama Athauda (Ex Provincial Council member Sabaragamuwa Province and SLSP organizer Ruwenwella electorate) Mr Helavikum Athauda (Dean, Faculty of Computer Science) Daughter Yamuna Kumari Athauda (Attorney at Law-People's Bank Head Office) and her daughters in law Mrs Brooksyce Mitchell, Mrs Mithila Weragala, Mrs Elena Athauda and Mrs Geetha Wijeratne and her six grandchildren.

The funeral of Mrs Athauda would be held on **17 th February 2021 at 3.00 pm** at the Borella Cemetery.

Mrs Athauda was a teacher by profession. She commenced her teaching career in the Kegalle District and after that joined Ananda College, Colombo, where she continued to serve for 18 years, till her retirement.

Obituaries

BASTIAMPILLAI - DEVANESAM entered Eternal Rest. Wife of late J.H.A. Bastiampillai (Walkers, Talawakelle), sister of late Devasagayam, sister-in-law of late Sarojini, mother of Rev. Prince (Anglican Diocese of Auckland, New Zealand), Wesley, Jeramy, Vincent, Samuel and Krishanthi, mother-in-law of Ramani, Yvonne, Shereen, Dymphna, Shobana and Sam Samuel, grandmother of Devashini, Devanjali, Priyanka, Praveen, Sandra, Gerald, Vincia, Dheekshiya, Harron and Brian. Lying in state at 2/2B, Ithalyadde Road, 2nd Mile Post, Kumbiyangoda, Matala. Cortege leaves residence for Funeral Service and Burial at Christ Church, Matala on Tuesday 16th February 2021 at 3.00 p.m. Contact Jeramy 0725315495. 012261

COPE recommends expeditious implementation of a National Policy on Child Protection

Chairman of the Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) Prof. Charitha Herath instructed the relevant authorities of the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) coming under the Ministry of Education to expedite the implementation of a national policy which is one of the primary responsibilities of the authority. The chairman stated the above at a COPE meeting held on February 12.

COPE disclosed that the National Child Protection Authority was established in 1998 with the objective of formulating a national policy on the prevention of child abuse, as well as for the protection and the purpose of treating children who are victims of such abuse.

However, the committee pointed out that the implementation of a national policy has not been carried out accordingly, paving way for a delay of 21 years. The committee emphasised the importance of expediting the implementation of the National Policy, which has already been approved.

Members of Parliament Jagath Pushpakumara, Eran Wickramaratne, Premnath C. Dolawaththa, Shanakiya Rasamanickam, and officials representing the Child Protection Authority were present at the event.

It was also brought to the committees' attention that annual reports of the authority for the years 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 have not been submitted to Parliament so far. Expressing displeasure over the matter, the COPE Chairman instructed the Secretary to the Ministry of Education and the Secretary to the Ministry of State to immediately look into the matter and submit the relevant annual reports to Parliament within two months.

It was revealed that Rs.9 million for consultants for the purpose of creating a database for the authority has been spent in the years 2016 and 2017, and that a grant of Rs.1.2 million has also been provided by the Department of Computer Studies of the University of Colombo in order to develop a software which is has come to a state of being futile. COPE emphasised that although it is important to prepare such a database, there should be a proper methodology in the use of government funds. Thus, the committee instructed the Secretary to the Ministry to immediately conduct an internal investigation and submit a report on the aforesaid matter.

Although a legal framework and regulations had been identified to regulate the transportation of schoolchildren as a measure to prevent child abuse, COPE pointed out that it had not yet been implemented thus far. The chairman of the authority said that the requisite standards have been prepared pertaining to the matter and that the authority should take action to fill the vacancies for regulatory purposes. The committee instructed to expedite this program by employing the newly appointed graduates according based on their qualifications.

The committee also raised concerns over the difficulties faced by the victims as a result of time-consuming process of child abuse cases. Emphasis was placed on the importance of developing a system to minimise the time period affiliated to child abuse cases before children reach the phase of adulthood.

It was revealed that although 3,165 child protection committees have been set up to prevent abuse, only 2,392 committees are active at present. The committee recommended that this should be revived with a more attractive approach in order to popularise it among school children and that it should be included in the institution's active programme schedule accordingly.

It was revealed that it is not at all sufficient in terms of conducting activities of the authority as there are only two persons to serve in the Legal Division of the authority. Therefore, the chairman of the committee recommended the Secretary to the Ministry of State that necessary steps to strengthen the legal sector should be looked into with immediate effect.

It was also revealed that the authority had received 89,405 complaints during the period between 2011 and 2020; and as at 31.01.2021, the number of unresolved complaints brought forward was 40,668. The committee stated that it is unfortunate to have only one person working in the Law Enforcement Division who handles complaints. Furthermore, the committee directed that the Law Enforcement Division be strengthened in order to expedite the process of handling complaints accordingly.

The need to investigate and regulate all orphanages in Sri Lanka was also discussed at length. The chairman recommended that the authority prepare a new program for this purpose and take immediate action to obtain all the basic data.

Although the National Child Protection Authority has data on complaints, the committee also noted the lack of a national database on child abuse. The committee directed that steps be taken to develop a more for-



Participants at the meeting.

mal database as formal data is essential for future child abuse prevention programs.

It was revealed that there are 548 approved posts in the institute and 206 of them are vacant. The COPE Chairman instructed the authorities to take immediate action as the recruitment process for the approved posts could be done with the approval of the Secretary to the Ministry.

COPE Chairman Prof. Herath stressed the importance of resolving these issues of the National Child Protection Authority, which plays a crucial role in the country advocating for abused children. Thus, the chairman emphasised the importance of making the institution a strong institution. He also said that the authority would be summoned before COPE again, later this year.



Gamini Perera, who worked for the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. (ANCL) for 52 years as a typesetter, retired from service recently. A ceremony to pay tribute to his service was held with the participation of ANCL Chairman W. Dayaratne PC, the Board of Directors, and the 'Sarasaviya' staff.

Two-day export procedure course on March 6, 7

The Industrial Development Authority will conduct a two-day export procedure course on March 6 and 7 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the authority's auditorium; at No. 4A, 1/1, Soratha

Mawatha, Gangodawila, Nugegoda.

The course will cover basic introduction to export procedures, export marketing and finance, settlement of payments, freight forwarding and transportation,

customs export processes, guidelines for CUSDEC, port procedures, export costing, INCORTEM, and a number of other subjects. For further details, contact the project division on 0112804511.

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Dry rations were distributed among 392 quarantined families in the Medadumbara Divisional Secretariat recently under the guidance of the Divisional Secretary. Each pack was worth Rs.10,000 and was enough to feed a family for two weeks. Picture by Ajith Gangoda.

TRC/D/PRO/20/10



Vijaya Kumaratunga



Richard de Zoysa

BRUTAL FEBRUARY

This month marks the assassination of veteran journalist RICHARD DE ZOYSA and popular actor VIJAYA KUMARATUNGA during 1988-1990

NADIRA GUNATILLEKE

February is the darkest month of the year for journalists, artists etc. who lived in Sri Lanka during the terror period from 1988 to 1990. Many patriotic, independent, talented and innocent prominent personalities were murdered in broad daylight during this period purely due to political reasons. The list of gunned-down journalists, scholars, artists etc. is very long; and there are two prominent most innocent and very talented sons of Mother Lanka who had been murdered during this month.

The murder of Richard de Zoysa on February 18, 1990, just one month before his 32nd birthday, marked the darkest day of Sri Lankan journalism and media freedom. The murder of Vijaya Kumaratunga on February 16, 1988, marked the darkest day in Sri Lanka's peaceful politics and the film industry. This year we mark the 31st death anniversary of Richard de Zoysa and the 33rd death anniversary of Vijaya Kumaratunga.

During the past five years, we talked about media freedom and the journalists and politicians who had been murdered but we never remembered or talked about any of them. We had to ignore some of them due to certain political reasons and we were biased. But as journalists and patriotic citizens of Mother Lanka, we must remember and pay tribute to all of them no matter who killed them, and why and when they were killed. We should not remember and talk about a few specific individuals who had dark sides in their lives, who had been involved in questionable activities for money or any other personal benefits and who had been very clearly biased towards one political party or a group of individuals. The only work done by some of the late 'journalists' who had been remembered all the time during the past five years was slinging mud at selected individuals due to personal issues, without engaging in genuine journalism at all.

We must remember and talk about all of them without any difference. Moreover, we have to do this in order to educate the young generation of Sri Lanka. They do not have an in-depth knowledge

about the terror period that existed in Sri Lanka at that time and its consequences. They do not know about any of those innocent prominent personalities murdered for no reason; they do not know how fearful the life for journalists and the public was at that time. Therefore, it is essential to educate the young generation of Sri Lanka about the recent history of the country. Otherwise, they tend to think that 'heroic journalists' of Sri Lanka are the individuals whose names had been regularly mentioned during the past five years in order to gain political advantages. Some of them were just ordinary people who engaged in some other jobs and who slung mud at selected popular individuals for money and other benefits. The friends of those late 'journalists' are still slinging mud at some individuals due to personal reasons and they do it right now not only from Sri Lanka but also from abroad.

Richard Manik de Zoysa (March 18, 1958 – February 18, 1990)

Richard Manik de Zoysa was a well-known Sri Lankan journalist, author, human rights activist and actor, who was abducted and murdered on February 18, 1990. His murder caused widespread outrage in the country, and is widely believed to have been carried out by a death squad linked to elements within the then government.

The death squad was formed under the auspices of members of then (1990) government to crush the insurrection launched by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). Since 1987, when the insurrection was launched, these death squads were alleged to have killed thousands of alleged JVP members in an ultimately successful attempt to quell the rebellion. Most of them were Sinhala Bud-

dhist youths. They were also alleged to have killed political opponents, including de Zoysa.

At the time of his abduction and murder, de Zoysa was the head of the Colombo office of the Inter Press Service. He lived in the Welikadawatte Housing Estate with his mother, Dr. Manorani Saravanamuttu and associate A.V. Karunaratne. Early in the morning of February 18, 1990, an armed group broke into their home, and forcibly removed de Zoysa and drove off without explanation.

His mother then lodged a complaint at the Welikada Police Station. The following day, de Zoysa's lifeless body was found on the beach near Moratuwa, some 12 miles south of Colombo. He had been shot in the head and the throat; his jaw was broken.

Richard de Zoysa was a multi-faceted personality who left a lasting impression during a short but prolific creative life span. He was a media critic, announcer, teledrama and stage actor, author and journalist. He was posthumously awarded the 1990 IPS International Achievement Award. The IPS Award for Excellence in Independent Journalism was renamed in his honour. It was in the early 80s that de Zoysa starred in his first film, *Yuganthaya*, which was based on a novel written by Martin Wickramasinghe and directed by Dr. Lester James Peiris. He acted in the highly popular Sinhala teledrama *Yashorawaya*. He was educated at S. Thomas' College in Mount Lavinia.

Vijaya Kumaratunga (October 9, 1945 – February 16, 1988)

Vijaya Kumaratunga was a popular Sri Lankan film actor, singer and a politician married to former Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga from 1978 until his assassination in 1988. Kumaratunga was shot in the head

with a Type 56 assault rifle outside his home on the outskirts of Colombo on February 16, 1988. The murderer confessed to the murder under questioning by the Criminal Investigation Department. In a 141-page statement, he said he had been carrying out orders given to him by the Deshapremi Janatha Viyaparaya (Patriotic People's Movement), the military arm of a current minor political party, which was responsible for multiple assassinations in the late 1980s. However, a presidential commission report concluded that leaders of the then regime (1988) were behind the Kumaratunga assassination.

Kumaratunga's funeral, on February 21, 1988, attracted huge crowds and was the first funeral to be broadcast live by the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation (SLRC). It was held at Independence Square in Colombo as a State funeral. The day of his assassination is widely known as "The Horrible Tuesday" or "The Darkest Tuesday in Sri Lankan History" since he was assassinated on a Tuesday. His death is still mourned by many people in Sri Lanka.

Kumaratunga started his political career in the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP). He later joined the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and became its first National Organizer.

In his final public address to a large crowd in Colombo's Campbell Park on January 28, 1988, Kumaratunga lashed out at the UNP, SLFP, and Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) for failing to address the needs of the hour. In 1988, the Sri Lanka Mahajana Pakshaya (SLMP) reached an agreement with several other left-wing parties including the LSSP, Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP), Sri Lanka Communist Party, and Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) to form the United Socialist Alliance (USA).

A few days prior to the establishment of the new alliance, Kumaratunga was assassinated.

Kumaratunga's first film was *Hanthane Kathawa* directed by Sugathapala Senarath Yapa in which he played the lead role. In a career that spanned nearly two decades, he acted in 123 films.

He also performed as a playback singer in several films and recorded more than 100 songs.

Some other GEMS WE LOST

* The other prominent Sri Lankan journalists killed during the terror period are SLRC broadcaster and singer Sagarika Gomes (September 13, 1989), SLRC Chief News Editor K. Amaratunga (August 13, 1989), broadcaster and lyricist Premakeerthi De Alwis (July 31, 1989), and ITN Chairman and SLBC broadcaster Thevis Guruge (July 23, 1989).

* The academics murdered during the terror period are Colombo University Vice Chancellor Prof. Stanley Wijesundara (March 8, 1989), Moratuwa University Vice Chancellor Prof. Chandraratne Patuwathavithane, and Peradeniya University Assistant Registrar Captain T.E. Nagahawatte (October 1989).

* The professionals killed during the terror period are prominent lawyer Wijedasa Liyanarachchi (September 2, 1989), SPC Chairman Dr. Gladys Jayawardene (September 12, 1989), Colombo Ports Authority Chief Engineer D.C. Athukorale (November 17, 1988) and Salt Corporation Working Director E. Liyana Pathirana (June 22, 1989).

* It was reported that Wijedasa Liyanarachchi had multiple injuries resulting from torture.



Prof. Stanley Wijesundara



Thevis Guruge



Premakeerthi De Alwis



Wijedasa Liyanarachchi



Sagarika Gomes



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LAKE HOUSE
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E-mail : editor.dailynews@lakehouse.lk
news.dailynews@lakehouse.lk
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Living with the new strain

The Government is in an unenviable position in having to decide if the country is to go under lockdown once again or it will be business as usual under new health regulations as the new UK variant of the Coronavirus spreads. The National Operation Centre on the Prevention of COVID -19 Outbreak was in discussion to decide on what course of action would have to be taken in view of the new development.

Army Commander General Shavendra Silva sounded optimistic that they would not have to go for a lockdown as speculated over social media but would decide on all available options given the emergency situation. He said as a small country we could not afford to resort to actions that would cripple the economy or shut down workplaces and businesses without affecting all aspects of the economy. State Minister Dr. Sudarshani Fernandopulle too ruled out a lockdown but stated that fresh movement restrictions would have to be imposed. Already 16 cases have been detected with the new variant of the virus and attempts are being made to locate their first contacts. It is in this backdrop that the Public Health Inspectors (PHIs) have warned of a rapid spread of the new variant and urged the authorities to impose partial or selective lockdowns in high-risk areas. The PHIs' warnings cannot be taken lightly since they work at the grassroots level and know the ground situation. But the Government too cannot revert to lockdowns having already experienced its consequences in the form of a social and economic backlash. Hence the Catch 22 situation the Government is faced with. But it has got to decide one way or the other.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa had made it clear that on no account will the country go back to shutdown mode after experiencing the downside of the closure of offices, businesses, commercial establishments and other livelihood providers. Besides, all measures are in place to reopen Western Province schools on March 15. Will the situation be conducive for such an exercise? Will the parents be willing to send their children to school with the rapid spread of the new Coronavirus variant as indicated by the PHIs? True, the vaccines are coming and the bulk of the first responders have already received the jab. The next most vulnerable groups are already being lined up for the vaccine. However fears of side effects are bound to keep a majority of the population eligible for the vaccine fearful of running any risk which means there will still remain a sizable segment as carriers of the virus. This is all the more reason for laying extra emphasis on preventive measures such as movement limitations as proposed by Dr. Fernandopulle, if the country is to be spared a total lockdown. A decision has already taken to ban parties, celebratory events and social gatherings. According to the Army Commander they would also be imposing restrictions on the number of invitees for weddings and also those attending funerals. The blackout of all Valentine's Day bashes over the weekend hopefully had paid dividends. It is also advisable to scale down all political gatherings keeping in mind that the onset of the second wave closely followed last year's election campaigns.

Most wisely the school authorities have decided to do away with the customary two day school cricket matches and instead limit this to a One Day tournament sans spectators. At the same time the authorities should also put a halt to official functions particularly giving thought to the fact that more and more Ministers and MPs appear to be contracting the Coronavirus. Parliamentarians should be showing the way by example to lesser minions on how to escape the danger instead of being victims themselves. The recent protest march held in the North is a classic example of how politicians will throw caution to the winds just to be in the limelight. The need for all precautions to be put in place cannot be overemphasized given the prevailing danger.

W. J. M. Lokubandara

The passing away of one time Cabinet Minister and former Speaker W. J. M. Lokubandara removes from our midst a colourful politician who enlivened sittings in Parliament with his lyrical Sinhala prose and verse. An entertainer to the core, Lokubandara entertained whatever audience be it in Parliament, the political platform or any other forum with his prolific dexterity in the Mother Tongue that most of the time left the listeners in stitches. In a galaxy of English educated stars in the Jayewardene era UNP Cabinet, he took pride in calling himself a Helaya (Sinhalese) and demonstrated this in his mannerism, style of speech and also other actions. He shunned his English initials and called himself "Wijamu". As Minister of Indigenous Medicine he promoted herbal porridge and other indigenous foods in Parliament. True to his village roots he lived a simple life, bore a humble countenance and took immense pride in his strong Sinhalese antecedents.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Coronavirus can happen to anyone, so it is really important to maintain good health overall.

- Sara Khan

Fair Distribution of Economic Welfare: Science against Myth

Part 3

P. SAMARASIRI

● Targeted Policy Tools with Coordination

If the policy decision is taken to initiate policies on selected disparities, targeted policies should be implemented. For example, China has commenced poverty eradication policy targeted for identified groups. Such policy decisions and policy actions should be taken by a group of authorities who have statutory mandates on identified distributional aspects. Recommendations of external professional committees who have no ground knowledge and information would only be a waste of time as the relevant authorities invariably tend to disregard such reports as they are not bound to accept such recommendations. In this regard, the government needs to ensure that the existing authorities get involved in taking policy actions willingly so that post-allegations could be avoided in the event of subsequent issues or concerns over new policies. Therefore, it is necessary to identify a consortium of authorities along with specific policy actions for each distribution to avoid bureaucratic conflicts.

For example, at the testimony of the US Fed Chairman before the Congress at one time, a Congressman after elaborating income and employment disparities in the US questioned the failure of the Fed to take policies to arrest the situation. The former Fed Chairperson Janet Yellen (present US Treasury Secretary) immediately responded that it was the duty of the fiscal policy to address the disparities whereas the Fed's mandate was the maximum employment and stable prices. However, the present Fed Chairman accepts the role of the monetary policy to address economic disparities through low interest rates and credit distribution tools under specific schemes, but inability to offer credit targeted to specific individuals or communities. Janet Yellen now moving to another powerful public shoe of the US Treasury Secretary states that low interest rates are likely to be long term and the smartest thing to act big on stimulus at historic low interest rates for the recovery of all segments.

World over, Central Banks generally tend to disagree with sectoral or targeted credit policies under their monetary hypotheses. However, the relevant legal provisions of the monetary policy and credit/bank regulations have immense discretionary powers to implement credit policies/schemes towards targeted sectors or groups that will qualify for the schemes. Credit is the single most powerful tool to address economic disparities in the modern monetary capitalist economies that run on credit and financial capital. Setting up of specialized credit institutions such as EXIM banks, development banks, mortgage banks, finance leasing companies, community/co-operative banks and micro-finance banks is intended to improve credit distribution channels. Directed lending and refinance lending are also two tools. In this perspective, ambitious proposals to set up new ministries or departments responsible for addressing distributional disparities will fail as it requires the integrated acts of several authorities.

Therefore, coordination of policy tools among the different authorities on the basis of distributional targets and performance levels is of prime importance to avoid tool conflicts. For example, households moving from foot bicycles to motorcycles, three wheelers and small cars over a period of time is an indication of improvement in distribution of household income and wealth and living standards of lower income brackets. However, if monetary authorities impose credit restrictions on financing of small motor vehicles due to concerns over rising volumes and their adverse impact on foreign exchange outflow and road traffic, the result will be the widened disparity as the rich will continue to import and enjoy luxury vehicles. Therefore, it is worthwhile to have a simple diagram to list the identified distributional disparities,

present levels, authority responsible, targeted policies, targeted disparity levels and policy implementation period and make it transparent to solicit the support of all stakeholders.

● Failure of Conventional Fiscal Instruments - Taxes and Subsidies

Taxing the wealthy, tax concessions to investors and offer of subsidies and facilities to lower income groups are not considered feasible in modern market economies. Taxes will always be passed on to the public and the wealth accumulation would continue. Killing the wealthy is not the solution as their wealth is in constant utilization for production activities that provide employment and income to people. In modern corporate world, wealthy investors confront immense risks on their capital and profit share as business managers steal corporate income by way of various executive remunerations and accounting impairments with the help of accountants, auditors and regulators. The market value of their wealth is also at risks of insider dealings and market manipulation by securities traders.

Income and corporate tax cuts announced with the objective of promoting further investments out of tax savings and multiplier effects on production, employment and income work in contrast to the objective. For example, US corporate tax cut in 2018 to 21% from 35% which was intended to raise local investments and to bring back American investments from abroad resulted in many corporates buying-back of shares out of tax savings where the US growth and employment slowed down in 2019 causing dampening impact on economic disparities. Tax concessions and state protections to investors and entrepreneurs would cause wealth accumulation to those investors through inflated profit unless a fair volume of factors is employed with fair share of factor remuneration to ease the income disparity based on the initial business feasibility reports. Therefore, corporate bailouts by the US Government in response to corona pandemic were conditional upon employee protection. Further, subsidies work as disincentives to skills and innovations.

● Need to address corruption

Corruption broadly reflects unfair accumulation of wealth/income/economic benefits by stealing the value through unlawful/unethical means. Corruption generally is referred to stealing of funds and benefits belonging to the public/state by various insider means inclusive of leakage of policy/market sensitive information to connected parties. Similar corruption is evident in the private sector too. For example, creative accounting, marketing and remuneration methods help business managers to steal corporate income and profit attributable to shareholders which cause corporate bankruptcies and financial crises.

Corruption disproportionately accrues wealth/economic benefits to those parties creating large disparities through a lot of leakages to distribution. Corruption is so powerful that ambitious policies targeted to improve the distribution become still born with allegation of new round of corruption. Therefore, the need to improve systems of institutional governance and cultures with the lines of responsibilities for internal controls, reporting and disciplinary procedures to prevent identified corruption is of prime importance to improve distributional disparities by lowering corruption. However, corruption is a key part of the natural price determined due to the government intervention/controls in the market mechanism and it will continue to remain depending on the size of such control.

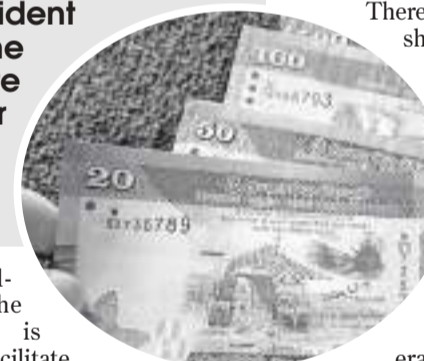
● Resorting to Market Mechanism

Market mechanism cannot be neglected in any economic governance system as the bureaucracy is not the god to solve basic economic problems connected with mobilization of resources to satisfy human needs and wants. The public is prepared to accept economic outcomes of competitive demand and supply forces if they are transparent with fair market prac-



The COVID pandemic adversely affected Colombo Stock Exchange trading.

Corruption broadly reflects unfair accumulation of wealth/income/economic benefits by stealing the value through unlawful/unethical means. Corruption generally is referred to stealing of funds and benefits belonging to the public/state by various insider means inclusive of leakage of policy/market sensitive information to connected parties. Similar corruption is evident in the private sector too.



tices/standards. The competition is needed to facilitate productive skills in mobilization and utilization of resources. Fair market standards set the field for competition. The price is the central outcome of market forces that determines the mobilization of resources.

Therefore, any bureaucratic control of price is the fundamental breach of market mechanism as it causes a network of insider dealings that prevents market-based distribution. Few bureaucrats have no divine knowledge to determine the fair price and distribution. Market mechanism tends to distribute resources and wealth based on competitive skills. To the extent the bureaucracy controls the markets, corruption enters as the most essential skill for competition. Driving on the roads is a good example for market competition.

The various modes of management of state enterprises also are attempts to harness the market mechanism in nationally critical businesses for fair distribution objectives as decided by the bureaucracy. Globalization of markets led by geopolitics is a crucial facet influencing the choice of the degree of the market mechanism. There is no question that global market mechanism is preferred to domestic market mechanism as it opens the base of resources, skills and fields to compete whereas global disparities of distribution also are caused by markets driven by few geo-political networks. However, although markets are dirty with geo-political elements, markets have to further evolve every day to ensure fair distribution in this journey by providing a transparent and competitive platform to search the value. Therefore, all types of market regulations have to be based on the assessment of the level of the value and its distribution created as against the possible outcome of free markets. The past half century gives enough real-world lessons on outcomes of markets to living standards of human being as

compared to state-controlled production processes.

Present Policy Challenge

There is no debate on global and local disruption of supply chains due to the present corona pandemic and resulting recession and disproportionate impact on people. Therefore, the recovery from the pandemic economy entails three dimensions, the control of the spread of the pandemic, economic recovery in terms of aggregate numbers such as GDP, employment and spending at pre-pandemic levels by repairing the supply chains and distribution of the economic recovery fairly to all stakeholders. The attempt to economic recovery in aggregate numbers compiled by statistics alone will not help recover from the pandemic. The recovery without distribution will soon cause civil unrest as the recovery is expected to be unequal.

Therefore, all three dimensions should be simultaneously integrated. This is the brutal challenge confronted by the governments on policy front by trial and error as there is no rocket science to recommend the policy mix. The time taken has no target and depends on the global recovery that may take several years. Therefore, it is worthwhile to have a monitoring list of policy actions, targets and performance on pandemic recovery in all three dimensions.

Another worse pandemic risk is globally on the way. That is the climate change and environment pollution. The poverty created and distributional disparities caused are already felt across the world and future generations are the victims of our present actions. The science has no limits to inventions and utilization of the nature for the well-being of the human, irrespective of the byproducts such as waste/garbage, pollution and global warming considered as harmful. The science can use all such harmful byproducts as raw materials to produce new welfare for the human being. Resources and nature are boundless in front of the science. They only punish human being if they are not duly utilized to solve human problems. Unfair distribution is a major abuse of resources and nature which is being punished. The global warming and rising conflict between wild animal and human are two such punishments.

Therefore, it is necessary that the governments share hands with global initiatives already going on based on science to address such risks. Markets have already ventured into solutions based on private capital. What matters are the scientific knowledge, skills and supportive policies and not political slogans and allegations. The regular policy transparency along with coordinated press briefings (in place of bureaucratic confidentiality and diverse political briefings) and regular policy fine-tuning based on impact assessment are necessary to improve the public trust in policies. Instead, pumping numbers on corner economic activities to paint rosy outcomes and mislead the public will only cause disasters eventually, sooner or later.

(The writer is a former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka)

Concluded



A bustling street in Pettah, Colombo.

LANGUAGE MATTERS



Learning a language can be fun.

Do we acquire OR learn our first language?

Dr. THARANGA WEERASOORIYA

In the last three articles, we talked about some features that characterize language such as spontaneity, arbitrariness, displacement, redundancy, structure dependency, productivity, semanticity and reflexivity. I hope that this discussion served to have a better understanding of what language is and does to establish a sound foundation for the ideas discussed in the articles to come. Now, it is right time for us to start talking about the ideas associated with the process of acquiring a language by us at a very young age as children. First of all, we need to understand the difference between learning and acquisition of a language. We will start with that.

Acquisition vs. learning of a language

Learning something is a conscious process while acquisition of something is a subconscious or unconscious process. Learning subjects such as mathematics, science, etc. in school involves a conscious process. For instance, as we know, we consciously learn and memorise the rules, formulae, equations, theories, etc. that we apply in the derivations in mathematics or drawing conclusions in sciences. That is "learning".

As opposed to learning subjects such as mathematics or science, the process involved for children being able to talk is a subconscious process or an instinct. That is, however much our parents or adults claim that they taught us to speak, that is not true. We rather acquire the language that we are exposed to as our first language. For instance, if we are exposed to English as our mother tongue, when people around us speak in English, we subconsciously acquire the underlying grammar rules/patterns of the English language. At the same time, we either acquire or learn words of the English language. Thus, as kids, we acquire the patterns and words of a language and put these patterns and words together to speak the language. Thus, we say that we acquire that language that we are exposed to.

If we are exposed to two languages at the same time at an early age as 2 to 5 years, we acquire both the languages at the same time. People who are competent in two languages are called *bilinguals* and people who acquire two languages at the same time are called *simultaneous bilinguals*. This process is actually different from the process involved in learning a second language

at a later age in our lives. When we attempt to gain the ability to speak a second language at a later age such as 7 or 20, it is mostly a conscious process that is involved. In other words, it is mostly "learning" that takes place. For example, if we learn English as our second language, we consciously learn or memorise the sentence structures/grammar patterns of the English language. We also consciously learn or memorise the words in the English language. Thus, we say that we "learn" a second language.

However, this is not to say that subconscious acquisition also happens in learning a second language at a later age. For example, when we are learning a second language like English, the language teachers advise us to read newspapers in English, to watch news in English and to be involved in conversations with those who speak English. All these activities promote acquisition of sentence structures/patterns new words, etc. rather than learning of sentence structures/patterns new words consciously. For instance, what happens when we are listening to news in a second language such as English that we are learning is similar to the process involved in a child acquiring her first language listening to peers/parents/adults around her speaking. A second language learner when listening to the speakers of the language subconsciously save the sentence rules/patterns of the language as well as the words of the language in her memory. Thus, it is a combination of both learning and acquisition that is involved in learning a second language at a later age. Those who learn a second language at a later age and are competent in both the languages are called *late bilinguals*.

However, it is hard to claim that it is 100% acquisition that takes place when it comes to the first language of a speaker. It is hard to deny that there are instances of conscious learning that happens when gaining the competence of a first language by a child. For example, at least towards later stages of language development (let's say around the age of 4 or 5), a child might consciously learn some grammar rules when forced by adults. Consider following conversation.

Child: I don't have no books, daddy.
Father: You don't have any books!

If we are exposed to two languages at the same time at an early age as 2 to 5 years, we acquire both the languages at the same time. People who are competent in two languages are called *bilinguals* and people who acquire two languages at the same time are called *simultaneous bilinguals*. This process is actually different from the process involved in learning a second language at a later age in our lives.

Child: Can you say I don't have ANY books?

Father: It's wrong to say I don't have NO books.

Child: Is ANY like NO?

Father: I am not sure. But we don't say I don't have NO books! We only say I don't have ANY books!

Child: Ok, daddy, I don't have ANY books! Can you get me any books?

The child might make the same mistake again, but with two or three instances of correction, the child might learn the grammar rule. Besides, children also might consciously learn new words in the language. Consider the following scenario.

Scenario: Ana and Maria are two children. Ana is 5-years-old and Maria is 7-years-old. They are reading a picture book together and Ana sees a picture of a tree that she has not seen before. Ana asks:

Ana: What's this tree?

Maria: It's a coconut tree.

Child: What's a coconut tree?

Maria: It's a tree that grows in other countries. It has a thin trunk like this, big fruits like this and long leaves like this.

Ana: Ok, now I know what a coconut tree is. When I see it, I will call it "coconut" tree.

There are also instances of grey areas where it is hard to define whether to call it acquisition or learning when it comes to gaining competence our first language. For example, consider the following scenario.

Scenario: Mary and her mother are in their garden. Mary is 4-years-old. The mother sees a racoon and tells Maria.

Mother: Don't go near the racoon.

Mary: What's that?

Mother: That's a racoon.

Mary: Ok, I don't go there racoon.

In the above, conversation, it's hard to determine whether it's conscious learning or subconscious acquisition of the word *racoon* that happens there.

Thus, the conclusion we can arrive at from the above discussion is that we as children mostly **acquire** our first language/s. We as late bilinguals mostly **learn** our second language.

In today's article, we talked about the difference between acquisition and learning of a language by a speaker of the language. That gave us insights as to what kinds of processes are involved when we gain competence of our first language and a second language. In the next article, we will discuss different approaches to the acquisition/learning of a language such as behaviouristic approach (behaviourism) and innatist (innatism). This will help us understand the nature of processes involved in the acquisition/learning of a language.

Email: tharangasipu@gmail.com

(The writer is a Senior Lecturer, Department of English and Linguistics, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

The Rise of Sri Lanka: Singapore's New Business Companion

CHRIS DEVONSHIRE ELLIS

Sri Lanka has been the source of numerous Western media articles describing it as a 'victim' of China's Belt & Road Initiative, and especially debt trap issues over the countries South-Eastern Hambantota Port and Airport. As I have been saying – I maintain two houses and own a boutique hotel in the country and know of these matters – the real story is not how Western media have generally portrayed the issue.

I debunked the Hambantota stories in the article 'China's Belt & Road Is Being Blamed For Hambantota's Port Problems, But The Real Story Is Rather Different' and also described how Hambantota Port and Airport are being connected to the national rail network, a project that is well underway and should be completed in the next couple of years.

Hambantota has become a contentious issue among the BRI naysayers that the *Atlantic Magazine* commendably featured in their well-researched article 'The Chinese Debt Trap Myth: Narrative wrongfully portrays both Beijing and the developing countries it deals with'.

Hambantota however is not the only game in town. Although Hambantota provides a far more convenient East Coast Airport and Deep-Water Port with immediate

access for tourists to Sri Lanka's legendary golden beaches, and Port facilities facing China, ASEAN, and Australia, the capital city, Colombo, is also getting a huge makeover. Facing West, just 30km from the South-East Indian coast and Ports such as Chennai, and over the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Eastern Africa, Colombo Port City (CPC) is another Belt & Road Initiative project that the Chinese are undertaking with reclaimed land. I examined the potential for the CPC in the recent article 'Colombo Port City Turns Into Belt & Road Initiative Cash Cow For Investors'.

Redeveloping Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is being developed to act as an accessory in part to Singapore, the regional Southeast Asia financial and services capital. While Sri Lanka will not compete with Singapore in financial services, it will compete in back-office services, where research and related non-front office activities can be carried out. The country is also Buddhist, and this has some advantages for Singapore, where nearby Malaysia and Indonesia in comparison are Muslim countries, occasionally with separate agendas and cultural issues. Sri Lanka also has an advantage in its size – and geographic position. Singapore occupies just 728 sq. km, Sri Lanka

65,610 sq. km – nearly eighty times the size. That means possibilities for manufacturing in Sri Lanka, and much of this is being earmarked for the South-East coast, in the Hambantota region, where the new airport, port, and rail connectivity is. The area is in the Dry Zone, which means less humidity, and is relatively flat, making construction easy. Those attributes have already led to savvy investors taking advantage of Hambantota's Special Economic Zone, which being new is offering some significant tax and investment incentives.

These include a specific Government FDI policy to attract investment into the automotive sector – Sri Lanka is unlikely to ever manufacture vehicles – but Hambantota has secured a recent US\$300 million investment in tire manufacturing (rubber is a natural product in Sri Lanka) and has plans to develop lithium-ion batteries based on another locally sourced product, Graphene. Sri Lankan made, export-oriented auto components are becoming a reality, with the factories able to be sited well away from the famed tourist areas.

Sri Lanka also has a young, tech-savvy population, and there have been plans for numerous Asian Universities to set up a joint campus in Colombo – although the development of education distance learning, for now, has put those plans on hold. Eng-

lish however is widely spoken and certainly at the business level of local talent. The majority of executive levels Sri Lankan's were educated overseas and are fully internationalized.

With Colombo developing as a South-East Asian Service Centre and possessing an airport, port, and CBD that looks West, and the Hambantota airport, port, and SEZ's looking East and South, Singapore will have competition. Sri Lanka, with its lower wages, larger geographic landmass, famous beaches, and an up-and-coming economy is shortly to become one of the Asian Leopards – smaller than the Tiger economies but attractive, adaptable, and alluring, nonetheless.

(The writer is Chairman, Dezan Shira & Associates which handle foreign investment into Asia and have done since 1992. With offices throughout China, India, and ASEAN they also have partner firms across the region including Sri Lanka, where the company Chairman is also based. For assistance, please contact asia@dezshira.com or visit www.dezshira.com)

- Asean Briefing



The Lotus Tower

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Colombo's changing skyline



The Colombo Port City under construction

Myanmar's junta cuts Internet, deploys troops

◆ Warns public not to hide protesters

◆ Five journalists arrested

MYANMAR: Myanmar's junta cut the nation's internet and deployed extra troops around the country on Monday as fears built of a widespread crackdown on anti-coup protests, but defiant demonstrators again took to the streets.

The military has steadily escalated efforts to quell an uprising against their seizure of power two weeks ago, which saw civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi detained along with hundreds of other members of her democratically elected Government.

With protesters refusing to back down, the Generals imposed an internet shutdown on Monday morning and ratcheted up the military's presence across the country.

Extra troops were seen in key locations of Yangon, the nation's commercial hub and biggest city, including



A protesters takes a photo of another protester posing in front military vehicles parked along a street in downtown Yangon yesterday. - AFP

armoured personnel carriers near the central bank.

Live-stream images shared on social media platforms before the internet blackout showed more military vehicles and soldiers moving through other parts of the country.

However fresh protests again flared in Yangon on Monday morning, including near the central bank.

Hundreds of engineering and technology students protested in a northern district of Yangon, according to an AFP journalist.

Monitoring group NetBlocks initially said the "state-ordered information blackout" had taken Myanmar almost entirely offline.

However some internet services in Yangon resumed at the start of the working day, according to an AFP reporter

in the city. Meanwhile, the military regime warned the public not to harbour fugitive political activists on Sunday after issuing arrest warrants for veteran democracy campaigners supporting massive nationwide anti-coup protests. Security forces have

stepped up arrests of doctors and others joining a civil disobedience movement that has seen huge crowds throng streets across big urban centres and isolated villages in mountainous frontier communities.

Meanwhile, Security forces in northern Myanmar arrested five journalists after firing at protesters in the city of Myitkyina on Sunday, according to local media.

"Five journalists covering the people protest in front of Buga electricity office in Myitkyina were arrested," said a Facebook post from The 74 Media, a media outlet based in the city.

A journalist at the scene told AFP that security forces used tear gas and then opened fire to disperse the crowd, but it was unclear whether they used rubber bullets or live rounds.

- AFP



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has repeatedly called for vaccines to be treated as a "global public good".

UN to debate challenge of global vaccine access

UN: At the initiative of Britain, which boasts of having an effective vaccination programme, the UN Security Council on Wednesday will debate the problem of global access to COVID-19 vaccines, raising issues likely to underscore sharp differences between council members.

How, for example, can vaccines be distributed fairly - without, as has been the case, going first to the richest countries in the North while those in the South suffer?

Should blue-helmeted UN peacekeeping troops in some 15 countries, along with other UN employees deployed around the world, be declared essential workers and receive vaccine priority - including in countries yet to receive vaccine doses?

If so, who should provide the jabs - the United Nations, the troops' countries of origin or those where they are deployed? "Vaccine, vaccination is not

really the job of the Security Council," said one ambassador, speaking on grounds of anonymity.

The Security Council, with a mission of maintaining peace and security around the world, has no special health expertise, the ambassador noted, adding, "the Security Council can just have a contribution." Vaccination "is the big challenge now," said Olof Skoog, the European Union Ambassador to the Council. "A long way to go before people are fully vaccinated."

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has repeatedly sounded a warning that as the virus and its multiple variants spread around the world, global security can be assured only if everyone enjoys the same level of protection.

He has repeatedly called for vaccines to be treated as a "global public good," without specifying exactly how that might happen. - AFP

Biden calls on Congress to reform US gun laws

US: US President Joe Biden on Sunday called on Congress to enact "commonsense" gun law reforms, three years after the school shooting in Parkland, Florida.

"This administration will not wait for the next mass shooting to heed that call," Biden said in a statement marking the Valentine's Day shooting in 2018 that left 17 people dead and brought fresh attention to America's lax gun laws.

"We will take action to end our epidemic of gun violence and make our schools and communities safer."

Biden said he wants Congress to pass laws that would require background checks on all gun sales and ban assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

The confessed school shooter, Nikolas Cruz, who was 19 at the time, was armed with an AR-15-style rifle and fired between 100 and 150 rounds in a rampage that killed 14 students and three adult staff at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.



People light candles at a makeshift memorial outside Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, where 17 students in the faculty were killed in a mass shooting in Parkland, Florida in 2018.

Biden said Congress must also eliminate "immunity for gun manufacturers who knowingly put weapons of war on our streets."

Even in a country that has grown inured to mass shootings and gun violence, the Florida shooting sparked outrage across the US and prompted fresh demands for firearms control.

But with Donald Trump in the White House and the Republicans controlling the Senate at the time, legislation approved by the Democrats in the House of Representatives went nowhere.

Democratic Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Sunday said the House would try again.

"We will enact these and other life-saving bills and

deliver the progress that the Parkland community and the American people deserve and demand," she said in a statement.

Despite polls finding most Americans in favor of some sort of gun law reforms, successive US administrations have been powerless to pass legislation. "The time to act is now," Biden said. - AFP

After Trump acquittal, Republicans see 'BATTLE FOR SOUL OF PARTY'

US: A day after the Senate acquitted Donald Trump in a historic second impeachment trial, America was weighing how long a shadow the former President, even with a tarnished legacy, will continue to cast - over his party, and over the country.

As much of the world watched, the Senate on Saturday voted 57-43 to convict Trump of inciting the January 6 assault on the US Capitol.

It was a stinging rebuke, with seven Republicans joining all Democrats in the most bipartisan impeachment vote ever, but it fell short of the 67 votes needed for conviction.

With Trump hinting afterward at a possible political future even as other Republicans said it was time to move on, the stark divide facing the party over the deeply controversial ex-president was on full view. One frequent Trump critic, Governor Larry Hogan of Maryland, on Sunday predicted a "real battle for the soul of the Republican Party."

"This is not over," the Republican Governor told CNN, adding he would have voted to convict Trump.

Senator Bill Cassidy of Louisiana was one of the seven Republicans to vote to convict; he predicted Sunday that Trump's still-strong hold on Republicans would



Rioters outside Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. on January 6.

fade. "I think his force wanes. The Republican Party is more than just one person... I think our leadership will be different going forward," he told ABC's "This Week."

But one of the former President's fiercest defenders, Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, insisted Sunday that Trump, with his fervent following, retains a huge political role as the party looks ahead to the 2022 midterm elections.

He called Trump the "most vibrant member of the Republican Party," adding, "We need Trump-Plus in 2022."

Trump has flirted with the idea of running for the White House again in 2024. A conviction Saturday would have likely barred him from holding federal office again.

Merely hinting at a possible run will keep him in political conversations - and allow him to continue raising large amounts of money. Trump for now remains secluded in his Florida club since leaving office on January 20.

In his statement Saturday, he welcomed the verdict, denouncing the proceedings as "yet another phase of the greatest witch hunt in the history of our country." - AFP

Harry, Meghan expecting second child

UK: Britain's Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle are expecting their second child, a spokesman said in a Valentine's Day announcement.

The couple released a black-and-white image of them under a tree, all smiles, with Markle, 39, showing signs of pregnancy.

"We can confirm that Archie is going to be a big brother," the spokesman said, referring to the couple's son. "The Duke and Duchess of Sussex are overjoyed to be expecting their second child."

The announcement came 37 years to the day newspapers in Britain carried the news Prince Charles and Princess Diana were expecting Harry, their second child.

Meghan and Harry, 36, who is Queen Elizabeth II's grandson, quit frontline royal duties in March last year and now live in California.

The news follows Markle's disclosure in The New York Times in November that she had suffered a miscarriage in July.

A Buckingham Palace spokesman said: "Her Majesty, Duke of



Prince Harry, Meghan Markle and baby Archie Harrison.

Edinburgh, Prince of Wales and the entire family are delighted and wish them well."

The couple's departure last year - dubbed "Megxit" by the British press - was a far cry from 2018, when they married in a ceremony at Windsor Castle watched around the world. In 2016, Harry issued an unprecedented statement denouncing "the racial undertones of comment pieces" and "the sex-

ism and racism of social media trolls".

Pressure from tabloids has dogged Harry throughout his life, and he blames them for the death of his mother Princess Diana.

Harry and Meghan's latest announcement came days after Princess Eugenie, a granddaughter of the queen, gave birth to a baby boy.

- AFP

NASA Rover faces "Seven Minutes of Terror" before Mars landing

US: When NASA's Mars rover Perseverance, a robotic astrobiology lab packed inside a space capsule, hits the final stretch of its seven-month journey from Earth, it is set to emit a radio alert as it streaks into the thin Martian atmosphere.

By the time that signal reaches mission managers some 127 million miles (204 million km) away at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) near Los Angeles, Perseverance will already have landed on the Red Planet - hopefully in one piece.

The six-wheeled rover is expected to take seven minutes to descend from the top of the Martian atmosphere to the planet's surface in less time than the 11-minute-plus radio transmission to Earth. Thus, Thursday's final, self-guided descent of the rover spacecraft is set to occur during a white-knuckled interval that JPL engineers affectionately refer to as the "seven minutes of terror."

Al Chen, head of the JPL descent and landing team, called it the most critical and most dangerous part of the \$2.7 billion mission.

Much is riding on the outcome. Building on discoveries of nearly 20 U.S. outings to Mars dating back to



NASA Mars rover Perseverance reaches final arc of descent.

Mariner 4's 1965 flyby, Perseverance may set the stage for scientists to conclusively show whether life has existed beyond Earth, while paving the way for eventual human missions to the fourth planet from the sun. A safe landing, as always, comes first.

Success will hinge on a complex sequence of events unfolding without a

hitch - from inflation of a giant, supersonic parachute to deployment of a jet-powered "sky crane" that will descend to a safe landing spot and hover above the surface while lowering the rover to the ground on a tether. Perseverance, the fifth and by far most sophisticated rover vehicle NASA has sent to Mars since Sojourner in 1997, also incorporates several pioneering features not directly related to astrobiology.

Among them is a small drone helicopter, nicknamed Ingenuity, that will test surface-to-surface powered flight on another world for the first time. If successful, the four-pound (1.8-kg) whirlybird could pave the way for low-altitude aerial surveillance of Mars during later missions.

The mission's first hurdle after a 293-million-mile (472-million-km) flight from Earth is delivering the rover intact to the floor of Jerezo Crater, a 28-mile-wide (45-km-wide) expanse that scientists believe may harbor a rich trove of fossilized microorganisms. The descent sequence, an upgrade from NASA's last rover mission in 2012, begins as Perseverance, encased in a protective shell, pierces the Martian atmosphere at 12,000 miles per hour (19,300 km per hour), nearly 16 times the speed of sound on Earth. - NDTV

Lessons from an HNB SME; 3 generations in the making

#ABankerForEverySriLankan

Sajith Makumbura was still young when he took the reins at Makumbura Service Station over 35 years ago. Just 7 months in, he already had plans for its growth.

Driven by a vision to provide service from the heart, Sajith was excited to implement his ideas and expand his business. But as a son of a government servant with no financial foothold to propel his ideas, Sajith's plans ground to a halt.

"When my father lost his job he started the service station to make ends meet. I used to work with him after school and on weekends. Eventually, he returned to his old job and so with my mother's encouragement, I soon found myself enjoying the work."

Established in a small plot of land, at first, the station could only fit 2 hoists, compared with the 8 available today. Working with HNB, Sajith secured the capital necessary to extend the station to include a tire shop, wheel alignment centre and an accident repair centre.

"When I took over the business, we started off with about 6 employees. Now we have over 40 and many loyal customers who trust the quality of our work and always come to us."



Sajith Makumbura
Owner - Makumbura Service Station



Makumbura Service Station

"Starting and building a business is always a challenge, but having a great support system gives you the motivation to overcome every hurdle. HNB's support empowered me to do what I do best - take a hands-on approach to my business and build relationships with my customers. I have expanded the small service station my father started, but the relationships I have built with my clients is what I am most proud of. I am excited to see my son continue this legacy and create his own success story as the 3rd generation owner of the Makumbura Service Station."

“ No substitute for hands-on experience and determination ”



Sajith with his father and son

"My parents taught me that a successful business can only be sustained by earning the trust and loyalty of your customers. They taught me the importance of determination and dedication, while my wife has been my biggest supporter – in my life and my work."

Just as he did with his own father 35 years ago, Sajith's son helps out on weekends. "I gained hands-on experience working with my father. I want my son to have the same benefit of practical experience. This is the kind of knowledge you can't acquire from books," Sajith shared.



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SPORTS EXTRA



Dhananjaya Lakshan and his teammate Mahesh Theekshana celebrate with the Trophy

T10 CRICKET IS A NEW EXPERIENCE - Dhananjaya Lakshan

DHAMMIKA RATNAWEERA

Sri Lankan all-rounder Dhananjaya Lakshan said that he was able to gain a huge amount of experience playing in the Abu Dhabi T10 League Franchise Cricket Tournament, which concluded in the UAE recently. The 22-year-old former captain of Richmond College had the honour of representing the champion Northern Warriors Team, which defeated Delhi Bulls in the final encounter. "Actually, T10 cricket is a new experience. It's hard to make a game plan to specific batsman as we have only 10 overs and one bowler can bowl a maximum of two overs." "Bowlers are always under pressure at all times. In this shortest format we have to use our skills wisely as the batsmen will try to attack you throughout the match." "I had the chance to bowl the final over in few matches. In T10 format the entire match is played similar to the death overs of a T20 match."

"The bowlers have to hold their nerve and bowl according to the match situation. We can't predict the outcome of an over like in other formats and this was a very good experience." "This is my first experience in playing in a foreign league tournament but I am very satisfied to be a member of the champion team." "I had the chance to play in seven matches during this tournament but batted only once against Delhi Bulls in a league round match and scored an unbeaten nine runs." "However, I had a chance to bowl in six matches including the final. We had some experienced bowlers like Wahab Riaz and Wayne Panell and both gave me good tips to build up my bowling career." "I always believe that bowlers should be able to find a way to bounce back in tough situations and a bowler can be a match winner if the skills are properly executed," added Lakshan.



Dhananjaya Lakshan celebrates a dismissal in the final

Luca and Anika hog the limelight at Colombo Open Tennis Tournery

Luca Knese and Anika Seneviratne clinched the Men's and Women's Open Singles title respectively at the Colombo Open Tennis Tournament worked off at the SLTA Courts in Green Path. Luca of course won the Men's final on a default as his opponent Vibuda Wijebandara was forced to retire with an injury during the third and final set. In contrast, Anika powered her way to retain the Women's Singles title with a hard-fought win over Savini Jayasuriya in the final encounter. Earlier, Vibuda Wijebandara and Savith Weerasinghe won the Men's Open Doubles title following a gruelling three-setter against Chathurya Nilaweera and Thehan Wijemanne in the final encounter. Meanwhile, sisters Anika and Alana Seneviratne continued their excellent form as they defeated Janali Manamperi and Savini Jayasuriya in the Women's Open Doubles final.



Arushi Thomas (Girls' Under-12) in action



Anika and Alana Seneviratne in action



Vibuda Wijebandara and Savith Weerasinghe celebrate their win



Anika Seneviratne with the trophy



Luca Knese receiving his trophy



Anika Seneviratne in action

Luca Knese in action

Daily News Business

Business Editor : (011) 242 9221 Fax : (011)2343694 e mail : business.dailynews@lakehouse.lk

“SEC responsible for downfall”

SHIRAJIV SIRIMANE

Former Chairman of the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) and State Minister of Urban Development, Coast Conservation, Waste Disposal and Community Cleanliness, Dr. Nalaka Godahewa lashed out at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and said that they were mainly responsible for the downfall of the Colombo Stock Exchange.

Dr. Godahewa told *Daily News* on the sidelines of Advocata's Panel Discussion on: "The Future of Ports

Development in Sri Lanka" at BMICH on Friday said that the Stock Market was catching up and moving up and 'probably getting a little hot' but the recent crash was due to unnecessary communications by the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE).

"When you name companies and issue directives basically you are telling the people don't buy. These are dangerous stocks. This is the last thing you should do. It was not very wise of them to have done that."

He recalled that before he became the Chairman of SEC there were

similar problems with SEC. "They never managed the sentiments of the market and kept on meddling with the market. Now it has begun crashing."

According to Bloomberg statistics, within the first few weeks of Dr Godahewa's appointment as SEC head in 2012 the market bounced back from the world's worst-performing stock market status to the third best performing stock market status.

Authorities must understand that if they like it or not, markets are driven by sentiments anywhere in the world

and this should be understood and be sensitive."

He said that he is not opposing investigations on companies. "But for 'heavens sake' investigate secretly and don't advertise to the world because the market will crash. Also if there are any wrongdoings punish them."

He said that he was with the SEC and knows that they have a very advanced surveillance scheme to detect any manipulations and based on that investigations could be carried out without bringing them to the



HEMAS ENDS 3Q ON STRONG NOTE **PAGE 15**

public. He said that the authorities have now realized their mistakes and this is the reason for the market to settle. But they should not repeat these mistakes."

He also said that the investors too should be wise not to be scared by these investigations.

National Savings Bank achieves milestone in international funding of US\$ 35 mn

National Savings Bank has announced that it has recently raised a US\$ 35 million loan facility supported by Indian Bank & Indian Overseas Bank.

The excellent relationship that NSB enjoys with its banking partners has allowed NSB to access the international debt market at a competitive interest rate. The facility was arranged jointly by NDB Investment Bank of Sri Lanka and Alpen Capital of Dubai.

Having followed a transparent process, Indian Bank and Indian Overseas Bank were identified as the most appropriate international lending partners. NSB was able to leverage



Darshan Perera – CEO of NDB Investment Bank, Shameer – Country Head of Indian Overseas Bank, K Raveendran – Senior DGM – NSB, Basheer Ahamed – Chief Executive Officer of Indian Bank, Ajith Peiris – GM/CEO of NSB, Christine Jesudian – DGM (Credit & International Banking) NSB, Dilip Samanthilake – Senior Director Alpen Capital (ME) Itd and Kaushini Laksumanage – COO of NDB Investment Bank exchanges the agreement

on its unique strengths of having a local credit rating of AAA (Ika) along with a strong financial and an operational track record of performance, in reaching a

highly satisfactory agreement.

"We are happy to announce that we have been successful in raising funds, especially during these dif-

icult times. I would like to thank the funding banks for supporting our growth strategy and our advisors, NDB Investment Bank and Alpen Capital, for facilitating this

transaction," said National Savings Bank General Manager / CEO Ajith Peiris.

NSB is presently focused on an ambitious mid-term strategy targeting 2021 as part of diversifying its sources of finances to spearhead Government initiatives in critical post-COVID revival of enterprises and entrepreneurs in the country. This loan will provide much impetus in expanding the Bank's Balance Sheet and steering it towards this goal. NSB is committed to the development of the country and its citizens, as a trusted financier with a track record nearing 50 years. **▶ TO PAGE 14**

ICRA Lanka assigns [SL]A rating for senior debt of LOLC

ICRA Lanka Limited has assigned the issue ratings of [SL] A with a stable outlook for the proposed LKR 10 Bn Senior Unsecured Redeemable Debenture Programme of LOLC Holdings.

The group performance is primarily driven by the finance sector of the group and hence the ratings reflect the same. The ratings factor in the group's long track record and leadership position in the Sri Lankan NBF sector, its experienced management team, commensurate risk management systems and its adequate funding profile.

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Hayleys posts best PAT of Rs. 8.20 bn

The Hayleys Group maintained its remarkable growth momentum in the first nine months of FY 2020/21, delivering its highest ever pre-tax profit of Rs.11.51 billion which represents a tripling of profitability compared to the corresponding period of last year.

The performance reflects exceptional growth in the core performance of the Group's export-oriented businesses, relentless focus on cost efficiencies through the 'Haysmart' program and commendable improvements in the Retail and Construction Materials sectors.

The period under review reflects the strongest quarterly and cumulative nine-month performance in the Group's operating history and demonstrates its adaptability and responsiveness in navigating complexities stemming from the operating landscape.

The Group's revenue increased by 7% to Rs.171.90 billion in the nine months driven by continued growth in the Hand Protection, Purification, Agriculture and Textiles sectors. Gross profit growth amounted to 14% and reflects improvements in core profitability primarily in the export-oriented businesses.

Meanwhile, the Group continued to achieve cost efficiencies with consolidated Administrative



Chairman and Chief Executive Mohan Pandithage and Co-Chairman, Dhammika Perera

expenses declining by 4% during the period, reflecting the successes of Haysmart - the Group's holistic cost rationalisation programme. The Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA) recorded strong growth of 38% to Rs. 22.60 billion.

Agriculture and Construction Materials sectors also recorded commendable growth while Consumer & Retail delivered its highest-ever quarterly profitability supported by targeted sales campaigns, robust demand for IT products and effective margin management.

Despite continued losses in the Leisure Sector, the Group's Consolidated Earnings before Interest and Tax (EBIT) increased by 40% to Rs.17.28 billion during the nine-month period. Resultantly,

pre-tax profit nearly tripled to Rs. 11.51 billion while profit-after-tax amounted to Rs. 8.20 billion compared to Rs.2.21 billion in the corresponding period of last year.

"While we expect our export-oriented businesses to maintain their current growth momentum and deliver continued earnings growth, we are also optimistic about our domestic businesses, given the resumption of economic activity and anticipated revival of Sri Lanka's economy," said Mohan Pandithage, Chairman and Chief Executive of Hayleys PLC.

"We commend the Government for their efforts in creating a conducive environment for businesses to continue operations, despite unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic."

Aitken Spence achieves 44% growth in 3Q PBT from non-tourism sectors

Aitken Spence PLC non-tourism multi-industry sectors reported a Profit-Before-Tax (PBT) of Rs. 1.3 Bn in 3Q, a growth of 44% compared to the previous year in the midst of challenging economic conditions. These sectors also reported an EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest Expense, Tax, Depreciation and Amortisation) of Rs. 1.7 Bn compared to



Chairman D.H.S. Jayawardena

Rs. 1.4 Bn of EBITDA recorded during the third quarter of the previous year.



Managing Director Dr. Parakrama Dissanayake

The overall contribution from the non-tourism sectors was notable during the second

lockdown period of the country. Companies in the maritime and freight logistics, power, money transfer, elevator agency, printing and packaging, and plantation sectors performed exceptionally well compared to last year with an increase in PBT for the quarter while maintaining positive performance during the nine months ending 31st December 2020.

The Group's latest iconic venture, Sri Lanka's first waste-to-energy project with an investment of approximately Rs. 15 Bn will be formally launched this month by the Prime Minister. This project will provide a sustainable solution to the Colombo city's waste management problem whilst adding renewable energy to the country's energy profile. **▶ TO PAGE 14**

Light Rail Transit project under review

SHIRAJIV SIRIMANE

The construction of a 15.8 km Light Rail Transit (LRT) track between the Colombo Fort area and Malabe has not been cancelled but it's under review, said State Minister of Urban Development, Coast Conservation, Waste Disposal and Community Cleanliness, Dr. Nalaka Godahewa.

He said that when they studied the report it was found out that the one lane to be funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) loan was too expensive and hence that part from the project was removed. "We



anticipate that with the devaluation of the rupee this loan amount will further increase."

He disclosed that a one kilometer stretch to be built by JICA funding costs over USD 2 billion as against USD 400 for the other three lanes.

"However the remaining part of the plan to construct the LRT is still on and we are having a meeting with the Finance Ministry and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa who is the subject minister of this to obtain further instructions.

E-Screen Systems partners with Japanese screen print giant under the aegis of BOI

E-Screen Systems (Pvt) Ltd, the pioneering screen print solutions provider joined hands with Japanese screen print giant Shin-Nakamura Chemical Co. Ltd Japan to establish a state-of-the-art manufacturing factory in Kurunagala for textile printing agents. The agreement to this effect was recently signed by Sanjaya Mohottala, Chairman of the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka and Mohamed Iqbal Mohamed Mubeen, Managing Director- Shin-Nakamura Lanka (Pvt) Ltd. E-Screen Systems (Pvt) Ltd. has been serving Sri Lankan garment



Sanjaya Mohottala, Chairman BOI and Mohamed Iqbal Mohamed exchanges agreement

embellishers since 1968 with a wide range of textile dyes, chemicals, printing binders, inks and machinery in line with international buyer compliance and standards. With the growing

demand, both companies have collaborated in forming locally produced textile printing binders and varnishes with Japanese technology, for direct and indirect exports.

Softlogic gross profit reaches Rs. 18.8 bn

Softlogic Holdings PLC Gross Profit reached Rs. 18.8 Bn while quarterly Gross Profit was Rs. 7.8 Bn for the nine months ending 31st December 2020.

Group turnover consolidated at Rs. 22 Bn during the quarter while cumulative revenue was Rs. 57.9 Bn during the first nine months of the financial year. Cumulative Group EBITDA reached Rs. 7.5 Bn while Rs. 3.7 Bn was reported for the quarter.

Operating profit for the quarter was Rs. 2.8 Bn while the cumulative operating profit reached Rs. 4.8 Bn. The reduced volatility in the interest rate regime has resulted in the change in insurance contract liabilities to decline. The quarter witnessed a transfer of Rs. 593 Mn in comparison to Rs.



Ashok Pathirage

707 Mn transfer last year. A transfer of Rs. 2.99 Bn was recorded for the cumulative period compared to Rs. 1.5 Bn in 1-3QFY20.

Quarterly PBT recorded more than a two-fold increase to Rs. 985 Mn while PAT for the quarter recorded an increase of 99% to Rs. 780 Mn.

"With the rollout of the vaccines currently taking place, and coinciding with the airport reopening, the economy will have a slow but steady recovery when

tourism and export sectors propel the nation forward with increased FOREX earnings, employment generation, improved purchasing power," Chairman Ashok Pathirage stated.

The third-quarter results have validated our hitherto ambitious forays into Retail, Healthcare and Financial Services sectors. With the GOSL vaccines plan being implemented, resumption of robust economic activity is bound to augment the Group's growth imperatives further with consumer confidence becoming more positive as the days pass by.

No doubt Sri Lanka's economy is closely intertwined with the global economy and pent-up tourism will become one of the greatest boons in history when tourists identify Sri

Lanka as a destination which managed its COVID-related issues and death rates with exemplarily low incident rates.

With tourism closely linked to our economy, the Group's Retail and Hotel arm would become one of its chief beneficiaries.

Furthermore, Healthcare and Life insurance will continue to dominate their increasing leadership positions stemming from the ensuing fear of uncertainty of overcoming global health risks. Notwithstanding this, our investments in Omni-platforms where the Group possess an enviable database - data mining and targeting consumers under our loyalty programmes - will give us unrivalled comparative advantages.

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Licensed by the Securities & Exchange Commission

SLT, ESOF Technologies partner to offer CloudPOS

ESoft has partnered with SLT-Mobitel to offer CloudPOS services. CloudPOS is one of the premier products of ESOF Technologies that had reached the market with its outstanding features and reliability, at a cost-effective price.

The devices are available with Android and Windows Support and contain a graphical menu layout on the sales interface which is easy to use and allows quick item selection using either the barcode, QR code or a serial number entry of a product.

ESOF Technologies, (ET) a fully owned subsidiary of the ESOF group of companies, is an award-winning total solutions provider in web, mobile, and embedded IT systems in Sri Lanka. ESOF Technologies has earned a reputation as a reliable company that caters to many industrial-technological needs and services of local and foreign clients. Being



ESOF; Abdul Hakeem Mohammed Hamdhan, Yehen Tennakoon, Amila Bandara, Manuja De Silva, Dr. Dayan Rajapakse. SLT; Kiththi, Prabhath Dahanayake, Chamila Dharmasena, Sonali Wijekoon, RavinTharinda, Iroshini Subasinghe.

a 100% locally owned company, ESOF Technologies recently partnered with Sri Lanka Telecom PLC by granting an exclusive license for SLT-MOBITEL to act as the sole distributor of CloudPOS (cloud-Based Point of Sales Solution) system solutions in Sri Lanka. This allows consum-

ers to pick and choose the POS products they need, directly from SLT-Mobitel regional outlets.

The POS machine also provides the users with the ability to handle multiple point-of-sale terminals from one back-end system. The features of the product are designed to easily access and

meet the expectations of sales solutions of the user.

The CloudPOS solution simultaneously provides the users with a bird's-eye view of multiple stores using a single app, and even allows the management to view a detailed sales report. Users could also schedule automatic sending

of Purchase Orders, which reduces manual oversights that could take place at the point of transaction.

CloudPOS has been nominated for an award at the National Best Quality Software Awards 2020, which is scheduled to be held on the 3rd of February 2021.

It carries significant features that support a range of selling applications, discounts, loyalty programs, sales returns tracking, goods returns, and commission tracking solutions.

Every sale is updated in real-time, enabling the business owners to monitor and obtain reports from office or home or overseas.

The CloudPOS machine could be paired with a package including thermal printers, hand-held and desktop barcode scanners, and a cash drawer which enables the customers to buy an all-in-one product from their nearest SLT-Mobitel regional outlets.

SAT brings Veritas Technologies to Lankan market



Sanjaya Padmaperuma

South Asian Technologies (SAT) the trusted partner for best-of-breed Information and Communication Technology products has brought Veritas Technologies to the Sri Lankan market.

A global leader in enterprise data management, this top-tier product is marketed by its subsidiary Ezoref Technologies, a leading distributor for next-generation cybersecurity software in Sri Lanka. Optimising on the recent surge in global interest towards obtaining premier data related brands, SAT through Ezoref guarantees superiority.

Believing in actions speaking louder than words, SAT has stepped into the digitalisation age with a vision to deliver as promised. ZVeritas Technologies is a global leader in enterprise data management. An estimated fifty thousand enterprises or more, including 90% of the Fortune 500, rely on Veritas to abstract IT complexity and simplify data management.

The company's Enterprise Data Services Platform automates the protection and orchestrates the recovery of data ubiquitously, ensures 24/7 availability of business-critical applications, and provides enterprises with the insights they need to comply with evolving data regulations.

Commenting on the expansion of its portfolio, CEO of South Asian Technologies Sanjaya Padmaperuma said, "With the increasing necessity for digitalization in the workspace now more than ever, organizations need proven solutions to help secure their businesses".

"Adding Veritas to our existing portfolio gives Ezoref a more omniscient opportunity to equip our partners and customers with the best in breed solutions. As Veritas has been a global leader in the Data Management market space the SAT team is extremely excited at the prospect of securing our clientele with a product that has a proven history with fortune 500 companies across the globe", he added.

With a reputation for reliability at scale and a deployment model to fit any need, Veritas supports more than 500 data sources and over 150 storage targets, including 50 clouds. Moreover, Veritas is the sole Data Center Backup and Recovery Solution that has been categorised as a Gartner Magic Quadrant leader over the last 15 years. Encouraging customers to harness the power of their information, Veritas Technologies empowers businesses of all sizes to discover the truth in information - their most important digital asset.

SLIC Motor Plus Ladies Only customers get exclusive offer from Vogue Jewellers

Rs. 10, 000 off on jewellery purchases of Rs. 100,000/- or above

Sri Lanka Insurance Motor Plus join hands with one of the leading jewellers of Sri Lanka, Vogue Jewellers to provide exclusive benefits for Sri Lanka Insurance Motor Plus Ladies Only comprehensive insurance policyholders under the

MotorPlus Loyalty Rewards scheme. Sri Lanka Insurance Motor Plus Ladies Only comprehensive motor insurance policyholders are eligible to enjoy the exclusive offer of Rs. 10,000/- off on

jewellery purchases of Rs.100,000/- or above by presenting their comprehensive motor insurance card along with the gift voucher to any Vogue Jewellers branch. Sri Lanka Insurance Motor Plus 'Ladies

Only' is the first exclusive motor insurance in Sri Lanka which provides unique benefits for ladies inclusive of call and move facility from 6 pm to 6 am next day, 24/7 roadside assistance service (towing, tyre change assis-



tance, dead battery assistance), reimbursement of emergency accommodation cost in the event of an accident, loyalty rewards exclusively for ladies and a gift upon every no-claim year.

SLPMA celebrates 65 years of local pharmaceutical production

Sri Lanka celebrates 65 years of local pharmaceuticals production since the first manufacturing plant was opened in 1956, the Sri Lanka Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association (SLPMA) announced recently.

Ten private sector local manufacturers of pharmaceutical bearing SLPMA membership currently manufacture and supply pharmaceuticals for the Ministry of Health

under a Guaranteed Buy Back Scheme, with 24% of all medicines in outpatient departments (OPDs) of government hospitals now supplied by them; helping the country save USD 30 million annually in foreign exchange spent on imports.

Sri Lankan private sector local pharmaceutical manufacturers currently produce 88 essential drugs under the Guaranteed Buy Back Scheme (GBBA) introduced in

2014 by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Industries under the leadership of present Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, fulfilling over 15% of the local requirement for essential drugs. They also export pharmaceuticals worth USD 10 million annually.

Members of the SLPMA are now targeting the completion of 50% of the local pharmaceutical requirement within the country by

the year 2025. Local pharmaceutical manufacturers aim to produce over 300 essential drugs saving the country an estimated USD 100 million annually in foreign exchange, while also targeting annual export earnings of USD 100 million by that period and USD 1 billion by 2030.

Chairman of Navesta Pharmaceuticals (Pvt) Ltd Sanjaya Jayaratne, and President of

SLPMA commented on this important milestone.

"As local manufacturers of pharmaceuticals, we are proud to have been of service to the nation for 65 years, and are committed to ensure the availability of essential drugs, saving on foreign exchange. A self-sufficient local pharmaceutical manufacturing industry is vital in this regard, and we are most thankful for Prime Minister Mahinda

Rajapaksa for initiating the concept of the Guaranteed Buy Back Scheme."

"The SLPMA will support the government in securing high quality medicines at a more affordable price, by investing approximately LKR 20 billion, in state of the art privately owned manufacturing facilities, enhancing the economic value addition to the Sri Lankan economy."



Chairman Navesta Pharmaceuticals Sanjaya Jayaratne

APIIT Sri Lanka holds annual Convocation 2020

The Asia Pacific Institute of Information Technology (APIIT) Sri Lanka held its annual Convocation at the Main Hall of the BMICH on February 10.

Chairman, University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka, Senior Professor Sampath Amarantunge graced the occasion as Chief Guest while Managing Director, Nestlé Lanka PLC, Fabrice Cavallin joined as Guest of Honour.

The Convocation saw 338 graduands of APIIT obtain globally recognised undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Business, Computing and Law awarded by Staffordshire University, UK. There were 38 First Class Honours passes, 117 Second Class (First Division) passes and 10 Postgraduate distinctions.

Chairman of APIIT Sri Lanka, Bandula Egothage addressing the gathering said, "The annual Convocation is the most remarkable event in our academic calendar. APIIT's purpose is to nurture



Chairman, University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka, Senior Professor Sampath Amarantunge, Guest of Honour, Managing Director, Nestlé Lanka PLC, Fabrice Cavallin and other dignitaries at the Convocation

leaders who uplift lives; you are the leaders of the future. You will have the unique opportunity and profound responsibility to contribute to the economic and social advancement of our country - your hopes, your dreams, your energy and your efforts will shape and create the future for all of us".

The ceremony was a joyous occasion where students who entered APIIT as young undergraduates finally reaped the fruits of their hard work and formally bid goodbye to student life. Reflecting the high stand-

ards of education at APIIT leading to a rich learning experience and overall personality development, the graduands walked on to the stage to receive their awards exuding confidence and were poised to take on the challenges of their career and life ahead.

Chief Guest, Senior Professor Sampath Amarantunge, Chairman, University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka in his Convocation address said, "Today APIIT is awarding 338 students a degree that will take them far in their lives. I would first like to convey my best wishes to

those who are graduating from this esteemed institution."

"The country and the world are facing a pandemic; the most severe in recent history. During a time when the freedom to breathe has been restricted, you have completed a great academic feat. You have successfully laid the foundation stone to your journey ahead", he added.

Professor Liz Barnes, Vice-Chancellor of Staffordshire University, the UK who shared her message via video said, "Every one of you graduating today has achieved something significant and special."

In his speech, Guest of Honour, Fabrice Cavallin, Managing Director, Nestlé Lanka PLC said, "Today, the world is in a state of constant fast-paced change, with thousands of trends and an overflow of information. I'd like to pass on some of my learnings over the years that will help you to succeed in this new reality. Be a critical thinker, keeping an open mind, and separating facts from opinions."

Exterminators win Gold at 'COVID-19 Restart Sri Lanka Awards'

The Exterminators, Sri Lanka's premier environmental enhancement solutions provider won the Gold Award under the SME-Sector category at Restart Sri Lanka Resilience Awards 2020.

The event was jointly organized by the Prime Minister's Office and (SLIM) Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing.

The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in new challenges across organizations. The SLIM Restart Resilience Awards 2020 was organized to recognize and reward the outstanding efforts of organizations which withstood and overcame the challenges resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Exterminators decided that to survive this unprecedented situation, the company needed to take some bold steps. Although it was a great risk, doing nothing was more of greater risk. Therefore, the following strategic steps were taken considering all factors while mitigating the risk of our employees, customers, community and suppliers. Exterminators ' High-Risk COV-



Exterminators Director Marketing Travis Ferreira and MD Marlon Ferreira receiving the award from Project Chairman SLIM Gayan Perera

ID-19' team with 8 specialized disinfectors working from the office and 5 sales and operations staff working from home, ventured into a brand new industry named 'Anti-Microbial Disinfection'.

The services were provided nationwide even during curfew/lockdown periods to help the community to fight COVID-19 and businesses all over Sri Lanka to get back to business.

Exterminators disinfected schools, railway stations, bus stations, underpass and South Asia's tallest tower 'The Lotus Tower' area covering over 200,000 sqft.

Since March 2020, Exterminators has increased salaries of all employees by 10-50% while the directors' salaries were reduced by 40%. Four motorbikes were donated to the High-Risk COVID-19 team members.

Kanrich donates Covid-19 equipment to Theldeniya Base Hospital

Considering the prevailing consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and as yet another corporate social responsibility, Kanrich Finance Limited (KFL) donated medical spray machines and other protective equipment to Theldeniya Base Hospital with the participation of Kalana Liyanage Branch Manager Kandy and the staff.



Kalana Liyanage Branch Manager with staff.

recently. Kanrich Finance Limited is a licensed finance company registered in the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. We offer various financial services to our valued customers through 36

branch network covering all the main areas of the country.

KFL celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2021 and eagerly looking forward to steps into a remarkable era.

Fashion Bug wins Great Place to Work Award 2020

Fashion Bug has been recognized as one of the best places to be employed, winning the Great Place to Work Award in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

In addition, the organization has also presented an Award for Excellence in Large Enterprises in Sri Lanka 2020, Best Workplaces for Millennials award 2020 and Best Workplaces for Women 2019.

The company also won an Award for Excellence in the Large Enterprise Category in 2020 and was placed amongst the Top 40 companies in Sri Lanka for the year.

At Fashion Bug, the management believes in nurturing and empowering their employees to bring out the best in them. Making various investments in learn-

ing and development to equip their employees with the right tools, the company ensures that their employees can perform their jobs to the best standards in a way that is mutually beneficial to the organization and the employee.

This year Fashion Bug was honoured with the prestigious Asia's Best Workplace Award, positioning the company at rank #7 amongst large enterprises in the Asian region.

Director Fashion Bug Aqeill Subian, commenting on receiving this award said, "The team at Fashion Bug consistently focus on implementing the best practices possible. It is a great accomplishment to be ranked as the 7th best place to work in Asia, competing with large enterprises in

the region. To be told that we are the only fashion retailer in this category to win this year is an enriching experience. We are proud to be a truly Sri Lankan brand to be recognized internationally."

Fashion Bug is also a company that is run by millennials and therefore it is a place that understands what the current generation wants from their place of work. The secret to the company's success comes from their workplace culture, which believes in inspiring at all levels. The management is determined to make a special place for people to work, ensuring that their organization is a place that provides equal opportunities across tiers irrespective of race, religion, creed or gender.



Manager Human Resources Oman Athukorala and Director of Fashion Bug Aqeill Subian with the award

Classifieds

Automotive

Vans

Cars

Employment

Positions Vacant

SP HN-9559
Hyundai Sonata, 2000, car for highest offer.
Vallibel Finance PLC. No. 310, Galle Road, Colombo - 03.
Tel: 0714542958.
011047

SPJJ-5491 Toyota
LH109, van, 1997, for highest offer.
Vallibel Finance PLC. No. 310, Galle Road, Colombo 03.
Tel: 0714542958.
011046

Urgent requirement
for Tea Maker in Hawaii Restuarant (Salary Rs. 45000/-) for inquiries: 0773658648. 009663

Urgent requirement
for the following categories of Hawaii Restaurant. Basic salary (per month).
* Rice & Curry Cooks - Rs. 90,000/= * Kitchen Helpers - Rs. 40,000/= * Juice & Fruit Salad Makers - Rs. 50,000/= * Counter Helpers - Rs. 40,000/= * Kottu & Rotty Makers - Rs. 65,000/= - Rs. 70,000/= * Cleaning Staff - Rs. 40,000/= . Company will be providing food & lodging as well as 04 days off per month. Please kindly call for interviews. 0773658648. 011445

WAGES BOARD ORDINANCE Notification

WAGES BOARD FOR THE RUBBER CULTIVATION AND RAW RUBBER PROCESSING TRADE

It is hereby notified under Regulation 30 of the Wages Boards Regulations, 1971 that Mr. I. W. Chandrasiri has been appointed as Employee's Representatives of the Wages Board for the Rubber Cultivation and Raw Rubber Processing Trade in Place of Mrs. Wajira Mapalagama by the Hon. Minister of Labour under Section 9 of the Wages Boards Ordinance (Chapter 136). This appointment is valid only upto 2024.10.31.

M P DU K Mapa Pathirana,
Secretary,
Ministry of Labour,

15th February 2021
Mehewara Piyasa,
Colombo 05.

TEACHING HOSPITAL, JAFFNA

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

RELATED TO THE ADVERTISEMENT OF TENDER DOCUMENT SUBMISSION

We published a tender documents submission advertisement on 01.02.2021 in the page number 30. Which is extended, from 24.02.2021 to 03.03.2021 for the reason of request of huge suppliers.

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES

STATE MINISTRY OF ORNAMENTAL FISH, INLAND FISH AND PRAWN FARMING, FISHERY HARBOUR DEVELOPMENT, MULTIDAY FISHING ACTIVITIES AND FISH EXPORTS



National Aquaculture Development Authority of Sri Lanka

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

SUPERVISION CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR BALANCE WORKS AT AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT MURUTHAWELA, FISH GENETIC UNIT AT DAMBULLA, NATIONAL INLAND FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE TRAINING INSTITUTE AT KALAWEWA, MILK FISH HATCHERY COMPLEX AT KUSALABANGADENIYA, MARINE ORNAMENTAL FISH BREEDING CENTRE AT BANGADENIYA, ORNAMENTAL FISH BREEDING & REARING CENTRE AT SEWANAPITIYA.

CONTRACT NO: NAQDA/CONSL/FB/SP/OF/02 (QCBS Method)

Request For Proposals (RFP) is invited from reputed Architectural and Engineering firms to Supervision Consultancy Services for Balance works at Aquaculture Development Centers at Muruthawela, Fish Genetic Unit at Dambulla, National Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Training Institute at Kalawewa, Milk Fish Hatchery Complex at Kusalabangadeniya, Marine Ornamental Fish Breeding Centre At Bangadeniya, Ornamental Fish Breeding & Rearing Centre at Sewanapitiya up to 17th March 2021.

For further Details please visit www.naqda.gov.lk

Chairman,
Department Consultancy Procurement Committee (Major),
National Aquaculture Development Authority of Sri Lanka,
41/1, New Parliament Road,
Pelawatta,
Battaramulla.

NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR TUBERCULOSIS CONTROL & CHEST DISEASES REGISTRATION OF SUPPLIERS - 2021

Applications are hereby invited from 16.02.2021 to 09.03.2021, for the registration of Suppliers, to obtain undermentioned Goods and Services, for the Control Chest Clinic, Borella, Chest Clinic, Gampaha, National Tuberculosis Laboratory, Welisara, administered by the National Programme for Tuberculosis Control & Chest Diseases,

- Duly completed applications should be sent by **Registered Post**, clearly marked as "Registration of Suppliers - 2021" on the top left-hand corner of the envelope, enclosing applications.
- Registration fee of Rs. 500.00 per each item, which is non-refundable, could be paid to the Accountant of this Institution, **from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.**, on week days, and the duly and clearly completed application forms obtainable from this institution, upon payment of the above fee, should either be sent by **Registered Post**, or **hand delivered**, to the following address, along with the receipt for the payment in cash to be received at or before **3.00 p.m. on 10.03.2021**. Money orders will not be accepted.
- Applications received after closing date will not be accepted.

Supply of Goods

- Office Stationery (including computer, stationery).
- Furniture (wooden, steel, fiber).
- All kinds of soap, washing powders, detergents, liquid for washing vehicles).
- Plastic bins, (yoghurt cups).
- Electrical Equipment - Refrigerators, air conditioners, electric fans, tube lights and spare parts.
- Laboratory Equipment and Medical Equipment.
- Tyres, Tubes and Batteries.
- All kinds of Printing Work (Hand Bills, leaflets, banners, posters, name boards).
- Computers, photocopies, fax machines, printers, adding machines, calculators and spare parts.

Supply of Service

- Repair and maintenance of air-conditioners and refrigerators.
- Repairs to vehicles.
- Repairs and Maintenance of Computers, and Printers.
- Repairs to and Maintenance of Laboratory Equipment and Medical Equipment.
- Electrical Repair and Maintenance work.
- Repairs/renovation of wooden and steel furniture (including cushioning / upholstery work).
- Building Construction and Maintenance works, C06, C07, C08, C09).
- Maintenance and Servicing of Electric Generators, (Cummins Diesel 150 KVA)
- Short-Eats, Beverages and Cooked Meal Parcels.

Conditions

- The institution reserves the right to themselves, to call tenders from external sources other than the Registered Suppliers, as well.
- If in indeed necessary and mandatory to provide documentary evidence to substantiate the qualifications and eligibility of those suppliers who vie the register themselves, as a Suppliers, for institutions (Including the Registration Certificates).
- Suppliers will be registered for a period of **one (01) year** and it will commence from 12.03.2021 onwards.

Director,
National Programme for Tuberculosis Control & Chest Diseases,
Public Health Complex (4th Floor),
No. 555/5, Elivittigala Mawatha,
Narahenpita.



INVITATION OF TENDERS FOR SALE OF REDUNDANT ITEMS

Tender No: AD /2/RI/25/2021

Closing Date & Time: 05th March 2021 at 11.00 a.m.

The Chairman, Departmental Procurement Committee, State Pharmaceuticals Corporation of Sri Lanka invites sealed bids from bidders for sale of Redundant Items.

Above redundant items could be inspected on working days from **17.02.2021 to 04.03.2021 between 9.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m.** in the head office premises of the Corporation at No. 75, Sir Baron Jayathilake Mawatha, Colombo 01.

Redundant Item List & Form of Price Schedule could be obtained at the Reception Counter of the State Pharmaceuticals Corporation No. 75, Sir Baron Jayathilake Mawatha, Colombo 01 during working days from **17.02.2021 to 04.03.2021 till 3.00 p.m.** on payment of a non-refundable tender fee of Rs. 500.00 + VAT to the Cashier of State Pharmaceuticals Corporation, No. 75, Sir Baron Jayathilake Mawatha, Colombo 01.

Your quotation addressed to **The Chairman, Departmental Procurement Committee, State Pharmaceuticals Corporation of Sri Lanka, No 75, Sir Baron Jayathilake Mawatha, Colombo 01** should be sent either by Registered post or deposited in a box kept at the Internal Audit Department of this building at or before 11.00 a.m. on 05th March 2021.

Bidders should strictly adhere to the following conditions:

- Offers should be submitted with duplicates that clearly & separately marked as "Original" & "Duplicate" and to be inserted in properly sealed two separate envelopes.
- "Tender No, Time & Date of closing" should be indicated on the top of left corner of the envelope.
- Alternative Bids will not be accepted.

Late Bids will not be considered. Tenders will be opened immediately after the closing of the tender. Tenderers or their authorized representatives will be permitted to be present at the time of opening of tenders.

SPC reserves right of rejecting any or all bids and the right of accepting a Bid without adducing any reasons.

Further information required could be obtained from the Administrative Officer on (011) 2 320 007 only on working days between 9.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN,
DEPARTMENTAL PROCUREMENT COMMITTEE,
STATE PHARMACEUTICALS CORPORATION OF SRI LANKA,
NO. 75, SIR BARON JAYATHILAKE MAWATHA, COLOMBO 01.
011-2320356-9.

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)



STATE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT, COAST CONSERVATION, WASTE DISPOSAL AND COMMUNITY CLEANLINESS SRI LANKA LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

SUPPLYING OF STANDARD CONVERTAINERS (OFFICE & SANITARY) FOR WERASGANGA STORM WATER DRAINAGE & ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Chairman of Department Procurement Committee on behalf of Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation (SLDLC) invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the item mentioned listed below.

Procurement No.	Item Descriptions	Closing Date and Time	Documents Fee (Non-refundable)	Bid Security
S/033/21	Supplying of Standard Convertainers (Office & Sanitary) for Werasinga Storm Water Drainage & Environment Improvement Project	09 th March, 2021 at 13.30 hrs.	Rs. 2,000.00	Rs. 50,000.00

- A complete set of Bidding Documents in English language could be inspected free of charge and purchased upon submission of a written request and paying non-refundable document fee as above mentioned to the Deputy General Manager (Supplies & Stores), Supplies Division, Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation, No. 3, Sri Jayawardenapura Mawatha, Welikada, Rajagiriya during 09.00 Hrs. to 15.30 Hrs. from **16th February 2021** Up to **09th March, 2021** (Working days). The method of payment will be only by cash to the cashier at Accounts Division, (3rd Floor New Building).
- Bid shall be delivered to the address given below and submitted on or before **09th March, 2021 at 13:30 hrs.** Late bids shall be rejected. Bids will be opened soon after closing time, in the presence of Bidder or their representatives who choose to attend.
- Procurement No. and the subject should be clearly mentioned on the top left-hand corner of the envelop and should be sent under registered post or deposited to the specified Tender Box kept in Supplies Division of Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation. (1st Floor New Building).
- Interested bidders may obtain further clarifications from Deputy General Manager (Construction). Tel: +9411 2 862438, Fax: +9411 2 867516



Chairman
Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation
No.03, Sri Jayawardenepura Mawatha, Welikada, Rajagiriya.
Head office Tel: 0112889485-7 Web: www.landdevelopment.lk

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PERFECT PREFECT

MISSION WITH A VISION

Gateway College, Negombo

ISHARA JAYAWARDANE
Every generation produces leaders. However visionary leaders such as Head Boy Keynula Alahakoon and Head Girl Shelina Fernando of Gateway College, Negombo, are a rarity. Perfect Prefects features the two heads who give the youth a vision, a purpose and a destiny.

behind with 300 Spartans and 1100 Greeks. It was one of the most famous last stands of history. Leonidas' tactics and skills were wonderfully executed during this battle and inflicted heavy losses on the Persians. He selflessly sacrificed himself so that he could buy time for the united Greek forces to form an army to rival the Persians. Before the battle he was offered to surrender his arms by the Persian king because his (Xerxes) army outnumbered the Spartans as if they were tiny fleas. But he simply replied 'come and get them'. These are bold words in the face of impending doom. He once said - "We fight as a single, impenetrable unit. That is the source of our strength. Each Spartan protects the man to his left from thigh to neck with his shield - a single weak spot, and the phalanx shatters!"



Gateway College

should cultivate in others. I believe the job of a great leader is to create leaders in others and inspire others to make decisions, be confident and take responsibility for their actions. If this can be cultivated in every single cluster of people in the world, the world would work so much more efficiently," explains Fernando.

to great victories during his time as captain," explained Fernando. "Therefore, my message is, have a set of principles that you believe in make sure every single action you make, every single decision you take, falls within these principles. Always make sure you do the right thing. When you work with different people, you will know how to approach each one differently because the way each one takes things could be different. So the approach can be different, but make sure you stick to your principles and always do what's right. I know being calm during a crisis is not as easy as it sounds and most of the time trying to perform under pressure can overwhelm us. However, the best way to solve problems is to be calm and composed," explained Fernando.



Winning the National Public Speaking Championship 2018



Taking part in the choir



Head Girl Shelina Fernando



Prefects Guild

him to see that there are people who do not get treated because they can't afford to pay the medical bill. We can't just let them suffer just because they can't afford it? It might be true that in some countries the privileged can afford to pay their bills at private hospitals, but there is always a low income class in every country.

"If there could be a change at least in introducing a universal healthcare system I believe would really help lots of people all over the world in terms of health. We also know that some politicians use their own citizens tax money for their own benefits. But what I hope is that at least they'll use most of that tax money for the betterment of their country," stated Alahakoon.

Another thing that disgusts him is human trafficking. It Alahakoon to know that at this very moment hundreds and thousands of innocent young women and children are subjected to sex trafficking.

"The International Labor Organization and Walk Free foundation, in partnership with IOM, estimate that there are about 4.8 million people trapped in forced sexual exploitation globally, the majority of whom are young women and children. And although leaders in the world are doing their best to try and stop this, it is still happening. What saddens me is the fact that an individual could do these things, exploiting innocent people. In addition to the reported cases there are so many cases that go unreported. Trafficking is done with so much precision, backing and support. I believe that this is one major issue that we should all focus on because these innocent people are subjected to such cruelty," said Alahakoon.

Head Girl Shelina Fernando rewards people according to merit. For her what matters is how you contribute to the team.

"For example, when working together in a corporation, there will be a large number of employees working under a few leaders. When there is a task that needs to be done, all the employees will be required to contribute. The employees are the people who need to take charge of the entire process and make sure that the deadline will be met. If each and every single employee has that sense of leadership, that spark of leadership within them, they will be able to make the correct decisions during this process without having to consult their line manager or anyone superior. This is something that great leaders



Winning a dancing competition

that we have to care about others. I think it's the responsibility of every single leader in the world to see that their people cultivate these traits," said Fernando.

Fernando shared her experiences when it comes to leadership and how both she and Alahakoon handle the mantle of being Head Prefect. For Fernando leading a team has always been a childhood dream. Making a difference in the lives of those she leads and motivating them to work towards a common goal is something she has desired. She has achieved her dream and is living that dream! She does her best when it comes to school.

"Keynula and I make sure we give the job 100 percent when fulfilling duties and responsibilities. Therefore, whenever we want to go ahead with an idea Keynula and I discuss it with each other. We are very open to suggestion when it comes to the rest of the members of our guild. Keynula is a very understanding leader and his continuous support has helped our prefects' guild stick together as a team and not fall apart," stated Fernando.

Alahakoon has similar sentiments when it comes to Fernando's leadership when he says - "I had great support from Shelina throughout out term as head prefects. She was really supportive in the most frustrating of times. She helped me a lot by bearing half of the pressure and did a splendid job as the Head girl. She was a really good partner. She has very good teamwork skills and we always made sure that we both knew what to do."

Fernando is a huge cricket fan. She grew up understanding the game.

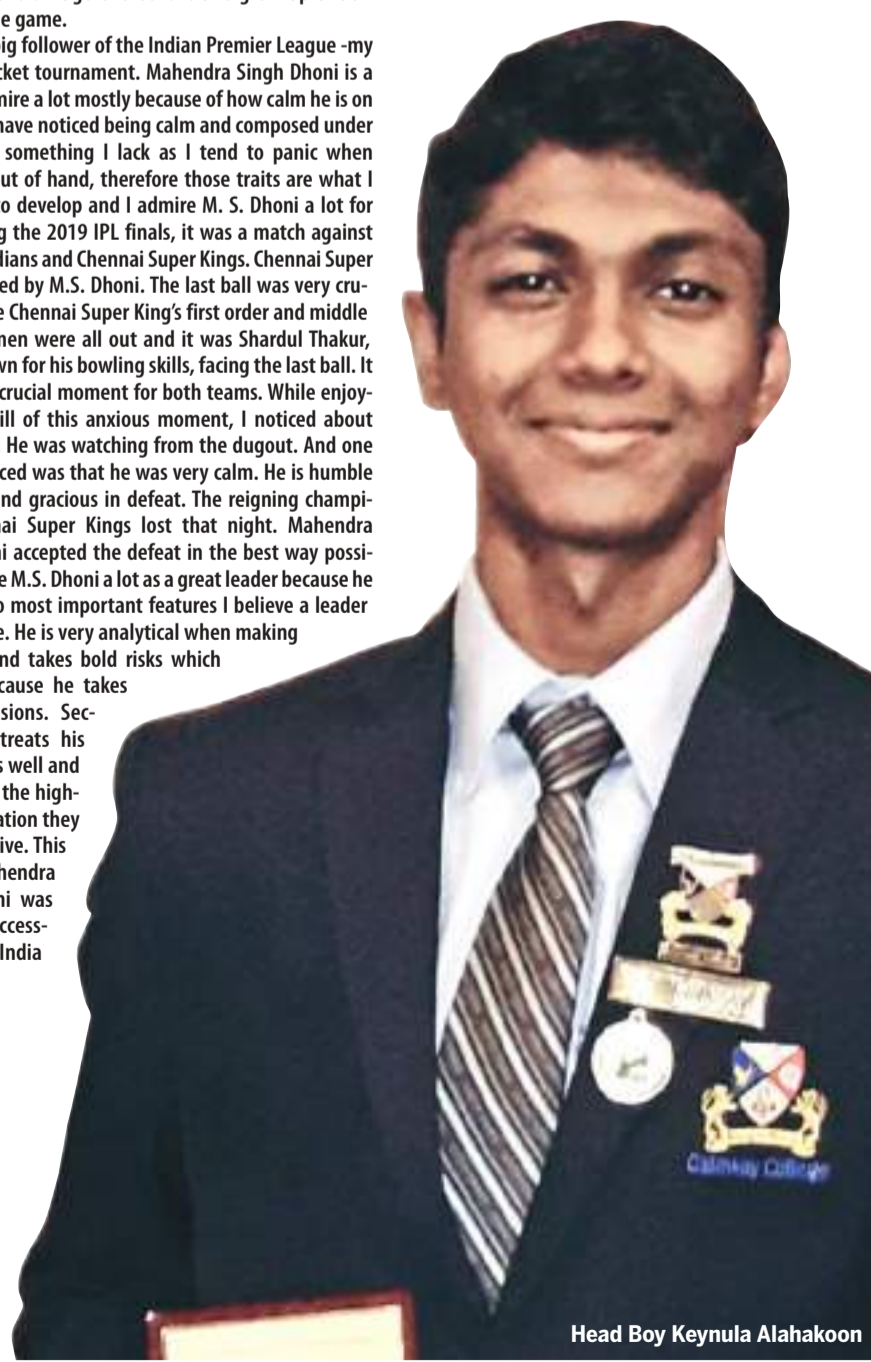
"I am a big follower of the Indian Premier League - my favorite cricket tournament. Mahendra Singh Dhoni is a leader I admire a lot mostly because of how calm he is on the field. I have noticed being calm and composed under pressure is something I lack as I tend to panic when things go out of hand, therefore those traits are what I am trying to develop and I admire M. S. Dhoni a lot for that. During the 2019 IPL finals, it was a match against Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings. Chennai Super Kings was led by M.S. Dhoni. The last ball was very crucial because Chennai Super King's first order and middle order batsmen were all out and it was Shardul Thakur, who is known for his bowling skills, facing the last ball. It was a very crucial moment for both teams. While enjoying the thrill of this anxious moment, I noticed about M.S. Dhoni. He was watching from the dugout. And one thing I noticed was that he was very calm. He is humble in victory and gracious in defeat. The reigning champions, Chennai Super Kings lost that night. Mahendra Singh Dhoni accepted the defeat in the best way possible. I admire M.S. Dhoni a lot as a great leader because he has the two most important features I believe a leader should have. He is very analytical when making decisions and takes bold risks which pay off because he takes smart decisions. Secondly, he treats his team mates well and gives them the highest appreciation they should receive. This is why Mahendra Singh Dhoni was able to successfully lead India



At MUN



Playing the guitar at a musical show



Head Boy Keynula Alahakoon



Chocolate may be the ultimate cliché on Valentine's Day but there's a good reason for that. I mean, have you ever had chocolate? It's literally delicious, especially really good chocolate made with a few unusual ingredients.

If you're going the chocolate route you shouldn't feel unoriginal but you should spring for something high-end or unique - or both! For choosy chocolate lovers, common candies or drugstore chocolates won't do on Valentine's Day, so pretty-please put down the heart-shaped box from the supermarket.

If your girlfriend, boyfriend, special someone, best friend, mom or whoever you want to treat (yourself included) has an elevated sweet tooth, there are some incredible options for buying extraordinary chocolate online. These highly creative craft chocolates are anything but ordinary! *C Net*

Love in 2021!



Painted planets



Squid



Chocolate pizza



Jalapeno peppers



Chocolate bees with caramelized honey center



Chips in a heart



Sour candy

Dogs have a love language too

When it comes to Valentine's Day and dogs, many feel it's worth it to involve their furry friends in the gift-giving. According to Rover, 69 percent of dog parents plan to purchase their pet a Valentine's Day gift, and 60 percent consider their dog to be their actual Valentine.

Broccoli



But did you know dogs also have certain types of love languages?

Much like humans do, based on the book "The Five Love Languages," by Gary Chapman, dogs also have certain love languages they enjoy more than others.

Rover conducted a survey for pet owners about what the most popular love languages are for dogs, but first, here's a brief description of the love languages.

Words of affirmation: This can be acknowledging your dog when you come home from work or any other errand in a strong, affectionate voice.

Acts of service: Whether it's taking a walk or bath, taking time out of your day to better the life of your dog is something pets usually love.

Gifts: What dog doesn't love getting treats or new toys?

Physical touch: Many dogs simply love to cuddle or sit

next to you on the couch.

Quality time: This can be a combination of all the above, but it's also simply dropping everything and devoting time to your dog - no cellphone, no TV or any other distractions.

Based on a survey of 1,000 dog owners, Rover found out this information on dogs and their love languages.

88 percent of dog parents say they know their dog's love language.

41 percent said physical touch was their dog's favorite love language.

21 percent said quality time was their dog's favorite love language.

13 percent said receiving gifts was their dog's favorite love language.

11 percent said words of affirmation was their dog's favorite love language.

8 percent said acts of service was their dog's favorite love language.

49 percent of people said they got a new dog during the pandemic. *Rover*



SWAN SONG...



A retired postman from Turkey and a beautiful white swan have been inseparable for nearly four decades, and the story of their amazing friendship has melted the hearts of millions.

When Recep Mirzan spotted a wounded swan in a field in Turkey's Edirne province, in 1984, he had no idea that he was about to meet his best friend. He was in a car with a group of friends, when he spotted a swan that appeared to have a broken wing in an empty field. Mirzan quickly realized that leaving the bird there was the same as signing its death sentence, as predators would have most likely eaten it, so he stopped the car and took the bird with him. He kept it in the car until evening, when he took it home and started nursing it back to health.

"Since I love animals, I said to myself that I should take her home instead of leaving her as prey to foxes," Mirzan told The Associated Press. "We got used to each other. We never separated."

Even after the female swan's broken wing healed, it didn't try to fly away. Instead, it befriended the other animals on Recep's farm in the Karaagac region, on the border with Greece, and decided to stick around. Recep named her Garip, which translates as 'bizarre', and she has been with him for the last 37 years.

"She comes when I call. Since 1984, she has never left me, not even during the river floods," the retired postman told Anadolu News Agency. "She used to be more vigorous, but she has grown old now. If she dies, I will make him a nice grave here, but I hope we live more together."

Garip has her own coop on Mirzan's farm, but she mostly spends nights in it. During the day, she is busy following her human friend around, either during his daily chores, or on his evening walks.

After his wife died a few years ago, Recep Mirzan started spending more time with his animals, and since he has no human children, he regards Garip as his child.

Whooper swans can live for decades in protected environments, but Garip has long surpassed the average lifespan for his species.

This story reminded us of the beautiful friendship between a penguin and the man that saved him two decades ago.

Oddity Central



'Singles' shopping baskets a Valentine's Day hit!

A supermarket in Hungary has brought smiles to faces and romantic opportunities to shoppers by providing shopping baskets for "Singles" in time for Valentine's Day on Sunday.

Shoppers entering the Auchan store in Csomor, east of Budapest, can choose a blue or pink basket with a "Single Seeking Mate" sign.

A sign above the stack of baskets reads: "Are you single? Use the singles baskets, so you can meet 'the one' in your favourite store".

"It's a great idea in this time of coronavirus. It's an opportunity for those seeking partners, and entertaining and funny as well," one shopper Csilla Beres, 25, told AFP while grabbing a basket.

"Let's see what comes up, and give it a try, we don't skip opportunities," said 25-year-old Tamas as he wheeled his basket into the store.

Staff who came up with the idea decided it could prove popular with unattached shoppers whose dating channels have been restricted by anti-coronavirus rules such as social distancing and mask-wearing.

"Of course, we also draw attention to the fact that you can only get acquainted with the maximum compliance with epidemiological rules," Ildiko Varga-Futo, a manager at Auchan, told AFP.

After their success in Csomor, similar baskets will be used in other Auchan stores in Hungary on Valentine's Day on Sunday, she said.

"I guess not everyone heard about the news that there are such baskets here," a shopper Annamaria, 40, told AFP on her way out. "It didn't work, but next time I'd try it again," she said.

AFP



VISAKHIAN TALENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT!



The Old Girls' Association of Visakha Vidyalaya (VVOGA) is presenting "2FORTY2 MAATHRA featuring Visakhian Talent," in the form of a Live Streaming Online Musical Show. The show will be featuring the 2FORTY2 band led by Billy Fernando along with few renowned artists who are past Visakhians. The event will be held on March 6, 2021, from 7 pm to 9 pm. This event will be a

novel and interactive experience to the audience given the prevailing pandemic situation of the country. The VVOGA expects large gathering of Visakhians, their families and well-wishers to patronize this event, an evening filled with song, music and entertainment. This event will also be an opportunity for the past Visakhians living overseas to join and be part of the entertainment. The funds raised through this event are

utilized to finance the development projects of the school. The event will be broadcasted in an online private platform, in which only the people who have purchased the online ticket will get a unique URL to join the event using only one device. The tickets are out from February 6 and can be purchased from lk.bookmyshow.com. For more details contact Kalani (0773359113) and Dilshani (0776762230).

GEARING UP!



The annual Prize Giving ceremony of Musaeus College, Colombo, was held on January 20 from 8.30 am to 10.30 am at the college premises. The Chief Guest of the event was Ajita de Zoysa, Chairman Board of Trustees, Musaeus College. Due to the ongoing pandemic situation this year's event took place as a "Drive Through" prize giving ceremony. Everyone followed the health regulations given by the Ministry of Health. This is the first 'Drive Through' Prize Giving to be held in a school in Sri Lanka.

Pictures by Ranjith Asanka



Independence Day celebrations



Principal Trizviy Marikkar addressing the gathering

Text and pictures by RUZAIK FAROOK

Zahira College, Colombo, organized its 73rd Independence Day Celebrations at the College Grounds recently. The College Band and Scouts welcomed the Chief Guest Principal



Triizviy Marikkar and Guest of Honour Board of Governors Secretary Alavi Mukthar. Deputy Principal Razeen Assan delivered the Welcome Speech. Board of Governors Secretary Alavi Mukthar and Principal Trizviy Marikkar planted trees at the college

premises and Moulavi Abdul Haleem conducted special prayers. Prefects of Discipline Muhseen Ariff, Head of Primary Mohamed Shazuly, sectional heads, teachers and students were present. Senior Prefect Mohamed Aaqil delivered the vote of thanks.

Eleven years of excellence



Text and pictures by M U M SANOON, Puttalam TKN Corr

Puttalam Madurankuly School of Excellence celebrated her 11th anniversary and the 73rd Independence Day of Sri Lanka, with the presence of the Chief Guest, Bandara, Traffic OIC, Sri Lankan Police, Mundal Division, Guest of Honours, Aashir, Sideeque, Nazrin and school Director, M Mihar.

The Principal, Vice Principal, Founder Members, pioneer teachers, present teachers and the students participated in this auspicious event.

The event wound up with a tree planting ceremony by Chief Guest, Bandara, Traffic OIC, Sri Lankan Police, Mundal Division and the school principal, Ajmal Hidayathullah.



Welcome address by Deputy Principal Razeen Assan



Prayers conducted by Moulavi Abdul Haleem



SURESHNI PILAPITIYA

Never in her wildest dreams young Hana Shafa thought of becoming a professional singer. Her main goal was to walk along the beautiful corridors of Hulftsdorp as a Lawyer. But life seems to be full of unexpected surprises, and destiny finally made her a teen sensation, with her first Mash up release being a big knock out of reaching eight million views to now, bringing her to stardom as an upcoming singer, representing the modern youth.

Music was in Hana's genes. Coming from a musical family, she was surrounded by music, which was not surprising at all. It nevertheless encouraged Hana to follow music as her passion, and her musical talents were further sharpened by this opportunity she had at home. She is still determined to fulfill her dream of becoming a Lawyer, and also pursuing her musical career at the same time. She had to give up her love for traditional dancing which she did at school, due to the hectic schedule and also since she had to decide between dancing and music, but later on, she wishes to that as well.

Being a student of Princess of Wales College, Moratuwa, music was in her heart and soul. She was also a member of the College choir and has played the trumpet in the western band and the geta beraya in the Hewisi band. So for Hana, she was surrounded by music which never seemed to leave her.

As a young teenager, Hana seems to have her hands full at the moment, but she cleverly manages to balance both her music and academic careers. She is determined to pursue her dreams, and reach her goals somehow. She was lucky enough to get the maximum support from her family and school, and her mother, who

SINGING from the HEART!



was the main inspiration behind her young daughters success, sent an entry to the Sirasa Voice Teens programme, which further enhanced her musical talent, and of course where it all began from. She encouraged Hana to give it a try, where she obliged accordingly. Her song 'Chakithaya' (Original by done by Mihindu Ariyaratne) was performed at the Blind Auditions of the Voice Teens, where it was also featured on YouTube, reaching a massive number of 3 million views. 'Rolling in the Deep' by Adele, was performed at the knock out round of the Voice Teens, and her cover version of the song was selected as YouTube's Voice Global under the category Best of July. Entering the Voice Teens, and being with stalwarts of the music field was a dream come true for Hana, and little did she know that this opportunity was filled with so many achievements yet to come. Her first public stint was at the Vihara Maha Devi Park, which drew a large audience in order to come and appreciate her performance.

Her first mash up hit includes Yanna Yanawada (Nilan Hettiarachchi), Siri Sangabo (B n S) and Sanda wage penawa, etc. This was what brought her to stardom as a teen sensation, and after singing 'Chakithaya' at the battle round, she got the opportunity of working with BNS. She considers it as a dream come true for her as a teen who entered a whole new world, getting ready to face the challenges and obstacles of the industry.

Singing 'Chakithaya' which was mainly a rock song made her select rock as her main music genre, and received an excellent response, but she also does Pop, R&B, Rap and Jazz as well.

Excerpt:

Q: What you are up to these days?

I'm working on my new album. The recordings are almost done by now and am working on the shoot as well.

Q: People got to know you from your performances at Sirasa Voice Teen - season 1. How did you find the experience and the support?

That was my first reality experience, and it was actually challenging moment. My family gave me a huge support in that regard.

Q: Your first release itself, which was a mash up cover, reached 8 million views within one month. Did you expect it to be such a hit?

Yes, I already knew it was going to be a hit. I don't have words to explain how I feel. I'm really happy about myself.

Q: You are eventually coming from a musical family. How did your family help you to enhance your musical skills?

My mom and my whole family has a good knowledge about music, and I think that would have been the reason which would have helped me to come this far.

Q: Whom do you follow as role models of the industry? Who are the musicians inspire you most?

My role model is Rihanna, because I love the way she is, and of course as other musicians, it was Bathiya and Santhush, Umarina and International artistes such as Ariana Grande who inspired me the most.

Q: How does it feel to sign up with BNS, a popular name in the industry, soon after the competition?

I think that was the turning point of my music life. Actually I didn't expect that much of good things after the competition, so I'm truly blessed enough to have them.

Q: What was it like, being with other contestants and performing in front of a public audience for the first time?

God, I was nervous at that time, because it was my first outdoor experience with a huge audience, but that was

really amazing. The audience specially gave me a big support. I wanna say, love you all!

Q: Do you still have an intention of following traditional dancing?

Yes, of course!

Q: You're also known as a Pop, RnB, Rap, and Jazz Artiste. But at the Voice Teens you opted for 'Chakithaya' by Mihindu Ariyaratne which was a rock song. Will you be focusing on rock as your main genre in future?

Oh will have to see!

Q: Since you are also focused on rock, what are your favorite rock bands?

Rockin 1000

Q: How do you hope to focus on your goal of becoming a lawyer and proceeding with your musical career as well?

Yes, it's a little hard because always there's a busy schedule, practices and recordings, but in future I'm definitely am going to work for it.

Q: What do you normally do during your past time?

Spending time with my family and friends.

Q: Did other musicians support you once you made your first appearance? And who has been most supportive?

Bathiya and Santhush, Ashanthi De Alwis

Q: Any people out there whom you wish to thank who had helped in this journey?

Oh, there's a lot! Bathiya and Santhush, Naveen Perera, Chamitha Cooray, Dilshan Silva, Sandesh Bandara, Tharaka Sandarawan, Eresh Eranga, Nethmi Sahasra, Chandana Sooriyabandara, and specially my family!



Real meaning behind 'Up' lyrics

Cardi B left U.S. talk show host Jimmy Fallon lost for words after explaining the unexpected meaning behind a line in her new single 'Up'.

The WAP hitmaker is known for her raunchy lyrics, but she caught comedian Fallon off-guard on Thursday as she revealed one part of the song originally referred to an uncomfortable constipation situation. The line in question, which she had borrowed from her husband, Migos rapper Offset, is: "If it's up, then it's stuck".

During The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon interview, Cardi admitted she initially thought it was a "Georgia thing" as Offset, who is from the state, says it "a lot", but she soon learned fans from other Southern U.S. states are also familiar with the phrase, so she was inspired to use it too.

"Um, so have you ever taken a poop, right, and it don't come out?" Cardi began to explain, as the stunned funnyman looked down at his desk.

"It's just up and it's stuck. Yeah," she shared. After an awkward silence, Fallon uttered, "Wow," while Cardi simply nodded.

"I mean, I guess you can take from it whatever you want. There's other ways to look at it, I guess," Fallon reasoned, as Cardi agreed. "It's a metaphorical quote."

MUSIC NEWS



'Fearless' re-recording completed!

Taylor Swift has finished re-recording Fearless as part of her ongoing effort to re-record her first six albums after the master recordings were sold by her former record label.

The singer announced on Good Morning America on Thursday that her 2008 album is the first in a series of full-album remakes she vowed to create after failing to acquire her master recordings, which were initially bought by Scooter Braun, sparking a bitter row between the music icon and the mogul.

Fearless: Taylor's Version will include six never-before-heard tracks, and the single, Love Story (Taylor's Version), will be released on Thursday at midnight, mirroring the lead single from the original album.

"I have now finished re-recording all of Fearless which will be coming out soon," Taylor said on GMA. "My version of Fearless will have 26 songs on it, because I've decided to add songs from the vault, which are songs that almost made the Fearless album, but I've now gone back and recorded those so that everyone will be able to hear not only songs that made the album but the songs that almost made it. The full picture."

As well as appearing on GMA, the singer also updated fans about the new release on her social media.

"Artists should own their own work for so many reasons, but the most screamingly obvious one is that the artist is the only one who really knows that body of work," she wrote. "For example, only I know which songs I wrote that almost made the Fearless album. Songs I absolutely adore, but were held back for different reasons (don't want too many breakup songs, don't want too many down tempo songs, can't fit that many songs on a physical CD)."

"I've decided I want you to have the whole story, see the entire vivid picture, and let you into the entire dreamscape that is my 'Fearless' album. That's why I've chosen to include 6 never before released songs on my version of this album, written when I was between the ages of 16 and 18. These were the ones it killed me to leave behind."

Although Taylor didn't share a release date for the project, fans quickly picked up on the fact that capitalised letters in her social media message spell out "APRIL NINTH".

Fearless won the singer her first Grammy Award for Album of a Year, a feat she later repeated with 1989.

Pop Sugar



From left Kovin, Mittabanu, Isiwara and Tharindu

Text and pictures by UPANANDA JAYASUNDERA, Kandy Sports Special Corr

Kovin Sanjula Korralage started his primary education at Sri Chandananda Buddhist School, Kandy, and later joined Dharmaraja College, Kandy for his higher studies after finishing his G.C.E.O/L examination.

He was involved in extra curricular activities as well as Athletics, Badminton, Swimming, Cricket and Chess. He is also an Astronomer, and the Senior Prefect of Sri Chandananda Buddhist School, Kandy. He was also an energetic student who was interested in music and dancing in the School.

Kovin was a singer and a musician who assisted in all the musical activities in the school. He was a vocalist, guitarist and a violinist who was the President of the Musical Association of the school in 2015 and 2016. He got through the Music

Visharada Examination in 2015. He was in the School Counseling Society from 2017 to 2019 and in the School Quiz team in 2019. Kovin was a Media Coordinator and Announcer for the school from 2013 to 2016. He got through the Visharada II in Instrumental Music at the Bhatkhande Sangit Vidyapith, Lucknow, India in the Annual Examination in the year 2015.

After Kovin joined Dharmaraja College, Kandy, for higher studies, he was determined to do his studies well as well as excel in his innate talents. He was involved in most of the extra curricular activities at the school. He competed at the Central Province Essay Competition and received first place. He represented the school at the Quiz Competition too. After his G C E A/LS, he followed a course related to Air-

Of melodies and memories

line Cabin Crew training at the International Airline Ticketing Academy and completed it successfully.

Presently he is a Trainee Bank Assistant at the Bank of Ceylon, second city Branch, Kandy.

Kovin had an idea of forming a music group and with a music lover he met at a tuition class. He formed 'Kovin & Tharindu' and added their work to YouTube with the assistance of a lyricist called Isiwara Manthirratne who was a Student of the University of Visual and Performing Art and a stage drama Music Director. Isiwara is the owner of Serene Music Studio and a composer, director, recording engineer, session art-



Receiving Certificate from Ticketing Academy

ist and a student of the Institute of Hit Factory Audio. The other person is Isuru Nilupul Rajapakse who is doing the Videography of the Channel. He is a student of SIBA Campus and is following a Course in mathematics. He is also maintaining his View Screen Entertainment Channel.

BATTLING FOR INDEPENDENT MUSICIANS

Composer A.R. Rahman unveiled an initiative that could potentially alter the independent music game in South India. Maajja, a tech platform to help resource-bereft artistes widen their reach, and YAALL, its global music festival of nearly unprecedented proportions, has musicians and fans around the region already sitting up and taking notice. YAALL Festival has scores of Chennai's — and the South Asian diaspora's — finest in its lineup, from Toronto-based hip hop acts like sister duo Cartel Madras and rapper Shan Vincent De Paul to widely recognised local talent like Sinnor, Tamil rock band Oorka, producer-composer-singer Tenma, rapper Arivarasu Kalaienaar aka Arivu and more, all performing on the ground in Chennai.

Noel Kirthiraj, CEO of Maajja, states over a call from Toronto that the festival would have been held far earlier but had to be put on hold because of COVID-19. The platform is the brainchild of Noel and his fellow Canada-based entrepreneurs Sen Sachi and Prasana Balachandran, besides Rahman himself. "We have been working on it [the

platform] with Rahman sir for years," says Noel, adding, "South Asians are worldwide; they have transferred their talents around the world. When the festival can happen, we envision over 80 artistes coming in from 12 countries. But meanwhile, why not do something else to showcase how the indie content here is on a par with movie music?"

To that end, a series of online "activities" — performances and narratives telling the story of each musician — will kick off in February. Musicians in the loop are gung-ho about the plans, with Bharath Sankar of Oorka describing the festival as "Tomorrowland-esque in vision". Tenma, who has composed for the film industry in addition to spearheading independent movements like the Casteless Collective, Madras Medai and the pioneering yesteryears band, Kurangan, states, "This elevates the music scene to the next level."

Maajja is a tech platform birthed in Toronto, that aims to bridge the resources gap between talented musicians and an industry that demands marketing and distribution skills, branding, and constant networking not only for music production but also for the

opportunity to just perform their original creations before an interested audience. The money, time and effort required for these non-creative but essential pursuits has always been a bone of contention for up-and-coming artistes, especially those who do not have the recognition of a label or a professional team to back them up.

Says Noel, "Our thing is to build an ecosystem around the artiste, facilitating what they need to do to put their music and their name out there."

At the centre of it all is the city of Chennai, for reasons best explained by Rahman himself in the unveiling video. "Being born in Chennai, I have grown up with the four South Indian languages together... as an industry, working with musicians, filmmakers, actors, together. Because it all started here in Chennai, I felt like we could do something to revive that unity. By doing this, we are expanding our industry, our viewership, the joy we create. We are unifying better," states the maestro. The Hindu

