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'Hope India will vote in Sri Lanka's favour at UNHRC': Foreign Secretary

Sri Lanka's Foreign Secretary Admiral (Retd) Jayanath Colombage on Monday said that he expects India to stand by and vote in favour of Sri Lanka ahead of next week's UNHRC sessions on the country's rights and accountability record. In an interview to India Today TV, he said "Abstinence will not hamper ties. But India's great leader speaks of 'Neighbourhood First'. We are immediate neighbours," Jayanath Colombage said. **▶ TO PAGE 02**

CABINET NOD FOR COLOMBO PORT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

■ INVESTORS FROM INDIA, JAPAN FOR WCT
■ BOT BASIS FOR 35 YEARS



ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA
The Cabinet of Ministers has approved a proposal made by Ports and Shipping Minister to develop the West Container Terminal (WCT) of the Colombo Port on a Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis for a period of 35 years as a public-private partnership with Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ Consortium) and its local representative John Keells Holding PLC

(APSEZ Consortium) and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA). In line with this decision, Cabinet approval has been granted to develop the WCT of the Colombo South Port as a public-private partnership in collaboration with the SLPA and parties nominated by Indian and Japanese Governments and also to appoint a negotiations committee and a project committee to evaluate the proposals in this regard. Accordingly, the BOT plan approved by the Negotiating Committee has been forwarded to the High Commission of India and the Embassy **▶ TO PAGE 02**

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Woman who beat infant held in Jaffna

SHAVINI MADHARA
The woman who inhumanely beat her infant son, as witnessed in a video currently circulated in social media, was arrested yesterday morning in Jaffna. Police Media Spokesperson DIG Ajith Rohana said the beating was carried out by a 24-years-old woman from Navaldi area in Ariyalai, Jaffna. The infant was taken under police custody for his future care and attention, DIG Ajith Rohana said. It was revealed that the arrested woman had arrived in the country with the infant over a month ago from Kuwait. Police initiated an investigation into this brutal act of the woman after video footage on social media brought the incident to light.

Woman's headless body carried from Hanwella

Police seek assistance to trace murder suspect

SHAVINI MADHARA
The bus which was used to carry the headless body of a woman found in a suitcase left behind in Dam Street in Colombo on Monday (01), was taken into police custody, Police Media Spokesperson DIG Ajith Rohana said. **▶ TO PAGE 02**

SLAF pays tribute to all who saved the Nation marking 70 years



Air Force Commander Air Marshal Sudharshana Pathirana addressing the 70th anniversary event at the SLAF Base in Katunayake.



The march past held at the SLAF Base in Katunayake to mark the 70th anniversary of the Sri Lanka Air Force yesterday. Pictures by Kelum Liyanage.

CAMELIA NATHANIEL
The Sri Lanka Air Force 70th Anniversary celebrations began at the Katunayake Air Force Base yesterday morning under the patronage of the 18th Air Force Commander Air Marshal Sudharshana Pathirana. From its humble beginnings on March

2, 1951, over a period of seventy years, the Sri Lanka Air Force has been serving the country and protecting its third dimension while maintaining territorial integrity and unity. During the Air Force Commander's address to the troops, he made it a point to pay tribute to all the brave Air Force

personnel who sacrificed their lives in active duty, and those who are today disabled having given their all to protect our motherland. Coinciding with the 70th Air Force Anniversary celebrations numerous events have been organized including religious observances, **▶ TO PAGE 02**

Iranativu set apart to bury COVID dead

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA
The Iranativu Island in the North has been identified as the site to bury COVID-19 victims in Sri Lanka, Co-Cabinet Spokesman Mass Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said. Speaking at the media conference held yesterday at the Government Information Department to inform the decisions taken at this week's Cabinet meeting, Minister Rambukwella **▶ TO PAGE 02**

AG gets 65 volumes of Easter Attacks PCoI report

22 Volumes not given

DILSHAN THARAKA
Attorney General Dappula de Livera received 65 volumes of the proceedings of the Presidential Commission to Inquiry (PCoI) probing Easter Sunday Attacks from the Secretary to the President yesterday. Attorney General's Coordinating Officer State Counsel Nishara Jayaratne said that there are 87 volumes of proceedings of the PCoI and 22 volumes were not handed over to the Attorney General due to the sensitive nature of evidence pertaining to national security. On a previous occasion, Attorney General Dappula de Livera received the report (Volume 1) of the PCoI from the Secretary to the President.

'White van' press con; Case against Rajitha, Rumi fixed for April 28



LAKMAL SOORIYAGODA
The case filed against former Health Minister Rajitha Senarathne and former State Pharmaceuticals Corporation (SPC) Chairman Rumi Mohammed in connection with the controversial 'White Van Press Conference' during the 2019 Presidential Election was yesterday fixed for April 28 by Colombo High Court. **▶ TO PAGE 02**

Corruption PCoI recommends strictures against Ranil, former ministers

DHANUSHKA GODAKUMBURA
The Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) that probed the allegations of corruption and fraud in public institutions between 2015 and 2018 had recommended taking action against former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, former Ministers Sajith Premadasa, Lakshman Kiriella, Dr Rajitha Senarathne, Akila Viraj Kariyawasam, Duminda Dissanayake and P. Harrison for misuse of public funds and other offences. The PCoI final report was presented to the Cabinet on Monday. The report has also recommended action against several public officials and Ministerial staff members. The Commission was appointed by former President Maithripala Sirisena on January 14, 2019. The Cabinet approved to present the report to Parliament for further action. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa informed the Cabinet that the copies of the report were sent to the Attorney General and Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery and Corruption to implement the recommendations of the PCoI. The report has recommended action against the above mentioned politicians for obtaining a private building for the Agriculture **▶ TO PAGE 02**

COPA committee probes irregularities in registering dual-purpose vehicles



COPA Chairman Prof. Tissa Vitharana.
The Committee on Public Accounts (COPA) Chairman Prof. Tissa Vitharana has appointed a special sub-committee to investigate into the loss of revenue to the Government in registering vehicles imported for special purposes as dual-purpose vehicles. He took this initiative at the COPA meeting held in Parliament recently. This meeting was convened to review the Auditor General's Reports for the year 2017-2018 and the current performance of the Customs. State Minister Lasantha Alagi-yawanna was appointed Chairman of the Sub Committee and State Ministers Dr. Sudarshani Fernandopulle and Duminda Dissanayake, MPs Ashok Abeysinghe, Dr. Harini Amarasinghe and Weerasumana Weerasinghe were appointed members. The committee drew attention to the Special Purpose Vehicle Identification Codes (HS Code) used by the Sri Lanka Customs and the changes that can be seen in the identification of vehicles for special purposes by the Motor Traffic Department. **▶ TO PAGE 02**

Cricketer Sacithra's anticipatory bail application rejected



SHAVINI MADHARA
The anticipatory bail application filed by former Sri Lanka cricketer Sachithra Senanayake to prevent him from being taken into custody over a match-fixing incident linked to the Lanka Premier League 2020 cricket tournament, was rejected by Colombo Additional Magistrate Kanchana Neranjana Silva yesterday. The Magistrate made this order as the facts of the anticipatory bail application have not been completed. **▶ TO PAGE 02**



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COVID jabs for 509,275 persons to date

The Health Ministry Epidemiology Unit yesterday said that 509,275 persons had been vaccinated against COVID-19 since the inoculation drive began on January 29.

India donated 500,000 doses of COVISHIELD vaccine manufactured by the Serum Institute of India to Sri Lanka in January as part of its "Vaccine Maitri" programme.

The consignment arrived on January 28. The priority was given to vaccinate frontline health workers and members of the Security Forces. The vaccination programme was extended to persons over 60 years and the workforce later. The Parliamentarians were also given the vaccine.

The second consignment of 500,000 doses of COVISHIELD vaccines was arrived in Sri Lanka on February 25. It was purchased from India as per an agreement between the State Pharmaceutical Corporation and the Serum Institute of India to buy 10 million doses of the vaccine.

Easter attacks: Cardinal calls for more comprehensive probe

Colombo Archbishop Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith yesterday called for more comprehensive investigations into the 2019 Easter Sunday bomb attacks.

Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith told a media briefing that the Terrorist Investigations Division, Criminal Investigations Division and State Intelligence Service must investigate the bombings further.

The Sri Lankan Catholic Church has declared March 7 as a "Black Sunday" to demand justice for victims of the 2019 Easter Sunday terror attacks. Catholic leaders are unhappy with the report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry as it has failed to identify the real culprits behind the attacks, he said.

The Commission, which heard from 440 witnesses, said the Attorney-General should consider instituting criminal proceedings against former President Maithripala Sirisena and his intelligence chiefs for failing to prevent the bombings.

Bishops and priests have declared Black Sunday since justice has not been achieved for victims of the atrocity. "Black Sunday has been declared for all the lives lost and victims of the attacks," said Father Ranjith Terry Fernando, parish priest of St. Mary's Church in Negombo, where one of the churches was targeted by a suicide bomber on that fateful day. Father Fernando invited all Catholics to dress in black when they attend Sunday services to show solidarity with the victims of the bombings to mark the protest on March 7.

A group of suicide bombers affiliated to local Islamist group National Thowheed Jamath targeted three churches and three luxury hotels, killing at least 279 people, on Easter Sunday in 2019.

The Catholic Church has also said it is considering staging a black flag protest on Easter Sunday if steps are not taken to identify the main perpetrators behind the 2019 bombings.

Central Bank urged to formulate Strategic Plan

The Committee on Public Finance informed Central Bank officials that the Central Bank should come up with an innovative strategic plan for the betterment of the public and the country. The Committee also recommended not to act like the State or commercial banks, which are pursuing the profit and ratings.



The Committee Meeting in progress.

The Committee Chairman on Public Finance Anura Pradharshana Yapa said that the Monetary Board should fulfill its responsibilities properly and that maintaining financial discipline is a fundamental factor for any country.

The Chairman, therefore, directed the Central Bank officials to submit new development strategies to the Committee on Public Finance, to uplift the local entrepreneurs, when the Committee on Public Finance met in Parliament recently.

The instructions were given when the bank officials said at the meeting that the Central Bank has recently managed to maintain a large savings balance of USD 323 million by February 21 under a scheme to open a special deposit account to protect local cash reserves in the face of COVID-19 pandemic situation.

The Committee said that such deposit schemes introduced by the Central Bank should be publicised as this savings special deposit account earns an interest of 2 per cent per annum on

deposits, which is beneficial to the country and Sri Lankans abroad.

State Minister Vidura Wickramanayake and MP Nalin Fernando also said that the harsh criticism levelled at the Government over the losses incurred due to the sugar tax revision measures has been a black mark on the Government and did not benefit the consumers as expected. The Committee Chairman said that the Committee had not yet received the report called by the Public Finance Committee in this regard and that the

Department of Import Control should be able to submit analytical comments with data on these gazette amendments.

The Committee approved the regulations issued on that day regarding the issuance of brown sugar licences and recommended that a full explanation be given on March 9 with the participation of all relevant Ministries and Institutions.

The Committee approved two Extraordinary Gazette Notifications regarding the extension of the duration of two projects under the Strategic Development Act No. 14 of 2008 submitted by the Finance Ministry. One such project is a 75-room city hotel at No. 116, Galle Road, Colombo 3. State Minister Susil Premajayantha said that the project had failed at the outset. Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation, Litro Gas and the Employees Provident Fund have spent about

Rs. 20 billion, of which Rs. 4 billion has been spent on settlement payments to a Malaysian company. The State Minister said that the hotel, which has only 16 floors, would cost at least another Rs 40 billion to use and could not be expected to be successful.

The Committee stated that the then management of the Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation was directly responsible for the 4-5 year delay in the construction of the Sinolanka Spa Hotel, which caused this surplus cost. The Committee Chairman said that the Board of Investment should have paid attention to this matter and requested that a feasibility study report on this hotel project be submitted to the Committee soon. State Ministers Susil Premajayantha, Vidura Wickramanayake, Parliamentarians Prof. Ranjith Bandara and Nalin Fernando were present.

Cancellation of VIP kits for SriLankan

Country incurs USD 22 m loss

DHANUSHKA GODAKUMBURA

The cancellation of the agreement on the VIP conversion kit for the SriLankan Airlines, which was to be received as a gift, has resulted in a loss of USD 22 million as at October 30, 2020.

The VIP Kit was to be received as a gift for the purchase of four A350 airbuses. However, the former Government

cancelled the agreement misinterpreting that it was a luxurious aircraft ordered by former President and incumbent Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa.

The Government had to pay compensation when cancelling this agreement and the then Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe had paid off this money without Cabinet approval.

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SKILLS SRI LANKA: Transformation for the Future

In 2014, the United Nations declared July 15 as the World Youth Skills Day on a resolution moved by the Sri Lankan Government under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, at the UN General Assembly.

Dr. T.A. PIYASIRI

Skills development in Sri Lanka evolves from ancient times where skills were taught by father to son or by elder relative to a younger one to ensure a regular supply of skilled artisans for society. Sri Lanka had high standards of skills in construction, crafts, architecture and hydraulic technology during that time. This harmonious system that prevailed for centuries was disturbed during the period Sri Lanka came under colonial rule. With the passage of time, requirements emerged for skills in manufacturing, construction, machinery maintenance, etc., with the progress of industrialization. Against this backdrop, formal vocational training had its beginnings in 1893 when the first Technical College at Maradana in Colombo was established to train skilled workers needed for development works.

The period after independence (1948) saw a renewed interest in the development of skills required for achieving the development objectives of a newly emerging nation. Accordingly, actions had been taken to establish a network of technical colleges and many other autonomous Vocational Training Institutes under different ministries. The company-based apprenticeship training system was re-organized by establishing the National Apprenticeship Board (NAB) in 1971. The Tertiary and Vocational Education (TVE) Act No. 20 of 1990 (amended by Act No. 50 of 1999) established the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) as the regulatory body in the vocational training sector and re-established NAB as the National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA).

Recent development initiatives

When progressive developments were taking place in the vocational training sector, the Labour and Vocational Training Ministry, the first ministry with the specific mandate for vocational training, was formed in 1994 and Mahinda Rajapaksa was appointed the Minister. He created a new vocational training institution – the Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka (VTA) in 1995 by bringing the training centres of the Vocational Training arm of the then Manpower Division of the Labour Ministry under its purview and establishing new training centres with regional and rural focus. The main objective of establishing the VTA was to bring the rural communities, especially the young people, into the mainstream of economic development which would result in eradicating poverty in rural areas. Then the VTA was tasked with consolidating skills training further in rural, semi-urban and urban areas with rapid expansion.

Sri Lanka as a tropical island nation had traditional fishing methods and slow transformation was taking place with new fishing techniques and with the introduction of multi-day fishing boats. The potential of



VTA Centre, Batticaloa

the fishing industry as a foreign exchange earner and supply of nutritious food to the nation is enormous. Mahinda Rajapaksa as the then Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Minister, noting the need to develop human resources for a modern fishing industry, took steps to establish the National Institute of Fisheries and Nautical Engineering (NIFNE) in December 1999. The institute offered training to fishing communities on various trades and conducted certificate, diploma and degree level courses in fulfilling the original objective of developing a modern fishing industry.

NIFNE was transformed into the Ocean University of Sri Lanka by Act of Parliament in 2014 enhancing its scope for ocean and maritime related education and research. The Ocean University of Sri Lanka now offers postgraduate and undergraduate programmes under two faculties and diploma, certificate and skills upgrading programmes under its Vocational Division. The Vocational Division consists of eight training centres serving the coastal areas around the country.

Establishing NVQ Framework

With the dawn of the 21st century, there were renewed efforts to modernize the vocational training sector by way of addressing the skills needed in the labour market and improving the quality of training delivery in keeping with international standards. International agencies such as the Asian Development Bank, ILO, GIZ, JICA, KOICA, etc., supported these efforts with their technical expertise and funding. The result was the establishment of the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) system for training and certification of competencies and equipping the training centres for delivery and assessment of such skills. The main operation centre, 'Nipunatha Piyasa', the Secretariat for Vocational Training, was opened in 2005. Mahinda Rajapaksa oversaw these developments as the Prime Minister during the period.

Reforming the entire skills sector of the country with the unified NVQ system was a challenging task. The vocational training programmes and qualifications issued by various institutes in the public as well as private sector during that period were expected to transform into the NVQ system. Initially,



45 National Competency standards with curricula were designed to transform the courses into the NVQ system in 2004 which by now has grown to nearly 400 standards in key occupations in the industry sectors. Since 2005, the skills sector was given the priority in the 'Mahinda Chinthana', the then Government's national policy strategy, with resources being allocated for expansion of the sector especially targeting the youth as well as adults by providing skills training courses within the NVQ system. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system was to provide qualifications upgrading pathways from certificate to diploma and from diploma to degree, breaking the barriers for entry to higher education through vocational training. Nine Colleges of Technology were established under the Department of Technical Education and Training for diploma-level education and the University of Vocational Technology (Univotec) by an Act of Parliament in 2008. This was the landmark reform in vocational education in the history of the skills sector of the country. The workmen and women with experience in various trades were given the opportunity of earning degree-level qualifications through this historic measure.

The ADB and World Bank assisted project – Skills Sector Development Programme (SSDP) came into effect in 2012 to consolidate the skills development drive and established University Colleges in six major locations in the country to award diploma-level qualifications in new technology sectors. In addition, VTA, NAITA, the Ceylon German Technical Training Institute, etc., were assisted to expand the institutional infrastructure for them to be able to provide quality courses in the NVQ system. The Korean government assisted project funded through the KOICA was also in effect during this period to further strengthen the skills sector.

During the two decades, from 2000 – 2020, the largest ever investment in the skills sector took place for the benefit of those who seek vocational education and training in our country. Apart from young people, those with employment experience were given the opportunity to obtain certification through Recognition of Prior Learning within the NVQ system.

World Youth Skills Day

In 2014, the United Nations declared July 15 as the World Youth Skills Day on a resolution moved by the Sri Lankan Government under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, at the UN General Assembly. Since then, this day is commemorated worldwide by organizing various events related to skills promotion and the day provides inspiration to youth to acquire skills for employment.

Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour

A new era of skills development of Sri Lanka has dawned with the new Government coming into power with a vision of skilling Sri Lanka with Technocrats as spelled out in the 'Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour' development policy framework of the present Government. It envisions enabling the workforce of Sri Lanka with skills for a technologically driven economy. The Government appointed a Presidential Taskforce to look into further reforms needed in the education sector, and the Taskforce recommended that the decade 2021 – 2030 be declared the 'Decade of Skills Development'. The Decade of Skills Development would be built around the success of the previous achievements in the skills sector underpinned by the NVQ framework of Sri Lanka. Further, the Decade of Skills Development would take into account the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

Continuous improvement of relevance and quality of skills training is the prime target of the skills sector. Based on the labour market behaviour and resource availability, the delivery is being rationalized to make it more focused and responsive to the needs of the industry and training seekers. There are many systems that have to work in harmony to train and certify a trainee acceptable to the industry.

Building and infrastructure, equipment, qualified trainers, quality assurance and accreditation systems, assessment and certification are the main systems and they require continuous review and improvement to stay abreast with world trends. Computer-based technologies are to be introduced where possible to improve the efficiency and accuracy of system operations.

In line with this initiative, TVET online system re-engineering is in the process where digitalization of skills assessment system and institute registration and course accreditation processes are underway. This will make the training delivery and assessment processes user-friendly and the paperwork would be reduced to a greater extent which eventually increases the efficiency and accuracy of processes and service quality.

New initiatives for training expansion

Successive governments have highlighted how skills development can make direct contribution to economic development and change the lives of citizens for better. 'Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour' places great emphasis on skills development and sets targets for reducing the unskilled workforce to 10 percent by



State Minister for Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation Seetha Arambepola

2025. The government has several strategies to achieve these targets despite the COVID pandemic and slow economic recovery. The 'Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour' envisions a 'One TVET' concept where all the skills training providers will be brought into the NVQ framework so that all those who follow vocational and technical training will receive standardized and quality assured NVQs with national and international recognition. It is expected that the 'One TVET' will also penetrate into all livelihood and community-based training conducted in rural and semi-urban areas in the country.

Increasing enrolment of trainees for training in occupations with high labour market demand, commencing from 2021, is a prime target and additional funding has been allocated to enhance the training facilities and support students. In order to ease the economic burden of parents, it has been decided to give a stipend of Rs. 4,000 per month for trainees in NVQ certificate level courses of high labour market demand. Soft skills and entrepreneurship competencies are being included in course curricula to increase employability and quality of trainees of the skills sector.

Promotion of innovations in the training delivery and assessment processes will be given priority and thus a new mode of skills acquisition has been introduced, titled 'Flexible Learning Mode' (FLM) where 'Nano Qualifications' are awarded in 'Narrow Skill' areas for employed persons. This step is expected to make a significant impact in the industry sectors where thousands of workers who work without proper qualifications will have the opportunity of obtaining national qualifications.

A nationally recognized and internationally understood 'Record of Achievement' (RoA) will be awarded to those who qualify in units of competencies of a given training programme in the FLM. The Sri Lanka skills sector is used to provide packaged qualifications over the years in the NVQ system mostly for six months to one-year duration. Nevertheless the FLM will give the opportunity for training providers to provide module based short courses related to units of competencies on part-time basis. This will expect to give opportunities to employed persons to obtain national qualifications for the work they do in industry. As they gradually acquire RoAs over time, they will be able to secure full packaged qualifications in the NVQ framework.

Increasing the access to higher education for those qualifying the GCE Advanced Level is one of the top priorities of the government and this issue is addressed in many fronts. The Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation Ministry is entrusted with the development of a new network of universities working in close collaboration with industry, offering employment oriented higher education leading to degree-level qualifications. It is planned to establish 10 universities in identified 10 administrative districts initially and expand the system in future.

The Sri Lanka skills sector is now focused to be responsive to the needs of the industry sectors and as well as to fulfill aspirations of the youth and employed persons. Sustained efforts of all – government, private sector training providers, industry, employees and trainees – will ensure the achievement of goals and a skilled nation.

(The writer is Acting Vice Chancellor, Ocean University of Sri Lanka)



During the two decades, from 2000 – 2020, the largest ever investment in the skills sector took place for the benefit of those who seek vocational education and training in our country.

Opponents of elections then, proponents of them now

– Minister Dinesh

Those who raised hands during the previous government to postpone the Provincial Council Elections are asking now at the Geneva Commission, to hold them. We at that time opposed the postponement of the Provincial Council Elections while the Tamil political parties in the North joined hands with the then government and voted in favour of the postponement," Minister Dinesh Gunawardene said.

Minister Gunawardena was addressing a meeting after opening a road in Madiwela, Maharagama. "When we were in the Opposition, we were committed to protect democracy. After the Presidential Election 2019, this Government has been elected through fair elections and winning the goodwill of the world. The Government is now taking steps to provide drinking water, electricity and other facilities to the people. All should work together to get the maximum benefit of the development," the Minister said.



Minister Dinesh Gunawardene addressing the meeting.

Colombo Archbishop seeks protection for Muthurajawela

Archbishop of Colombo Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith requested to declare the Muthurajawela wetland as a protected area under the Wildlife Conservation Department.

Issuing a press statement on Monday, the Cardinal expressed his objections to the proposal to take over the Muthurajawela wetland

and adjoining villages to the Urban Development Authority (UDA).

He said that Environment Minister Mahinda Amaraweera, Wildlife State Minister Wimalaweera Dissanayake and Central Environmental Authority Chairman Siripala Amarasinghe in a meeting held at the Archbishop's residence on January 21

promised not to carry out any project or allow any destructive activity in Muthurajawela. He said that this promise had not been kept and expressed his displeasure for failing to take necessary steps to protect the Muthurajawela ecosystem.

"The Minister also promised to appoint a Committee to look into the damage

already caused to the Wetland and I nominated two members to the Committee as requested by the Minister," he added.

He said that a certain private company had forcefully removed the signboard at the site claiming ownership to the land.

Ministry to identify areas with sensitive eco-systems

The Environment Ministry has launched a programme to identify areas with sensitive ecosystems in the country, Environment Minister Mahinda Amaraweera said. He said that Ministry Secretary Dr. Anil Jasinghe has been tasked to initiate the project.

"When implementing development projects, trees are felled first. Because of this, many valuable trees have been lost to the country. A forest is a natural ecosystem. If such ecosystems are destroyed, artificial forestation is impossible. The people will have to suffer the consequences at some point in the future," he said.

"According to the Paris Agreement, we must increase our forest cover to 32 per cent by 2030. This target goes hand in hand with the *Saubagya Deema* Policy, which aims to increase the forest cover to 30

per cent by 2025. But some racketeers with the connivance of government officials and some local politicians are damaging the environment. These illegal activities are a great obstacle to increase the forest cover of our country," he said.

The Minister was addressing the gathering when he visited the seven-acre Root Ball Tree Park run by Janaka Jayalal of Suriyawewa. "Janaka has so far planted about 102 varieties of seedlings using the Root Ball system. Instead of cutting down trees in the name of development projects, Janaka has used new technology to remove trees and plant them elsewhere. He also transplanted a 110-foot tall Botre in Halpanwila in Chilaw in Rasnayakapura, Nikaweratiya. The tree had now grown about two more feet," the Minister said quoting a press release.



Minister Mahinda Amaraweera inspecting plants during his visit to the Root Ball Tree Park in Suriyawewa.

Sri Lanka Press Association holds 65th AGM



Standing from left are Daminda Harsha Perera, Sandun Yapa Karunaratne, Pani Wewala, Saliya Fonseka, Cyril Ariyapala, Kumudu Upul Shantha, Sriyanjani Lokuliyana, Krishna D. Edirisinghe, Maalee Yasantha Gabriel, Shakya Sheshadi, Anura C. Perera, Thilanka Kanakarathna, Rohitha Wickramasinghe, Ananda Kannangara and Yohan Perera.

The Sri Lanka Press Association held the 65th Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Western Province Aesthetic Resort Auditorium in Colombo 7 last month.

The Office Bearers and the Executive Committee for 2020 /2021 gathered for a group photograph after the meeting.

Here seated from left are National Organizer Nimanthi Ranasinghe, Treasurer Chaminda Karunaratne, Chief Patron Muditha Kariyakarawana, Guest of honour and Sri Lanka Press Complaints Commission Official Kamal Liyanarachchi, President Dharman Wickremaretna, Secretary General Kurulu Koojana Kariyakarawana and Dep. Sec. Gen. Tilak Senanayake.

Prasanthan further remanded

SIVAM PACKIYANATHAN, Batticaloa Special Corr.

Tamil Makkal Viduthalaipulikal (TMVP) General Secretary and former Eastern Provincial Councillor Poo-palapillai Prasanthan, who is remanded for allegedly intimidating witnesses in the double murder case in Arayampathy, Kattankudy, was further remanded till March 15.

The case was taken up for hearing through Zoom at the Batticaloa Magistrate's Court. Prasanthan was arrested on November 23, 2020 for his alleged involvement in the Arayampathy double murder in 2008. While on bail, he was ordered to be re-arrested by the Attorney General's Department for intimidating witnesses in the case. Magistrate A.C.Rizwan on Monday gave the order to remand him for another 14 days.



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Ambassador of Sri Lanka to China Dr. Palitha Kohina handing a consignment of 'Ceylon Tea' over to Party Secretary of the China International Chamber of Commerce for the Private Sector (CICPCS) Wang Yanguo recently.



A religious book, Buddha Vandana and Bodi Vandana, was launched on February 4 at the Mihiliaka Medura, BMICH by the Chief Incumbent of Maithri Monastery, No. 88, Nagarukkarama Rd, Kalegana, Galle, Ven. Darangala Mangala Thera in the presence of Most Ven. Prof. Vijitha Walpola Thera, Rural and Local Water Development Project State Minister Sanath Nishantha Perera and distinguished guests. Here the Thera presenting the book to Southland College Galle Principal Sandaya Irani Pathiranaswami.

ADA KOTIPATHI - Wednesday

Draw No.: 1211 Colour: Pink

Date: 03.03.2021

Today's Jackpot

Rs. 113,374,010/-

Winning tickets are valid for 6 months.

Development Lotteries Board
 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 2
 Tel: 0112 333 546-47 Fax: 2 333 545 Website: www.dlb.lk
 Hotline: 0114 824 824, 0112 333 778

SUPER BALL

Draw Number: 1383 Colour: Purple

Draw Date: 01.03.2021 Date: Monday

Winning English Letter and Numbers

I 06 46 59 63

Total Value of Prizes **Rs. 3,651,780/-**

Winning tickets will be valid for 6 months.

Development Lotteries Board
 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 2
 Tel: 0112 333 546-47
 Hotline: 0114 824 824, 0112 333 778 or 1919
 SMS: DLB=space-LOT=space=SB & send to 999
 For Interactive Voice Response Service - Call 0114 825 825

Monday Draw No.: 3539

Date: 01.03.2021 Colour: Blue

Total Value of Prizes **Rs. 4,619,780/-**

Winning Numbers **04 11 63 70** English Letter **I**

Winning tickets are valid only for six months

Development Lotteries Board
 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 2
 Tel: 0112 333 546-47
 Hotline: 0114 824 824, 0112 333 778 or 1919
 For Interactive Voice Response Service - Call 0114 825 825

Date: 01-03-2021

Draw Number: 3090 Colour: Yellow

SUPER JACKPOT **Rs. 2,000,000/-**

Winning Numbers **33 49 57 62** Sagittarius

Total Value of Prizes **Rs. 11,410,060/-**

Development Lotteries Board
 No. 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 2
 Tel: 0112 333 546-47
 Result Hotline: 0112 333 778
 Interactive Voice Response Number: 011 4 825 825

Date: 01-03-2021

Draw Number: 1737 Colour: Yellow

Super Jackpot **Rs. 22,218,940/-**

Winning Numbers **21 51 67 70** English Letter **B**

Total Value of Prizes **Rs. 2,983,680/-**

Next Super Jackpot **Rs. 22,377,132/-**

Development Lotteries Board
 No. 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 2
 Tel: 0112 333 546-47
 Result Hotline: 0112 333 778
 Interactive Voice Response Number: 011 4 825 825

Monday

Date: 01.03.2021

Draw No.: 1209

Colour: Red

Total Value of Prizes **Rs. 4,601,900/-**

Winning Numbers **17 21 49 64** English Letter **M**

Winning tickets are valid only for six months

Development Lotteries Board
 356, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place, Colombo 2
 Tel: 0112 333 546-47
 Hotline: 0114 824 824, 0112 333 778 or 1919
 For Interactive Voice Response Service - Call 0114 825 825

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Wednesday, March 3, 2021

An unpardonable act

The high-handed act of the Karuwalagaswewa Pradeshiya Sabha (PS) Chairman in assaulting a person who brought up the issue of a dilapidated road with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa during a "Gama Samaga Pilisandarak" (Conversation with the Village) programme in the area last week should be extensively investigated and the full force of the law brought to bear on the suspect. Such thuggery on the part of politicians in the periphery should not be condoned.

The assault triggered a protest opposite the PS premises by its members across political party lines urging the authorities to bring the errant Chairman to book. A complaint was lodged with the police by the victim leading to the arrest of the Chairman who was subsequently released on Police bail. The assaulted victim, a retired Army Major, had apprised the President that the road in question had been in a state of neglect for over 50 years and pleaded with the latter to make early arrangements to repair it.

The victim alleged that the Chairman carried out the attack on him because the Chairman was angry that he brought this matter to the attention of the President. It is not clear if the victim had spoken out of turn and invited the wrath of the Chairman, because it is alleged that many villagers attending the programme have been instructed to put only those questions to the President that are scripted by the local politicians themselves. If this is indeed the case, the entire programme will be undermined since the whole purpose of the President visiting these village outposts is to learn firsthand the problems of the people from the people themselves so that effective and lasting remedies could be found.

Hence MPs and local politicians should be kept out of the whole process if the villages are to benefit because it is also known that the local politicians get people to pose questions that would only accrue benefit to the politicians themselves rather than to the poor villagers. It is well known that various ruses are adopted by Local Government (LG) politicians to line their pockets at public expense. Most LG heads are today a law unto themselves and ride roughshod over the people. That the victim in this instance was a retired Army officer mattered little to the Chairman whose inflated ego may have been hurt by this person 'jumping the gun'.

The Karuwalagaswewa incident was just one instance where LG bigwigs had taken the law into their own hands. Numerous are the instances where grassroots level politicians have gone berserk harassing the people and engaging in unlawful activities such as illegal sand mining, destruction of forests and illegal reclamation of lands, etc. The Police usually turn a blind eye to these depredations fearing repercussions.

LG politicians ought to be reined in and cut down to size. In any event a majority of Provincial Council (PC) and LG members are biding their time waiting their turn to enter Parliament with the development of the villages and the people's welfare furthest from their minds. One recalls the numerous foreign trips undertaken by PC and LG members at tremendous cost to the taxpayer on so-called study tours including to educate themselves on garbage disposal methods. But the country is still grappling with the garbage problem with no manifest signs of coming to grips with it apart from a Waste to Power initiative in Colombo.

The President has hit the right note on venturing out to the far-flung villages and personally obtaining knowledge of the problems and hardships faced by the poor marginalized villagers. It was witnessed by all how the President utilized his powers to deliver instant solutions in a majority of instances even insisting on dispensing with the mostly obsolete Government circulars with his own instructions given full weight. Hence, in this whole exercise PS Chairmen and their ilk should be kept out of the equation and not made to interfere with the smooth process since 'Gama Samaga Pilisandarak' means just that - a dialogue with the people where no other interference should be tolerated from whatever quarter.

Obviously the PS Chairman's ire would have been raised by the fact that he was exposed as a non-performer before the President. It is also common knowledge that LG heads and their functionaries only opt for projects that have potential side earnings for themselves and repairing a road would have not brought in the desired returns for this particular LG head.

It is also being alleged that certain LG politicians are exploiting the recent Presidential order to permit villagers to use peripheral forests for cultivation purposes, to grab these forest lands for themselves for other commercial ventures which should be looked into by the authorities. The Government is being unfairly blamed for allowing such forest destruction when in fact it is the local politicians who should be hauled over the coals. It is such acts by local politicians that make Governments unpopular with the people. Hence the need for remedial measures to be taken before it is too late.



Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith receiving the Easter Sunday PCoI report.



Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena receiving the Easter Sunday PCoI report.

The East speaks up for Sri Lanka

"Diplomacy is to do and say the nastiest things in the nicest way"

- Isaac Goldberg,

American Critic (1887-1938)

A lot had been said on Sri Lanka as the country came under the microscope at the 46th United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) session that kicked off with virtual contributions last week.

The latest report on Sri Lanka by United Nations Human Rights High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet drew both favourable and critical remarks by Foreign Ministers and envoys of about 30 countries and 10 Non-Governmental Organizations that took part in the debate.

Deciphering the messages behind the decorated and guarded diplomatic language of those speakers would help identify their real intentions and foretell the fate of the country in the face of another Western bloc-sponsored Resolution at the Geneva-based Council.

UN Human Rights Chief Michelle Bachelet, opening the interactive dialogue on Sri Lanka, reiterated her position that domestic initiatives have repeatedly failed to ensure justice for victims and promote reconciliation.

"For these reasons, I call on the Council to explore new ways to advance various types of accountability at the international level, for all parties, and seek redress for victims,... as well as to support relevant judicial proceedings in Member States," she noted.

Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena, in the five minutes allotted to him, took great pains to enlighten the Member and Observer States on the Council's discriminatory approach toward Sri Lanka and invited them to see the big picture before coming to conclusions.

"Sri Lanka rejects the High Commissioner's Report which has unjustifiably broadened its scope and mandate further, incorporating many issues of governance and matters that are essentially domestic for any self-respecting, sovereign country.

"Sri Lanka calls upon the members of this Council that any resolution which is based on this Report, be rejected by the Council and be brought to a closure. We remain open to engaging constructively with the UN, including this Council, and the international community in mutually agreed areas, in conformity with the Constitution and in keeping with domestic priorities and policies," he remarked.

Showing solidarity

According to the analysts who closely followed the debate, about 21 countries commented in favour of Sri Lanka including about a dozen Member States which are entitled to vote at the Council. During the interactive dialogue last Wednesday, Sri Lanka received the full backing of Russia, China and Pakistan, and no doubt the Government looks to these countries to whip up support at the 47-Member UN Inter-Governmental body to defend the country's position.

The Chinese envoy in Geneva told the Council that the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) should "respect the sovereignty and political independence of all nations," adding that, "It is the consistent stand of China to oppose politicization and double standards on human rights, as well as using human rights as an excuse in interfering in other countries' internal affairs."

Bolstering this stance, the Russian representative stressed that Sri Lanka must itself without external pressure determine the priorities for action and the areas which require international assistance. These



A session of UNHRC in progress



Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena speaking at the UNHRC Interactive Dialogue on Sri Lanka recently.



The Chinese envoy joining in the UNHRC debate on Sri Lanka.



United Nations Human Rights High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet



The Indian Representative joining in the UNHRC debate on Sri Lanka

MIDWEEK POLITICS

with Disna Mudalige

words of solidarity by the world powers of the Eastern bloc came at a time the Government was very much in need of solidarity.

Pakistan, in the spirit of renewed cordialities and mutual bond following Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan's two-day visit in Colombo that coincided the UNHRC forum, also stood by the side of Sri Lanka.

At the same time, Pakistan did not forget to call for an immediate policy change of the Sri Lankan Government to allow burial of those who die of COVID-19, an issue that had been dragging on for months earning the ire of not only the Muslim brethren in the country but also the entire Muslim population around the globe.

Ending the impasse, the Government last Thursday gazetted the revised Regulations to the Quarantine and Prevention of Diseases Ordinance to allow cremation or burial of those who succumb to COVID-19. The health guidelines and suitable dry and isolated lands for the purpose are expected to be announced shortly.

Core Group's Resolution

Needlessly to say, many international actors were keenly waiting for India's position on Sri Lanka, its immediate neighbour, to take a clue on how to react at the Council. Interestingly, India remained more or less neutral in its stance, but used the forum as an opportunity to call for the full implementation of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution,

which gave birth to the Provincial Councils as a result of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord in 1987.

As expected, a number of influential countries in the Western bloc spoke for the OHCHR report on Sri Lanka while complaining of "the reversed progress" on the fronts of justice and accountability for the alleged past human rights violations and

"the risk of their recurrence" in the country. Not all of them are Member States of the UNHRC, but global powers such as the US can make an impact on the voting through its proxy States.

In the meantime, the zero draft of the Resolution by the Core Group on Sri Lanka, which consists of the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Malawi, has now been uploaded to the UNHRC web portal.

Discussions on this draft are now on and it is expected to be put to a vote on March 22. The content and wording of the draft Resolution may be subject to changes over the next couple of weeks. Foreign policy analysts observe that the proposed Resolution, in its current shape, poses a challenge to the sovereignty and independence of the country.

It also shatters hopes of any closure to the 12-year-long scrutiny of Sri Lanka at the UN Human Rights body. The available copy of the draft Resolution requests the OHCHR to present a written update to the Council at its 49th session (March next year), and a comprehensive report at its 51st session (September 2022) on the country's situation.

Easter Sunday report

While the Government was focused on the UNHRC, the political pot was boiling at home over the recently released report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCoI) into the Easter Sunday attacks.

The PCoI report was tabled in Parliament last week and the copies of the PCoI report were handed over to the Ven. Mahanayake Therasa and Archbishop of Colombo His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith on Monday.

The outspoken Cardinal questioned the rationale of appointing a ministerial committee comprising political members to study the report. His irritation was palpable when he openly complained on the qualifications of some Committee Members appointed to study a hefty report produced by an erudite team of Justices.

However, the Government responded that the Committee Members were appointed based on their experience. The Government will determine the future course of action with regard to the PCoI report following the submission of Committee's observations which are due by March 15.

Former President Maithripala Sirisena was in trouble following the release of the PCoI report, as it has recommended instituting criminal charges against him. He has now turned to legal advisers to decide how best to defend himself. At the same time, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) came forward to defend its Leader and collectively decided to repudiate the report.

Some SLFP Members commented that the PCoI report was an attempt by the ruling party to push the SLFP to the wall. The Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) frontline members were quick to point out that the SLFP's argument did not hold water as the Commission and all its Members were appointed by the former President himself. In a twist of fate, the Commission has boomeranged on former President Sirisena after about 18 months.

Observing that only the first Volume of the report was available for perusal, Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa demanded that all six Volumes of the report be presented in Parliament. The United National Party (UNP) was at ease that the PCoI has not recommended legal action against its Leader former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe but has only censured his lax attitude towards extremism.

However, all parties across the political divide were in agreement that the report was inconclusive and that it does neither reveal the masterminds behind the attacks or their real motives. They complained that the Commission had failed to meet the expectations of the public and the report that runs to 472 pages had only repeated what is already visible. They pointed out that questions such as whether there was a foreign hand behind the attacks and whether there was a tier above ring-leader Zahran Hashim from whom he received instructions have been left unanswered by the report.

Having said that, it is imprudent to belittle the report's findings. Independent analysts opine that it will be wise to give the Attorney General a free hand to extract whatever evidence is needed from the report and proceed onto legal action. In the meantime, the investigative bodies will have to dig deeper to ascertain the truth behind the Easter Sunday carnage that shook the nation on April 21, 2019.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Conversation is the most human and humanizing thing that we do. - Sherry Turkle



Former Minister Arjuna Ranatunga

RAJPAL ABEYNAYAKE

PM Khan and his political lessons for Arjuna



Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan

Pakistani Premier Imran Khan apparently had a message for his former cricketing colleague Arjuna Ranatunga. Take the knocks he said, and learn from them.

He also said that Arjuna instilled a sense of self-confidence in Sri Lankan cricketers who were always abundantly talented, but never had that one quantity — self-belief.

No argument with the legendary Prime Minister on that one. It was Ranatunga's chutzpah and his sense of can-do that won us the World Cup, a feat so far not emulated.

This is not a cricket column, but worth mentioning that the country reached two subsequent World Cup finals, one under the captaincy of Mahela Jayawardene and the other under that of Kumar Sangakkara. Arguably, both had more talented teams to lead than Arjuna had in 1996, but they couldn't win the clincher. On the given day only one team can win, and so this is not to take anything away from Mahela's or Sanga's feats — but both probably lacked that one ingredient, Arjuna's Captain Cool chutzpah, his sense of, "We don't care who you are, because we are going to wallop you right here before you can say Darrell Hair."

Many hats came off to salute Arjuna for that quality.

Politics is a different game though. Imran Khan apparently had some words for Arjuna Ranatunga on that too.

There is one thing this writer thinks, that Imran Khan did not say. He is a kind of politician who won in the end because he had his country at heart. Yes, he possessed other qualities, but he had his people's interests uppermost.

Humane qualities

The same could be said of any number of successful Asian politicians, and politicians from anywhere around the world. But to confine it to Asians for sake of example, Aung San Su Ki, Imran Khan, Lee Kwan Yew, Mahinda Rajapaksa, etc., were all in the same mould — even though their political backgrounds were vastly different. They worked for their people and only their people.

Politics rewards only those who work for the people of the country, and though that should be axiomatic, it would be surprising, the number of folk who do not understand that. Politics may temporarily reward those who work for other people — for other countries, and for outside interests, to put it as crudely but credibly as possible. But politics rewards on a tangible, not accidental basis, those who work for their people and their people alone. Ask Ranil Wickremesinghe, he learnt that the hard way.

Politics does not reward the Mangala Samaraweeras of this world. This writer knows Mangala Samaraweera, or at least had known him — met and spoken to the gentleman, on many an occasion in the past. Make no mistake, he is no ogre. He is at a personal level, genial, humane and better than most. After all, he is the type who even in the middle of a most acrimonious political climate, drops in on his way to



Arjuna Ranatunga with the 1996 World Cup



Imran Khan with the 1992 World Cup

say 'hi' to his political rivals, Mahinda and Gotabaya Rajapaksa in Medamulana. This writer saw the video — where he is shown to drop in, and say "Me yanagaman nikan aawa" (Dropped by for no reason). When he is invited to a Rajapaksa family wedding, he is there, sometimes in the teeth of unfair criticism by sections of his constituency over the mere act of attending a family function out of goodwill, forgetting bitter political rivalries for a moment on the happy occasion.

Colonial times

But I digress. Despite these qualities, Samaraweera will never be a politician in the mould of Aung San Su Ki, Imran Khan, Lee Kwan Yew, or Mahinda Rajapaksa. That is because, essentially, he does not work for the people of this country. He is free to disagree, and he probably would stand on his head and say, no, he does work for "we, the people". "We the people" maybe, but not "we the people of our country". If he lived in colonial times, he

would have been a great Governor General. No doubt the Queen would have appointed him to that decorated sinecure without batting an eyelid. But sadly for him, these are not colonial times. As much as he wishes this was, this country is no colony, not of the British — not of any other power, period.

What goes for Samaraweera, goes for Wickremesinghe, and Ranatunga as well. As long as these folks primarily work for outsiders, they would not succeed. The people are aware of

Samaraweera's 'performance' in Geneva. He would say he made those moves that were ridiculously inimical to this country's interests, in the interests of this country's minorities. Nice try, but the people would never buy that. Least of all, the minorities.

The people of this country, though generally passive and unengaged in the political whirligig, have keener instincts than Samaraweera thinks they do. He cannot dupe them, and claim that what he did for expediency was done in their interests. By now, he

probably believes in his own lie that he did all that he did as Foreign Minister for the longer term interests of the nation and its people. At best, he did what he did because he thought that is the easier option — the cushier path of least resistance.

How did that turn out? This is the problem with the opinion makers of this country too. There was this ode that Victor Ivan the journalist had written about a beautiful country in the future, because according to him, "extremism" would soon be defeated. In many people's view, Aung San Su Ki was extremist too. But it appears she cannot be defeated, not even by a marauding military.

Outsiders

Lee Kwan Yew, wasn't 'extremist' by any stretch. He was known for his best efforts to foster racial amity. That is despite agreeing to constitutionally allocate a special place for Malays, Singapore's indigenous people. But despite his moderate stand on race, he was Singaporean first. Refer that famous speech, in which he said the CIA tried to bribe him and he spurned the lot.

That is where Victor Ivan gets it wrong. He conflates 'extremism' with working in the interests of the country, and not in the interests of outsiders.

He thinks people can be roused to be 'racist' but people are in their grain amicable, and they want to co-exist with those of other races, religions, sexual orientations, what have you. He seems to underestimate the innate goodness in people, however acrimonious the 'mob' may seem at times.

But he underestimates something more than that. He underestimates the disdain people have for those who work in collaboration with the outsider. He cannot hide it — he hates the Government in power, and worships the Wickremesinghe, Samaraweera and Premadasa type of 'liberals'.

He is unaware that the people know those of the aforementioned ilk work with the outsider, the interloper — even when they try their best to hide that fact. They also try other tactics such as claiming "this (current) Government is making the country a Chinese colony, and they are outsiders too." The people know that what is damaging is when Samaraweera turned against us in Geneva, and not when the Chinese lent us a little money.

Politicians who go against these fundamentals may succeed in duping the people in the short term — but they cannot sustain that gig. It is also extremely unlikely that they can repeat-dupe the people as they did in 2015. There was nothing beautiful about that. It was as ugly as hell, and the people learnt a bitter lesson from Samaraweera's antics in Geneva, and the raw deal they got due to the neoliberal economics, also recommended to us by outsiders and 'experts'.

Ivan can try, but he cannot conflate that sort of disloyalty to the people, with what he thinks is a 'beautiful' counter reaction to extremism. Just so he understands, people will go to 'extreme' lengths to save this country from inimical, non-Sri Lankan, patently alien influences.

As for Arjuna Ranatunga, even as a bit player in the political game as of now, he can take note and learn something from his younger brother Prasanna Ranatunga.



Arjuna Ranatunga and Imran Khan with Indian Cricket legend Kapil Dev

We have received the following response to the Right of Reply (ROR) written by Ranga Suriarachchi which was published in these spaces on February 8, 2021, regarding the article headlined "COPE: Coping with Corruption" written by Amrit Muttukumaru, which was published in the *Daily News* in these spaces on January 12, 2021. The following is Muttukumaru's response to Suriarachchi's ROR.

"It is not surprising it has taken Printcare Secure Limited more than two months to respond to the findings by Parliament's COPE against the company reported in the front page of the *Daily News* on December 7, 2020. I wish to set the record straight on the slanderous allegations against me by its General Manager, Ranga Suriarachchi (Ref. *Daily News* of February 8, 2021).

Printcare Secure Limited is a

Right of reply

Muttukumaru responds to Printcare Secure

fully owned subsidiary of 'Printcare PLC' some of whose directors are household names in the key industries of tea and tourism. The nature of the allegations contained in the *Daily News* news item against the company and it being ignored for so long does no credit to the directors concerned.

The Annual Report 2019 of Printcare PLC in the section on 'Anti-Corruption' inter alia states: "Ethical practices are placed as one of the core values of Printcare and it maintains a zero tolerance policy towards corruption and bribery in all its transactions."

Although I only referred to the findings of COPE as reported in the *Daily News* of December 7, 2020, Ranga Suriarachchi has gone ballistic after my article "COPE: Coping with Corruption" published in the *Daily News* on January 12, 2021.

Ranga Suriarachchi's vicious attack on me is nothing but a 'red herring' to obfuscate the COPE findings. He has accused me of having a "personal vendetta against the Managing Director of this company" and being "sued for willful defamation by our Managing Director". I categorically debunk that I have

defamed anyone let alone Suriarachchi's Managing Director. No Court has ever found me guilty of defaming anyone or guilty of Contempt of Court.

Although the said MD sued me for defamation and Contempt of Court after I raised matters concerning Rotary International, the cases were settled on his initiative. On the alleged defamation, after suing me for Rs. 100 Million both cases were settled on identical undertakings — we will both not write on any matter concerning each other.

My payment to a charity was in

settlement of a Contempt of Court issue which has nothing to do with any 'defamation' as insinuated by Ranga Suriarachchi citing a *Sunday Times* news report dated November 8, 2015. It was not a court directive.

Suriarachchi's MD has apparently breached his undertaking to court through Suriarachchi who has slandered me by name. While I place my name upfront in all I write, Suriarachchi's Managing Director has been using agents to vilify me after I raised matters concerning Printcare Secure.

In any case, Suriarachchi's claim

in his clarification that "at no time have we approached a member of the Cabinet" is spurious. He has himself confirmed "appealing" to Minister Karunanayake, who was the subject minister at the time.

Why did it take Printcare Secure more than two months to respond to the exposé in the *Daily News* of December 7, 2020 that COPE had observed that its use of political influence had caused a huge financial loss to the NLB? The same exposé in the front page of *The Island* on December 7, 2020 titled "COPE finds Karunanayake influenced Lotteries Board procurement causing losses" has also been ignored by Printcare.

If Printcare Secure genuinely believed that the NLB had acted "unfairly" and there was a "mendacious award of a tender", why is it not disclosing whether they have lodged a complaint with the 'Bribery Commission' and if not why?



DIGITAL DIVIDE:

COVID-19'S DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT ON EDUCATION

A year into the COVID-19 pandemic, children across the world have lost an average of 74 days of education each due to school closures and a lack of access to remote learning. Save the Children said, which is more than a third of the standard global 190-day school year.

In total, an estimated 112 billion days of education have been lost altogether, with the world's poorest children disproportionately affected.

New analysis by the child rights organisation of data for 194 countries and different regions shows that children in Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia, missed out on almost triple the education of children in Western Europe.

Broken down at regional level, the difference in lost days of education becomes painfully clear, Save the Children said: (1) Both in Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia, children went through around 110 days without any education; (2) Children in the Middle East lost 80 days of education; (3) Children in Sub-Saharan Africa lost an average of 69 days; (4) In East Asia and the Pacific, children lost an average of 47 days; (5) In Europe and Central Asia, children lost out on an average of 45 days; (6) In Western Europe alone, it was 38 days.

Inger Ashing, CEO of Save the Children, said: "Almost a year after the global pandemic was officially declared, hundreds of millions of children remain out of school. The year 2021 must be the year to ensure that children do not pay the price for this pandemic."

A spike in school closures

started in February 2020, and on March 11 the pandemic was declared, pushing 91 percent of the world's learners out of school at its peak.

As schools closed and remote learning was not equally accessible for all children, the biggest education emergency in history widened the gap between countries and within countries, Save the Children said. The divide grew between wealthier and poorer families; urban and rural households; refugees or displaced children and host populations; children with disabilities and children without disabilities.

Santiago, 13, attends a school for children with a profound hearing loss supported by Save the Children in Venezuela. The school has been closed since the start of the pandemic. He said: "What makes me feel sad, worried, and scared is not being able to return to school, because I like school. People understand me there. When I can't go to school, I cry and just want to sleep. What I would tell the children in the world who are feeling sad or scared or worried is that they are my friends. And that they are not alone."

Jonathan, 15, a Save the Children child rights campaigner in a refugee camp in Uganda, has like many children missed out on schooling over the past year. He is worried for his friends who he has seen drop out of school permanently due to school

closures and end up working, pregnant or in early marriages. He said: "I feel bad when other children are not going to school. Because without education no one can get success. So, you find that if you do not go to school, it will be hard on your side. You will not understand, you will always be illiterate. So, you find that it's very difficult."

There have also been huge discrepancies in access to learning in wealthier nations during the pandemic, Save the Children said.

Students in the U.S. for example are more disconnected from the internet than students in other high-income countries, which likely also impacted their access to remote learning. Only two EU countries have lower levels of internet access than the U.S. - Bulgaria and Romania. At

the start of the pandemic, upwards of 15 million students from kindergarten through to high school in U.S. public schools lacked adequate internet for distance learning at home.

Other wealthier countries also struggled to provide equal online alternatives for school-based learning. In Norway, while almost all youth between 9 and 18 years old have access to a smartphone, 30 percent did not have access to a PC at home. In the Netherlands, one in five children does not have a PC or tablet for home learning. Governments and donors need to take immediate action to prevent an irreversible impact on the lives of millions of children who may never return to school, the agency warned.

Save the Children urged them to ensure that all children can

return to school in a safe and inclusive way so the most marginalised children, including girls, are not robbed of a future by this pandemic. All children need to have access to catch up classes, so that children can make up for their lost learning, while recognising the huge emotional toll this crisis has taken.

Ashing said: "With vaccines being rolled out, there is hope that we can win the battle against the virus, if all countries can access them. But we will lose the war against the pandemic if we do not ensure children get back to school safely, have access to health services, have enough to eat and are protected. We owe it to children to get this right."

"At the same time, we need to recognise that children need support as they return to school. Living through this pandemic will have made many anxious and they will have missed out on basic needs, like playing with friends. They may also feel enormous pressure to make up for lost education. Children should be able to take their time - it should be a school-by-school,

child-by-child process that does not add pressure."

Besides losing out on learning, children out of school are exposed to a higher risk of child labour, child marriage and other forms of abuse, and are more likely to be trapped in a cycle of poverty for generations to come. The global pandemic is estimated to push an additional 2.5 million girls into child marriage by 2025.

Save the Children emphasised that with the G7 coming up, world leaders need to prioritise supporting children to return to school as safely as possible - especially girls. Also, governments and donors must close the education financing gap, with a particular focus on ensuring that the Global Partnership for Education achieves its replenishment target of \$5 billion for the next five years (2021-2025).

As schools closed and remote learning was not equally accessible for all children, the biggest education emergency in history widened the gap between countries and within countries, Save the Children said.

The global pandemic is estimated to push an additional 2.5 million girls into child marriage by 2025.

ONLINE EDUCATION

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN ASIA

KARIN HULSHOF

Dung, a 14-year-old girl from the Hmong ethnic minority, lives in Lao Cai province in northern Vietnam. During the COVID-19 related school closures in the country she and her brother began studying at home using materials their teachers shared through an online portal. But there is no internet in Dung's home, so they walked daily to the nearest preschool, stood outside the gate and tried to catch its Wi-Fi to download their homework.

Dung and her brother are not alone. Although East Asia and the Pacific has the fastest growing internet penetration in the world, the education response to the pandemic has revealed deep digital divides between and in countries based on gender, geography, income, and abilities.

Before the pandemic, over 183 million (or 32 percent) 3 to 17-year-old school-aged children in the region did not have internet at home. Many students also lack devices and adequate digital literacy. A recent UNICEF survey of youth in 10 ASEAN countries revealed that 61 percent of students do not receive any digital literacy education in schools. Teachers are largely unfamiliar with new technologies and need training to effectively utilize new tools.

Pandemic-related school closures forced many students to rely on virtual learning, but for those who had no internet access, education became out of reach. UNICEF



estimates that 80 million children in East Asia and the Pacific did not access any kind of learning during the 2020 lockdowns. With school closures returning in Malaysia, Mongolia and Thailand this month, the education of millions of children is once again at risk.

If it isn't addressed, the costs of the digital divide will be high for the current generation of young people. As economies rapidly digitize with most jobs requiring digital literacy, those unable to acquire these new skills will not be able to participate in

the workforce and will have less opportunities to succeed in life.

Gender aspects of the digital divide must not be ignored. Women and girls often have less access to technology and the internet than boys, either because they cannot afford it or because social norms consider 'technology is for men'.

While COVID-19 deepened the learning crisis and exacerbated inequities in education, it has also acted as a catalyst for innovation and for including technology into the sector in many countries. Almost all

A recent UNICEF survey of youth in 10 ASEAN countries revealed that 61 percent of students do not receive any digital literacy education in schools.



education ministries in this region have adopted some type of remote learning policy and are seeking to digitally transform their education systems by harnessing the power of technology.

Technology was used in enabling teachers in Malaysia to embrace new approaches and learn new skills for teaching online. To support children like Dung, UNICEF Vietnam is rolling out the Augmented and Virtual Reality education solution for those minority children in rural areas whose teachers have no skills in teaching science, technology, engineering or math. In Lao PDR, where internet penetration is amongst the lowest in the region, the government is introducing the Learning Passport, a digital learning platform with both online and offline access to ensure continuity of learning of its children.

At a recent high-level meeting (October 2020), 10 ASEAN Ministers of Education committed to fostering digital literacy,

developing transferable skills and creating access to safe digital learning opportunities for all children and adolescents.

With ITU (the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies), UNICEF launched GIGA, an ambitious global initiative to connect every school and its surrounding community to the internet. We have also partnered with mobile-network operators in 100 countries to help bridge the digital divide.

Providing every child and adolescent access to the internet in a safe and responsible way can be a powerful equalizer to human resource development. With growing technology and a diverse range of actors providing online learning, together we can deliver learning opportunities anywhere, at any time and to everyone.

(Karin Hulshof is the Regional Director for UNICEF East Asia and Pacific.)

France approves AstraZeneca jab for older people

The French government says older people with pre-existing conditions can now get AstraZeneca's Covid-19 vaccine, revising its stance on the issue. "People affected by co-morbidities can be vaccinated with AstraZeneca, including those aged between 65 and 74," the health minister said.

Last month France approved use of the vaccine for under-65s only, citing lack of data for older people.

The Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is widely used across the UK, but several EU countries are still limiting it to the under-65s, including Germany.

The EU drugs regulator has approved it for all adults, but it is up to each member to set its own roll-out policy.

In a further development, Canada's immunisation commission on Monday advised against giving the AstraZeneca vaccine to over-65s, saying clinical trial data for that age group

was too limited. Speaking on television, French Health Minister Olivier Veran said people with pre-existing conditions - such as high blood pressure or diabetes - could get the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine from GP surgeries, hospitals and "within days" from pharmacies.

The policy would apply to those over 50, including those aged 65 to 75, he said. Those aged over 75 will still be offered either Pfizer or Moderna jabs in a vaccination centre, he added.

In January French President Emmanuel Macron said the AstraZeneca vaccine was "quasi-ineffective" for older age groups - a claim strongly rejected at the time by the UK officials and scientists.

But after a European Council meeting on Friday, he said: "If this is the vaccine I'm offered, obviously I would take it." As more data has emerged, French health officials have tried to

convince people that it is just as safe and effective as other Covid-19 vaccines.

Just 273,000 AstraZeneca doses have been administered in France out of 1.7 million received by the end of February, health ministry figures show.

Some French doctors had spurned the vaccine, citing initial side-effects in some people and trial data suggesting it offered minimal protection against mild disease from the South African Covid variant, though the developer said it still protects against severe disease.

The MG France doctors' association has since hit back at criticism of the AstraZeneca jab and the fact that many

doses remain unused. The man in charge of France's vaccine rollout has also backed it, saying it has unfairly received a "bad press".

About three million people have so far received at least one dose of a Covid-19 vaccine in France - against more than 20 million in the UK, which has roughly the same population.

The world has been closely watching the UK's vaccine rollout. Britain has vaccinated more of its population than many other countries and has taken bold, pragmatic decisions about who to offer shots to and when.

Some EU states were reluctant to use the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine in very elderly people because there was little

trial data to show how well it worked for this age group, compared to other vaccines such as the Pfizer jab.

The UK, however, reasoned it was highly likely it would be beneficial and it was better to vaccinate as many vulnerable people as quickly as possible. And now real life data suggests that educated judgement has paid off.

According to results so far from the vaccination programme, the shot is cutting the chance of people aged 80 and over from getting very sick with coronavirus and needing hospital care by more than 80%, just a few weeks after a first dose.

England's deputy chief medical officer - Prof Jonathan Van-Tam - said the findings were a clear vindication of the UK's strategy and that other countries would doubtless be very interested too.

Every nation is in a race



against the virus and vaccines offer a real hope of getting ahead. France is still struggling to control increased infection rates in some areas, despite a continuing national night-time curfew. Bars, restaurants and museums remain closed but the government wants to avoid another national lockdown, resorting instead to tighter measures in some localities such as the southern city of Nice.

Travel to Germany from the French Moselle region has been restricted at the request of Germany which is concerned about the South African variant. Cross-border public transport is suspended, while

drivers can cross but only with proof of a negative coronavirus test. Germany is also concerned that AstraZeneca jabs are going to waste and there are calls to widen the number of priority groups who can receive it. Only 240,000 of 1.45 million doses had been used by 23 February. On Sunday, a senior German immunologist, Carsten Watzl, urged his country to change its mind and start allowing over-65s to receive the vaccine. Germany's vaccine commission is currently reviewing its recommendation and Chancellor Angela Merkel said last week that it was "a vaccine that can be trusted". (BBC)



Kidnapped Nigerian schoolgirls released

More than 275 Nigerian schoolgirls kidnapped last Friday have been returned safely, government officials say.

The Nigerian government has denied paying a ransom for the girls, and officials have not said who's responsible. It's unclear whether the captors were arrested.

The government initially said 317 girls were abducted, but today revised the number to 279 without explanation. They were taken from their beds at the Government Girls Science Secondary School in the town of Jangebe.

Witnesses told reporters that gunmen - some wearing uniforms and disguised as security personnel - arrived at the school in pickup trucks and on motorcycles around 1 a.m. last Friday (7 p.m. ET Thursday). They then "broke into the students' hostels" and "forcefully evacuated" them.

The girls' kidnapping and return are the latest in a string of other similar instances in Nigeria. On Saturday, a group of 42 people kidnapped last month were released by their captors. In December, 300 abducted schoolboys were let go after negotiations.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari tweeted Tuesday that the Nigerian government is "working hard to bring an end to these grim and heartbreaking incidents of kidnapping." (NPR)

Ancient pet cemetery unearthed in Egypt

Excavations of the early Roman port of Berenice in Egypt have unearthed the remains of nearly 600 cats and dogs from an ancient pet cemetery thought to be the earliest known yet discovered dating from 2000 years ago.

Berenice, also called Berenice Troglodytica, and Baranis, was founded in 275 BC by Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BC), who named it after his mother, Berenice I of Egypt. From the 1st century BC until the 2nd century AD, Berenice was one of the trans-shipping points of trade between India, Sri Lanka, Arabia, and Upper Egypt.

Evidence for the cemetery was first discovered by Archaeozoologist Marta Osypinska and her colleagues at the Polish Academy of Sciences back in 2011, who discovered remains beneath a Roman rubbish pile.

In 2017, her team announced the discovery of 100 animals (mainly cats), but the exact nature of the bone assemblages was unclear, thought possibly to simply be discarded rubbish at the time.

During the latest series of excavations, Osypinska and her colleagues uncovered the remains of 585 animals buried in pits, with many covered with textiles or pieces of ceramics forming a kind of sarcophagus.

A veterinarian studying the bone assemblages has determined that most animals appear to have died from injury or disease, with some showing evidence of fractured legs and breaks in the bones.

Of the 585 animal remains, more than 90% were cats (many with iron collars or necklaces made with glass and shells), with dogs making up 5%, and the rest being baboons and two species of macaques native to the Indian subcontinent.

(Heritage Daily)

President Xi spearheads tech revolution

For U.S. politicians, China's potential to dominate sensitive cutting-edge technologies poses one of the biggest geopolitical threats of the next few decades. President Xi Jinping is similarly worried the U.S. will block China's rise, and this week will unveil plans for greater self-sufficiency.

At an annual session of China's legislature, top Communist Party leaders will approve a five-year policy blueprint to cut dependence on the West for crucial components like computer chips while also making big bets on emerging technologies from hydrogen vehicles to biotech. The push to mobilize trillions of dollars could help China surpass the U.S. as the world's biggest economy this decade and cement Xi's goal of turning the nation into a superpower.

"The most important thing is the magnitude of the ambition - this is bigger than anything Japan, South Korea or the U.S. ever did," said Barry Naughton, a professor at the University of California, San Diego, and one of the world's top researchers on China's economy. "The ambition is to push the economy through the gateway of a technological revolution."

The race to develop the most advanced technology is stoking U.S.-China tensions following decades of integration that raised living standards around the globe.

Now both countries are aiming for self-sufficiency in strategic areas, each fueled by fear the other wants to upend their political system: One that sees free speech and democracy as essential to prosperity, and another that puts one-party rule above individual liberty to deliver economic growth.

At stake for Xi is more than just improving the lives of China's 1.4 billion people, which is key to the Communist Party's justification for effectively banning political opposition. He also wants to show the party can play a successful role in guiding the economy, particularly after U.S. President Donald Trump's administration sought to undermine its legitimacy to rule and destroy national champions such as Huawei Technologies Co. and Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corp., China's largest microchip manufacturer. Beijing's confidence in its political system has grown after it quickly contained Covid-19 following delays by local officials in sharing information that allowed it to spread around the globe. Economists predict China's economy will expand 8.3% this year, compared with 4.1% in the U.S. "The pandemic once again proves the superiority of the socialist system with Chi-



President Xi Jinping

nese characteristics," Xi said last year. On Monday, he called the party's "glorious traditions" a "precious spiritual treasure." But the U.S. is now looking for allies to help thwart Xi's aspirations, both through denying Beijing access to

key technology and shoring up its own supplies of strategic goods. Last week, U.S. President Joe Biden announced a wide-ranging supply-chain review of semiconductors, pharmaceuticals, rare-earth metals and high-capacity batteries, part of a broader plan to out-compete China that includes \$2 trillion in infrastructure spending.

"If we don't get moving, they're going to eat our lunch," Biden told reporters in February after holding his first call with Xi. EU Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis separately highlighted concerns that Beijing was giving unfair advantages to Chinese companies, telling Bloomberg Television last month that the bloc would cooperate with the U.S. on challenges stemming "from the socio-econom-

ic model of China." Global investors are closely watching the National People's Congress session, which starts Friday and runs for about a week. While the Communist Party has shown it can quickly channel billions of dollars to control the supply chains of emerging sectors like solar power and electric vehicles, it has also swiftly reined in the private sector if risks escalate - seen most recently by the 11th-hour halt of an initial public offering by billionaire Jack Ma's Ant Group Co. Premier Li Keqiang will outline plans Friday to keep the economy humming over the next 12 months, which may include fresh measures to boost consumption even as he stops short of giving an official growth target for a second straight year. (Bloomberg)

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INT'L STANDARDS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

A major concern for businesses and protecting the planet

DR LALITH SENAWERA

The world-leading standards body the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the International Electro-technical Commission (IEC), and the International Telecommunication (ITU) each year on October 14th celebrate the World Standards Day to salute the collaborative efforts of experts who are involved in the formulation of voluntary standards for the betterment of the world activities paving the way to enhancing the quality of life of people. The theme declared last year was "Protecting the planet with standards".

I take my hat off to the presidents of the three main standards bodies for selecting a timely important issue as the year 2020 theme for the world standards day which reemphasizes the importance of paying attention to the climate change issues and the value of use standards in addressing such issues.

Now a day's world community has given considerable attention to address climate change effects as the future of the planet depends on how the present generation takes steps to control climate change issues. One of the major concerns that all of us in the world face is to control the rising temperature level of the planet, which is known as Global Warming. The world leaders agreed to reduce the global emission especially to limit the cumulative emissions of long-lived greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide, and considerable reductions in other climate forcers. Even US President Joe Biden announced a sound plan to tackle climate change and he signed an executive order deals with climate change that is a very positive and welcome move towards addressing this global issue. During the fifty years due to improper human behaviour, the experts in the world indicated that greenhouse gases (GHG) such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide were produced leading to the increase of Earth's temperature. We have evidenced about the rise of Earth's temperature as we experienced more intense heat waves, droughts, floods, wildfires, etc. causing much damage to the quality of life of the people and the economic growth of the countries as those activities, in turn, makes losses in biodiversity, crop failures, and infrastructure-related damages.

According to the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), this is mainly due to the burning of fossil fuels in power stations and our vehicles. As an effort towards limiting the rise of temperature well above 2°C, by the end of the century, a policy framework has already been framed and agreed upon as part of the Paris agreement and as a result, each country needs to submit their agreed National Determined Contributions (NDCs) to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and those are reviewed to check the compliance. This approach is designed as a voluntary measure to achieve the said objective as the scientific community noted that the rise of earth's temperature well above 2°C, may lead to catastrophic and irreversible weather events causing much damage to the planet.

Moreover, the scientific community also noted that the ice-disappearing even in the North Pole and this trend continues then in future the Arctic will free of ice and that will have a major impact on climate paving the way that makes the Earth uninhabitable for most species, including us. We as Sri Lankans are also highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change creating negative socio-economic outcomes in different sectors. Since we as humans are responsible for generating GHG emissions it is high time for us to look for sound ways and means as individuals and as a nation collectively to contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions as that would help to protect our planet for future generations to live happily.

Main GHG Gases and its Impact on Global Warming

The scientific community has pointed out that like carbon dioxide (CO2) other gases'



contributions are relatively important as those are also contribute considerably to increasing the Earth's temperature. In other words, even though CO2 is a highly released GHG gas to the atmosphere other gases also important to consider due to the contributory effect of such gases on climate change. The details of the GHG gases and their main sources are given in the following table.

However, the scientific community found that Carbon Dioxide is the main contributor to raising the temperature of the earth, and normally it is sequestered from the atmosphere when it is absorbed by plants as part of the biological carbon cycle. We as humans need to provide support for effective implementation of the carbon cycle by carrying our activities in a well-behaved and disciplined manner by maintaining our forests and by planting trees and that create an ecological balance in the earth leading to a situation of emission reduction. Since this requires a well-focused approach, and that was made available to us as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and what we need to do is to understand those and to practice them to gain the expected benefits.

Setting the Stage- 17 Goals to protect Our Planet

To meet the threshold limit of global temperatures to 1.5 °C by 2030, the emissions need to be reduced by 7.6% every year but as per the UN Environment's Emissions Gap Report 2019 the countries are not taking sufficient actions to achieve the said threshold.

As a global effort for all nations poor, middle-income and rich, to address climate change issues leading to sustainable development adopted seventeen sustainable development goals in the year 2015 at the United Nations General Assembly. Out of seventeen Sustainable Goals (SDGs), Goal number 13 is purely to cover climate change issues and it has nine (9) targets. All together under seventeen goals (17) there were one hundred and



are ISO 15839 Water quality, ISO 20325 Service activities relating to drinking water supply and wastewater systems, ISO 24516-1 Drinking water distribution networks and ISO 14046 Water footprint. In the same manner for SDG 10- Reduce inequality also one of the famous ISO standards is ISO 26000-Social Responsibility. In the same manner, IEC has also introduced standards that are not addressed by the ISO. For instance, SDG 4 -Quality Education, IEC has introduced standards for hardware such as computers, mobile phones, displays, printers, etc. Moreover, SDG 6- Water and Sanitation IEC standards cover water extraction, desalination, purification, distribution, and use and wastewater management.

In furtherance, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has published a broad set of ITU-T Recommendations, which are usually implemented, because they guarantee the ensuring of the global communication network coordination and provision of technical services. The Internet and its connected technologies are not properly used or do not have the skills to use by half of the world's population and hence ITU is making a significant contribution by assisting countries to transition into the digital era as that would help to create a digital society to meet all 17SDGs.

Role of Standards and Climate Action (SDG 13)

As explained we can observe very clearly that SDG 13 is purely dedicated to climate change and that indicates the importance given to climate change and also considering the objectives of other SDGs we can see that those are also having an interrelationship with SDG13. It is very much clear that the SDGs have given us a very clear direction as a nation on what we need to do in achieving the required results. As discussed that SDG Goal 13 is purely covered climate action which indicates that "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts" and in this regards standards have a multi-faceted role to play in handling climate change, from top governmental level, organizational levels, through to tactical applications at the project and even product levels.

It is a fact that industrialization has caused damage to the environment by releasing GHG gases because of the operation of industrial activities even though the industries contribute heavily to the economic growth of any nation. Hence industry can act as a change agent for having minimal damage to the environment while manufacturing the products by following environmentally-friendly (green) practices. It is worthwhile to note that most of the manufacturing facilities set ambitious goals to curtail carbon emissions and waste impacts of products etc. But the fact remains that just setting the scene would not bring in results unless it is properly established and systematically managed and monitored. One way of doing this is to use standards as those provide best practices to be followed within an organization to achieve its goals. Furthermore, the use of standards support to align trade policies, and overseas market development paving the way to have sustainable production giving preference to credibly certified goods.

As a baseline inventory to tackle and control GHG emissions from the starting point of activities at the organizational level, ISO has developed and introduced several standards as ISO 1406 x some of those standards can even be applied at the individual level to address carbon footprint. For example, ISO 14064-1 for quantifying GHG emissions at the organizational level considering the organization's boundaries. The use of these standards helps the organization level or individual level to capture GHG emission-related data in a very systematic manner so that it supports making the right decisions for regulatory bodies because of the development of a reliable data system.

It helps the government strategic level to make a policy framework to address the burning climate-related issues. Likewise, ISO 14065 provides a quality assurance framework

for third-party validation and verification bodies. Moreover, the skills, knowledge, experience, and qualifications of personnel is a critical aspect of verification bodies, ISO 14066, in turn, specifies the competency requirements for such staff. Furthermore, ISO 14064-2 describes processes for quantifying, monitoring, and reporting GHG emission reductions or removal enhancements at the project level. For instance, ISO 14064-2 can be applied for a project of Reforestation for offsetting CO2 emissions, in which trees are sinks or absorbers for CO2. In other words, using ISO 14064-2 the projected CO2 can be calculated. Likewise, ISO 14064-3 standard specifies requirements and guides verifying and validating reports of GHG emissions, reductions, and removals. Therefore ISO 1406x series of standards are very logical and connected like a chain of activities and therefore use of those standards pave the way to tackle climate change issues in a very systematic and scientific manner.

A way forward

All sectors of the economy require to take appropriate actions to reduce GHG emissions even though a considerable amount of GHG emissions are coming from the industry and agriculture sectors. Not only reducing or mitigating actions, but it is also very much important to take adaptation measures and those measures can be categorized as "soft" and "hard" measures. The soft measures include setting appropriate policies, training, developing early warning systems, or adopting new insurance policies. Also, hard measures include product, process changes, and infrastructure changes. We as Sri Lankans also can initiate adaptation measures depending on the situation in addition to the mitigation measures to address the GHG emission issues by using relevant appropriate standards. In this connection it is worthwhile to indicate ISO is in the process of formulation of the following standards to address the adaptation measures; ISO 14090, Adaptation to climate change - Principles, requirements, and guidelines ISO 14091, Adaptation to climate change - Vulnerability, impacts, and risk assessment, and

ISO 14092, GHG management, and related activities; requirement and guidance of adaptation planning for organizations including local governments and communities. ISO has already published ISO 14090 standards and in the process of finalizing the other two standards. Therefore those standards once published can also be used for adaptation measures that help to take appropriate actions in a focused manner to get the best results. The beauty of these standards is they are non-linear and therefore irrespective of the size, type of activities, and whether it is already engaged in adaptive activities or not, the standards can be used. It is also possible to use standards to develop the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)coherently and strategically.

Concluding Remarks

To have best practices within an organization using the standards should come from the top-level as a strategic direction then it will become a reality as it will help to develop a plan of action that provides the opportunity for the senior management for developing policies and awareness and capacity building of employees to implement green practices that would support to address the climate change issues while contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals which finally help to protect the planet.

The world nations including Sri Lanka have developed their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to meet the requirements of the Paris Agreement. Normally these NAPs include the national commitments covering businesses and industry sectors actions and strategies. The important fact that we need to note is that ISO has facilitated this process also by introducing a series of International Standards with supporting guidelines as indicated in the previous section. The importance of these standards is those standards can use to address specific issues of climate change requirements to develop effective, efficient, and deliverable measures by having a pragmatic approach to prevent or mitigate the harm caused by climate change issues.

Hence the standards are available to use for mitigation and adaptation measures but to understand the contents and the application of these standards is important as that would help to achieve the best results. In this regard, the implementation of adaptation measures like training and awareness on the application and contents of these standards is very much important to enlighten the relevant authorities so that as Sri Lankans we can also contribute significantly to reduce GHG emissions leading to protect the earth.

It is always better to use internationally recognized best practices because Sri Lankans would also benefit from the implementation of these practices which are addressed in the International Standards and therefore obtaining an understanding of the requirements of these standards not only help to address the climate change issues in overall basis but also to support the burning issue of protecting the planet. Furthermore, this would help to create sustainable and environmentally friendly business enterprises which in turn support Sri Lanka to contribute effectively to the global effort of combating climate change issues.

The writer is retired Director General/CEO of the Sri Lanka Standards Institution.

Green House Gases	Main Source
Carbon Dioxide	Fossil-fuel combustion for power generation, transportation, deforestation, cement production, and domestic heating/cooking
Carbon Dioxide	Fossil-fuel combustion for power generation, transportation, deforestation, cement production, and domestic heating/cooking
Methane	Agriculture: Landfills, Fermentation, decomposition of wastes, & industry.
Nitrous Oxide	Fertilizer application: Fossil fuel and industrial processes
Hydrofluorocarbon (HFCs)	Refrigerants, air conditioning, insulation, fire suppressants, aerosols
Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF6)	Electricity transmission, electrical insulation, and medical applications
Perfluorocarbons (PFCs)	Electronics manufacturing, and refrigeration
Nitrogen Trifluoride	Semiconductor manufacturing used as a fluorine source in the electronics industry (plasma etching, silicon chips, semiconductors, LCD panels) as well as in the photovoltaic and chemical laser industries

Daily News Business

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In wake of sanitary import ban

Ceramic manufacturers invest over Rs. 3 bn to upgrade factories, increase capacity

SHIRAJIV SIRIMANE

Sri Lanka can be self-sufficient in the ceramic sanitary ware market this year provided the government continues with the current import ban restrictions.

Speaking to 'Daily News Business' after winning the National Chamber of Exporters award for Art Decoration International Pvt. Ltd, its Director Dilanga Karunaratne in an interview with 'Daily News Business' said that currently 5 local ceramic manufacturers have invested over Rs. 3 billion to upgrade their factories to increase capacity.

"This is done on the assumption that the government won't go back on their assurance suspending

Sanitary wear imports. "We are not asking for a total import ban. What we are saying is that we are ready to compete with international buyers provided the customs create a level playing field. We want the government to look into undervaluing issues and make sure that Rs. 125 per CESS is charged per kilo and 30% customs import duty is imposed properly during imports."

He said that unlike previous years Sri Lankan manufacturers too have 'upped' their quality and their products are of international standards and exports too are taking place.

"However, we must admit the Sri Lankan products may be more



ADI, Director Dilanga Karunaratne

expensive than foreign products since Sri Lanka is not into mass production and has higher overheads than other countries. If you take for instance Sri Lankan kilns

in the industry use LPG gas while in China they use LNG which is around 40% less. Another is the labour factor. When you compare both India and China which supply huge amounts of sanitary ware to Sri Lanka labour is very much cheap. However with time and more exports local processes too would come down further. "Asked to comment on the 'raw material deposits' factor he said that it is freely available in Sri Lanka for many more years, commenting on the tile market he said that Sri Lanka can also be self-sufficient in tiles in two years provided the government gives a strong assurance that import will be done only on a level playing field.

Again we want our customs to maintain the correct duty and ensure that there is no under invoicing which is now happening. "He also said several local tile manufacturers are ready to invest in this segment.

He discloses that ADI Group, a world renowned company that has been thriving in the ceramic industry and decorating the world for 25 years since 1992, too have plans to invest around Rs. 2 billion for a tile factory soon if the government gives a strong guarantee to curtail tile imports. "We have a range of more than 5,000 designs and market to over 39 countries and we are keen to export tiles too."



SETHSUWA AYURVEDIC HOSPITALS OPENS PAGE 20

Anti-dumping legislation yet to be used

DINESH PERERA

Sri Lankan firms are yet to utilize the anti-dumping legislation enacted over 4 years ago. Any affected stakeholder is able to raise a petition with the Department of Commerce when companies cross the 2% threshold. **TO PAGE 18**

SL and Pakistani private pharmaceutical manufacturers hold first ever bi-lateral discussions

Pakistan to help boost local pharmaceuticals manufacturing

The Sri Lanka Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association (SLPMA) facilitated a bilateral meeting on February 24, with visiting representatives of the Pakistani Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association (PPMA).

The meeting was presided over by Prof. Channa Jayasumana, M.P., State Minister of Production, Supply and Regulation of Pharmaceuticals and accompanied by Rohitha Udawala, Secretary to the Ministry and Dr. Lakshitha Rajakuruna. The meeting took place on the sidelines of the first State visit by Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan to Sri Lanka.

The first ever bilateral meeting between pharmaceutical manufacturers of the two countries focused on mutually beneficial proposals for both nations to leverage on opportunities



The Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL) in collaboration with the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Beijing gifted a consignment of "Ceylon Tea" to Wang Yanguo, Party Secretary of the China International Chamber of Commerce for the Private Sector (CICCPS) and Executive President of APTA, CCI headquartered of Beijing. Wang Yanguo was instrumental in giving much needed medical supplies to Sri Lanka during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic (2020). Wang spoke at length about enhancing the bilateral economic and trade relationship. He also proposed holding the next meeting of the CICCPS in Sri Lanka and leading a large delegation of business people to Sri Lanka. He was particularly interested in the opportunities available in the Hambantota Industrial Zone.

provided by each for the other. State Minister Jayasumana requested the Pakistani pharmaceutical manufacturers to share

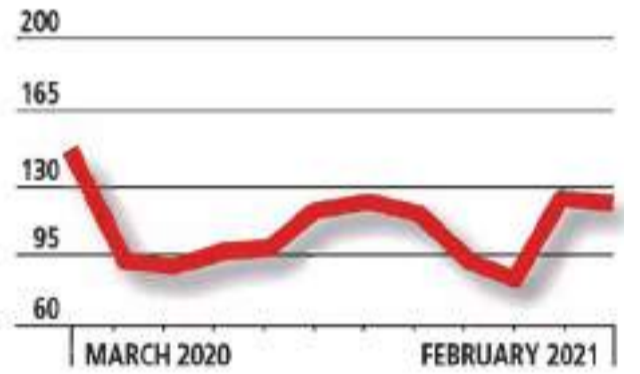
their experience in developing Pakistan's local pharmaceutical manufacturing industry. The State Minister also invited the

PPMA to set up joint ventures with local pharmaceutical companies to manufacture complex molecules in Sri Lanka, in order

to benefit from the government's drive to increase local pharmaceutical manufacturing to 50% of country's requirement by 2025, where Sri Lankan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers will have to manufacture at least 350+ pharmaceuticals locally.

Responding to the invitation by the State Minister, Kashif Sajjad Sheikh, Head of the Pakistani Pharmaceutical Delegation promised to share the best practices and technical knowhow with the SLPMA. He also invited the State Minister and SLPMA to visit Pakistan to make a Road Show on the Opportunities for Pharmaceutical manufacturing in Sri Lanka and enter into MoUs with prospective Pakistan companies, which will be facilitated by PPMA. **TO PAGE 18**

LMD- Nielsen Business Confidence Index up by 39 points



Reversing the downward trend witnessed in the recent months, the LMD- Nielsen Business Confidence Index (BCI) shot up by 39 points to 122 in January 2021.

BCI index spiked a notable 12 points above the average for the last 12 months with the Covid vaccine rollout giving some form of relief to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for December 2020 increased to 110.7 from 106.9 in November 2020 while Sri Lanka's Manufacturing and Service Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) remained in expansion territory in January 2021 with new business activity in PMI increasing in January 2021, particularly with the improvements observed in financial services, transportation, and wholesale & retail trade sub-sectors.

Private sector credit increased by Rs 25.7 billion in January 2021 recording a growth for the 6th consecutive month indicating a revival in gross loan disbursements.

Growth reflects that both businesses and individuals are speeding-up economic activities.

National Chamber of Exporters Awards

'Economic and social statistics do not indicate SL anywhere in the dumps'

ANANDA KANNANGARA

The global C-19 pandemic during its current generations' lifetime caused panic and curtailment of normal activities. However, newly published economic and social statistics do not indicate Sri Lanka is 'anywhere in the dumps' but managing the affairs well in many ways compared to most countries in the world.

SLTMobtel, Chairman Rohan Fernando made these observations at the annual National Chamber of Exporters (NCE) Awards ceremony held at

Shangri -La in Colombo under tight health guidelines. Over 80 Sri Lankan exporters who rendered an invaluable service to prosper the country's economy received awards. A unique feature of the event was recognizing a differently able person by export oriented enterprises.

"Resilient exporters" are the living proof that they have found the ways and means to stay in business. Sri Lanka has the best 'crop' of entrepreneurs who can steer the country towards prosperity and the National

Chamber of Exporters (NCE) is a cradle for these budding exporters," Fernando noted.

He said it was the deeply embedded belief that for a country like Sri Lanka, exports were necessary for priming the economy and the NCE was responsible for driving this point home.

Speaking further, Fernando said he has a high regard for NCE as it has the ability and the encouragement to shape Lankan entrepreneurs as mentioned by the late Patrick Amarasinghe, a fearless proponent of market economy. **TO PAGE 18**



Officials from Jaindi Export (Pvt) Ltd, receiving the Most Outstanding Exporter 2020 award from Chairman SLTMobitel, Rohan Fernando.

HDFC Bank posts Rs 978 mn PBT

A farsighted management strategy has enabled HDFC Bank to post a profit before tax for the year ended December 31, 2020 of Rs. 978 million. This is a sharp increase over the previous year's figure of Rs. 774 million. The net interest income also rose from Rs. 2.9 billion to Rs. 3 billion over the same period. Total assets grew from Rs. 55.9 billion at end 2019 to Rs. 60.8 billion by the end 2020.

Chairperson of HDFC Bank Wasanthi Manchanayake attributed their success to a number of factors. These include a practical strategy to deal with the Covid-19 crisis, efficient customer service, technological deployment and a diversified product range. "We performed well despite our obligation to serve the housing requirements of the people," she noted.



Chairperson R. M. R. W. Manchanayake

She said their plans for this year include expanding the branch network from 39 to 48 branches across the country, introducing new services and enhancing customer service levels.

General Manager/CEO of HDFC Bank, Palitha Gamage said a proactive management strategy laid the foundation for their performance. "We prepared for the Covid-19 crisis well before things got bad," he noted.

He added that last year, they offered over 21,000



CEO Palitha Gamage

moratoriums on loans amounting to Rs.17 billion. These concessions cost the bank nearly Rs.400 million in lost income. Most of the debt moratoriums - which began in April last year - were for a period of six months.

Chief Financial Officer of HDFC Bank Anura Hettiarachchi said that despite the pandemic, the bank's deposits have grown significantly. He noted that their savings and fixed deposits increased from Rs. 42.5 billion at end 2019 to Rs. 48 billion by end 2020. "As for

our lending portfolio, we have maintained it at a steady level as before," he added.

According to Hettiarachchi, the earning per share on profit has seen a positive trend. In fact, the basic earnings per ordinary share rose from Rs. 7.35 in 2019 to Rs. 8.90 in 2020. The bank's stock presently trades at Rs. 40 to 45 in the market compared to the Net Asset Value of Rs.87..

HDFC Bank is presently the market leader in housing development finance. It benefits from a unique state-private ownership structure. The controlling stake of 51% is held by the government while private companies and individuals have a 49% share. It was a state entity until it was listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange in 2005, resulting in private sector investment.



SriLankan in record-breaking cargo upliftment to Male

SriLankan Airlines carried a record-breaking 1.2 million kilograms of cargo from its network to Malé, Maldives, in February 2021.

The Maldives is one of the few open, and highly popular, island destinations in the world for travellers. Since the pandemic, perishable goods have been in high demand.

Its island neighbor Sri Lanka supplied a large share of perishable

goods, with cargo carried from Colombo to Malé exceeding 500 metric tonnes in the last month. Exports from the Maldives to Sri Lanka amounted to 188 Metric Tons on the route.

SriLankan remains firmly committed to supporting its neighborhood hub - Maldives' - import and export needs, with a global cargo network that spans from London to Tokyo and Sydney.

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SHARES - COLOMBO STOCK EXCHANGE

Market Statistics on 02.03.2021

Table of market statistics for the Colombo Stock Exchange, including columns for Security, Volume, V.W.A. Previous Close, Open, High, Low, V.W.A. Yesterday's Close, and Change (Rs.).

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Pakistan to help boost local... From Page 17

Elaborating further, Kashif stated that it is a good sign that Sri Lankan government policies and the National Medicinal Regulatory Authority are supporting local manufacturing.

President), Executive Committee Members Viraj Manatunga and Murtaza Esufally. Discussing long term opportunities to work together, the Sri Lankan delegation invited Pakistan to relocate its pharma export centers in Sri Lanka.

COCONUTS

Coconut Products - Prices on 02.03.2021

Table of coconut product prices, including categories like FRESH COCONUT, DESICCATED COCONUT, and COCONUT OIL, with columns for product name, price, and unit.

EXCHANGE RATES

Table of international exchange rates for various currencies, including Australian Dollar, Canadian Dollar, Euro, Japanese Yen, etc.

Anti-dumping... From Page 17

Subsequent to a petition the department of commerce will assess if firms are selling below their cost of production. Director of Commerce, Department of Commerce Somasena Mahadiulweva noted that dumping legislation was a very specific offence but if proven an effective remedy could be found.

Mahadiulweva noted that under-invoicing thereby evading taxes such as Value Added Tax would remain an issue that has to be raised with customs.

'Economic and social... From Page 17

Recalling the history, Chairman Fernando said he had the fortune of associating with the late Amarasinghe and his Secretary General the late Rasa Weerasingham in the formative years when this Chamber was held in high esteem and always consulted for policy making by the Treasury and the EDB when it came to matters of exporters.

"The period we are living is the most exciting due to the unprecedented C-19 situation and we are awaiting with closely watching developments of the Western world," he said. NCE, President Ravi Jayawardena said we need a secured country to conduct our export business with constant policy and good international relationships.

NEWS

S-lon, NAITA partner to promote plumbing as viable career prospect

S-lon Lanka (Pvt) Ltd, recently signed a MoU with National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA) by extending their partnership for three more years to grant necessary professional training and qualifications for plumbers of S-lon Plumber's Club (over 7,000 active members) to progress in their career.

Key objectives of the club

include providing education on modern techniques and technology, inspiring innovation, ensuring occupational safety and instilling a sense of pride among plumbers by awarding them with certifications such as National Trade Test (NTT) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) which are recognized nationally and globally, resulting in a better

and a professional service to the end-consumer. Through this initiative, so far over 2000 plumbers have received vocational qualifications.

The MoU signing was signed by Chairman of NAITA, Tharanga Nalin Gamlath and S.C. Weerasekara, Group Director, Capital Maharaja Group. The event was also graced

by State Minister of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation Dr. Seetha Arambepola.

At the event, Group Director of Capital Maharaja Group said, "We are excited to be partnering with NAITA for 3 more years whereby, we're confident that we will be able to promote professionalism

among plumbers in the country who happen to be one of the most crucial stakeholders in our business.

With the country returning to normalcy, we hope to continue with our Plumber Club regional programmes taking knowledge and expertise to every corner of Sri Lanka. NAITA has been a great partner in this mission and we're



State Minister Dr. Seetha Arambepola, Chairman of NAITA Tharanga Nalin Gamlath and Group Director of Capital Maharaja Group S.C. Weerasekara at the event

confident that we will continue to receive their co-operation in the future too," he further stated that, S-lon views elevating standard of professionals as being equal to elevating standard of industry

itself. Established in 1957, S-lon manufactures and distributes a diverse portfolio of water management solutions that include a comprehensive range of pipes & fittings, rainwater disposal systems,

sewage pipes and fittings, hot water piping, ball valves, plastic taps, water pumps, solvent cement, garden mesh, chrome plated faucets and accessories and roofing sheets.

Havelock City introduces 'Ezy Pay Home Loans' for apartment buyers

Havelock City, Sri Lanka's premier mixed-use development project, has announced a new flexible payment solution, Ezy Pay Home Loans, for those looking to purchase a luxury apartment in Phase 3 (move-in ready) and Phase 4 (set for completion in May 2021). Ezy Pay Home Loans allows buyers to pay just 20% of their total investment upfront and move into their brand-new apartment and defer further payments for up to one year. This grace period would allow for better cash management and more reasons to celebrate a brand-new home.

"We want our customers to feel at ease when they make the decision to purchase an apartment at Havelock City. Whether they seek to expand their property portfolio or wish to personally enjoy our unique 'city within a city' lifestyle, Ezy Pay Home Loans is the wisest, most convenient choice," said Pravir Samarasinghe, Group CEO of Havelock City.

With an Ezy Pay Home Loan, potential buyers would be able to enjoy: Move-in ready apartments



from LKR 35 million, Pay 20% and move into your luxury apartment, Attractive interest rates at 7%, Your first year's interest paid by Havelock City and Deferyour loan re-payments by one year.

A number of banking partners, including Hatton National Bank PLC and DFCC Bank PLC, have signed on to accommodate Havelock City's Ezy Pay Home Loans.

Havelock City is built on 18 acres of prime land at the heart of Colombo, consisting of both residential and commercial components. It offers its residents a range of facilities at the largest clubhouse of its kind, and an

exclusive 7-acre landscape garden. The COC-certified Stratford and Melford Towers of Phase 3 have a limited number of move-in ready apartments available, and the Peterson and Edminton Towers of Phase 4 will also soon be ready for occupation.

The 50-storey office building within Havelock City, Mireka Tower, offering distinctive work-spaces, adds more value to the property, as does the upcoming Havelock City Shopping Mall, soon to provide premium F&B and entertainment experiences from both local and international brands.

Senior Business Managers Join PIM's EMBA



Prof. Ajantha S Dharmasiri, Director, PIM, welcomed the virtually connected EMBA participants.

The Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM), as the nation's management mentor successfully launched another batch of its Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) programme recently with a virtual inauguration.

Prof. Ajantha S. Dharmasiri, Director, PIM, in his welcome address mentioned

the efforts taken by the PIM to design the EMBA to suit an emerging category comprising of General Managers, Chief Executive Officers, Chief Financial Officers and Entrepreneurs.

Channa de Silva, CEO, Lanka Clear, who was the chief guest of the event, stressed the importance of contributing towards economic growth of the country

with innovative approaches. Dr. Trevor Mendis, EMBA Coordinator of PIM elaborated the content and the conduct of the EMBA at the PIM. Himaja Wijeyanayake, a Gold medalist from a previous EMBA batch highlighted the need to be brilliant in basics with regards to the challenging yet rewarding EMBA experience at PIM.

Union Assurance opens branch at Kollupitiya



Union Assurance opened its newest branch at Kollupitiya St. Michael's Road recently.

The branch is equipped with modern and state-of-the-art working spaces and collaboration rooms in an energetic and vibrant atmosphere.

The new branch opening took place in the presence of Jude Gomes, Chief Executive Officer of Union Assurance and the Senior Management Team.

CIC Poultry Farms widens chicken distribution

CIC Poultry Farms widens the CIC Besto chicken distribution island wide. CIC Chicken, the product reputed as one of the highest quality chicken available in Sri Lanka, offers their brand - 'Besto' which is available in most of the leading Supermarkets and groceries, at affordable prices.

The advanced technology and international food safety standards have earned customers' trust for CIC Besto chicken as the safest chicken available in the country. Now 'Besto' stands as a unique brand for chicken and poultry products coming in 3 convenient packs as Family pack, Pre-cut skinless, and Pre-cut whole chicken. Besto Pre Cut normal and skinless versions come as whole chicken cut in to 12 pieces.

"Today chicken is the cheapest available protein for Sri Lankans and CIC chicken is the least human handled product in the country. Our processing plant is a state-of-the-art automated

plant equipped with modern technology. We have automated many areas in chicken processing and use advance technology to retain high quality and safety of chicken meat," says Ajith Weerasinghe, CEO, CIC Poultry Farms Ltd. What is so special with 'Besto' chicken is the fact that everything from chicks/chicken feed to broiler chicken is made within the company. Therefore, the company has high level of traceability for Besto Chicken.

It is worthy to clear the wrong information of the general public that hormones are used in the production of chicken. No producer uses hormones in the production of chicken and it is practically not possible. Therefore there is no reason to be afraid of consuming CIC Besto chicken. Further the hormone cost is higher than chicken meat



prices. As a result of technological improvements and advancement of science, today broiler chicken grows to 2.2kg in 5 weeks by consuming 3.5kg of quality feed. CIC Feeds (Pvt) Ltd has its own feed production facility, breeding farms and hatcheries to produce Day-Old-Broiler chicks.

The Broiler production is done under environmentally controlled houses where light, temperature and air flow are regulated. In addition to following all international standards pertaining to food safety, the company has obtained ISO 22000 and HACCP certifications. CIC Poultry Farms Ltd is a subsidiary of CIC Feeds (Pvt) Ltd and came into operation as a result of CIC Feeds aiming to become a vertically integrated poultry enterprise.

Milo to provide Rs. 10 million to support 10,000 children

To help them learn remotely and stay active

Milo is to provide Rs. 10 million worth of support to 10,000 children. This is via its latest campaign, in the form of laptops, tabs, reloads, scooters, bikes and more to help them learn remotely and stay physically active, at a time where many are shielding indoors from the pandemic and limiting the time spent outside their homes. The brand will be gifting 1,000 children every week via raffle draws between 18 February 2021 and 18 April 2021.

"Supporting and encouraging them to stay active and lead a healthy lifestyle has been a big part of this, but we wanted to go one step further this year. We heard many stories of families struggling with remote learning and online classes, especially those with more than one child, as they didn't have enough devices or data to cope. We also heard of parents worried about the lack of outdoor playtime and physical activity for their children.



Sethika Metunija with the kids scooter she received from Milo and his family

This purpose-driven campaign is our way of supporting parents with the resources they need to help their children go further in life" said Mohamed Ali, Category Marketing Manager for Milo.

Dinodi Dissanayaka from Anuradhapura is one of the first week's winners. She says the laptop she has won will make a world of difference to her family "My sister and I follow online classes on our mother's mobile phone and sometimes even

have classes at the same time, which makes it difficult. We took part in the competition hoping against hope that we would win an electronic device to help us follow classes better and complete our schoolwork easily."

Sethika Metunija from Piliyandala has won a kids scooter, which his father says will help him and his sister get at least half an hour of exercise a day "We never expected to win but

we're so happy our children have won something that will not only keep them entertained but also active."

In the future, 1,000 winners will be chosen every week at random via a raffle draw, as per the terms of the competition, to win laptops, tabs, reloads, scooters, bikes, skateboards, basketballs, footballs, skipping ropes, headsets, or school bags.

More information is available on the @MiloSriLanka Facebook page.



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இலங்கை மத்திய வங்கி
CENTRAL BANK OF SRI LANKA

EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUND

NOTICE

STATEMENTS OF MEMBER ACCOUNTS SECOND HALF OF 2019

For the special attention of all Employers and Members

The Statements of Accounts of the members for the Second Half of 2019 showing the closing balance as at 31.12.2019 and contributions credited to the member accounts from July to December 2019 have been posted to the respective employers for distribution among the relevant members.

Accordingly, members of the Employees' Provident Fund are hereby requested to obtain these Statements of Accounts from their employers.

If any discrepancy/discrepancies are noted with respect to the details such as member names, National Identity Card Number and the contribution amounts in these Statements, please forward the documents applicable for correction of such details through your employers to the Superintendent, Employees' Provident Fund, immediately.

Telephone Nos. : EPF Help Desk 011-2206642
011-2206690
011-2206691
011-2206692
011-2206693

Fax No : 011-2206694

Email : epfhelpdesk@cbsl.lk

A G U Thilakarathna
Superintendent
Employees' Provident Fund Department
Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Level 12, Tower 5
No.30, Janadhipathi Mawatha, Colombo 01.

Dialog Axiata partners *Gamata Sanniwedanaya*

A project Initiated by TRCSL

Staying true to its vision of Empowering and Enriching Sri Lankan Lives and Enterprises by connecting everyone and driving digital inclusion across the nation, Dialog Axiata PLC (Dialog) partnered the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) to launch the first phase of the 'Gamata Sanniwedanaya' initiative in Ratnapura.

By facilitating the 'Gamata Sanniwedanaya' initiative, the Company aims to enable all Sri Lankans to move forward as one digital society and support the distant-learning and working requirements in this new normal. This initiative was deployed by TRCSL with the pilot programme of implementing 37 new sites in the Ratnapura District, where 18 of these sites will

be deployed by Dialog by July 2021. The next phase of the 'Gamata Sanniwedanaya' initiative will focus on expanding 4G coverage to deep rural communities in Kurunegala, Matara and more districts to achieve near 100% population coverage by the end of 2022.

Oshada Senanayake, Director General of Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka said, "Today marks a special day where we launch this 'Gamata Sanniwedanaya' initiative with Dialog in the Napawala village in the Ratnapura district. Our efforts through this initiative is to establish the necessary connectivity infrastructure which is imperative for Sri Lanka to successfully navigate its journey towards digitisation. Along with the Ratnapura

project, we are also aiming to expand coverage in 10 districts this year, including Kurunegala, Matara and Anuradhapura with a vision of expanding coverage to 100% of the country."

Supun Weerasinghe, Group Chief Executive of Dialog Axiata PLC said, "We are pleased to join hands with TRCSL to launch the 'Gamata Sanniwedanaya' initiative as part of our efforts in expanding 4G coverage to deep rural communities across the nation and support our subscribers, considering how connectivity has become a necessity with the ongoing pandemic, especially with learning and working requirements.

We hope to collaborate further with TRCSL in the upcoming months to make this initiative a success, in line with our shared vision of enabling a fully connected and truly empowered Sri Lanka."



Sriyani Mawellage, Deputy Director - Competition Division, TRCSL, Supun Weerasinghe, Group Chief Executive, Dialog Axiata, Oshada Senanayake, Director General, TRCSL, Sudath Wakista, Deputy Director - Spectrum Management Division, TRCSL and Pradeep De Almeida, Group Chief Technology Officer, Dialog Axiata at the event

Sethuswa Ayurvedic Hospitals opens Narahenpita Rajawasa Economic Center outlet

Sethuswa Ayurvedic Hospitals has recently opened a new outlet at the Rajawasa Economic Center in Narahenpita.

All the ayurvedic products of Sethuswa including Pranajeewa are available at the new outlet open from 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. daily.

Pranajeewa, the flagship product of Sethuswa Ayurvedic Hospitals is now available in capsules. Pranajeewa, is an attempt to showcase traditional Sri Lankan medicine towards a modern-day audience. It is a medicine that has been produced with the utilisation of western scientific methods and processes, and has had its effectiveness proven through clinical trials. The product has received praise from its myriad of users across the globe as it is currently exported to many countries around the world.

Considering the busy lifestyle of the current generation and the demand for easy-to-use products, Sethuswa Pranajeewa now comes in capsule form that can be easily carried and used anytime.

Sethuswa Pranajeewa has proven that it can boost immunity thus shielding the user from non-communicable diseases, it helps maintain youthful vitality and promotes overall good health.

One of the unique features of Sethuswa Pranajeewa which is produced with organic herbs using latest technology is the fact that it does not have any side effects.

The Intellectual Property (IP) rights of Sethuswa Pranajeewa are held by Sethuswa Ayurveda Hospital (Pvt) Ltd. Sethuswa Pranajeewa can be used to treat all types of heart diseases, cancers, diabetes, disorders of the nerves, wheeze, catarrh, phlegm, paralysis, arthritis, haemorrhoids, gastritis, kidney diseases, bladder stones, liver diseases and obesity.

There have been instances where those who had been recommended bypass surgeries had their health conditions improved through Sethuswa Pranajeewa. This product can also minimize the damage caused by alcohol to the liver and reduce hair loss.



President Gotabaya Rajapaksa visiting the new outlet at the opening

Scientific studies have shown that Sethuswa Pranajeewa has strong antioxidant qualities that inhibit the formation of free radicals. Sethuswa Pranajeewa, globally renowned for its miraculous medicinal properties, can now be purchased at all main pharmacies and Ayurvedic medicine outlets. Contact 0703528003 for further details.

Pelwatte Industries to support local dairy farming

Pelwatte Dairy Industries, one of Sri Lanka's leading industry in the process. Managing Director of Pelwatte Dairy, Akmal Wickramanayke said, "As a local leader, we believe that the most significant component of our value chain are the farmers and their supportive industries. It is for this very reason that we, at Pelwatte Dairy Industries, remain heavily invested in working with and uplifting lives and work of the dairy farmers and those of the supportive industries with an intense focus of raising the socio-economic standards of these poor communities.

By providing supporting services like the training, PDIL ensures that they create a high-quality raw milk supply chain. This helps the Milk Procurement Personnel to source the highest quality fresh milk. Since

all year along, while also supporting an auxiliary industry in the process. Pelwatte Dairy Industries, one of Sri Lanka's leading industry in the process. Managing Director of Pelwatte Dairy, Akmal Wickramanayke said, "As a local leader, we believe that the most significant component of our value chain are the farmers and their supportive industries. It is for this very reason that we, at Pelwatte Dairy Industries, remain heavily invested in working with and uplifting lives and work of the dairy farmers and those of the supportive industries with an intense focus of raising the socio-economic standards of these poor communities.



PDIL only uses 100% fresh milk in its product range, this ensures the highest standards in every product.

The company has substantially been sourcing milk from locals following strict guidelines and testing ensuring its quality and hygiene stays intact. This alone has been the livelihood of over 1000 families around the area with an assurance that all small-scale farmers and private farms will have a guaranteed buyer in them, and that their products will always be competitively priced. Pelwatte, which strongly

believes and invests in capacity building, regularly carries out training programs regarding cattle nutrition. They regularly invite farmers from all parts of the island to visit and undergo a training programmes.

The highly trained farm professionals show the farmers practical usages of various feeds along with nutrition combination using fodder grown in their extensive grass lands.

The high producing dairy cow requires a diet that supplies the nutrient needs for high milk production.

While Milk remains the raw material that comes into play in the Dairy Industry. The forage fed to the cattle falls into certain shortages at several times of year, especially during the dry season, when rainfall will be minimal and lands will be barren and dry.

Best Annual Report and Accounts Awards 2020, organised by the Association of Public Finance Accountants of Sri Lanka (APFASL), the Public Sector Wing of CA Sri Lanka, was held at the BMICH recently with State Minister of Money, Capital Markets and State Enterprise Reforms Ajith Nivard Cabraal and Secretary to the Treasury S.R. Athygal as special invitees. The Public Sector Best Annual Reports and Accounts Awards is an initiative aimed at helping improve the quality of annual reports and accounts issued by public sector organisations to help enhance transparency and accountability within the sector, while also promoting the underlying need to develop high-quality financial reporting.

Some photographs of the event:

APFASL honours Public Sector Institutions At Best Annual Reports & Accounts Awards 2020



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DIRECTORS CHANGE. ALL THE TIME. FORD DIDN'T. BUT AS THE YEARS WENT BY AND HIS STRENGTH LEFT HIM, HE TRIED TO. IN CHEYENNE AUTUMN, HIS MOST ATYPICAL AND IN MY OPINION MOST MOVING STORY, HE TRIED TO REDEEM HIMSELF. FOR THE FIRST TIME, A PROMINENT DIRECTOR OF WESTERNS PORTRAYED THE UNDERSIDE TO THE AMERICAN FRONTIER. HE TOOK THE INDIAN'S SIDE.

JOHN FORD: COWBOYS AND INDIANS

MADAPATHA CHINTAKA

He was born more than 120 years ago. Directing wasn't really his forte: he just took to it. That was a time when film-making was looked at as another job to earn bread with. A time when you worked at it like you would at any other job, when you'd do your share for the day and leave at night. He did win some awards and accolades, true, but in the end that was all peripheral. Indeed, his knowledge of film-making was limited to its technicalities. Everything else he knew about his job amounted to one classic rule: photograph the actor's eyes. That was it.

And yet, we remember him today. Not because he did something he happened to take to. We remember him because of what he filmed and how he filmed them all.

But I'm digressing a little here.

In one volume

Talk about filmmakers and there are names that come up: Spielberg, Lucas, Scorsese, Nolan. Trace them back and you will find two names that crop up: David Lean and William Wyler. Trace them back and you will find yet another name. John Ford.

Who was he? All I know is that when the history of cinema is collected in one volume, there is always one icon who'll come up in every chapter. Him.

What was so special about this man? Was it the fact that everyone admired him? If so, it wouldn't be surprising. Directors, critics, those who rate themselves as film connoisseurs all praised him. They saw in him someone who guided them in whatever they did and wrote. Very few filmmakers won praise this way. He did have his detractors, but the truth is that even those who criticised him found enough reason to absolve his lesser works. That's rare.

We remember him for those films he made, in particular the Westerns. Like the ballad, the cowboy film is probably the most indigenised art-form in America. Generations of schoolkids and would-be directors grew with them. Everyone who fell in love with them grew up emulating them. They couldn't equal Ford, of course, but they came very close at it. After all, what was Lawrence of Arabia other than a Western in the desert? What was Star Wars other than a Western in outer space?

There's more.

The Western has become larger-than-life today. Inevitably. It has become the most clichéd film genre out there. The reason isn't too hard to find. Take the usual elements of a Western film: uncivilised town, a stranger riding in, wine spouting out of barrel holes, and (perhaps the most iconic of them all) sage-brush rolling along lonely stretches of land. All these we remember, so much so that you cannot improve on them.

Restrained, yet tense

But masters know how to tweak cliché. That's what Ford did. Take his battle scenes, for instance. He shot them all in such a way that they were unique not only to his vision but to the films they were in. Witness the Indian attack in Stagecoach, for instance, to see just how different it is from the attack in The Searchers. Witness how Wyatt Earp fights Newman Clanton and his sons in My Darling Clementine - restrained, yet tense - and how Ethan Edwards



The Searchers



My Darling Clementine

massacres the Indians in The Searchers.

Yes, there is a difference, tied together by one thing: the way Ford saw the West.

The Western has been associated, reasonably I should think, with bigotry. In its universe, the Indians were the villains and the White Man the hero. Always. The cowboy enforcing "civilisation" in a chaos-ridden land, trying to convert the "savages" to his faith: this was the thread that binds every Western in common. What made Ford stand apart from the rest, defiantly almost, was the way he portrayed this conflict between White Man and Indian, between order and chaos.

Unlike the gangster film, which it resembles, the Western film was

shunned as the years went by. Commentators from both sides of the political divide critiqued it, not least because of how racially biased it was. There is no doubt, after all, that the characters in some of Ford's films were bigoted. Like Ethan Edwards from The Searchers, who remarks that his nephew is a "half-breed" because he's one-eighth Indian.

Directors change. All the time. Ford didn't. But as the years went by and his strength left him, he tried to. In Cheyenne Autumn, his most atypical and in my opinion most moving story, he tried to redeem himself. For the first time, a prominent director of Westerns portrayed the underside to the American frontier. He took the Indian's side. He tried to show that as



Cheyenne Autumn



Sometimes, as with Young Mr Lincoln, they do. Sometimes they don't. It is perhaps this that compelled him to delve into a past he himself had refused to see: a past that had vilified the same people he had depicted as villains. The attempt backfired. We know why.

He could also be very self-assured, to the point where he appeared to be smug and arrogant. I remember an incident that illustrates this well. An interviewer asked him whether he had been interested in films as a child. Ford is reported to have said, "Not at all. Not interested in them even now. It's just a way of making a living."

Professional filmmaker

Those who think that he was arrogant and insufferable, no doubt, would note these words down. But he wasn't. The truth is that he was a professional filmmaker. And as someone once told me, he was probably the most indifferent filmmaker out there. Only indifference would have moved the giant he was to say what he did to that interviewer, after all. Not arrogance. I must end here.

There are those who measure giants. There are giants who live on no matter how they're measured. John Ford lives on. He lives in every film that pays homage to him. He lives every time we see Darth Vader fighting Luke Skywalker, and Indiana Jones cracking his bull-whip.

Yes, he lives. More than a hundred years after he was born, we remember him. We will continue to do so as long as the idea of movies endures.

much as they rebelled against the notion of civilisation introduced by the White Man, the natives were unjustly treated. Ford went as far as to call it an elegy, an apology for what the American government did to them.

Most folksy

But it failed. That was the last time he made a Western, ever.

He didn't just direct Westerns, of course. He occupied other worlds. His fascination with American history (he was an Irishman) came out forcefully in Young Mr Lincoln. His commitment to social problems brought out The Grapes of Wrath. His Irish roots took him to his most "folksy" film, The Quiet Man.

Even his lesser works - They Were Expendable, The Informer, The Long Voyage Home - he managed to go beyond his limited vision and still fascinate us. He was a sentimentalist and a romantic, and knew well enough not to apologise for it. But he was justified. At the end. There's a reason for this, obviously. The man wasn't just a director. He was a poet. The first poet of the screen.

There are no real heroes in Ford's films. He didn't need them. As much as he painted his films in black-and-white, it's also true that he didn't stoop to the larger-than-life. Those who reside in his universe all have secrets, a dark past to escape from. The plots of his stories (he was a master storyteller) culminate on whether his characters come to terms with their pasts.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021

DR SUBASHINI PATHMANATHAN

Nava Rasas are the important essence of Bharatha Natyam. It is not only found in Bharatha Natyam but also it is the most important and dominating factor in almost all the Indian classical forms and even in many of the Indian folk dances. Most of the Indian dance forms interpret the meaning through beautiful hand gestures and beautiful facial expressions in the form of Bhavas and Rasas.

Normally, Bhava means inner emotional feelings in the Nirthya aspect of dance. Classical Bharatha Natyam consists of three varieties of three different factors of dance. One is Nirthya, Nirthya, and Natya. Nirthya means pure dance which consists of the Adavus, stands (Mandala positions), body positions, footwork, combined hand positions and hand gestures. Nirthya simply reveals the pure dance. Nirthya consists of expressions Bhava (emotional involvement) and essence of the substance of Bhava which is often referred to as Rasas. Natyam in dance means story-oriented dance.

Unfortunate condition

However, in today's Bharatha Natyam has lost the essence of dance due to the absence of Rasas in the stage performances. If we analyze the reasons for the absence of rasas in this classical dance form, the present mentality of students and teachers is responsible for the unfortunate condition. Institutional methodology, syllabus based curriculum, the craze for certificates are equally responsible and ruling factors for declining rasas in today's Bharatha Natyam.

Earlier in the Gurukula method of imparting techniques and approach adopted by the traditional Nattuvanar Gurus was totally different. The traditional Nattuvanars were the outstanding gurus and mentors of dance. Those days the traditional Nattuvanars took the classes with full dedication and devotion. They worked with students without considering time limits. Therefore, according to the ability, talents, interest and involvement, they spent the maximum time with students. Even in a group class, the number of students was limited. Individual attention was paid to each student. They

SCOPE OF EXPRESSIONS IN BHARATHA NATYAM



Bharatha Natyam is totally based on Hindu philosophy. In Hinduism, the word 'Nava' plays an important role, Nava means nine in number. Navagrhas means nine planets; Nava Sakthi means; nine Sakthi of Goddess Durka, Navathaniya, means nine different varieties of grains used for poojas, Navarathiri means nine nights devoted to three different Sakthis.

changed. Most of the teachers do not understand the level of their students, interest, understanding power, IQ level, and psychology. It is the responsibility of the teachers to induce the navarasas in their performances. Today's Bharatha Natyam performances are very mechanical and the facial expressions (Navarasas) are almost absent.

Meaningful facial expressions

Twenty to twenty-five years back, the attraction of Bharatha Natyam depended not only on the glittering costumes or jewellery but also on the interpretation of the songs through appropriate meaningful facial expressions. Yesteryear dancers such as abhinaya queen Balasrswathi, Mylapore Gowriamallai gained fame in the classical Bharatha Natyam due to their exceptional talents in the way of expressive facial expressions (Bhava Rasas).

tried to uplift the interest and involvement of the individual students. Hence, every aspect of the dance was taken into account and taught perfectly. Until the student mastered the selective aspect or piece, the Guru would not move further. Hence, almost every nuance of dance was well trained, giving more attention to bringing out the facial expressions. The Gurus induced students to bring out their inner feelings.

However, in today's Bharatha Natyam field the interest, involvement and approach of students, teachers, and the public, are totally

Now more attention is given to the pure Nirthya factor such as steps or adavus than that of Nirthya (Bhava and rasas). In the present generation dance field, those who are using facial expression are labelled as cinema type of dancers. It is a misinterpretation and misconception of facial expression. Due to the long absence of facial rasas in stage performances, most people feel using facial expressions is akin to cinema type of dancers. This type of understanding in the present society is also one of the causes for the declining factor of Nava rasas (nine emotional rasas of facial expressions) in the dance field.

Bharatha Natyam is totally based on Hindu philosophy. In Hinduism, the word 'Nava' plays an important role, Nava means nine in number. Navagrhas means nine planets; Nava Sakthi means; nine Sakthi of Goddess Durka, Navathaniya, means nine different varieties of grains used for poojas, Nav-

arathiri means nine nights devoted to three different Sakthis.

Navaratnam means nine precious stones in the Tamil language and Hinduism. Navamy in the Hindu calendar means, the ninth day after the full moon day and the ninth day after the dark full moon day. Similarly, in Bharatha Natyam Nava Rasas means nine different feelings. Nava Rasas are sringara Rasas (erotic sentiment), Hasya Rasas (laughter), Veera Rasas (heroic sentiment), Karuna Rasas (benevolence), Ruthra Rasas (anger), Bibacha Rasas (Odious sentiment), Bhayanaka Rasa (fearful sentiment), Atputha Rasa (astonishment sentiment), Santha Rasa (peaceful sentiment).

Without inner involvement, dance reveals the flower without the scent. The Application of Navarasas in the performances is very much needed and such practices should not be discarded in any case. Mostly to show or illustrate the Navarasas in Bharatha Natyam in the present era the Bharatha Natyam artistes only reveal the nine expressions through still photos, not much in stage performances.

CALL OF THE WILD

Commemorating World Wildlife Day on March 3

A Zoom panel discussion on World Wildlife Day was held recently. This was the 16th of a series of virtual zoom panel discussions hosted by America Sri Lanka Photographic Art Society in Los Angeles California, USA (ASPAS); Member of Photographic Society of America (PSA) and The International Federation of Photography of Art in France (FIAP). The objective of the series is to showcase the beauty of world fauna and flora and promote environmental conservation in the context of nature photography and tourism, with a special focus on the grandeur of Sri Lanka's natural habitat.

The panellists were Dr. Peter Sand, Rukshan Jayewardene and Mari Margil.

Dr. Peter H. Sand was the Secretary-General, of the Organization for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); previously he was Assistant Director-General and later, Acting Director-General, of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)

Previously, he has held several senior positions in international organizations including the post of Senior Environmental Affairs Officer United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Geneva; Legal Adviser for Environmental Affairs, World Bank, Washington D.C.; and Senior Legal Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome. Currently, he is a Visiting Professor, University of Paris (Institute des Hautes Etudes Internationales); Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich; and Adjunct Professor, Durham, USA. Previously he has been an Associate Professor, McGill University, Montreal, Canada; and University of Geneva, Switzerland. He has published 145 research papers in international journals on the environment, wildlife, and conservation of fauna and flora.

Rukshan Jayewardene has an M.Phil. in South Asian Archaeology from the University of Cambridge with 14 years of field experience in the Sri Lankan early historic period. For the past 25 years he has been a wildlife photographer, writer

on wildlife related topics and a popularizer of Sri Lanka's amazing biodiversity. He has intensively studied the Sri Lankan leopard in the wild and through that exposure been inspired to work for its long-term conservation. His involvement with five (non-profit) conservation/environmental NGOs over a twenty-year period, with broadly common goals and like-minded individuals, has resulted in both success and failure. He continues to fight for avoidable, biodiversity loss, in order to conserve the common heritage of all Sri Lankans. He sees the current decade, starting with 2020 being a deciding decade for the Sri Lankan leopards both in and outside legally Protected Areas, together with a host of other animals on land that are co-dependent.

Mari Margil serves as the Executive Director of the Center for Democratic and Environmental Rights and program manager for CDER's International Center for the Rights of Nature. Margil previously served as the Associate Director of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF). Margil is widely viewed as one of the leading global voices for the recognition of legally enforceable rights of ecosystems and nature. In her role with CDER, Margil works with national, state, and local governments, tribal nations, and indigenous communities in Australia, Sweden, the Philippines, Nepal, and elsewhere, to advance legal and policy frameworks regarding Rights of Nature. She has served as the primary drafter of a "Himalayas Bill of Rights" (Nepal) and other groundbreaking legislation. Her writing has been featured in The Guardian, YES! Magazine, Earth Island Journal, Democracy Journal, World Policy Journal, In These Times, and Common Dreams.

Margil received her Master's degree from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and is a co-author of The Bottom Line or Public Health (Oxford University Press 2010) and Exploring Wild Law: The Philosophy of Earth Jurisprudence (Wakefield Press 2011). She was a co-host of Democracy Matters, a syndicated public affairs radio show broadcast from KYRS in Spokane, Washington.

PIONEERING CRITIC OF TAMIL LITERATURE

KS Sivakumaran

Dr SUBATHINI RAMESH

Art, literature and social practices are fields where dissemination of positive thinking could produce profitable results. Such dissemination is possible through the relentless efforts of persons like K.S. Sivakumaran, who never tires of working for the promotion of inter-communication between readers belonging to different language groups through his writings.

One of the most respected Sri Lankan men of letters, Sivakumaran has succeeded in almost every field of literature. The bilingual writer (English & Tamil) has been a rare phenomenon in Sri Lankan Culture. As far as I know, there have been only a few, who have written creatively in both English and Tamil.

He began writing short stories in his mother tongue Tamil and later they were translated by him in English. Now he writes both in Tamil and English - poems and short stories. He is praised for his extraordinary ability to create moods and atmospheres, his unforgettable images, the music of his language and his awareness of his human conditions.

Oral inspiration

The language is naturalized sufficiently to achieve a form of transparency. Language is often moulded to achieve a balance between the literary and the oral.

And yet the pieces, poetry, prose or a combination of both, invoke a whole discourse, a way of life to communicate with the reader. Genre is of little importance to the author as he experiments with structure and language to expression to the multiplicity of a beleaguered and resilient life.

The nuances of a way of life and culture are the backdrop of his writing and that explains the texture of Sivakumaran's insightful work. The two collections of short stories (Irumai and Sivakumaran's Stories) published by him portrayed him as a gifted writer. His writings convey not only facts but also feelings because he imaginatively projects himself and his readers into the experience of each moment.

The reading public in Sri Lanka is not aware that there are several Sri Lankan Tamil writers who have used English to create purposes. Sivakumaran's literary predecessors are late K Kailasapathy, AJ Canagaratna and Alagu Subramaniam, CV Velupillai to name just a few. But there is a significant contrast between Sivakumaran and his predecessors. The latter was educated in the English medium during British rule. So was Sivakumaran. But he is a product of the post Independence era (the 1960s) when the mother tongue was the medium of education. All the greater is the credit due to him for using English as a medium for creative expression.

KS Sivakumaran is one of the most versatile writers of his generation as a translator, teacher, essayist, short story writer, columnist, journalist, broadcaster and highly respected literary critic. In whatever he did, however, the creator in him dominated and consequently in every area of his interest whether it is short story writing or criticism or cinema, he left behind a new order, a new system and an indelible mark of his natural predilections



Veteran Critic KS Sivakumaran.
Picture by Saman Sri Wedage

and potential for creative contributions. His entries on contemporary Sri Lankan Tamil literature are found in two International Encyclopaedias of Literature. Another welcoming feature in Sivakumaran's writing is that he writes not only on the theories of literary criticism, the appreciation of literary personalities, film reviews, creative writing of Lankan writers in Tamil and the development of Tamil fiction, poetry and literary criticism but also on science, philosophy and technology. The heterogeneous nature of his articles on various topics clearly shows his versatility and resourcefulness, which he got through his constant convergence with English and Tamil litterateurs.

Meticulous treatment

Sivakumaran is best known, even a pioneer in the western style of column writing both in English and Tamil. Whatever the title he chooses, he gives a meticulous treatment of his topics with precision. His entire articles are descriptive, analytical and informative on different facets of the literary scene. His style of writing is lucid and precise. He also has launched a programme of collecting these writings and bringing them out as books and booklets. The series is at once edifying, informative for students of literature and those who wish to gain access to the field of writing and higher education.

He also acknowledges his vital interest in translation. He had translated literary texts including short stories into English and vice versa. He had worked for the defunct Local Government Service Commission as a Tamil translator.

Sivakumaran had embarked on what was to become his major phase producing criticism on various topics, now considered to be among the greatest Tamil Sri Lankan literary criticism of the 20th century. His Tamil books on criticism such as Traditional Criticism and Sri Lankan Tamil Literature, Some Sri Lankan Tamil fictions, Criticism-recent collection of some Sri Lankan short stories, Collection of Sri Lankan Short Story - A Criticism, Sri Lankan Literature-Introduction of Books, Critical Views and Aesthetic Literary Criticism give very valuable materials for the readers who are interested in modern Tamil Sri Lankan Literature.

Sivakumaran had embarked on what was to become his major phase producing criticism on various topics, now considered to be among the greatest Tamil Sri Lankan literary criticism of the 20th century.

He did make a substantial contribution to exploring cinema and film review for the Tamil readers of Sri Lanka. He had written a book named 'The Moving Images' on the aesthetics and grammar of cinema with guidelines to approaches of film criticism. In this book, Sivakumaran not only compares the kinds of professional filming techniques to the current Tamil films and the importance of photography but also the discovery of the camera and the history of film making. His other book in Tamil is titled Cinema: A World Passage.

Administrative experience

He is an artist of global dimensions and creator of a unique calibre. Sivakumaran was Chairman of the Tamil Drama Panel and a member of the Literary Panels in English and Tamil of the Arts Council of Sri Lanka. He was also a member of the Preview Committee of selecting English films for the National Film Corporation and a member of selecting TV presenters and newsreaders for the Tamil Channel of Rupavahini. Presently he is a member of the Public Performances Board under the Ministry of Culture.

Sivakumaran had worked for the SLBC (Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation) Tamil Service as a Relief Presenter, News Reader and News Editor (1966-1980) and now he is one of the Relief Hosts for the English Service of the SLBC.

This outstanding personality also proved himself as a successful teacher of English and English Literature. He had taught in The Maldives, Oman, Sri Lanka and the US. During his services in various capacities and after retirement he has been working as a freelance journalist. He is a freelance media critic for most of the English and Tamil newspapers in Lanka.

In the 1980s he was the Deputy Features Editor of The Island (Sunday and Daily) and also edited the 'Culture Page' which was voted as the best feature by the paper's readers. He was also the Associate Editor of the Virakesari for a short time (the 1990s) and also the pioneer editor of the Tamil weekly Navamani (latter part of the 1990s). He was the Tamil News Duty Editor of the SLBC (the 1970s) In short KS Sivakumaran played and even now is playing a vital role in the literary, cultural and media scene of Sri Lanka.

To the readers of Tamil stories Sivakumaran gives a new sense of sophistication and refinement, to the Sri Lankan literary criticism, a new approach and view, to journalism, a new language, format and method of expression, to the Tamil and English languages, a new form, and new life and above all to the readers of North and South of Sri Lanka, he helps to provide a new channel of communication. KS Sivakumaran is a great treasure to the Sri Lankan literary world.



TITLE: ONE BY ONE
AUTHOR: RUTH WARE

Getting snowed in at a beautiful, rustic mountain chalet doesn't sound like the worst problem in the world, especially when there's a breathtaking vista, a cozy fire, and company to keep you warm. But what happens when that company is eight of your coworkers...and you can't trust any of them?

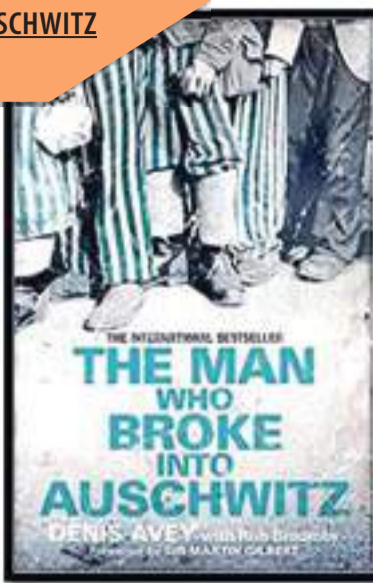
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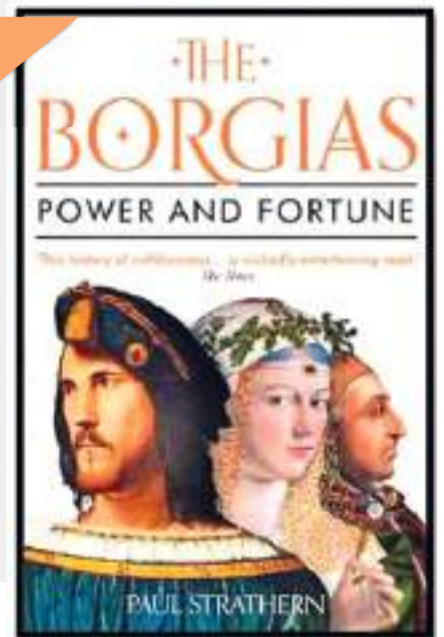
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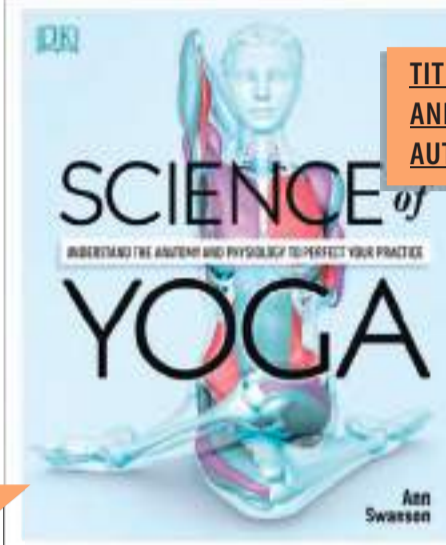
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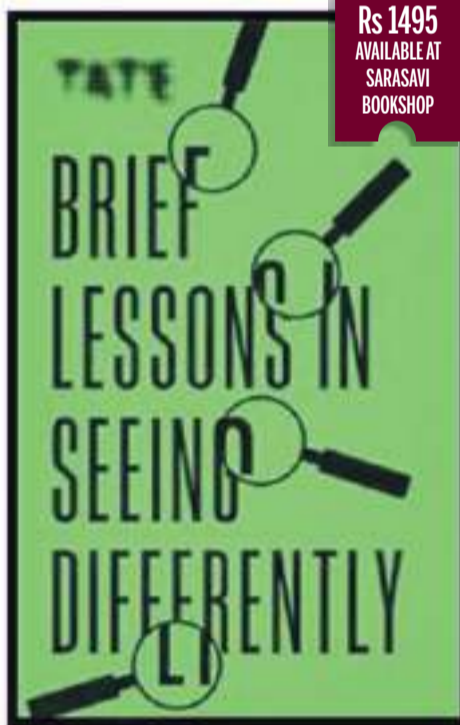
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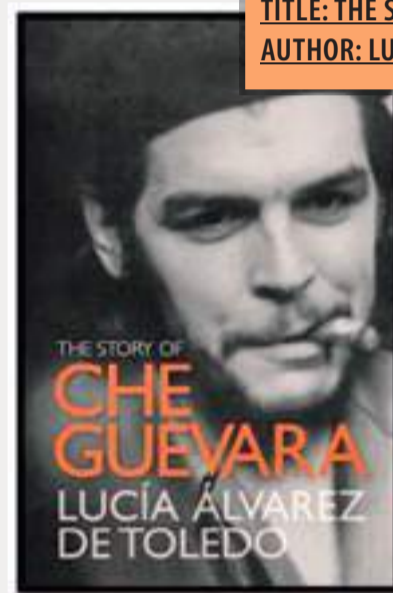
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Che Guevara is something of a symbol in the West. But for the rest of the world he is different: a charismatic revolutionary who redrew the political map of Latin America and gave hope to those resisting colonialism everywhere. In The Story of Che Guevara Lucia Alvarez de Toledo follows Che from his birth in Rosario and his early years in his parent's mate plantation, to his immortal motorcycle journeys across South America, his role at the heart of Castro's new Cuban government, and through to the unforgiving jungle that formed the backdrop to his doomed campaigns in the Congo and Bolivia.

TITLE: RAAVANPUTR MEGHNAD: THE PRINCE OF LANKA
AUTHOR: KEVIN MISSAL

This is the story of the greatest warrior in the Ramayana. Meghnad was the perfect son of the Raavana. Ever since his childhood, he was taught one thing: to be ruthless. Honed by the greatest gurus, Meghnad grew up to be the conqueror of Amravati, the capital of the Devas. He battled Lord Indra. He defeated Lord Ram. But then ... he fell in love. Her name was Prameela and she was a Naga princess. And she knew something that no one did: the truth behind Lady Sita's abduction.

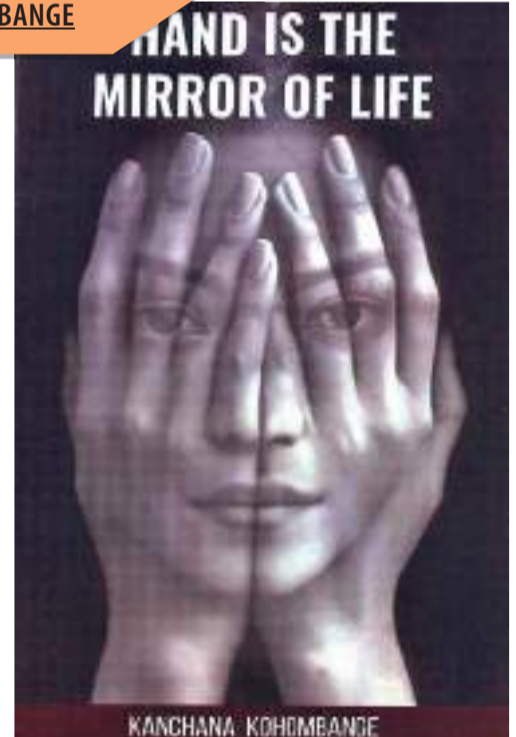
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TITLE: HAND IS THE MIRROR OF LIFE
AUTHOR: KANCHANA KOHOMBANGE

The palm contains potential answers to those questions that arise as we grow and mature. These facts contribute to the development of any person or a country. Palmistry is neither an art nor a science, but it is the blend of both. No one can explain why the palm imprints differ from person to person and a deep analysis shows in retrospect shows the accuracy of readings.

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TITLE: CHILD'S PLAY
AUTHOR: DANIELLE STEEL

You think you know what's best for your grown-up children. But you'll find they have lessons they can now teach you. Kate Morgan is an esteemed Manhattan lawyer. After losing her beloved husband in a tragic accident, she's successfully raised their three children single-handedly. Now in their twenties, she slightly smugly feels that they are well set up to travel the path she planned. Except why is her eldest daughter, Tamara, a high-flying marketing executive, so secretive and why won't she commit to a relationship?

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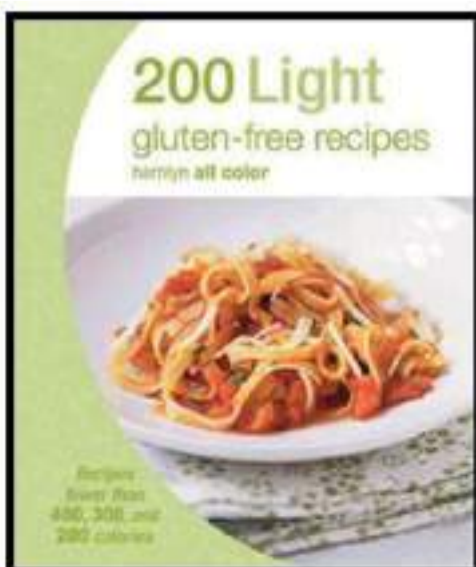


Then there's Anthony, Kate's middle child, who is engaged to a wealthy New York socialite - it will be the wedding of the year, so why doesn't he seem happy?

TITLE: 200 LIGHT GLUTEN-FREE RECIPES
AUTHOR: ANGELA DOWDEN

Millions of people either suffer from gluten intolerance or choose to reduce their intake of gluten as part of a healthy lifestyle. With stunning photographs and clear step-by-step instructions, Hamlyn All Colour Cookbook: 200 Light Gluten-Free Recipes offers a range of tasty, low-calorie dishes that are free from gluten and simple to make.

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TITLE: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION JAPANESE CULTURE
AUTHOR: DR. DILRUKSHI RATHNAYAKE AND NAHO KOMATSUBARA

There are many ways of doing things in the world. The way you do things may not be the way others do it. Accept the cultural diversity! Respect the cultural diversity! Then you will be able to be successful in intercultural communication. This is the message of Dilrukshi Rathnayake, Senior lecturer at the University of Kelaniya and Naho Komatsubara of the Japan Foundation Tokyo who have written this book specially for Sri Lankans. It includes a free CD.

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TITLE: THE DISAPPEARING ACT
AUTHOR: FLORENCE DE CHANGY

The incident was inexplicable. In a world defined by advanced technology and interconnectedness, how could an entire aircraft become untraceable? Had the flight been subject to a perfect hijack? Perhaps the pilots lost control? And if the plane did crash, where was the wreckage?

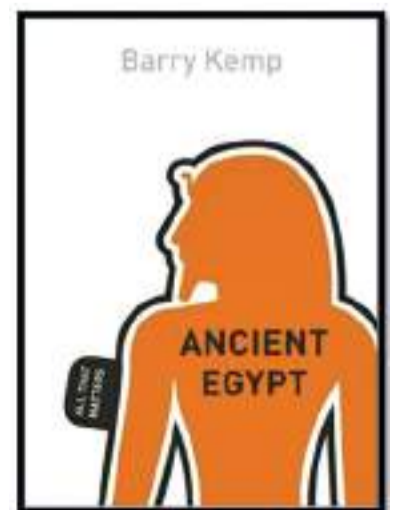
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PROCUREMENT NOTICE



Quotations will be invited from Local Suppliers to obtain Heavy Vehicles to transport non degradable solid waste from Mihisaru Resources Management Centre at Karadiyana, Piliyandala operated by the Western Provincial Waste Management Authority to the Waste to Energy Project at Kerawalapitiya, Wattala and to obtain heavy machinery on hire basis for a period of one year, installation of a Software System updated as per the site requirement for two weigh bridges of 30 MT and 50 MT at Karadiyana Centre and purchase and installation of relevant capital items, purchase of ordour controlling material separately for degradable and non-degradable waste for projects managed by the authority and to enter into an agreement to purchase recyclable items collected at controlled pump site and recycling centre at Mihisaru Resources Management Centre, Karadiyana for a period of one year.

No.	Item	Details	No. of Units	Bid Document Sets
01	Obtaining Heavy Vehicles for transport of non-degradable solid waste	Obtaining Heavy Vehicles on rental basis (for a period of one year) for transporting non-degradable solid waste from the Karadiyana Mihisaru Resources Management Centre, Piliyandala up to the Waste to Energy Project at Kerawalapitiya.	No. of Units will be decided upon the capacity of the vehicle and the load capacity of the waste	A
02	Heavy Machinery	Obtaining on rent basis (for a period of one year) PC-200 category Long Arm Excavator	01	B
03	Installation of an updated Software System for 30M Ton and 50M Ton Weigh Bridges according to the requirements of the site and purchasing and installation of the relevant capital items	Updating and installing a Software System according to requirements of the location in place of the Software System presently in use for 30 M Ton and 50 M Ton Weigh Bridges and Purchasing and Installing of the relevant Capital Items	-	C
04	Purchase of degrading capacity enhancing and ordour controlling material for the Organic Waste Yards by the Authority	Should improve the degrading process of the organic waste being collected in Waste Yards and thereby easing the composting process, getting rid of the small and should not be harmful to the environment and health	2,400 Litres	D
05	Purchase of ordour Controlling material in the non-degradable Waste Yard and the Reloading Center managed by the Authority	Must be material that can instantly control the ordour generated by depositing and frequent inter-mixing of waste not harmful to the environment and the body	1200 Litres	E
06	Re-cycling items	Invitation for quotations for daily purchase of all recycled items from Karadiyana Controlled Dump Site and the Re-cycled Material Collection Site	-	F

A, B, C, D, E Bid document sets containing specifications could be obtained from 03.03.2021 up to 2.00 p.m. on 17.03.2021 from the "Mihisaru Viyamina" Resources Management Centre, Karadiyana, Thumbowila, Piliyandala operated by the Western Provincial Waste Management Authority after paying a non-refundable fee of Rs. 3500.00 for each set. It is mandatory to submit a letter of request with an official stamp when obtaining Bid Forms. A pre-Bid meeting relevant to all items mentioned above will be held at 10.00 a.m. on 10.03.2021 at the Karadiyana "Mihisaru Viyamina" Resources Management Centre Office Premises.

Duly completed sealed Bids should be inserted in the Tender Box kept at the **Head Office of the Waste Management Authority (W.P.) located in the 1st Floor of the Western Provincial Council Building at No. 204, Denzil Kobbekaduwa Mawatha, Battaramulla** to be received before **2.00 p.m. on 17.03.2021** or should be sent by registered post. The relevant Bids will be opened at **2.15 p.m. on 17.03.2021** at the **Head Office of the Waste Management Authority (W.P.)** and the Bidder or his authorized representative could participate. All Bids received late will be rejected.

**Chairman,
Waste Management Centre (W.P.)
No. 204, Denzil Kobbekaduwa Mawatha, Battaramulla.
Tel. No : 011-3056703 / Fax : 0112613317**

01.03.2021

Procurement Notice

Ministry of Youth and Sports National Youth Corps

Obtaining 09 Vehicles on Monthly Hire Basis for a period of One Year for the Provincial Offices of the National Youth Corps – 2021 / 2022

Invitation of National Competitive Bids No. 01

- Quotations are hereby invited from 03.03.2021 up to 11.00 a.m. on 24.03.2021 from vehicle suppliers / institutions for obtaining vehicles on monthly hire basis for a period of one year from 01.04.2021 until 31.03.2021 required for the under-mentioned 09 Provincial Offices of the National Youth Corps established under the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Ser. No.	Provincial Office	Location
01	Northern Provincial Office	Vavuniya - National Youth Corps Training Centre
02	Southern Provincial Office	Galle - National Youth Corps Training Centre
03	Western Provincial Office	Yakkala - National Youth Corps Training Centre
04	Eastern Provincial Office	Trincomalee - National Youth Corps Training Centre
05	North Central Provincial Office	Kekirawa - National Youth Corps Training Centre
06	North Western Provincial Office	Mawathagama - National Youth Corps Training Centre
07	Sabaragamuwa Provincial Office	Kegalle - National Youth Corps Training Centre
08	Uva Provincial Office	Bandarawela - National Youth Corps Training Centre
09	Central Provincial Office	Senkadagala - National Youth Corps Training Centre

- Relevant service should be provided as per the details attached to the bid forms and a non refundable fee of Rs. 1000.00 should be paid to obtain bid forms. (Separate bid documents should be purchased making separate payment for each province). Bid forms may be obtained from the Procurement Division on submission of the receipt obtained from the Shroff of the Accounts Division of the Headquarters of the National Youth Corps upon payment of the above non refundable fee between 9.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. on working days from 03.03.2021 until 23.03.2021 and the bid documents placed in the Security Division Counter of the National Youth Corps Headquarters may be inspected free of charge. (A written request should be submitted to obtain bid documents.)
- Bids should be submitted clearly as per the conditions provided and the bids in duplicate may either be sent by registered post addressed to "**Chairman, Procurement Committee (Minor), National Youth Corps Headquarters, No. 420, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 07**" or deposited in the Bid Box kept near the Main Auditorium in the Ground Floor at the National Youth Corps Headquarters to receive before 11.00 a.m. on 24.03.2021. Bids will be opened immediately after the closing of bids on 24.03.2021 at the Auditorium of the National Youth Corps Headquarters.
- Bids should be accompanied by the original receipt obtained upon payment of the bid fee and a bid security drawn in favour of Chairman / Director, National Youth Corps, No. 420, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 07 valid from bids opening date 24.03.2021 until 07.07.2021 to the value not below Rs. 6000.00 separately for each province obtained from a commercial bank approved by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.
- Bids should be accompanied by the original receipt obtained upon payment of the bid fee along with clear photocopies of the following documents, which should be certified by the bidder as true copy. Bidder should be able to produce the originals of those documents whenever required.
 - Certified Photocopy of the Vehicle Registration Certificate
 - Certified Photocopy of the Full Insurance Certificate
 - Certified Photocopy of the Revenue License for the current year.
 - If registered for VAT, VAT Registration Certificate/Exemption Certificate
- A Pre-Bid Meeting will be held at the National Youth Corps Headquarters at 11.00 a.m. on 10.03.2021 regarding this bid.
- Quotations submitted should be valid for 90 days from the date of opening of bids on 24.03.2021 until 23.06.2021.
- Bids that are not accompanied by the documents requested in Para 5 and 6 will be rejected.
- Procurement Committee reserves the right to take the final decision regarding this.
- Please call the Additional Director (Administration and Finance) of the National Youth Corps for any inquiry. Tel No. 011-2 688 885 / 011-2 690 294.

**Departmental Procurement Committee (Minor)
National Youth Corps Headquarters
No. 420, Bauddhaloka Mawatha,
Colombo 07.**

03.03.2021

WESTERN PROVINCIAL COUNCIL ENGINEERING ORGANIZATION

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

- The Chairman, **Procurement Committee of relevant Divisional Engineers** now invite sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the following works as described below.
- I. "Bidding will be conducted through National Competitive Bidding (NCB). Since the Total Cost Estimate of this procurement is below Rs. 50Mn., regional Preference and CIDA grade preference shall apply as stipulated in Public Finance Circular No. 04/2016(ii).

II. Public Finance Circular No. 03/2020(i) is entitled to this Procurement and, If the State Owned Enterprises (SOE) are quoted for bids, five percent (5%) preference will be given.

- To be eligible for contract award, the successful bidder shall not have been blacklisted or assigned contracts should not be defaulted or not completed in given time period beyond bidders control or terminated prematurely and shall meet the following requirements and have a valid CIDA Registration.

(1) Serial No.	(2) Contract No.	(3) Name of Contract	(4) Requirement of Public Contracts Act No. 03	(5) CIDA Registration	(6) Non Refundable Fee (Rs.)	(7) Bid Security Validity Period (Rs.)	(8) Place of Issuing and submission bidding documents and contact Phone No.
1.	WP/DB/CON/21/78	Roof repair and other essential repairs at Primary Medical Care Unit - Kalagedihena	No	C9 and C8	1,000.00	Cash Deposit - 10,000.00	Divisional Engineer's Office Gampaha, Court Road, Gampaha. TP: 033-222515
2.	WP/DB/CON/21/79	Repairs of Divisional Engineer's Quarters at Divisional Engineer's Office - Kaluthara	No	C7 and C8	1,000.00	Cash Deposit - 10,000.00	Divisional Engineer's Office Kaluthara, Sumangala Road, Kaluthara North. TP: 034-2237349
3.	WP/DB/CON/21/80	Construction of Ambulance Garage (Stage 1) - Base Hospital - Pimbura	Yes	C5 and C6	4,000.00	Cash Deposit - 100,000.00 or Bid Security 200,000.00 (77 days)	Divisional Engineer's Office Mathugama, Ananda Shasthralaya, Mathugama. TP: 034-2243082
4.	WP/DB/CON/21/81	A/C System for X-Ray Room - Base Hospital - Pimbura	No	EM5 or above	1,000.00	Cash Deposit - 10,000.00	
5.	WP/DB/CON/21/82	Construction of 90'x25' two storied class room building with Laboratory room at Yatiyana K.V - Matugama	Yes	C5 and C6	5,000.00	Bid Security 250,000.00 (77 days)	

- Qualifications should be fulfilled as in the Bidding Document.
- Interested bidders may obtain further information from **relevant Divisional Engineer's offices given in the Table** and may inspect free of charge the bidding documents at the same office during the office hours.
- A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by any prospective Bidder or their accredited agent on the submission of a written request to the **relevant Divisional Engineers** (As in Column No.08 of the table) of the Western Provincial Council upon payment of non refundable fee from **09.00 hrs to 15.00 hrs** on any working day from **01.03.2021** until **22.03.2021**. Payment shall be made in cash.
- Sealed bids shall be delivered in duplicate with separate envelope project name written at the top left hand corner and addressed to the **relevant Divisional Engineer's offices (As in the Table)** on or before **23.03.2021 at 10.30 a.m.** Bids will be opened soon after closing in the presence of bidders or bidders' representatives who choose to attend. Late Bids will be rejected.

- All bids shall be accompanied by a bid security or cash deposit (As in the Table).

- Bidders shall have been registered under the Public Contract No. 03 of 1987 and the Certificate of Registration should be submitted (As in the Column No. 04 of the table).

**Head,
Procurement Unit,
Engineering Organization (W.P.),
5th Floor,
#204, Denzil Kobbekaduwa Mawatha,
Battaramulla
01.03.2021
T.P.: 0112 -092504
Fax: 0112 - 092505**

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lkDEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES - UVA PROVINCE
PROCUREMENT NOTICE

STERILIZATION OF DOGS - 2021

Bids are invited for Sterilization of Dogs, both in the Badulla and Moneragala Districts in the Uva Province.

Serial No.	District	No. of Dogs to be Sterilized	Bid Security in Cash	Non Refundable Bid Form Fee
01 02	For Badulla / Moneragala Districts	2000	Rs. 20,000.00	Rs. 1500.00

Bid applications will be issued by the Uva Provincial Department of Health Services by submitting the receipt obtained after paying the Bid Form Fee in cash as mentioned in the column above to Finance Assistant of the Provincial Department of Health Services. Bid documents will be issued on working days of the week from 02.03.2021 up to 3.30 p.m. on 23.03.2021 and cash payments will be accepted on working days of the week only between 9.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. The value of the Bid Security will be twice the amount mentioned above if it is paid by a Bank Guarantee.

- > Institutions or persons registered at the Veterinary Surgeons Association and possessing a service experience of two years are able to submit applications.
- > All payments will be accepted only in cash. Bid documents will be issued in two copies and they should be duly completed similarly. The two Bid Forms as original and duplicate should be enclosed in separate envelopes and sealed and thereafter, these should be inserted in a single envelope and marked with the words "Sterilization of Dogs - 2021" on the top left-hand corner of this envelope and the name and address of the applicant should be marked below this.
- > Sealed Bids should be inserted in the Bid Box kept in the Uva Provincial Department of Health Services to be received before 10.30 a.m. on 24.03.2021 or they should be sent by registered post to the Chairman, Departmental Procurement Board, Uva Provincial Department of Health Services, No. 301, R.H. Gunawardena Mawatha, Badulla, to be received before the specified time. Incomplete applications and Bids received after the specified date and time will be rejected.
- > All Bids received will be opened on 24.03.2021, immediately after closing of accepting Bids in the presence of the Procurement Board of the Uva Provincial Department of Health Services. The Bidder or his representative with written approval could be present on this occasion after proving his identity.
- > Bid documents could be inspected during office hours on working days of the week and the right of the decision of accepting or rejecting any Bids lies with Procurement Board.

Chairman, Departmental Procurement Board,
Uva Provincial Department of Health Services,
3rd Floor, No. 301, R.H. Gunawardena Mawatha,
Badulla.

Tel. No. 055-2231981 Fax No : 055-2223098

SOUTH EASTERN UNIVERSITY OF
SRI LANKA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

SELECTION OF STRUCTURAL
DESIGN CONSULTANCY SERVICES

The Chairman, Department Procurement Committee, on behalf of the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka invites technical and financial proposals from reputed and experienced chartered consultants in providing structural design consultancy services for the following project.

Project Name: The Extension Work to the Administrative Secretariat Building at the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Oluvil

Eligibility Criteria

- Consultant shall be a Registered Consultancy Firm or Chartered Engineer registered in the Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka (IESL) / in The Engineering Council, Sri Lanka (ECSL).
- Consultant shall possess at least 05 years experience in the field of structural consultancy services.
- Consultant shall not have been blacklisted previously.

RFP document Particulars

- Issuing period : 03.03.2021 - 16.03.2021
- Pre Proposal conference : 17.03.2021 at 11.00 am at Board Room, SEUSL
- Proposal closing date & time : 23.03.2021 before 11.00 am
- Proposal opening date & time : 23.03.2021 at 11.05 am
- Proposal validity period : 60 days from the date of opening of proposal

Terms & Conditions

- Prospective consultants who fulfill the above criteria can collect the RFP document with TOR on submission of a written request along with supportive document for eligibility, from the Deputy Registrar/Capital Works & Planning, SEUSL, Oluvil. The RFP documents can also be obtained via email by sending an email request to drcapitalworks@seu.ac.lk
- Further information may be obtained from the Deputy Registrar/Capital Works & Planning or Works Engineer, SEUSL. Telephone Nos. 0672255147/067225535
- Late proposals shall be returned unopened.
- The final decision in this regard shall be with the SEUSL.
- Sealed Technical and Financial proposals together shall be deposited in the tender box kept in the office of the Registrar or sent by registered post to the Vice Chancellor, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka to reach him before 11.00 am on 23rd March 2021. Please indicate "Selection of Structural Design Consultant" on the top left hand corner of the sealed envelope.

Chairman
Department Procurement Committee
South Eastern University of Sri Lanka
Oluvil.



SLAASMB
Sri Lanka Accounting and Auditing
Standards Monitoring Board

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI)

Title of the Consulting Service :

Design, Development and Implementation of Management Information System of the Sri Lanka Accounting and Auditing Standards Monitoring Board (SLAASMB)

Reference No: SLAASMB/GOSL/CON/QCBS/2021/01

Ministry Consultancy Procurement Committee on behalf of SLAASMB invites eligible Software Development Firms to indicate their interest in providing the consultancy services to implement a centralized Management Information System (MIS) to SLAASMB. The consultant firm is required to gather requirements, design, develop and deploy the solution and provide three (03) years support and maintenance for the implemented solution. The interested consultant firms should provide the information through brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, and availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.

A consultant firm will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the Guidelines for Selection and Employment of Consultants published by the Department of Public Finance, following the Quality and Cost Base Selection (QCBS) method. All interested parties are informed that all documentations shall be in English Language. Joint Ventures, consortia, sub consultancy or any other form of associations are not allowed under this assignment.

Further information can be obtained from Procurement Officer, Sri Lanka Accounting and Auditing Standards Monitoring Board, 3rd Floor, 293, Galle Road, Colombo 03. Telephone: (011) 2301210, Facsimile: (011) 2301211, Email: procurementslaasmb@slt.net.lk, during office hours from 0900 to 1630 hours. The detailed "Terms of Reference (TOR)" for the assignment and "EOI Information Form" can be found at the following website: <http://slaasmb.gov.lk>

Expressions of interest must be delivered in written form along with documentary evidence as specified above as per the "EOI Information Form" on or before 1500 hrs on 17 March 2021 to the address below either: (i) hand delivered or (ii) by post.

Envelope containing the EOI to be marked as "MIS for SLAASMB - SLAASMB /GOSL/CON / QCBS/2021/01"

Chairman

Ministry Consultant Procurement Committee
Sri Lanka Accounting and Auditing Standards Monitoring Board
3rd Floor, 293, Galle Road, Colombo 03

Phone: (011) 2301210 Fax: (011) 2301211, www.slaasmb.gov.lk

03 March 2021

THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA

MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION

IRRIGATION DEPARTMENT

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Procurement of Providing Janitorial Services to
Irrigation Headquarters & Other Buildings

Contract No: ID /HO/CT/Jan.Ser/NCB/2021/01

01. The Director General of Irrigation, invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the following service.

Table 01

Contract No.	Name of Work	Bid should be valid up to	Bid Security (LKR)	Bid Security should be valid up to
ID/HO/CT/ Jan. Ser/NCB/2021/01	Procurement of Providing Janitorial Services to Irrigation Headquarters Complex & Other Buildings	09.06.2021	150,000.00	07.07.2021

02. Bidding documents can be purchased from the office of Director of Irrigation (Contract & Procurement), Room No. 216, 02nd Floor, Irrigation Department, No. 230, Bauddhaloka, Mawatha, Colombo 07 on a written request made on a company letterhead (Original) and by paying a non-refundable fee of Rs.5,000.00 from 3rd March 2021 to 23rd March 2021 on working days from 09:00 hrs. to 14.30 hrs.

03. Interested bidders may inspect Bidding Document free of charge prior to the purchase and obtain further information from Director of Irrigation (Contract & Procurement); T.P.011-2582897/ 011-2583305

04. Pre-bid meeting and Site Visit will be held as mentioned in the table below. Prospective bidders are requested to inspect the sites with the assistance of the relevant officers.

Table 02

Name of Work	Divisional Irrigation Engineer Assisting the Site Visit	Date/Time and Commencing venue of the Site Visit	Date/Time and Venue of the Pre-Bid Meeting
Procurement of Providing Janitorial Services to Irrigation Headquarters & Other Buildings	Divisional Irrigation Engineer (Building & Building Services) T.P. 011-2581802	10.03.2021 at 10.00 a.m. at the Office of the Divisional Irrigation Engineer (Building & Building Services)	10.03.2021 at 11.00 a.m. at the Office Room of Director of Irrigation (WG & BS), Room No. 318, Irrigation Department, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 07

05. Bid must be accompanied by a Bid Security for the value mentioned in Bidding Document. Any Bid without a valid Bid Security will be considered as non-responsive and rejected without any query.

06. All pages of the Bidding Documents shall be signed by the bidder and affixed his seal.

07. Completed Bids shall either be deposited in the Tender Box kept for this purpose in the Room No: 311 (Room of Chief Financial Officer), 03rd Floor, Irrigation Department, No. 230, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 07 or sent under registered post to The Chairman, Departmental Procurement Committee of the above address to reach him on or before 10:00 hrs. (10.00 a.m.) on 24th March 2021. Bids shall be closed at 10:00 hrs. (10.00 a.m.) on 24th March 2021 and opened immediately. Late bids will be rejected. Please write the Description of Procurement and Bid No. (IFB No.) on top of left hand corner of the envelope.

08. The Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders or their representatives who wish to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the bid closing date specified above, the bid closing date will be the immediate next working day and will be opened at the same time and venue.

09. The decision of the Department Procurement Committee is final and conclusive. The Department Procurement Committee is empowered to reject single, any or all bids at its own discretion.

Eng. K.D.N. Siriwardana
Director General of Irrigation,
Irrigation Department,
No. 230, Bauddhaloka Mawatha,
Colombo 07.

Date: 03.03.2021

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