



YOUR PAPER TODAY 16 PAGES

Travel restrictions only solution to contain COVID: SLMA

● Sri Lanka is almost in the fourth wave and the country would plunge into a catastrophic situation

BY SHEAIN FERNANDOPULLE

The imposition of travel restrictions will be the only solution to contain COVID-19 within a short term, the Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA) highlighted yesterday.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

21,344 COVID POSITIVE CASES, 591 DEATHS REPORTED WITHIN 10 DAYS

Health Minister reveals startling figures in Parliament

- About 30,017 Covid patients have been receiving treatment as of August, 1 2021
- 19,688 children, under the age of ten have tested positive
- Another 14 children who were below 18 years of age had succumbed to COVID-19

BY YOHAN PERERA AND AJITH SIRIWARDANA

A total of 21,344 COVID-19 cases and 591 COVID related deaths have been reported during the last ten days, Minister of Health Pavithra Wanniarachchi informed Parliament today.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

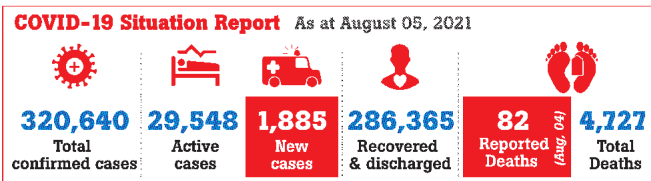


State Minister Roshan Ranasinghe paid for my air ticket: Namal

BY AJITH SIRIWARDANA AND YOHAN PERERA

Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa said yesterday it was State Minister Roshan Ranasinghe, who had purchased him his air ticket to travel to Japan to witness the Olympic games.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>



CID arrests several illegal emigrants from North, Chilaw

BY DILRUKSHI GREGO

A group of illegal emigrants under arrest warrant for attempting to illegally emigrate to several countries including France and Australia were arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

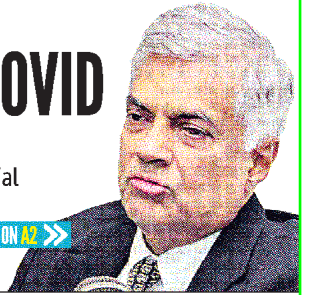
RANIL PROPOSES SPECIAL EXPENDITURE HEAD FOR COVID

- It is better we create a special expenditure head as it is an essential need

BY YOHAN PERERA AND AJITH SIRIWARDANA

UNP MP- Ranil Wickremesinghe yesterday proposed a special expenditure head for COVID-19 related expenditure.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>



Port City says it has no direct links with companies targeted by US

CHEC Port City Colombo said neither the company nor its parent company- China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) are listed in the United States sanctions which were announced in August 2020.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

NO CHANGE IN GOVT. POLICY BANNING CHEMICAL FERTILISER: PREZ ADVISOR

Principal Advisor to the President, Lalith Weerasinghe, highlighted that although certain decisions were made based on scientific facts, the government's policy to ban the use of chemical fertilisers remains unchanged.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>



PHI videos public protest for record

A protest organised by the Ceylon Electricity Board Joint Working Committee opposite the Ceylon Electricity Board Head Office, Colombo against the sale of the Kerawalapitiya Power Plant to the United States, was being videoed by a Public Health Inspector.

PIC BY NISAL BADUGE

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

SC suspends operation of "De-radicalisation"

- The petitioners stated that individuals arrested in terms of these Regulations could be subjected to executive or administrative detention

BY LAKMAL SOORIYAGODA

The Supreme Court yesterday issued an Interim Order suspending the operation of Prevention of Terrorism (De-radicalisation from holding violent extremist religious ideology) Regulations No.01 of 2021, which was published by way of Gazette notification on 12 March, 2021.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

Special mechanism for recalling public servants for duty

- It was also agreed to issue a circular allowing public servants to report to duty on shift basis on the consent of the head of the institution and the recommendation of the Public Ministry Secretary

BY AJITH SIRIWARDANA AND YOHAN PERERA

Special mechanism would be introduced with regard to recalling of pregnant mothers and public servants for duty, State Minister of Production, Supply and Regulation of Pharmaceuticals Prof. Channa Jayasumana said yesterday.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>



Nimal Siripala insists on ban or apt mechanism to regulate social media

- Sri Lanka has no laws to regulate social media which is the prime cause for child abuses taking place
- Face-book and other social media platforms should be held 90% responsible for child abuse in the country

BY AJITH SIRIWARDANA AND YOHAN PERERA

A mechanism should be introduced to regulate or ban social media since they have been the major cause for

child abuses. Labour Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva said. The Minister told Parliament that Sri Lanka had no laws to regulate social media which was the prime cause for child

abuses taking place. "Face-book and other social media platforms should be held 90% responsible for child abuse in the country.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>



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POLITICAL GOSSIP

Tantrum of a despondent one!

There is a highly despondent fair Diyawanna member who is going around these days taking swipes at the government.

This fair member hailing from an area just beyond the Bentara river, is said to be highly dejected that she received no recognition from the high authorities for sacrificing a much-valued citizenship for the sake of winning a Diyawanna seat for the party. She is said to be bemoaning the fact that she has been ignored while even her juniors have received right royal treatment.

Courtesy:

Read more POLITICAL GOSSIP in the inside news pages

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CONT'D. FROM PAGE 1

Travel restrictions only solution to contain COVID: SLMA

This is an alarming situation and it's nothing, but the truth that the contribution of the contagious Delta variant has also led to the sharp rise in deaths and infections

SLMA Vice President Consultant Endocrinologist Dr. Manika Sumanatilleke, said that Sri Lanka was almost in the fourth wave and added the country would plunge into a catastrophic situation if strict measures were not taken at correct time. "It should be noted that the virus spreads faster than our vaccination drive. Hence, we need to subtract this gap. As such, the only option is to impose travel restrictions in short term," he stressed. "The authorities must pay special attention to the current situation and take immediate steps to address the crisis," Dr. Sumanatilleke added. "Meanwhile, commenting on the increase in COVID deaths, he said that three people were dying from the virus every one hour, with regard to the 82 deaths that was reported on Wednesday (4). "This is an alarming situation and it's nothing, but the truth that the contribution of the contagious Delta variant has also led to the sharp rise in deaths and infections," he added. "The SLMA Vice President proceeded to say that the capacity in wards in hospitals where COVID patients were treated, had reached their maximum capacity.

21,344 COVID POSITIVE CASES, 591 DEATHS REPORTED WITHIN 10 DAYS

We are providing 44 tons of Oxygen per day for the use in the hospital network while arrangements have been made to set up 14 Oxygen plants at regional level

Responding to a question raised by Leader of Opposition Sajith Premadasa, the Minister mentioned that there had been a surge in cases and mortalities. "About 30,017 Covid patients have been receiving treatment as of August 1 2021," she said. "Nearly 19,688 children, under the age of ten have tested positive while 26,143 children who are between the

ages of 10 and 18 are tested positive during the said period," she said. "Another 14 children who were below 18 years of age had succumbed to COVID-19. The Minister also mentioned that there was an increased need for oxygen. "We are providing 44 tons of Oxygen per day for the use in the hospital network while arrangements have been made to set up

14 Oxygen plants at regional level with an additional six liquid Oxygen cylinders of 20 tonnes. In addition 1,000 oxygen kits have been donated from various sources," she also said.

Adding more information the Minister said nearly 50 percent of the population will be provided with the second dose of the COVID vaccine within the next two weeks.



Ranil proposes special expenditure head for COVID

"It is better we create a special expenditure head as it is an essential need," he said, while adding that the committee on public finance could monitor the expenditure. He also proposed setting up of temporary

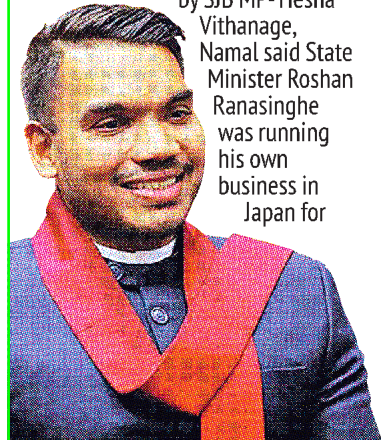
wards in all hospitals to accommodate the surging COVID 19 cases. "The security forces can engage in constructing temporary wards with cajans and shrink sheets. This is an essential need," he said. "I also

propose that the government goes for emergency procurement rather than going for tender procedures when it comes to purchasing of COVID related equipment as it is an urgent need," he said.

State Minister Roshan Ranasinghe paid for my air ticket: Namal

He told Parliament that the State Minister of Sports and he travelled to Japan to witness the Olympic games and that the other two State Ministers went to Japan to engage in official duties pertaining to their respective Ministries.

Responding to a question raised by SJB MP- Heshu Vithanage, Namal said State Minister Roshan Ranasinghe was running his own business in Japan for



the last 25 years and added that no other businessman should buy him an air ticket. "It was he who bought the ticket for me as well," he said.

Minister Rajapaksa said he was under the Olympic bubble during his stay in Japan and that he was only allowed to visit the Prime Minister's Office, the Sri Lankan Embassy in Japan and the office of the Sports Minister in Japan.

"We, the ministers who went there separately, could meet only at the Sri Lankan Embassy in Japan. So, we had our meetings in the Embassy," he said.

Cabinet spokesman, Mass Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella earlier said that a probe would be initiated on the alleged visit to Japan by State Ministers Thenuka Widanagamage, D.V.Chanaka and Roshan Ranasinghe especially to witness the Olympic games.

CID arrests several illegal emigrants from North, Chilaw

The suspects were from Manipai, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Paranthan, Point Pedro and Chilaw areas.

A senior CID officer said the suspects were arrested after conducting investigations for a long time and said several

of those arrested were king pins behind the racket.

He said Sri Lanka had become a centre of human smuggling racket and that the illicit immigrants entering foreign countries would be arrested and deported. The

Officer pointed out that it was a futile attempt to take a risk and illegally emigrate to other countries through racketeers.

He also said the CID was conducting raids all over the country to save the innocent people from falling prey to the racketeers. A team of CID investigators under Suranga Prabhath was conducting raids on the instructions of SSP Samarakoon Banda.

Port City says it has no direct links with companies targeted by US

The company, in a statement, said this in response to remarks made by US Ambassador to Sri Lanka Alaina B. Teplitz in a round-table with journalists.

The U.S. Ambassador said during the meeting, "The United States does have one of the companies that are working on the Port City development on our sanctions list, I believe, and we

can get you, I think some more facts about the specifics on that. One of my priorities has been to encourage U.S. investment in Sri Lanka as a whole. Looking at the opportunities that would be here for joint projects and to help the economy grow, and of course continue to strengthen the ties between our countries by encouraging

business relationships." The project company, in its response to the Ambassador, said as clearly announced back in August 2020, CHEC Port City Colombo had no direct business relationship with any of the China Communications Construction Company's subsidiary companies targeted by US sanctions. "The subsidiaries which were included in the said US sanctions were a few companies involved in South China Sea reclamation work.

POLITICAL GOSSIP

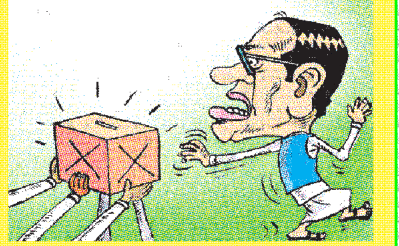
He now prefers personal freedom to political power!

A group of Blue party front-runners had recently submitted a roadmap for the party.

According to this roadmap, the party chief should run for the highest office and also plan out a strategy to demand an early general poll and win it.

No sooner the party chief had received this roadmap than had sent word to the group that he would not vie for the highest office again and instead he would extend his unstinted support to the cause of producing

a charismatic and patriotic leader for the country. He has told his intimates that he would rather enjoy his personal freedom than go after political power.



Will he get his just deserts?

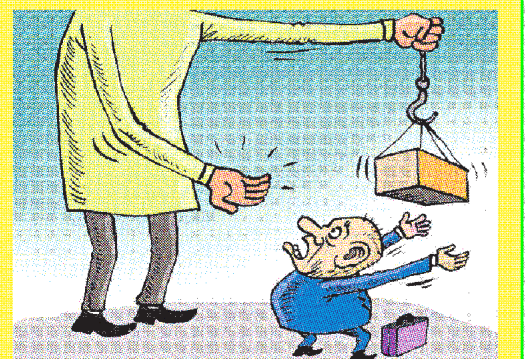
A patriotic one, is said to be running after 'commissions'. he has reportedly imposed a 'commission' on the imports of a certain kind of metal.

There are five to six businessmen importing this kind of metal to the country. An acolyte of the authority had recently summoned the businessmen importing this metal and had conveyed an order that had come from above: that they should pass on him to a commission at the rate of Rs. 20 per kilo of the stuff they import.

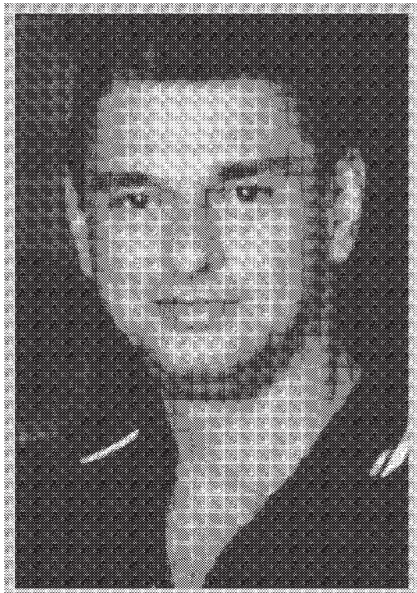
However, the businessmen had told the acolyte that they could not pay a 'commission' higher than Rs. 5 per kilo of the stuff as they too were not making

a big profit. The acolyte had later conveyed the order from above: there will be no more imports if the 'commission' at the rate already stipulated is not forthcoming. The businessmen had later made a complaint about his intimidatory tactics to the higher authorities, they say.

Courtesy: දේශය



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Chandran Rutnam and the staff of



NO CHANGE IN GOVT. POLICY BANNING CHEMICAL FERTILISER: PREZ ADVISOR

Mr. Weeratunga made these remarks at a media briefing held at the Presidential Media Centre (PMC) on the topic "Has the ban on chemical fertilizers been lifted?" yesterday morning (05).

Responding to questions raised by the journalists,

Mr. Weeratunga said that transforming a country that had been accustomed to using chemical fertilizers for decades to use organic fertilizers is a challenging endeavour and therefore, the different opinions directed at the move were reasonable, the President's

media said. The Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Senior Professor Udith K. Jayasinghe, stated that only natural minerals and chelated matter produced using plant nutrients will be imported and those are essential for the biological enrichment of the soil. The Secretary pointed out that as the use of organic fertilizer is a brand new experience for many farmers, a mechanism has been implemented to monitor these activities on a weekly basis and plans are all set to apply new technologies and techniques for this purpose.

SC suspends operation of "De-radicalisation"

Supreme Court three-Judge-bench comprising Justice Murdu Fernando, Justice Yasantha Kodagoda and Justice Achala Wengappuli issued this order pursuant to three Fundamental Rights petitions

challenging the legality of the De-radicalisation Regulations, were taken up for support.

This Interim Order will be effective until August 24, the next hearing date.

Journalists and Human Rights activists Ruwan Laknath Jayakody, Kavindya Christopher Thomas, Centre for Policy Alternative and its Executive Director Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu and Shreen Saroor had filed Fundamental Rights petitions seeking a declaration that the Deradicalisation Regulations was not legally valid.

Special mechanism for recalling public servants for duty

He told Parliament that a special discussion was held at the Finance Ministry presided by Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa on the Covid situation admits

the fast-spread of the Delta variant. He said it was decided at the meeting attended by the Director General of Health Services, Public Administration

Ministry Secretary and Finance Ministry Secretary, that a special mechanism should be introduced with regard to the recalling of public servants for duty. The Minister said the Public Administration Ministry would issue a circular allowing pregnant mothers to work from home.

Nimal Siripala insists on ban or apt mechanism to regulate social media

There are no laws in the country to regulate or ban social media. I have repeatedly

brought this matter in the Cabinet," he said. Speaking during the adjournment

debate on Wednesday, he said there was no social media operating in China.

OBITUARIES

SENAKA DE SILVA - Beloved husband of Sherin De Silva, loving father of Shane, dearest brother of Shanthi, Srimala, Maya, Sunil and Sapumali passed away peacefully on Thursday 5th August 2021. Remains will lie at the Jayarathna Funeral Parlour from 6 p.m. onwards on 5th August. Cortege leaves the parlour on Friday, August 6th at 4 p.m. for cremation at the Borella Cemetery at 4.30 p.m. 274948

ONLINE OBITUARIES www.dailymirror.lk/obituaries

NAME OF CHANGE

I, Maggonage Lahiru Madhusanka Fernando, a resident in Rajawatta Gramaseva Division (729G) in the Divisional Secretariat of Kalutara - Kalutara District, hereby inform the Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka and it's Citizens that I use my name as Maggonage Lustin Fernando from today. DMR 271628

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POLITICAL GOSSIP

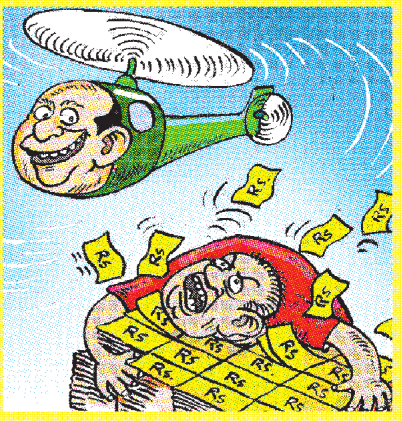
Rice mafia's heyday is over!

The blow struck at the rice mafia of Pulatisipura by the government has produced a telling effect. The mafia that ran a government within the government earlier is tame now, they say.

Meanwhile, three leading rice tycoons out of the 'Big Four', have turned their guns on the other one for flaunting his wealth by buying a flying machine.

The threesome now blame the flying machine buyer for making it known to the world at large that their rice business is a veritable gold mine and thus leading the government to start breathing down their necks.

Meanwhile, knowledgeable sources say that the profit made by each rice mafia tycoon in their heyday exceeded Rs. 50 million a day.



Courtesy: දේශය



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<p>Up to 25% OFF on Selected SHAMPOO & CONDITIONER</p> <p>Offer valid till 12th August 2021</p>	<p>SAVE Rs. 55.00</p> <p>Rs. 165.00 Kist Choky Magic Disc 100g</p>	<p>SAVE Rs. 130.00</p> <p>Rs. 520.00 Kotmale Cheddar Cheese 250g</p>	<p>SAVE Rs. 74.00</p> <p>Rs. 221.00 Harpic 10x 750ml</p>

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<p>Keeri Samba Pack 5kg - Rs. 900</p> <p>Kamatha, Tharaka, Mihiketha</p>		

*Conditions apply. Vegetables, Fruit & Seafood offer valid till 08th of August 2021. Other offers are valid till 12th August 2021. Until stocks last.



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August 2021

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15 R. R. Samarakoon's **කැලණි පාලම**

21 Somalatha Subasinghe's **පුංචි අපට දැන් තේරෙයි සමග තොපි වෙළෙන්දා**

28 Chamila Priyanka's **සම වෙද ගුරු ගොවි කම්කරු**
(Premier Show)

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NEWS FEATURE



By **Kamanthi Wickramasinghe**

A tsunami of protests led by teachers and principals from around the island continued and they request the government to solve a salary anomaly issue that hasn't been resolved for 24 years. Responding to protests the government promised to give a solution at a cabinet meeting held earlier this week but to the dismay of the teachers and principals the government announced that it doesn't have the money to resolve the issue. A teacher is often acknowledged as a 'second mother' and one may question the pathetic plight of a teacher in Sri Lanka who had to finally take to the streets to demand the government to increase their salaries even after completing all higher educational qualifications and dedicating a greater part of their life to a much revered profession.

ARRESTS UNLAWFUL

"The only component that was done from distance learning was online education, but that too wasn't done properly. The government didn't allocate a cent for it and everything was done by the teachers - Joseph Stalin



44 individuals representing various teacher and principal unions were arrested following a protest that took place in front of the Presidential Secretariat on August 4. The teachers and principals were later produced at the Colombo Magistrate's Court yesterday (August 5) and were released on bail. "These are unlawful arrests because these people were arrested once the protest was over," opined Ceylon Teachers Union (CTU) President Joseph Stalin. "They were being detained by the Harbour Police, Police personnel from Maligawatta, Dematagoda and various other police stations were deployed to disperse the crowd. These incidents clearly show the undemocratic nature of governance implemented by the present regime. We will take every possible trade union action against these unlawful moves."

When asked how the salary anomaly issue first came into being, Stalin said that teaching was established as a service in 1994 and as a result teachers and principals received pay hikes. "But in 1997 the B. C. Perera Salary Commission arrived at a notion that the formula to increase salaries for teachers and principals was errant. However, those engaged in other services got a 60% pay hike. According to Circular No. 297(3) the matter was held for later consideration but that consideration didn't happen for 24 years. Thereafter we took various trade union actions. Then again in 2006 the Lionel Fernando and Saliya Mathew Commission arrived at the same conclusion made by the B.C. Perera Commission."

"As a result we decided to boycott A/L paper marking and a case was filed by a student at the Supreme Court. In the final verdict, the Supreme Court rules (SC/FR287/2008) that teachers and principals be taken out of the General services category. But to date, that too hasn't been done. In 2008 we met with the then Education Minister Susil Premajayantha and at the meeting it was decided that a sum of Rs.

Teacher-Principal salary anomaly crisis

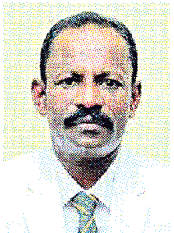
UNIONS CONTINUE STRUGGLE AMIDST UNLAWFUL MOVES BY GOVT.

6.7 billion was required to fix salary anomalies of teachers and principals. Subsequently the amount was brought down to Rs. 3 billion to increase the salaries by 45%. But no budgetary allocations were made with regard to this matter," he added.

Stalin further said that in 2019 there were several cabinet papers addressing this matter and President's manifesto itself mentioned that teaching would be made a 'closed service'. "To date, none of these decisions or promises has been fulfilled. We staged our protests on par with the protests being held requesting the government to withdraw the Kotlawala National Defence University Bill. Since July 12 we have stopped conducting online classes for students. The only component that was done from distance learning was online education but that too wasn't done properly. The government didn't allocate a cent for it and everything was done by the teachers. It is only after one year and four months that they are talking about starting educational channels. We then met with Education Minister Prof. G. L. Pieris and Salary Commission was appointed where we submitted our salary proposals and requested to make it a closed service."

GRAVE INJUSTICE EXPERIENCED BY PRINCIPALS

"Some children come to school without breakfast, some children don't bring books to school because they cannot afford. All these are covered by teachers but these factors haven't been counted when calculating salaries of teachers or even principals for that matter" - Sugeeshwara Wimalaratne



"To become a principal as per the Sri Lankan education system, one has to gather a lot of experience," opined Professional Principals Association President, Sugeeshwara Wimalaratne. "In order to become a principal an individual has to serve for five years as a teacher and obtain a Degree in Education or serve five years as a teacher and have a basic degree and apart from that they should complete a Postgraduate Diploma in Education or complete a Diploma and serve seven years as a teacher. So far the total cadre of school principals island-wide is 16,512 but only around 11,000 of them are active at the moment."

Salaries received by teachers from 1994 to 2020

From 1994.10.06 (Edu. 7/95)	SITS	SLAS	Difference
SLTS 2-11	4,490.00	4,490.00	-
SLTS 2-1	6,700.00	6,700.00	-
SLTS 1	8,750.00	8,750.00	-

From 1997.01.01 (P.A.C No. 2/97)

	SITS	SLAS	Difference
SLTS 2-11	5,610.00	8,125.00	2,515.00
SLTS 2-1	7,535.00	11,545.00	4,010.00
SLTS 1	9,830.00	14,960.00	5,130.00

From 2006.01.01 (P.A.C.06/2006)

	SITS	SLAS	Difference
SLTS 2-11	15,350.00	22,935.00	7,585.00
SLTS 2-1	17,900.00	30,175.00	12,275.00
SLTS 1	21,345.00	36,755.00	15,410.00

From 2020.01.01 (C.P.A./2021)

	SITS	SLAS	Difference
SLTS 2-11	33,300.00	47,615.00	14,315.00
SLTS 2-1	39,175.00	62,595.00	23,420.00
SLTS 1	44,950.00	76,175.00	31,225.00

Statistics courtesy: Ceylon Teachers' Union

The teacher-principal service has been under the same salary code in the administrative service until 1997 when the B.C. Perera Salary Commission raised questions about errant calculations. What we now request is to add these anomalies to our salaries. When the Subodhini Salary Commission was appointed with five executive members representing the Education Ministry we submitted a proposal

with our requests. As such a principal in the Grade I category should receive Rs. 76,175. The salary for a Grade II principal was calculated at Rs. 62,595 but the actual amount is Rs. 64,890 and the salary calculation for a Grade III principal is Rs. 47,615 but the actual amount should be Rs. 57,798."

Wimalaratne expressed concerns over categorizing principals in the same salary code that includes field officers, clerks and management assistants at government offices, those involved in paramedical services etc. "This is a grave injustice that we have faced. As such a principal is entitled to a salary of only Rs. 35,280 with all the educational qualifications we have to fulfill. It costs around Rs. 10,000 to stitch the white outfit that we have to wear; we need a good pair of shoes etc. When we talk about teachers they look after students with their own expenses. Some children come to school without breakfast, some children don't bring books to school because they cannot afford. All these are covered by teachers but these factors haven't been counted when calculating salaries of teachers or even principals for that matter."

"What we have seen since the pandemic is the government was making proclamations about school openings and closing and holding exams and not holding exams, without addressing important policy issues such as introducing a curriculum for emergency situations" - Dr. Sujata Gamage



WE ARE WITNESSING A DETERIORATION OF SCHOOL EDUCATION: DR. SUJATA GAMAGE

Continuing a struggle to bring about reforms in the education sector, Dr. Sujata Gamage, Senior Research Fellow at LIRNEasia and Co-Coordinator of Education Forum Sri Lanka says that one of the main reasons for teachers to receive step-motherly treatments by successive governments is due to deeply ingrained socio-political issues.

"One of the main arguments for the ongoing struggle is that teachers have been underpaid for the longest time. Why do you think teachers (and their well-being) were neglected by governments? Is it a political motive? How could this issue have been resolved by successive governments? (In terms of special allowances, salary hikes etc.)"

I am not conversant with the salary issues, but the reason that teachers have been underpaid, unrecognized and disrespected is due to deeply ingrained socio-political issues.

Teaching has gradually become a profession which is the last resort for the educated while administrative posts in government or positions of political power are hugely more lucrative and status boosting. In a climate where private interests override public interest, it is not surprising that the decision makers are interested in serving the interest of their professional class and their kith and kin.

A glaring example is the struggle by FUTA to increase spending for education to 6% of GDP, an unrealistic demand considering our total budget is less than 20% of the GDP. Anyway, the struggle was supported by a broad base of workers including teachers' unions, but the end result was a substantial increase in salaries for university staff and nothing for teachers.

How do you resolve the salary issue for teachers? Shut down state enterprises such as Sri Lankan which are causing billions of rupees losses per day (Rs.40 billion in 2019) bleeding the treasury and fund school education adequately and pay teachers and principals better salaries.

Have you observed a reduction in budgetary allocations for education over the past few years?

The budget for education has been steady at around 2% of the GDP over the last decade. As I noted later, this spending is skewed towards higher education and promises by the government to open more and more free-of-charge degree awarding opportunities is squeezing resources for school education. Another issue is that of the money allocated to primary or secondary education more than 95% is taken up by salaries and other personnel expenses. As the education sector is viewed by each succeeding government as places for employment of party supporters there is less and less money for anything other than buildings and bodies.

Schools were closed for more than a year in Sri Lanka and teachers claim that it was them who spent their own data charges and conducted online classes. The government didn't implement any programme to provide e-learning opportunities for children. How do you see this?

What we have seen since the pandemic is the government was making proclamations about school openings and closing and holding exams and not holding exams, without addressing important policy issues such as introducing a curriculum for emergency situations, giving power to schools use a diversity of methods to reach out to each child without dictating terms from the center and reallocating funds to meet unforeseen costs and more importantly recognizing teachers for efforts they were making to reach out to the children and making some payment to show the appreciation. Instead teachers were sent one-size fit all circulars dictating how and when they should be teaching.

Since teachers have boycotted online classes, children are once again at the receiving end. What are the greater disadvantages children due to ongoing protests?

50% of children who were left out of online education are unaffected. Of those who were online many of them may have already turned off from zoom fatigue. I don't see a big problem for children. Bigger problem is having frustrated teachers.

Why is Sri Lanka not keen to bring about reforms in the education sector and why is it necessary in this day and age?

If you go by stated intentions, the present government is keen to bring about reforms proposed in Saubhagya Dakma manifesto of President GR. The state Ministry of Education Reforms is promising to launch a pilot in 2023 with reduced examinations and reduced content in the curriculum. Unfortunately, I see very little chance of their efforts succeeding.

First, the attitude of the central government is all wrong. They cannot manage the present number of 300+ national schools but they want to take over more schools to increase the number to 1000 national schools. Essentially controlling about two thirds of the total enrollment in schools. This effort not only violates the intentions of the 13th Amendment which has devolved the subject of education to the provinces but also further centralization will worsen the present problems which are due to a ministry which should be doing policy and monitoring of policy implementation trying run 10,000+ schools from the centrally controlled school.

Secondly, our priorities are all wrong. Over the years we have diverted funds from school education to tertiary education. In 2004, the World Bank reported that "By international standards the average recurrent expenditure per student in Sri Lanka is modest at primary and secondary education levels but high at the tertiary education level. Further analysis is needed but over the years the funding for schooling has become more modest in comparison to higher

Present salary, salary proposed by Subodhini report for Teachers, Teacher Advisors and Principals

Sri Lanka Teachers Service	Present salary	Subodini report	Total increase
SLTS 3-11 (G.C.E.A.L)	27,740.00	35,355.00	7,615.00
SLTS 3-1 C(Diploma)	29,540.00	39,315.00	9,775.00
SLTS 3-1B (College)	31,060.00	44,600.00	13,540.00
SLTS 2-11 (Graduate)	32,200.00	47,615.00	15,415.00
B.Ed	34,290.00	51,620.00	17,330.00
SLTS 2-1	39,175.00	62,595.00	23,420.00
SLTS-1	44,950.00	76,175.00	31,225.00

Sri Lanka Teacher Advisors Service	Present salary	Subodini report	Total increase
Class-2	34,615.00	62,595.00	27,980.00
Class-1	46,000.00	76,175.00	30,175.00

Sri Lanka Principals Service	Present salary	Subodini report	Total increase
SLPS-3	35,280.00	47,615.00	12,335.00
SLPS-2	40,040.00	62,595.00	22,555.00
SLPS-1	46,325.00	76,175.00	29,850.00

Statistics courtesy: Ceylon Teachers' Union

education. To make matters worse, this government has promised to open city universities in each district when much needs to be done to improve our school education. The priority of the government should be to ensure every child gets an opportunity to complete 13 years of education with readiness to face the world. It is well established in economics that school education gives more public benefits than private benefits while the opposite is true for higher education. Once well prepared in quality school education, all that youth would need is a loan from the government to pursue whatever they want to pursue for a fee. It is said the Dr. Kammangara inserted including higher education to the "Education shall be free up to ..." at the last without weighing on the consequences. What we are witnessing today is deterioration of school education due to this haste in assuring free of charge higher education to all.

FAIR SOLUTIONS NEEDED

Lionel Abeywickrama has served as a teacher for 24 years and is now the Principal at Hinguralakanda Maha Vidyalaya. "With 367 children are studying from Grades 1-13 this school is a ray of hope for students who cannot afford to study at the school in the town. Many of them come from less privileged backgrounds and teachers too are battling their own struggles. We need fair solutions at this hour. If teachers aren't given a satisfactory salary they will step down from their service. There needs to be talented teachers to mold talented children. The government needs to resolve this matter at least after a 24 year lapse."

"If teachers aren't given a satisfactory salary they will step down from their service. There needs to be talented teachers to mold talented children. The government needs to resolve this matter at least after a 24 year lapse" - Lionel Abeywickrama

CHILDREN WON'T BE INCONVENIENCED FROM THIS CRISIS

Expressing his views on social media, a teacher from Kandy has stated that children will never be inconvenienced due to this crisis. "All lessons that have been missed will be covered in extra classes, holidays, weekends etc. To see our students succeed is the greatest joy in our lives."

"We haven't forced anyone to increase our salaries. We only request the government to add the salaries that have been deducted. If a student wants to be a teacher or a principal in future he/she would also want to be proud about their career like other careers. Some people in power, likened teachers to losers while another politician said that one teacher is enough to teach all students in Sri Lanka. To date, I respect and worship all my teachers and they are like my own parents."

"I chose this profession because I liked it and even during the COVID lockdown I enjoyed conducting classes to students despite certain disgusting acts by those in the same profession. It was the teachers who took the lead in conducting online classes, not because anybody forced us, but it was done with all the love we have towards our students. That too has been criticized by those in power and the process has been disrupted."

Following protests a committee comprising officials from the Finance Ministry and the National Salaries/Pay Commission has been appointed by President's Secretary Dr. P. B Jayasundara to look into matters relating to the education sector including the teacher-principal salary anomaly issue.

"Some people in power, likened teachers to losers while another politician said that one teacher is enough to teach all students in Sri Lanka. To date, I respect and worship all my teachers and they are like my own parents" - Suren M. Rathnayaka (Teacher)

Several attempts to contact Education Ministry Secretary Prof. Kapila C. K. Perera proved futile.

COVID-19 CASES SURGE, BUT GOVT. NOT IN A POSITION TO LOCKDOWN



By
**Kelum
Bandara**

COVID-19 cases are rising again, triggering fears over the capacity of the health sector to cope with the daily challenges. After the latest relaxation of restriction of public movements, intermixing took place, leading to a spike in cases in the aftermath of the outbreak of Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 that is more transmissible. The newest surge is not a phenomenon in Sri Lanka alone. It is the same story with the entire globe.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) said four million new cases were reported last week along with 64,000 deaths all over the world. But, the countries in the world, particularly, the low, middle-income economies, are no longer in a position to enforce stricter lockdowns this time despite high transmissibility of the current dominant variant. The pandemic – induced curtailments of economic activities have crippled the world's economies to such an extent that the respective countries have now decided to remain open regardless of COVID-19 and proceed with routine activities.

The present predicament, caused and exacerbated by the pandemic, prompted the world bodies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to evolve fresh approaches to address liquidity issues of the member states battered by limited economic activities.

The IMF Board of Governors approved a general allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) equivalent to US\$650 billion on August 2, 2021, to boost global liquidity.

"This is a historic decision – the largest SDR allocation in the history of the IMF and a shot in the arm for the global economy at a time of unprecedented crisis. The SDR allocation will benefit all members, address the long-term global need for reserves, build confidence and foster the resilience and stability of the global economy. It will particularly help our most vulnerable countries struggling to cope with the impact of the COVID-19 crisis," IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said, according to a press release uploaded on its Twitter account.

The statement said the general allocation of SDRs will become effective on August 23, 2021. The newly created SDRs will be credited to IMF

member countries in proportion to their existing quotas in the Fund.

About US\$275 billion (about SDR 193 billion) of the new allocation will go to emerging markets and developing countries, including low-income countries. According to the IMF current account balances of the countries were widened by the factors such as major shifts in travel, trades and consumption.

Sri Lanka is no exception to this crisis at all. It has already begun to feel the pinch of reduced economic activities during previous lockdowns. Income from tourism, an industry that generates US \$ 4.5 billion foreign exchange, had dropped to a mere US \$ 19 million during the first quarter of this year. The remittances of expat workers have come down.

Like elsewhere in the world, the informal sector of economy has been hard-hit by the pandemic in Sri Lanka. The informal economy involves people as diverse as tax drivers, pavement hawkers, vegetable, fish/meat sellers, construction workers etc.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that about 2 billion workers, or over 60 per cent of the world's adult labour force, operate in the informal sector—at least part time.

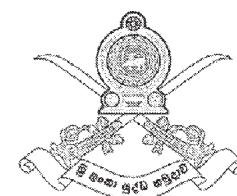
After the relaxation of restrictions in recent times, it is found some of these people in informal economy struggle hard to resume their businesses due to lack of working capital. The pandemic has raised its ugly head at such a time, but further curbs public movements appears to the last option for the government grappling with a slew of economic challenges including foreign currency liquidity issues to lack of money for daily operation. In fact, the government has reached the saturation point in the enforcement of COVID-19 related curbs. Any further lockdown, either national or localised will have a huge bearing on the economy with marginalised people being driven to poverty.

Likewise, COVID-19 curve should also be flattened without allowing the number of patients to rise beyond a point as otherwise the health sector will be exhausted. Then, it is a challenging situation with limited options. The health experts have warned of a serious outbreak in the months to come. But, the government does not mull any closure of economic activities to control the trend because it is aware of economic challenges lying ahead. Actually, the government is eager to open the country for international tourism as early as possible as otherwise, it cannot replenish its depleting foreign reserves.

Sri Lanka paid a \$1 billion bond last week. It gave some confidence in overcoming the crisis. But, there is no payment until next January. The government is expected to settle US \$ 500 million next January, and another US \$ 1 billion in July, next year, and another US \$ 1 billion before the end of 2023. As such, it is impossible for the government to resort to any step that will result in the slowdown of the economy any further.

That is the reason for Deputy Director-General of Health Services, Dr. Hemantha Herath urge people repeatedly to cooperate in the containment of the spread of the pandemic by following health guidelines. Of course, people have a greater responsibility in bringing transmissions down. That is by adhering to health measures that are simple in nature. What is perturbed is the fact that some people do not despite warnings.

WHO's Infectious Disease Epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove also said health measures – physical distancing, hand sanitizing, avoiding gatherings and mask-wearing – could prevent infections, but she was worried, during a vacation with her family recently, to notice some people not following them.



TENDER NOTICE - SRI LANKA ARMY

1. National Competitive Bidding Procedure Sealed Tenders are called for the concept, design, printing & supply of the Organizer Diary, Executive Diary, Wall Calendar, Desk Diary and Desk Calendar items to the Sri Lanka Army.

File Number	Item	Tender Forms Issued until	Tender Opening (Date & Time)
AHQ/D/C/I	Army Organizer Diary for the year 2022 (Approximately 5,200 Nos)	29 August 2021	30 August 2021 at 11.00 am
AHQ/D/C/II	Army Executive Diary for the year 2022 (Approximately 10,500 Nos)	29 August 2021	30 August 2021 at 11.00 am
AHQ/D/C/III	Army Desk Diary for the year 2022 (Approximately 28,000 Nos)	29 August 2021	30 August 2021 at 11.00 am
AHQ/D/C/IV	Army Wall Calendar for the year 2022 (Approximately 184,000 Nos)	29 August 2021	30 August 2021 at 11.00 am
AHQ/D/C/V	Army Desk Calendar for the year 2022 (Approximately 100 Nos)	29 August 2021	30 August 2021 at 11.00 am

2. Tender documents with the specification could be obtained from the Tender Opening Section, Army Camp (Ceylinc Building), No: 167/30, Avissawella Road, Orugodawaththa (0113136254) from 09 August 2021, during working hours after payment of a non-refundable fee of Rs: 3,500.00 per (Except for the Desk Calendar) each item at the Directorate of Welfare, Army Headquarters, Sri Jayawardanepura, Colombo (Tel: 0765309734/0112514971/0112514992). *Duly perfected tenders along with samples should be hand delivered in to the tender box at the above address before 11.00 am on 30 August 2021.*

3. For further details or correspondence, please contact Staff Officer 1, Army Headquarters, Sri Jayawardanepura, Colombo (Tel: 0768574428).

Commander of the Army
Army Headquarters
Sri Jayawardanepura
COLOMBO



Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Auction for Issuance of

Sri Lanka Development Bonds

(Treasury Bonds denominated in US Dollar)

Public Debt Department, Central Bank of Sri Lanka

Submission of bids : Open from 11.00 hrs on 06 August 2021
to 10.00 hrs on 11 August 2021

Date of Settlement : 16 August 2021

- **Currency** ➤ US Dollar
- **Size* & Tenure** ➤ US Dollars 75 Million of 9 months, 1 year 7 months, 3 years 5 months and 4 years 11 months
- **Interest Rate** ➤ • Fixed rate arrangement : Fixed rate determined through competitive bidding for all maturities
- **Interest Payments** ➤ Semi - annual
- **Minimum Investment** ➤ US Dollars 10, 000 & in multiples of US Dollars 10, 000
- **Transferability** ➤ By Endorsement, Delivery & Registration
- **Eligible Investors **** ➤ Citizens of foreign states irrespective of their residential status through the Inward Investment Accounts (IIAs), Citizens of Sri Lanka who are residents outside Sri Lanka through IIAs, Holders of Personal Foreign Currency Accounts, Business Foreign Currency Accounts, or Offshore Banking Unit Accounts, Companies incorporated outside Sri Lanka or Partnerships registered outside Sri Lanka through IIAs, Country funds, Regional Funds, Mutual Funds, Unit Trusts, and Institutional investors established outside Sri Lanka through IIAs, Licensed Commercial Banks appointed as Authorized Dealers by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Licensed Specialized Banks and Licensed Finance Companies, which have been permitted to accept deposits in foreign currency
- **Tax** ➤ Subject to the applicable tax laws in Sri Lanka
- **Issuing Office** ➤ Public Debt Department, Central Bank of Sri Lanka
- **Designated Agents to purchase bonds** ➤ Selected Licensed Commercial Banks & Primary Dealers as given below
- **Paying Agent** ➤ Bank of Ceylon
- **Governing Law** ➤ Laws of Sri Lanka

* In the event of oversubscription, further US Dollars 75 Million will be considered.

** Conditions apply. Please refer the related Document of Offer.

*** **Bids have to be submitted to 'fopdd@cbsl.lk' in pdf format protected with passwords. Such passwords are required to be submitted separately to 'fopdd@cbsl.lk' within the first 30 minutes of the auction cut-off time (That is 10.00 am - 10.30 am on 11.08.2021).**

The details of the offer are available in the Document of Offer dated 05 August 2021.

DESIGNATED AGENTS

Acuity Securities Ltd., 4th Floor, Acuity House, 53, Dharmapala Mawatha, Colombo 3, Tel: 2206297, Fax: 2206290. **Bank of Ceylon**, 7th Floor, Bank of Ceylon Head Office, Bank of Ceylon Mawatha, Colombo 1, Tel: 2448830, Fax: 2448207. **Capital Alliance Ltd.**, Level 5, "Millennium House", 46/58, Nawam Mawatha, Colombo 2, Tel: 2317777/2317730-1, Fax: 2317788. **Cargills Bank Ltd.**, 696, Galle Road, Colombo 03, Tel: 7640000, Fax: 7640507. **Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC**, 21, Sir Razik Fareed Mawatha, Colombo 1, Tel: 2330406, Fax: 2384650. **Deutsche Bank AG Colombo Branch**, 86, Galle Road, Colombo 3, Tel: 2447062, Fax: 2449589. **DFCC Bank PLC**, 73/5, Galle Road, Colombo 3, Tel: 2442442, Fax: 2440376. **First Capital Treasuries PLC**, 2, Deal Place, Colombo 03, Tel: 2639898, Fax: 2639899. **Habib Bank Ltd.**, 70 A, Dharmapala Mawatha, Colombo 3, Tel: 2370390, Fax: 2370389. **Hatton National Bank PLC**, HNB Tower, Level 21, 479, T B Jayah Mawatha, Colombo 10, Tel: 2664664, Fax: 2662832. **Indian Bank**, 57, Sir Baron Jayatilke Mawatha, Colombo 1, Tel: 2447163, Fax: 2447562. **Indian Overseas Bank**, 139, Main Street, Colombo 11, Tel: 5324422, Fax: 2447900. **MCB Bank Ltd.**, 8, Leyden Bastian Road, Colombo 1, Tel: 2448765, Fax: 2448764. **National Development Bank PLC**, 40, Nawam Mawatha, Colombo 2, Tel: 2448448, Fax: 2440262. **Nations Trust Bank PLC**, 242, Union Place, Colombo 2, Tel: 4711411, Fax: 2370854. **NSB Fund Management Company Ltd.**, 400, Galle Road, Colombo 3, Tel: 2425010, Fax: 2574387. **Pan Asia Banking Corporation PLC**, 450, Galle Road, Colombo 3, Tel: 4667702, Fax: 2565558. **People's Bank**, 13th Floor, 75, Peoples' Bank Head Office, Sir Chittampalam A Gardiner Mawatha, Colombo 2, Tel: 2206783, Fax: 2458842. **Public Bank Berhad**, Colombo Branch, 340, R A de Mel Mawatha, Colombo 3, Tel: 2576289, Fax: 2573958. **Sampath Bank PLC**, 110, Sir James Peiris Mawatha, Colombo 2, Tel: 2305841-2, Fax: 2314940. **Seylan Bank PLC**, Level 3, Seylan Towers, 90, Galle Road, Colombo 3, Tel: 2456337, Fax: 4716111. **Standard Chartered Bank**, 37, York Street, Colombo 1, Tel: 2480000, Fax: 2422618. **State Bank of India**, 16, Sir Baron Jayatilaka Mawatha, Colombo 1, Tel: 2326133, Fax: 4446868. **Union Bank of Colombo PLC**, No. 64, Galle Road, Colombo 3, Tel: 2374100, Fax: 2370593. **Wealth Trust Securities Ltd.**, 102/1, Dr. N M Perera Mawatha, Colombo 8, Tel: 2675091-4, Fax: 2689605.

Dr. M Z M Aazim
Superintendent/Registrar of Public Debt
Public Debt Department, Central Bank of Sri Lanka

30, Janadhipathi Mawatha,
Colombo 1.

Telephone : 2477011 Fax: 2477687, 2477718 /9
http://www.cbsl.gov.lk



Request for Proposals (RFP)

Selection of Auditors for 16 State Owned Companies

The National Audit Office of Sri Lanka (NAOSL), as per Section 154(4) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka wishes to procure the services of an Audit Firms to carry out a comprehensive audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards on the financial statements of the state owned companies for the year ended 31 December 2021 or 31 March 2022 as applicable.

02. Terms and conditions, method of selection, procedure for submission of proposals, eligibility, qualification, proposal validity, proposal evaluation criteria etc are available in the RFP document. The interested firms who opt to submit proposals can obtain the documents from the Room No 204, 2nd Floor, National Audit Office, Polduwa Road, Battaramulla, since 6th August 2021 from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm in working days. List of the clients has been attached with the RFP. Firms can submit proposals for more than one company.

03. Audit firms which are fulfilling following criteria are eligible to submit proposals

- Firms should have adequate past experience in carrying out audits in similar nature companies.
- Firm should not have undertaken the audit continuously for 5 years in relation to the company concerned.

04. Single stage two envelop procedure will be used for open competitive bidding. Interested Audit Firms shall submit their sealed proposals comprising single package containing two separate envelopes. Each envelop shall contain separately the "Financial" and "Technical" proposal which will be clearly mentioned in bold and legible letters on respective envelopes to avoid any confusion.

05. Sealed RFPs prepared in accordance with the instructions in the RFP documents must reach to the office of Chief Accountant, Room No. 101, National Audit Office, Battaramulla, on or before 2.00 pm on 24th August 2021. All late proposals will be rejected and returned to the bidders unopened.

06. National Audit Office has the right to reject any or all RFPs in the evaluation process at any time in accordance with Public Procurement Guidelines.



National Audit Office
306/72, Polduwa Road,
Battaramulla.

EDITORIAL

'Teaching kids to count is fine, but teaching them what counts is best'
-BOB TALBERT

OUR THOUGHT

ARE OUR TEACHERS SHORTSIGHTED?

Sri Lanka is a nation which has seen many rebellions staged against the state or the government. These rebellions suggest that past governments have hardly been people friendly regimes.

There is a section of the society which still maintains the idea that Sri Lanka would have been better off under British rule. But history shows us that the Ceylonese were brutally repressed during colonial times and their incomes were taxed with the introduction of taxes. Apart from paying taxes for uncultivated lands there was a tax that had to be paid if you reared a dog (these are two among several other reasons that fueled the 2nd battle for independence).

People rebel against the regime when lawmakers make merry at the expense of tax paying citizens. This tendency to rebel against the state has continued over the years since the time of the British.

These days we see the teachers rebelling against the regime. Strangely the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) is not using strong arm tactics to squash these rebellions by teachers.

Past records on rebellions against the government show that the main cause for them being unsuccessful was due to the lack of cooperation.

These agitating teachers are having the government by the scuff of its neck. Covid or no Covid these teachers have crippled school education because they have pulled out of online education; and worse threatened to stay away from upcoming exam duties and paper marking.

Now in this environment we see private tuition masters minting money by conducted online classes. Some parents have said that if their sons and daughters don't log in to the class at least 10-15 minutes before the class commences such students have logging in problems and miss the class. In the absence of school activities these tuition masters have virtually taken over education in the country and have found loyal students and supportive parents, who'd keep their bank accounts supplied with a steady remittance.

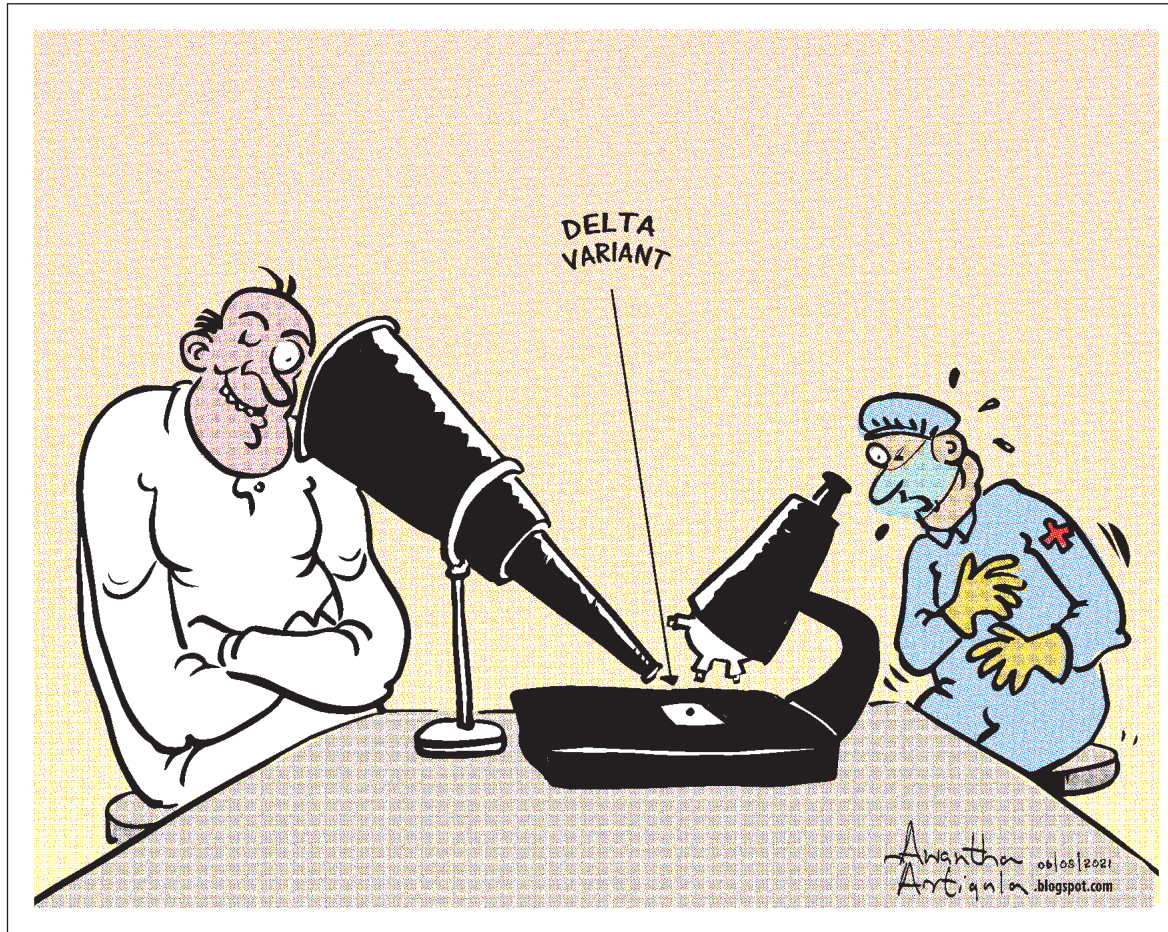
The GoSL probably loves what it sees. These private tuition masters are fighting the regime's battle. The government has specifically stated that salary anomalies of teachers would only be solved after the presenting of the next budget.

Parents and observers of this standoff between the regime and teacher unions must understand that there is a political line to this battle fought by the teachers. If one observes the proceeding up to now one can see that two of the top most individuals marshaling these teachers are almost in retirement and would be desperate about what the future holds for them; hence their aggressiveness and efforts to add fuel to agitation activities.

There was a time in the past when school teachers were looked upon as demi gods. But over the years private tutors have taken that place and cemented their futures in education by producing students with island rankings at Education Ministry conducted school examinations.

This is a 'me' era and any ambitious student would ask the question 'what's in it for me' before making a commitment to sign up for a course or even participate in a social responsibility project like a 'shramadhana'. The same thinking is adopted by the private tuition masters; hence that is why they prefer to do their own businesses rather than teach in schools for paltry salaries.

There are those who bat for these school teachers and support their demands. But a good majority of parents are frowning at them for neglecting their duties and the children who came under their tutelage. A recent facebook post on the teachers perhaps sums up the general thought outsiders have of these teachers. It reads, "If the teachers can only think of staging a strike to win their demands during the present pandemic and suggest that they are so shortsighted then these teachers deserve the present salaries they are drawing".



FOR MORE CARTOONS LOG ON www.dailymirror.lk/cartoon

FROM SRI LANKA TO TUNISIA: DEMOCRACY UNDER THREAT



By **Ameen Izzadeen**

A scorpion wants to cross the stream and asks a frog to carry it across. The frog hesitates because it is afraid the scorpion will sting it. The scorpion argues that if it does so both would drown. The frog then agrees and starts swimming while carrying the scorpion on its back. Mid-stream, the scorpion stings the frog. The dying frog asks the ungrateful stranger why he did so knowing well both would die. The scorpion replies: "I couldn't help it. It's in my nature."

This Russian or Persian fable well describes the unpleasant nature of the power-packed executive presidency, with democracy being depicted by the ill-fated frog. If the frog had worn protective armour, it could have saved itself. Similarly, for a democracy to survive, it needs to protect itself from excessive powers of the executive branch of the government. Theoretically speaking, not only the executive presidency, but also the other two government arms – the legislature and the judiciary – can be anti-democratic if proper checks and balances are not in place.

Just as the scorpion, executive presidents are also unable to resist the temptation to undermine democracy. This happened in Sri Lanka in October 2018 and in Tunisia only last week. In between, to varying degrees, executive presidents and prime ministers have acted like scorpions and killed or undermined democracy. Of course, among the culprits was Donald Trump who cared no two hoots about democratic values which form the very fabric of the US constitution. He even refused to accept the people's verdict at the November 2020 presidential election and enticed his hardcore followers to launch an insurrection and storm the US Congress when it was about to confirm the election verdict.

While Trump was destroying democracy, it was no surprise that in many nations, populist leaders had no qualms over misusing the executive powers, with some demagogues saying they were doing so to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In Hungary at the outset of the pandemic, the rightwing populist Prime Minister Viktor Orban removed the constitutional checks and passed legislation to rule by decree for an indefinite period, while silencing the media to boot.

When Sri Lanka was plunged into a constitutional crisis after the then President Maithripala Sirisena removed Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, appointed opposition Parliamentarian Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister and then went on to dissolve Parliament, democracy's defenders had pinned their hopes, rightly so, on the judiciary. The Supreme Court had the courage to cut the then President down to size and tell him tersely that he had violated the Constitution. The court



Tunisian soldiers cordon-off the Parliament in the capital Tunis, following a move by the president to suspend the country's parliament and dismiss the Prime Minister. AFP

ruled that in terms of the 19th Amendment, he lacked the power to dissolve Parliament at will before parliament completed the mandatory four-and-a-half year period from the day of its first sitting.

But alas, the hard-won victory for democracy was short lived, when the new Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna government revoked the 19th Amendment which, despite its many shortcomings, stood as the new powerhouse of Lanka's democracy, and replaced it with the 20th Amendment which removed key constitutional checks and made the office of the executive president all powerful.

Apart from a murmur of protests from opposition parties and intellectual circles, the people at large, dreaming of Utopia under the new government and the new leadership, refused to see the danger of vesting too much power in the executive branch.

Constitutional changes democracies worth their salt enact should come with necessary reins to restrain those who hold office when they try to abuse the power the people have vested in them in the belief that they will exercise it with responsibly.

Tunisia's political hodgepodge was in many ways similar to the 2015-2019 Sirisena-Wickremesinghe government during which governance was held hostage to the political game of back-stabbing while the leaders paid little attention to national security, national economy and national harmony in what could be described as a criminal desertion of responsibility.

But the little luck Sri Lankan democracy lovers had in 2018, thanks to the uprightness of the judiciary, is not to be found in Tunisia where there is no constitutional mechanism or a court to challenge the President. Last week, the all-powerful executive president removed the Prime Minister and dissolved parliament in a move condemned by democracy promoters as a constitutional coup or the

militarization of the government.

It was also seen as the last nail on the coffin of the Arab Spring, which began in Tunisia. The democracy wind blew across the Arab world in 2011, giving people hopes that soon they would be freed from the clutches of autocratic rulers, military dictators and monarchs. Alas! The Arab Spring has been turned into a long and dark winter.

Tunisia stood out as the only success story of the Arab Spring. But its success was its apparent undoing. Many external forces do not want democracy to take root in the Arab world. The United States which claims that part of its foreign policy is democracy promotion around the world is a silent observer or in some cases an unseen accomplice when democracy is destroyed by the military or military-backed strongmen. It is alleged that the US played a behind-the-scenes role in the 2013 Egyptian coup when the democratically elected Brotherhood government after the Arab Spring was overthrown in a bloody counter-revolution financed and supported by some Gulf Arab countries which saw democracy as a curse. In last week's Tunisian constitutional coup, too, it is alleged that some Gulf leaders had a hand in it, as they see Islam's blend with democracy as a dangerous mix that could destabilize the region and pose a threat to their hold on power.

Yet, democracy survived for ten years in Tunisia until last week President Kais Saied invoked emergency powers, fired the prime minister, and suspended parliament. The president said he acted in terms of the Constitution's Article 80 which granted him the authority to take "any measures necessitated by the exceptional circumstances" if the country is in a "state of imminent danger."

The exceptional circumstances were the protests in the capital against the technocrat government of Prime Minister Hichem Mechichi. But the protesters were targeting largely, the Islamic party Ennahda, the largest party in parliament and whose leader was speaker under a power-sharing arrangement.

Although, the Tunisian government had several ministers from the President's party, the protesters directed their anger at the Islamist Ennahda for the government's failure to prop up the economy which was crumbling in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. With Tunisia recording the highest per capita death rate from Covid-19 in Africa, income flow from tourism, one of its biggest foreign exchange earners, has come to a standstill.

Sri Lanka in 2018 and Tunisia last week point to a disturbing trend where those who destroy democracy are allowed to go unpunished and tolerated in politics. The then United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan once famously remarked that countries where governments are toppled in coups should be suspended from UN membership. It appears that in the absence of a global mechanism to punish or shame coup leaders and democracy killers, democracy's full bloom will only be an idealist's dream.

DM Poll

Should the Government listen to the views of the free education endorsing groups and withdraw the controversial Kotelawala National Defense University (KNDU) Bill?

1) Yes 2) No 3) Don't know

LAST POLL

Do you agree with the Presidential Secretary PB Jayasundara's recent claim that Sri Lanka taking some painful structural adjustments including the shift in fertiliser and fuel price hike under a climate resilience and green economy initiative is for a healthy nation?

Yes 27.4%
No 21.2%
Don't know 51.4%

See web poll at www.DailyMirror.lk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

US Ambassador's statement on Port City Colombo Developers is misleading!

"Port City Colombo has sent the following in response to a statement issued by the US Ambassador".

CHEC Port City Colombo (Pvt) Ltd wishes to clarify its position regarding the remarks made by the US Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Alaina B. Teplitz, while addressing a group of journalists on 29th July 2021.

Wherein she stated that (quote) "the United States does have one of the companies working on the Port City Development on our sanctions list so doing business with that company may not be something that's advisable." (unquote)

Neither CHEC Port City Colombo nor its parent company China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) and China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) is listed in the United States sanctions which were announced in August 2020. As clearly announced back in August 2020, CHEC Port City Colombo wishes to reiterate that the company has no direct business relationship with any of the China Communications Construction Company's subsidiary companies targeted by US sanctions. The subsidiaries which were included in the said US sanctions were a few companies involved in South China Sea reclamation work. The land reclamation work of Port City Colombo conducted by CHEC Port City Colombo (Pvt) Ltd is an entirely different subsidiary of CCCC. Furthermore, it is important to note that there were no US actions against the Project company's parent company, CCCC at any point. CCCC is a Fortune 500 company currently ranking 78th.

Land reclamation work for Port City Colombo was completed back in January 2019. Construction of state-of-the-art internal infrastructure is currently being carried out and 20 land plots are now ready for vertical construction.

It is our intent to bring clarity to Ambassador Alaina B. Teplitz's misleading comments and provide with an unbiased understanding of Port City Colombo.

Investment friendly policies, efficient administrative systems coupled with the master-planned city to be built on sustainable principles make Port City Colombo a compelling investment opportunity for any investor regardless of the nationality.



The subsidiaries which were included in the said US sanctions were a few companies involved in South China Sea reclamation work

"State Minister Roshan Ranasinghe purchased my air ticket" - Namal

WEB COMMENTS

LION - Poor boy thinks that lying will solve this Olympic puzzle, if so he is sadly taken the wrong route.

RAVINGCREEK - What were the expenses incurred by the Sri Lankan Embassy in Japan to entertain these three jokers?

RAVIN - Really? What you told the media earlier was you used your own funds. Are we so dumb not to understand the difference?

JAVA - Always coming up with some story to fool the masses.

See more web comments at www.DailyMirror.lk

'YOUR THOUGHT' is a space, a right of the readers to support or contradict and discuss the issues highlighted in the editorial and other articles in the editorial and op-ed pages. Designed as the reader's editorial; our readers can send in their writings, with a word count not exceeding 200, to 'Your Thought', Daily Mirror Political Features Desk, No 8, Hunupitiya Cross Road, Colombo 2 or email to dmreadersthought@gmail.com.

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MEXICO SEEKS \$10 BLN IN DAMAGES FROM GUN MAKERS

Forensic technicians work at a crime scene where unknown assailants murdered two people, in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico (Reuters)



Mexico sued several gun makers in a U.S. federal court on Wednesday, accusing them of negligent business practices that generated illegal arms trafficking which led to deaths in Mexico.

The lawsuit alleges that units of Smith & Wesson; Barrett Firearms; Colt's Manufacturing Company; Glock Inc; Sturm, Ruger & Co Inc and others knew their business practices generated illegal arms trafficking in Mexico. The companies did

not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Mexico has recorded record-high homicide rates in recent years, driven in part by weapons from the United States in violation of Mexico's stricter gun ownership laws.

The lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts. Mexico said the venue was appropriate because the defendants did business in the area.

Mexico is seeking compensation for damages, which are estimated at as much as \$10 billion,

Mexican officials said at a news conference on Wednesday.

Speaking at a public ceremony, Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said his government wanted arms manufacturers to put an immediate end to practices that caused deaths in his country.

He said he viewed the U.S. government, which is not named in the civil lawsuit, as being willing to work with Mexico to stem arms trafficking.

MEXICO CITY (REUTERS), 4 Aug



PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Wayamba University of Sri Lanka

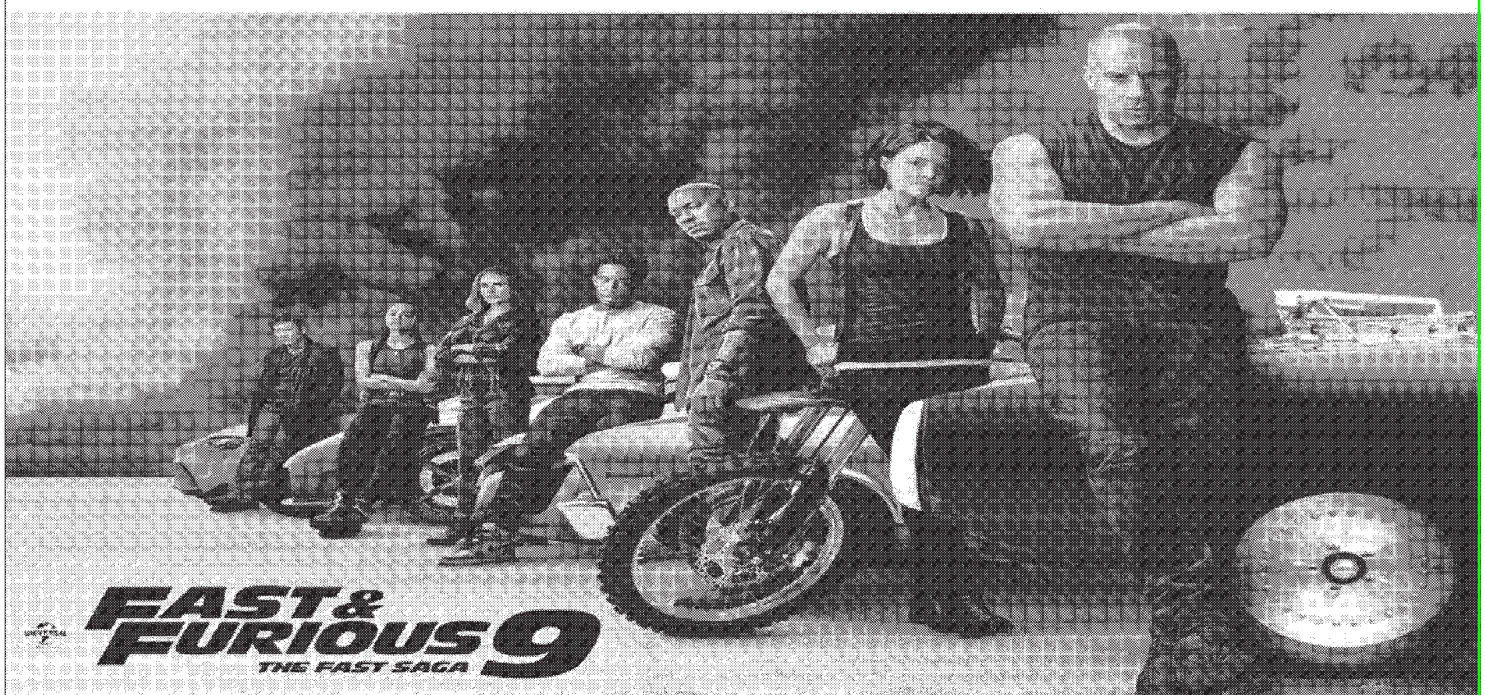
Invitation of bids for obtaining the service of suitable contractor for Staff Canteen at Kuliypitiya Premises - 2021

Please refer the advertisement appeared in Lankadeepa on 06/08/2021 for this procurement.

Registrar
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka Kuliypitiya

06.08.2021

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Sale under Section 09 of the Recovery of Loans by Banks (Special Provisions) Act No. 4 of 1990.

SEYLAN BANK PLC DEVELOPMENT BANKING UNIT BRANCH AUCTION SALE OF VALUABLE PROPERTY AND DENTAL INSTRUMENT.

Property and Machinery secured to Seylan Bank PLC for the facilities granted to whereas Sakura Dental Hospital (Private) Limited a company duly incorporated in Sri Lanka under the companies Act No. 17 of 1982 bearing certificate of incorporation No. N(PVS) 34674 of Battaramulla as "Obligors".

1ST AUCTION SALE

All that divided and defined allotment of land marked Lot 1A in Plan No. 1571 dated 22.10.2003 land called "Nugahakumbura" alias Migahakumbura bearing Assessment No. 172 Battaramulla Road situated at village Battaramulla in the Palle Pattu of the Hewagam Korale in the District of Colombo, Western Province, Registered under G.1451/208 at land Registry Homagama.

Which the said Lot 1A is an amalgamation of the following lands.

1. All that divided and defined allotment of land marked Lot 1 in Plan No. 1487 dated 24.06.2003 land called Nugahakumbura alias Migahakumbura situated at Battaramulla aforesaid containing in extent One Road Two Perches (0A-1R-2P)
2. All that divided and defined allotment of land marked Lot 2 in Plan No. 1487 aforesaid of the land called Nugahakumbura alias Migahakumbura situated at Battaramulla aforesaid containing in extent Eight Decimal Three Five Perches (0A-0R-8.35P)

LAND EXTENT 39.35 PERCHES (0A-00R-39.35P)

Together with buildings, trees and everything else standing thereon.

UNRER THE AUTHORITY GRANTED TO ME BY THE SEYLAN BANK PLC

I SHALL SELL BY PUBLIC AUCTION ON 26th AUGUST 2021 COMMENCING AT 10.00A.M.

AT SEYLAN BANK PLC DEVELOPMENT BANKING UNIT PREMISES

MODE OF ACCESS - Proceed from Colombo to Rajagiriya join Sri Jayawardenapura Mawatha, travel about 1.5km, join Kaduwela Road continue for 100 meters to the subject property on to the left.

2ND AUCTION SALE

MACHINERY	MODEL SERIAL NO	MACHINERY	MODEL SERIAL NO
1. VIP Chair with Inter Oral Camera and Accessories (Signo G30)	1320818135	18. Ring Furnace	0410016
2. Dental Chairs and Accessories (Actus 9000)	Actus EC-U	19. After Burner	SAB 100F
3. Hand Instrument for Dental Treatment		20. Centrifugal	
4. Dental Surgery Instrument		21. Vacuum Mixer	7648
5. Cutting Instrument and Abrasives		22. Vibrator	230
6. Ultrasonic Cleaner	6021	23. Model Trimmer	2502
7. Dental X-ray Unit		24. Laboratory Air Turbine	
8. Panoramic X-ray Unit		25. Laboratory Micro-Motor	7609/07/08
9. Automatic Film Processor	920461	26. Steam Cleaner	1S2500
10. Auto Clave	C0421026/27	27. Air Gun Kit	
11. Dental Port Root Zx	DP2X-31119	28. Laboratory Gas Torch YG	YG 9000
12. Dental Port TR Zx	HG4024/25	29. Multi Purpose Light Curing Unit	2376
13. Endo Wave 21 mm		30. Heat Curing Unit	4366SN01
14. Endo Wave 25 mm		31. Laboratory Lathe	3733SN01
15. Pulp Tester	49831/43/45	32. JM Hydraulic Flask Press	1778
16. Porcelain Furnace	ESGAIA/156254	33. Pencil Blaster	SK012
17. Vacuum Pump	34125	34. Super Elder	SE-3
		35. Laboratory Vacuum Mouth	
		36. Articulator Spacey type Unit	YJ307W-D
		37. Compressor	YJ260W-D

Lying at Sakura Dental Hospital (Private Limited, No. 16/7, Gemunu Mawatha, Sri Subuthipura, Battaramulla.

I SHALL SELL BY PUBLIC AUCTION THE

MACHINERY DESCRIBED ABOVE

ON 26th AUGUST 2021 COMMENCING AT 10.30A.M.

AT SEYLAN BANK PLC DEVELOPMENT BANKING UNIT PREMISES

For the Notice of Resolution- Refer the Government Gazette of 05.03.2010 and Daily Mirror, Lankadeepa Newspapers dated 02.04.2010 and Thinakkural dated 09.04.2010 For the Notice of sale refer Government Gazette of 06.08.2021.

The auction will be conducted in accordance with the strict guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health, adhering to COVID 19 protocol.

MODE OF PAYMENT: The successful purchaser will have to pay the following amounts in cash at the fall of the hammer.

1. Ten per cent of the purchased price (10%)
2. One per cent Local Sale Tax payable to the Local Authority (1%)
3. Two and a half per cent as Auctioneer's Charges (2.5%)
4. Notary's attestation fees for Conditions of sale Rs. 3000/-
5. Clerk's and Crier's wages Rs 1500/-
6. Total Cost of Advertising incurred on the sale.
7. Balance 90% of the purchase price together with any other statutory levies duties taxes or charges whenever applicable and imposed by the Government of Sri Lanka or any other authority to be payable within 30 days from the date of sale.

If the said Balance amount is not paid within 30 days as stipulated above, Bank shall have the right to forfeit 10% of the purchase price already paid and resell the property.

Title Deeds and connected documents could be obtained from the Assistant General Manager (Legal) Seylan Bank PLC, Seylan Tower, No. 90, Galle Road, Colombo 03. TP. 011-2456479, 011-2456481

"The Bank has the right to stay/cancel the above auction sale without prior Notice"

Thuthith Karunaratne (JP)
Licensed Auctioneer
Commissioner for Courts

T & H Auction
No. 50/3, Vihara Mawatha, Kolonnawa,
Tel. 0113068185, 2572940



The Luxury Channel PRESENTS



CHRISTELL
- Luxury Wellness -
PRESENTS

FEATURING
DEEN, THOSHAN & SUZIE
AUGUST 8th SUNDAY AT 9.30PM



DIALOG
121

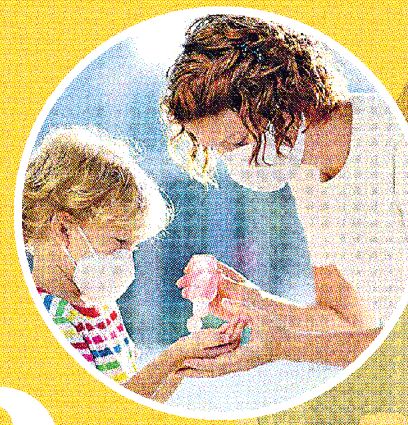


hi!!online

Health Capsule



Long-lasting Covid-19 symptoms rare in children, research



Children who become ill with coronavirus rarely experience long-term symptoms, with most recovering in less than a week, research suggests. King's College London scientists say that while a small group may experience prolonged illness, they were "reassured" that number was low. Headaches and tiredness were the most common symptoms seen.

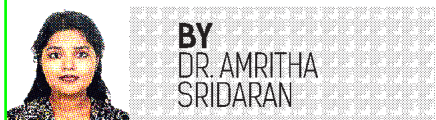
A Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health expert said the data reflected what doctors saw in clinics. Compared to adults, children are far less at risk of coronavirus.

Many who are infected do not develop symptoms and those that do, tend to have a mild illness. This peer-reviewed study, published in the Lancet Child and Adolescent Health journal, wanted to understand how Covid affected children and how it compared to other respiratory diseases.

Source : BBC

World Lung Cancer Day

Early stage detection can be a challenge



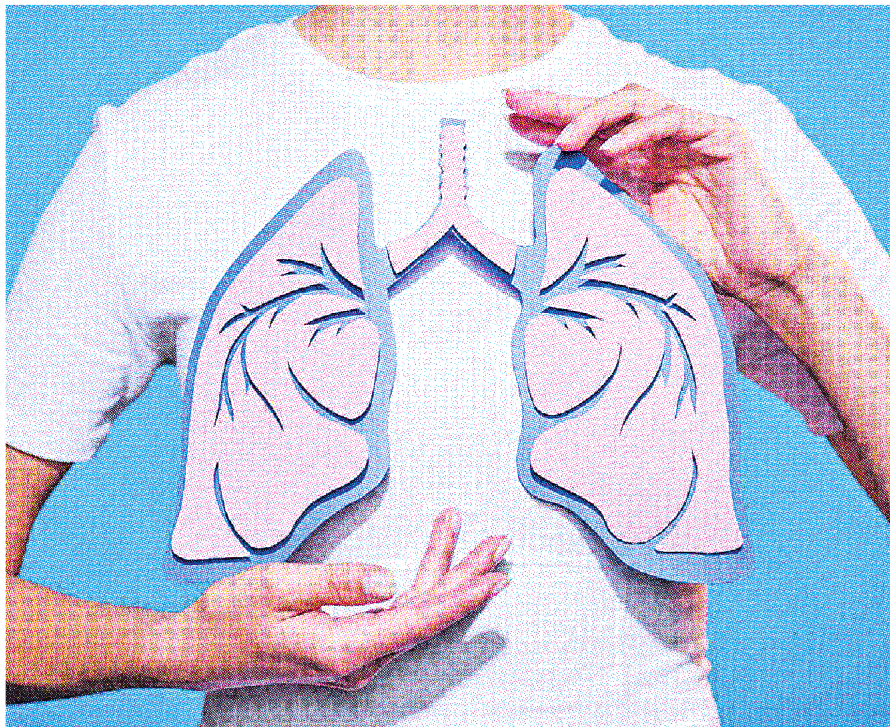
BY DR. AMRITHA SRIDARAN

The World Lung Cancer Day was observed on August 1. Lung cancer, as the name suggests is a type of cancer that originates in the lungs. Lung cancer has topped the charts as the leading cause of cancer deaths worldwide.

Lungs are the organs that participate in gas transfer. They aid oxygen molecules enter and reach the red blood cells, which then carry it via the medium blood, to all the organs and tissues of the body, up to every last living cell. The lungs also expel carbon dioxide from the body when we breathe out.

The ongoing COVID -19 pandemic has caused respiratory health to take the center stage, and the plight of patients who struggle due to a lack of oxygen is certainly an eye opener to be more vigilant about one's lung health. **If smokers are looking for a sign to quit smoking, now is the time.**

Although people who have never smoked can develop lung cancer, smoking is the most common cause. Passive smoking or any other exposure to cigarette smoke increases the risk of lung cancer among many other ailments. **Smoking can cause damages to the fragile lining of the lungs, which is designed for air exchange, and when they are exposed to inhaled smoke and other carcinogens, the cells tend to change their nature in order to withstand these new stressors. As chronic exposure occurs, the cells mutate into cancerous cells.** Inhaling carcinogenic substances such as asbestos, some types of coal dust and other chemicals too can increase the risk of getting lung cancer. The challenge is recognizing the initial



stages of lung cancer is that it does not show definitive, specific symptoms. A common symptom of lung cancer is prolonged cough. Other symptoms such as coughing up blood, Chest pain, Shortness of breath, and weight loss. It is important to diagnose Lung cancer at its early stages, as lung cancer can spread to other organs. This process is called metastasizing.

The two major types of lung cancers are

- Small Cell Lung Cancer – This is caused almost exclusively by extensive smoking.
- Non-small Cell Lung Cancer – This is a common term given for several cancer types including squamous cell carcinoma, adenocarcinoma etc.

Regular check-ups and being aware of the changes in one's body may provide early diagnosis. Smoking or passive smoking are known risk factors and quitting can reduce the risk of lung cancer. If it is difficult to abstain from smoking, you should actively seek different aids to help you quit.

Those who are working in factories where chemicals are involved, you may be constantly exposed to carcinogens, hence, it is important to adhere to proper safety and health guidelines to avoid direct contact with these substances. Moreover, maintaining a healthy diet with regular exercises too will greatly aid in reducing the risk of lung cancer and even improve your general health.



BY MUQADDASA WAHID

Recently a news article created a stir regarding Ringworm Disease also known as Tinea. Speaking to Daily Mirror, Dr Nayani Madarasingha, Consultant Dermatologist at National Institute of Infectious Diseases, stated that there was no need to be alarmed about the disease. "This disease is not something that just appeared, it has been here for a long time. Ringworm disease is caused by a type of fungus known as a dermatophyte," said Dr Madarasingha.

She noted that this was a common skin disease where the fungus affects the keratin containing cells (skin, hair and nails). "The fungus affects the superficial skin layer thus the disease is not fatal," stated Dr Madarasingha.

The symptoms of the disease can differ according to the site of infection. A red round patch with a usually clear center, margin with red bumps and extensive scaling can be seen when the infection occurs on the skin. This is mostly seen on flexures but can be widespread too. When scalp is infected, red scaly patches and areas of hair loss are seen. When toe webs are infected, a whitish thick plaque like material is visible between the toes and blisters too could develop after some time. Redness and scaling may also be present in the palms or the soles.

Hot and humid weather

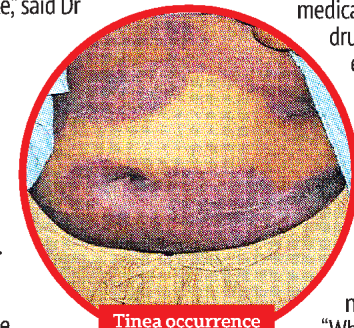
Commenting on the rise of the disease which happened over the last few years, Dr Madarasingha opined that a possible reason could be the current hot and humid weather in the South Asian region. "But there are other causative factors for this disease," she said, adding that the factors were poor personal hygiene, wearing tight fitting clothes and wearing closed toe shoes for a long period of time. She also revealed that immunocompromised people such as those with diabetes, cancer and those who've recently had an organ transplant have a higher risk of contracting the disease. "This is mostly transmitted via person to person contact. The disease can be transmitted through sharing of clothes, towels and beddings with an infected person. Even coming in contact with the surfaces touched by the infected person can cause the transmission of the disease," she explained.

Why has it become harder to treat?

Due to the itchy nature of the disease, people may

Tinea on the rise?

seek quick relief from it using certain combination medications that contain steroids and antifungal drugs, this had resulted in the increasing extensiveness of the disease. "These drugs provide quick relief but causes the disease to become extensive which would result in longer treatment duration and can also be difficult to treat," cautioned Dr Madarasingha. She also pointed out that another reason for this could be antifungal resistance which is a result of patients not following the treatment properly. "When symptoms disappear a few days



Tinea occurrence around the waist



DR. NAYANI MADARASINGHA
Consultant Dermatologist at National Institute of Infectious Diseases

into the treatment, patients discontinue the treatment. This should not be done, because even though the symptoms disappear, it does not mean the patient is fully cured. Therefore, a re-emergence of the disease could occur and it could be more extensive," she warned. A more extensive form of the disease would require a longer treatment period and stronger drugs to be used.

What should I do if I get infected?

"At the earliest sign of the disease, seek medical care. It is easier to cure the disease in the early stages," she stated adding that for mild cases of the disease, topical creams are prescribed while in severe cases, oral antifungal drugs are prescribed for a specified period. "The treatment must be followed for the specified period and if the condition persists, please visit the dermatologist again. Please don't attempt to change the treatment duration without the advice of the dermatologist or self-medicate as it can cause more harm than relief," warned Dr Madarasingha.

How to prevent from it?

Following proper personal hygiene and avoiding sharing of clothes, towels and combs, not wearing tight clothes and closed toe shoes for long time are the preventive measures one can take to prevent getting infected, according to Dr Madarasingha.

Urinary Stone Disease

Sri Lankans exposed to high risk of stone formation



BY DR YASHODHARA EMOGAMA

Do you know that human urine can form stones and it's one of the commonest conditions affecting both males and females in Sri Lanka?

Our urinary system consists of kidneys, ureters, urinary bladder and urethra. The kidneys form urine which is carried to the urinary bladder through narrow tubes called ureters. The urinary bladder temporarily stores the urine and carries it outside through a tubular structure called Urethra.

Disease conditions can occur in any part of urinary system and in today's Health Capsule we are going to shed light on urinary stone disease, a common yet an important entity which could lead to permanent kidney damage if ignored or improperly treated.

"USD (Urinary Stone Disease) is a condition which indicates the presence of stones made up from the minerals of urine within the urinary tract," explains Dr Nishantha Liyanapathirana, Consultant Urological Surgeon. Most of these stones are made of minerals of calcium (Eg. Calcium oxalate and calcium phosphate), but in a smaller percentage they could consist of constituents such as uric acid and cysteine. Urinary stones are generally formed in the kidneys, but can be found anywhere in urinary tract.

Prevalence and risk factors

"The prevalence of USD is similar to diabetes, affecting 1 in 11 people in their lifetime. As a temperate country with a tropical weather Sri

Lankans are inherently more prone for USD, since the major risk factor for stone formation is chronic dehydration" underscores Dr Liyanapathirana.

This is mainly due to evaporation of fluid from the body making our urine concentrated to a point where minerals of urine become tiny crystals and stick together to form a stone. Recurrent episodes of urine infections and various causes of obstruction of the urinary tract could accelerate the stone formation. Additionally, the number of patients with stones has nearly doubled over the past 15 years owing to the increasing incidence of other risk factors including high blood cholesterol, obesity and diabetes

Presentation

"Urinary stones are well-known to cause severe pain. However a stone forming inside the kidney may be completely asymptomatic until the latter stage which can manifest as a pain in the loin area. Nevertheless, this can silently cause significant damage to the kidney during that period. In contrast an excruciating pain in the loin region which runs down to the lower abdomen is typically experienced when a stone drops down and obstructs the ureter tube. It's more often associated with bouts of vomiting and may be accompanied with passing red colour urine due to bleeding in to the urinary tract caused by the stone obstructed" says Dr Liyanapathirana.

This is referred as ureteric colic and often requires hospital admission for pain relief. Occasionally stones develop inside the bladder which manifest as symptoms of difficulty and pain while passing urine due to the obstruction of the urine outflow.



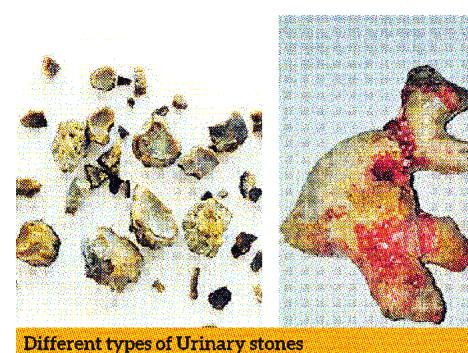
DR. NISHANTHA LIYANAPATHIRANA,
Consultant Urological Surgeon

Diagnosis

According to Dr Liyanapathirana, the widespread availability of many modalities of investigations, diagnosis of USD is quick and accurate in the modern day. Urological surgeons could request basic tests like urine analysis and X-rays of GU tract as well as more advanced, imaging tests such as CT scans for accurately assess and locate the stones.

Interventions

Treatment of urinary stones depends on location and size of the stones and their complication. Most of the larger stones formed inside kidneys need interventions. On the other hand stones causing obstruction to ureters or kidneys need a careful evaluation before



Different types of Urinary stones

proceeding with treatment. They could sometimes be treated with oral medication to expel with urine, but this needs careful follow-up to reassess the situation. If the stones are too large or unlikely to pass with the medications or complicated with infections or kidney impairment an urgent surgical intervention is always recommended.

In this modern era stones developed at any part of the urinary tract are managed with endoscopic or telescopic surgeries by the urological surgeons. Kidney stones are now effectively treated

with keyhole surgery called Percutaneous Nephrolithotomy (PCNL).

Gone are the days of painful open surgeries with cuts and scars. Laser and ultrasonic energy are used during procedures to break the stones into dust pieces, which warrants almost pain-free outcome allowing the patient to return to routine work within a day or two.

Complications

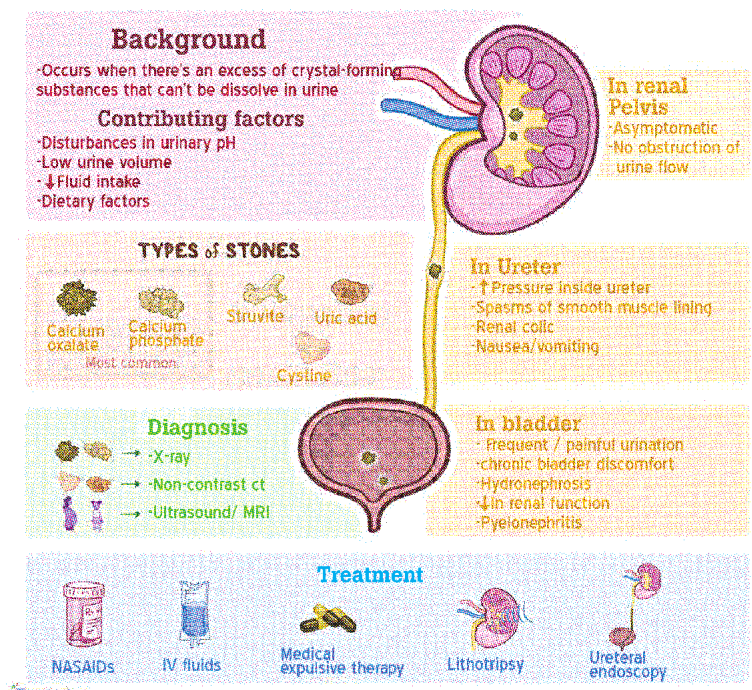
"Apart from the crippling pain urinary stones could cause serious complications if not assessed and treated properly. This includes infections of urinary tract which may at times lead to serious life threatening condition" says the doctor.

Stones obstructing kidneys and ureters could cause significant damage to the kidneys if not attended on time. In a worst case scenario this may be permanent, needing advanced therapies like dialysis and even renal transplantation.

Prevention

Since dehydration plays a main role we generally advise to have at least 3 litres of fluid per day if one is at risk of USD. Also follow these tips:

- Limit high salt intake.
- Avoid high calorie processed food and excessive animal protein intake.
- Take regular exercises and maintain ideal body weight.
- Not every stone is alike, thus a proper assessment and early treatment could avert a possible kidney damage.



Sri Lanka to skip Asian Women's VB Tourney

BY SUSIL PREMALAL

The Sri Lanka Volleyball Federation (SLVB) has decided not to field a team for the 21st Asian Women's Volleyball Championships, which will be held from August 29 to September 5 in the Philippines. Sri Lanka has been participating in this event regularly from 1991 to 2019 with the exception of five occasions. This year's event will be an Asian Qualification Tournament

for the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Championship. The tournament, which has been conducted by the Asian Volleyball Confederation since 1975, has attracted only eight countries due to the Coronavirus pandemic. SLVB has decided to skip this year's tournament as the Sri Lanka Women's Volleyball Team has not performed upto expectations in the recent past and also given the estimated cost for this event being over Rs. 10 million.



Players of India pose for pictures as they celebrate their victory in the men's bronze medal match of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games field hockey competition by defeating Germany 5-4, at the Oi Hockey Stadium in Tokyo

India 'dances' with joy after hockey team end four-decade medal drought

India celebrated yesterday over a bronze medal, after the most successful nation in men's Olympic hockey claimed their first podium finish in 41 years. A comeback 5-4 win over Germany in Tokyo snared third place in the tournament and ended decades of agonising over repeat failures since they won the last of their eight Olympic titles in Moscow in 1980. Families of the Indian team danced in the streets in Punjab state, waving hockey sticks in the air after the win. Other fans waved the Indian flag as they rushed out of their houses. Ten of the 18-man squad -- including double goalscorer Simranjeet Singh -- come from Punjab, where the state government said each would get a \$135,000 bonus. "The whole nation is dancing," Prime Minister Narendra Modi told captain Manpreet Singh and coach Graham Reid in a celebratory call to the team. He hailed the win as "historic". Hockey has fallen behind cricket in the popularity and glamour stakes in India. Despite the country's pedigree in the sport,

none of the team were born the last time India won a medal. Even cricket legends such as Gautam Gambhir were quick to praise the team. And goalkeeper Parattu Raveendran Sreejesh echoed Modi's hopes that the result would inspire a new generation to take up hockey. "It's a rebirth. That's it. It's been 41 years," he said. "In 1980 we won the last medal and after that, nothing. This gives a boost and gives energy to the youngsters to pick up hockey and play this game. This is a beautiful game." India came back from 3-1 down and went into the final quarter leading 5-3, before a fourth German goal set up a tense finale. Sreejesh pulled off a crucial save in the dying seconds as Germany threw everything at India, sinking to his knees when the match finished. India's women's team has enjoyed their best ever Olympics and will play Britain for bronze today after eliminating title favourites Australia in the quarter-finals. -AFP

From factory 'skivvy' to Olympic final for British boxer Yafai

It was not that long ago that Galal Yafai was handling rubbish and picking up boxes in a car factory. He hated it. Now the Briton is vying for gold in an Olympic boxing final. The 28-year-old, who has two older brothers who are professional boxers, defeated Kazakhstan's Saken Bibossinov in their flyweight semi-final in Tokyo yesterday on split points. Yafai now faces Carlo Paalam of the Philippines in Saturday's title decider and said: "It's the Olympic gold, isn't it, man? Olympic gold is crazy. Just imagine being the Olympic champion." It is a far cry from his long and demoralising days at the car factory. "I was grafting, picking up boxes, dreaming of being an



Britain's Galal Yafai celebrates after winning against Kazakhstan's Saken Bibossinov after during their men's fly (48-52kg) semi-final boxing match during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games

Olympic Games," said Yafai, who made it to the Rio Games a year later, in 2016, but failed to win a medal. "I was doing the rubbish, picking up boxes, delivering parts. Just a skivvy job really," he added of his former life. -AFP

THE INTERNATIONAL ATHLETICS SCHEDULE FOR 2022:

- January 22:** 18th Asian Marathon - *Buriram, Thailand*
- February 11-13:** 10th Asian Indoor Athletics Championships - *Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan*
- March 1-4:** 4th Asian (Under-18) Athletics Championships - *Kuwait*
- March 12:** 16th Asian Cross-Country Championships - *Kathmandu, Nepal*
- March 20:** Asian 20km Race Walking Championships - *Nomi City, Japan*
- May TBC:** Asian Grand Prix Series/Asian Relays - *Thailand*
- June 16-18:** 20th Asian Under-20 Athletics Championships - *Yecheon Gun, South Korea*
- July 15-24:** 18th World Athletics Championships - *Oregon, US*
- September TBC:** Asian Throwing Championship - *Mokpo, South Korea*
- October/November TBC:** Asian Half Marathon Championship - *Thailand*

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BUSY SCHEDULE FOR SRI LANKAN ATHLETES IN 2022

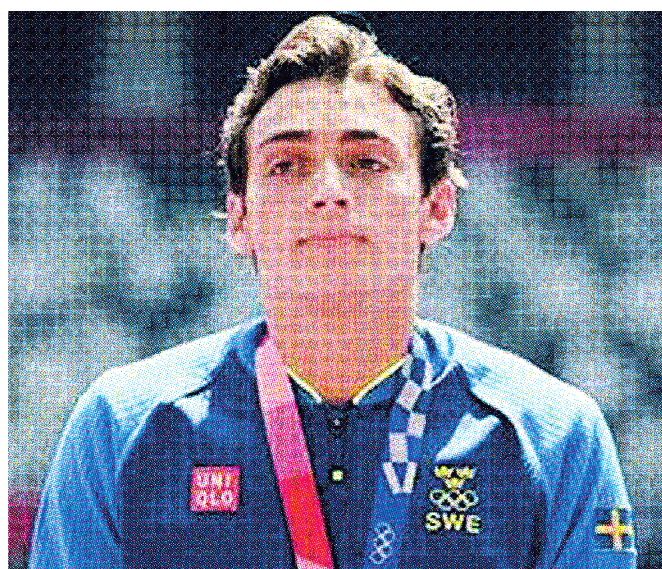
BY SUSIL PREMALAL

Sri Lankan athletes will have a busy schedule in 2022 as they are set to compete in 12 international events according to the programme released by the Asian Athletics

Association (AAA). The Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, England, Asian Games in Hangzhou, China and the IAAF World Athletics Championships in Oregon US are

the key events for the Sri Lankan Athletes, according to Prema Pinnawela, Secretary, SLA. In preparation for these events Sri Lanka Athletics (SLA) will conduct a selection trial on October 17 and

18 at the Sugathadasa Stadium in Colombo in order to form a national pool. Those athletes who are selected for this national pool are set to commence training from November.



First-placed Sweden's Armand Duplantis celebrates on the podium with his gold medal after competing in the men's pole vault event during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games

I can go higher, says pole vault champ Duplantis after record near-miss

Olympic pole vault champion Armand Duplantis said he was confident of raising his world record still further after he came close to setting a new best in the Tokyo final. Duplantis secured gold with 6.02 metres and then came agonisingly close on his record attempt of 6.19m. But the 21-year-old Swede said he had plenty more to come. "I definitely think I can jump higher than I've jumped so far," he said at an event organised by official timekeeper Omega. "Into the 6.20s, this is very possible for me, especially considering the way I felt over 6.19 a couple of nights ago." After Sergey Bubka's world record of 6.14m stood for 20 years, France's Renaud Lavillenie jumped 6.16m in 2014, but Duplantis has taken the event to new heights, raising the record to 6.18m. He said it was a "bit of a

bummer" that his good friend, American Sam Kendricks, missed Tuesday's final after being ruled out by coronavirus and he believes he could have jumped higher with the reigning world champion present. "He's somebody that very well could have pushed me to some higher heights," Duplantis said. "And I think we could have definitely done something even more special than what happened." Duplantis narrowly missed a potentially ruinous coffee appointment with Kendricks in Tokyo's Athletes' Village when a phone conversation with his girlfriend overran. He said he was in regular touch with Kendricks during his isolation in Tokyo. "It's a shame. It's a crazy situation, something that you never would predict to happen," Duplantis said. -AFP

LANKA WOMAN

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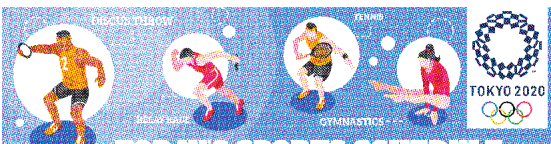


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SPORTS



TODAY'S SPORTS SCHEDULE
02.30 p.m. (SL time)

- ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS: Ariake Gymnastics Centre, 05.30 a.m.
- ATHLETICS: Musashino Forest Sport Plaza, 06.30 a.m.
- BASKETBALL: Saitama Super Arena, 05.30 a.m.
- BEACH VOLLEYBALL: Shiokaze Park, 07.30 a.m.
- BOXING: Kokugikan Arena, 06.00 a.m.
- CANOE SPRINT: Sea Forest Waterway, 09.30 a.m.
- CYCLING TRACK: Tokyo Aquatics Centre, 07.30 p.m.
- DIVING: Tokyo Aquatics Centre, 03.30 p.m.
- EQUESTRIAN: Equestrian Park, 02.30 p.m.
- FOOTBALL: Tokyo Stadium, 03.00 p.m.
- GOLF: Kasumigaseki Country Club, 06.00 a.m.
- HANDBALL: Yoyogi National Stadium, 07.30 a.m.
- HOCKEY: Oi Hockey Stadium, 02.30 p.m.
- KARATE: Nippon Budokan, 08.25 a.m.
- MODERN PENTATHLON: Tokyo Stadium, 02.30 p.m.
- RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS: Ariake Gymnastics Centre, 02.30 p.m.
- SPORT CLIMBING: Aomi Urban Sports Park, 07.30 a.m.
- TABLE TENNIS: Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium, 06.30 a.m.
- VOLLEYBALL: Ariake Arena, 06.30 a.m.
- WATER POLO: Tatsumi Water Polo Centre, 09.30 a.m.
- WRESTLING: Makuhari Messe Hall

WORLD CHAMPION GARDINER WINS OLYMPIC GOLD IN 400M

BY SHEHAN DANIEL REPORTING FROM TOKYO, JAPAN

Steven Gardiner added Olympic gold to his 400m World Championship title with a steaming run down the home stretch that gave Bahamas their first medal at Tokyo 2020 yesterday.

Gardiner overcame a poor start but still found himself behind in the last 100m, before he powered his way through and crossed the line first with a season's best time of 43.85 secs, ahead of Anthony Jose Zambrano of Colombia who took silver.

"It feels amazing. My first Olympic Games didn't go well for me (missing the final at Rio 2016) but this one here, I'm cherishing this moment. Olympic champion," Gardiner, who won gold at the 2019 World Athletics Championships said after the race.

Grenada also bagged its first medal of Tokyo 2020, when Kirani James crossed the line for bronze, claiming his third Olympic medal in the Men's 400m, having taken gold in 2012 and silver in 2016.

Americans Michael Cherry and Michael Normal finished just outside the medals, a tenth of a second apart, as the USA's

TOKYO 2020 OLYMPICS MEDAL TALLY - TOP 10

RANK	COUNTRIES	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
1	China	34	24	16	74
2	USA	29	35	27	91
3	Japan	22	10	14	46
4	Australia	17	5	19	41
5	ROC	16	22	20	58
6	Great Britain	16	18	17	51
7	Germany	9	9	16	34
8	France	7	11	9	27
9	Italy	7	10	18	35
10	Netherlands	7	9	10	26

woeful track returns continued. In the Men's 110m hurdles final, Jamaica's Hansle Parchment improved on his bronze medal from London 2012 to win gold with a season's best time of 13.04 secs, five-hundredths of a second ahead of Grant Holloway from the United States.

Ronald Levy of Jamaica finished third with a time of 13.10 secs.

"There was no intimidation. He is a great competitor. I knew that he would have taken the lead, he always takes the lead. I don't know how he gets to the first hurdle so fast. I know

that once I am close to the first three hurdles, I would be able to catch him close to the line and I did just that," Parchment said of beating favourite Holloway, who set the second fastest time in the event's history earlier this year.

The United States did however have success in field events yesterday, with Pole Vaulter Katie Nageotte winning gold, even though she was on the cusp of elimination after failing her first two jumps at the opening height of 4.50 metres.

After making the height on her third attempt, she later went on to make the winning jump

at 4.90 metres on her second attempt, beating the number one ranked athlete Anzhelika Sidorova of the Russian Olympic Committee.

In contrast, Sidorova had clean jumps until she botched two attempts at 4.90 metres and, choosing to go one level higher, couldn't make her only attempt at 4.95 metres.

Speaking on how she handled the competition, Nageotte said: "It was the worst warm-up I have had in a long time and I did an ugly first few jumps. It took me a few heights to get in to it, but I was just fighting and I finally found a smooth jump. It came together."

Holly Bradshaw of Great Britain whose last successful clearance, like Sidorova, was at 4.85m, won bronze medal on countback, having registered more failures.

The United States also took gold and silver in the Men's Shot Put event, with Ryan Crouser setting a new Olympic record with a throw of 23.30 metres, ahead of compatriot Joe Kovacs whose best effort was for a distance of 22.65 metres.

Tomas Walsh of New Zealand won bronze with a season's best 22.47 metres.

Portugal's Pedro Picahardo won gold in the Men's Triple Jump with a new National Record of 17.98 metres on his third jump, with Yaming Zhu of China a distance second with a leap of 17.57 metres.

Hugues Fabrice Zango created history by winning Burkina Faso's first ever Olympic medal, with a bronze medal winning jump of 17.47 metres.

A fifth-place finish in the Men's Decathlon 1500m was enough for Canada's Damian Warner to take gold with a new Olympic Record and take gold in the ten-discipline event, 292 points ahead of World Record holder Kevin Mayer.

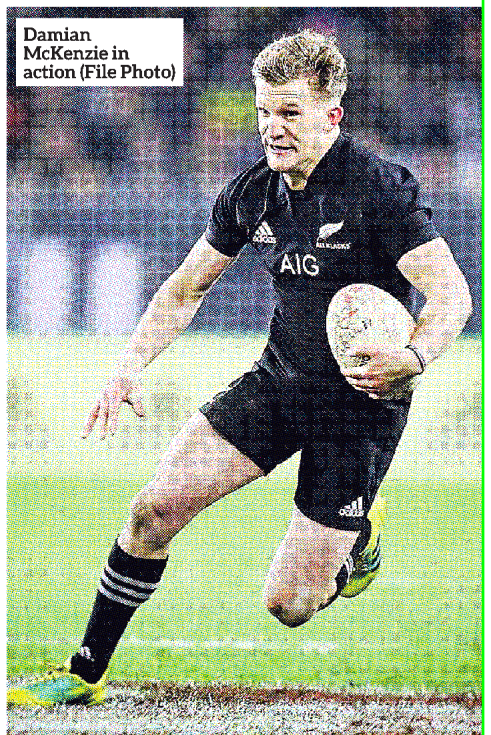
Ashley Moloney broke the Oceania Record with his total of 8649 points in taking bronze.



Bahamas' Steven Gardiner (L) runs to first place ahead of second-placed Colombia's Anthony Jose Zambrano (R) and USA's Michael Cherry (C) in the men's 400m final during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games



- INTERNATIONAL**
- Tennis: Citi Open - H.G. FitzGerald Tennis Center, Silicon Valley Classic - Spartan Tennis Complex
 - Cricket: TEST MATCH SERIES - England vs. India - Nottingham
 - Football: CHAMPIONSHIP - AFC Bournemouth vs. West Bromwich Albion - Dean Court
 - Golf: Olympic Women's Golf Competition - Kasumigaseki CC, Hero Open - St. Andrews, Barracuda Championship - Tahoe Mountain Club - Old Greenwood, Aramco Team Series - Sotogrande - La Reserva Club de Golf, WGC-FedEx St. Jude Invitational - TPC Southwind



All Blacks primed to defend historic run at Eden Park fortress

The All Blacks will not only be defending the Bledisloe Cup when they face the Wallabies on Saturday, but looking to preserve an unbeaten run at Auckland's Eden Park.

Their unbroken run of 19 years with the Cup and 27 years without a loss at the grounds known as "the fortress" are achievements that rile Australia.

To prepare for the Bledisloe, the Wallabies won a tense 2-1 series against Six Nations runners-up France and the All Blacks easily won Tests against Tonga and Fiji last month.

New Zealand's performance had Wallabies coach Dave Rennie planning to dominate up front and play a fast, physical and aerial game in the hope of claiming the three-Test series and ending the All Blacks' dominance.

The All Blacks have not been beaten at Eden Park, their spiritual home, in 44 Tests dating back to 1994. Australia have not won at the ground since 1986, nor held the Bledisloe Cup, which is contested annually by the two countries, since 2002.

While the All Blacks say they are focused on the game rather than extending records, the Wallabies see an opportunity to claim a slice of history.

None of the Wallabies were born when the team last won at Eden Park in 1986. Captain Michael Hooper said that, though he has not enjoyed repeatedly losing at Eden Park, younger members of the squad have been spared the pressure that comes with playing there.

"It wouldn't be good to put what everyone else says about Eden Park on to them," Hooper said. -AFP

SQUAD:

Teams (15-1) New Zealand: Damian McKenzie; Sevu Reece, Anton Lienert-Brown, David Havili, Rieko Ioane, Richie Mo'unga, Aaron Smith, Ardie Savea, Dalton Papalii, Akira Ioane, Sam Whitelock (capt), Brodie Retallick; Nepo Laulala, Codie Taylor, George Bower Replacements: Dane Coles, Karl Tu'inukuafe, Angus Ta'avao, Scott Barrett, Luke Jacobson, Brad Weber, Beauden Barrett, Jordie Barrett.

Australia: Tom Banks, Jordan Petaia, Len Ikitau, Hunter Paisami, Andrew Kellaway; Noah Lolesio, Tate McDermott; Harry Wilson, Michael Hooper (capt), Rob Valetini; Lukhan Salakaia-Loto, Darcy Swain; Allan Alaalatoa, Brandon Paenga-Amosa, James Slipper

Spain's Sanchez Jaime lands karate's historic first Olympic gold

Spain's Sandra Sanchez Jaime won the first ever Olympic Games karate gold medal in Tokyo yesterday.

She ensured her name would be in the sport's history books by beating Japan's Kiyou Shimizu in the women's kata final.

Karate was included for the first time on the Olympic programme for the pandemic-delayed 2020 Games, but was not included on the menu for Paris 2024.

Sanchez Jaime, 39, took the historic title with a higher athletic score than the home favourite Shimizu after the two karatekas were all square on 19.60 on the technical score.

The 2018 world champion beamed and raised her arms skywards after the chief judge had walked out to stand between the two finalists, then raising the right arm to signify victory for Sanchez Jaime.

Karate is split into two disciplines: kata, where athletes perform choreographed moves for the judges to score, and kumite, which involves two fighters trying to land blows on each other in bouts of up to three minutes. Yesterday France's Steven da Costa will



Spain's Sandra Sanchez Jaime celebrates as she wins the gold medal in the women's kata final of the karate competition during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games

face Turkey's Eray Samdan in the men's -67kg kumite final followed by the women's -55kg kumite final.

The karate competition is being held at the Nippon Budokan, the venue with the roof fashioned to resemble Mount Fuji. It staged judo at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics.

New Zealand cricket team to tour Pakistan after 18 years

New Zealand will tour Pakistan for the first time in 18 years to play three one-day internationals and five Twenty20s, both countries said yesterday.

Pakistan has made steady strides in restoring its image as a safe venue for international matches, after successfully hosting Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, the West Indies, and South Africa in recent years.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said New Zealand will tour "Pakistan for the first time since 2003" starting September 17, with all matches split between the central cities of Lahore and Rawalpindi.

"The 2019 World Cup finalists, who are also the World Test champions and ranked third in T20Is, will draw tremendous attraction and interest from the local fans, and will reinforce Pakistan's status as a safe and secure country," PCB Chief Executive Wasim Khan said in a statement.

A bomb blast outside the New Zealand team's hotel in Karachi in 2002 cut short the Black Caps' last Test tour of Pakistan, but they visited again for an ODI series the following year.



Wasim Khan (File Photo)

After a deadly 2009 attack on the Sri Lanka team bus in Lahore, most of Pakistan's international matches have been hosted outside the country over security fears.

However, the rapid improvement in security in recent years has gradually seen the return of international cricket to Pakistan.

Rawalpindi's Pindi cricket stadium will host the ODIs

between September 17 and 21, while Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will stage all five T20s, starting on September 25 the PCB said.

Kane Williamson's side is currently ranked number one in Tests and ODIs.

New Zealand Cricket's chief executive David White said the country was looking forward to the upcoming tour.

"New Zealand was the first country outside India to (ever) tour Pakistan and we share a close relationship with the PCB," White added.

"It's great that, after such a difficult time for Pakistan, international cricket is again being played in the country." The three one-day internationals are part of the ODI League, a qualification process for the men's Cricket World Cup in 2023 to be held in India.

New Zealand will be the first side to visit Pakistan in what the PCB has called a "bumper 2021-22 season."

Following New Zealand's tour, England's men's and women's sides are set to play white-ball matches in Pakistan in October. -AFP

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UK think tank ranks SL world's fifth least affordable nation for basic food

■ 66% of average wages per person would need to be spent to afford minimum recommended amount of food for an adult

Sri Lanka has been ranked the fifth poorest country in the world in terms of food affordability, according to a latest report by United Kingdom (UK)-based think tank, Institute of Development Studies.

The country rankings were based on the 'Cost of Food Basics' analysis

that compares the monthly minimum recommended spend on food per adult and monthly average wage in 107 countries globally.

For the analysis, the research team has utilised the data published on publicly available global cost-of-living database, Numbeo, in June this year.

The minimum recommended amount of food is based on 12-14 basic items that together would account for 2,100 calories per adult per day which is the level recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the US

Committee on International Nutrition.

The 'Cost of Food Basics' found that, more than one year since the outbreak of COVID-19, there was a vast disparity between countries in terms of the proportion of average wages needed to afford enough food.

Sri Lanka was the fifth least affordable nation for basic food, according to the analysis.

The monthly minimum recommended expenditure for food per person in Sri Lanka was US\$ 161.23, while the average monthly wage per adult in the

country stood at US\$ 245.81.

"This means that 66 percent of average wages per person would need to be spent to afford the minimum recommended amount of food for an adult. This is before considering other costs such as feeding their family or expenses including rent, transport, utilities and other non-food purchases," the researchers pointed out.

In contrast, in neighbouring India, the recommended minimum monthly expenditure on basic foods accounted for only 27 percent of monthly wages.

MORE ON P12

Cruise ship 'Navigator of the Seas' calls at Hambantota Port



The cruise ship 'Navigator of the Seas', under the agency of Prudential Shipping, called at the Hambantota International Port (HIP) for the purposes of receiving bunkers, marking another significant milestone in the diversity of the vessels calling HIP for bunkering.

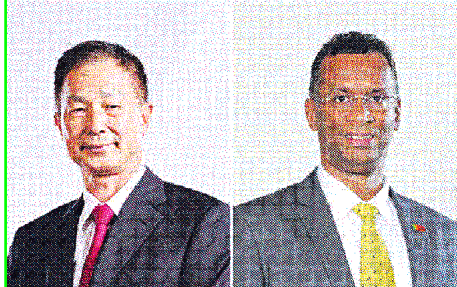
Bunkering is an important part of HIP's energy services portfolio. Different categories of vessels calling at the port for this service is another step in the port coming closer to establishing itself as a strategic bunker supply location on the main East West shipping route.

This vessel is also the first passenger vessel to arrive at the Port since the outbreak of the pandemic.

The vessel, sailing under the Bahamian flag whose last port of call was Port Said, Egypt, is enroute to Yeosu, South Korea. The vessel had a crew of 217, but there was no disembarkation at the Hambantota Port as per Covid protocol.

Tissa Wickramasinghe, COO of HIP said the port has already launched the wholesale supply of marine bunker fuels. "In order to further develop HIP as a competitive marine bunker supply location, we entered into a strategic partnership with Sinopec Fuel Oil Lanka Limited (SFOL) to provide bunkering services as a wholesale exporter and also service vessels calling HIP as a value added service." **MORE ON P12**

Teejay Lanka records improved 1Q performance



Teejay Lanka Chairman Bill Lam (left) and CEO Pubudu De Silva

Teejay Lanka PLC has made an encouraging start to FY 2021-22 with solid top and bottom line growth in the three months ending 30th June 2021, shrugging off the pandemic-imposed shackles that retarded 1Q growth last year and overcoming the impact of the third wave of COVID-19 on the industry.

Sri Lanka's largest textile manufacturer more than doubled revenue to Rs. 10.4 billion at group level for the three months posting growth of 119 percent, achieved 27-fold improvement in its profit before tax of Rs. 385 million, and converted last year's 1Q net loss of Rs. 31.5 million into a post-tax profit of Rs. 310.5 million in 1Q, 2021-22, the Group's third consecutive quarter of profit growth.

Teejay Lanka Chairman Bill Lam welcomed the positive start to the new financial year, but cautioned that raw material prices and the new dynamics brought about by the global pandemic would continue to pose challenges to the business.

He attributed the growth in turnover to the Group's success in maintaining uninterrupted operations at all three manufacturing plants despite the third wave of COVID-19, additional revenue from outsourced operations in Sri Lanka and the depreciation of the Rupee in the review period.

The turnaround in 1Q profits was achieved through increased volumes, a strong order book, strategic management of yarn price increases and stringent control of costs, he said.

At company level, Teejay Lanka reported profit before tax of Rs. 347 million for the three months, reflecting growth of 40 percent, while net profit improved by 50 percent to Rs. 315 million on revenue of Rs. 6.2 billion, up 65 percent over the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

MORE ON P12

Pandemic fuels SL's digital literacy; computer literacy lags

■ COVID-19 has pushed more people to pick up digital devices for work, study etc.

■ Digital literacy rate rose to 50.1% in 2020 from 46% in 2019

■ But computer literacy rate only edged up by 1.5% to 32.3%

While computer literacy hasn't reached a third of the population in Sri Lanka, the COVID-19 pandemic has given the country's digital literacy a push with people picking up digital devices to connect with each other, work, study and entertain themselves while staying at home.

The ability of a person between the ages of 5 and 69 to use a computer, laptop, tablet or a smartphone on their own without outside support is defined as digital literacy and it is measured as a percentage of the population in the same age bracket.

In Sri Lanka, this rate reached 50.1 percent by the end of 2020 compared to 32.3 percent computer literacy rate, according to the latest



Courtesy: AP-Vonhap

survey on computer literacy by the Department of Census and Statistic.

This is also a jump from 46 percent digital literacy rate in 2019. In comparison, the computer literacy, which requires a bit more sophistication and perhaps a little training, rose only by 1.5 percentage points from 2019.

Some low-income households could only afford a smartphone to ensure that their children receive their daily dose of online schooling when the pandemic deprived them of classroom learning for over a year.

With the so-called new normal brought in by the pandemic, people

were seen increasingly investing in computers, laptops, tabs and smartphones to work-from-home.

Even after the end of the pandemic, it is now being predicted that the world work would largely remain a hybrid one, as employers have also realised the operational savings such an arrangement could bring in.

According to the bi-annual survey, every one in five households in Sri Lanka has either a desktop or a laptop computer and this hasn't changed much during the last four years from a range of 22 percent to 23 percent.

MORE ON P12

Oshada Senanayake appointed new ICTA Chairman

Oshada Senanayake has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) of Sri Lanka.

Senanayake, who was already a board member of ICTA, also serves as the Director-General of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRC).

Senanayake's appointment follows the resignation of former ICTA Chairman Lalith Gamage. Gamage is the Chairman of Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT).

However, Gamage will continue to serve on the ICTA board, informed sources said.



President's office stresses no change to fertilizer policy; says only organic fertilizer allowed for local agriculture

■ Only specialised fertilizers allowed to be imported through Agriculture Department and other relevant institutions under special licensing system

■ According to census conducted by relevant govt. institutions, licenses have been issued for a six month period



President Gotabaya Rajapaksa

The government on Wednesday stressed that it has not granted permission to import chemical fertilizers for local agricultural purposes, and has not made any changes to the decision taken by the President to use only organic fertilizers for local agriculture and will not make any changes to this decision in the future as well.

A media statement by the President's Media Division said the Cabinet had granted approval to the proposal made by the Minister of Agriculture on 31st of May 2021, to import plant nutrients, which include natural chelated minerals and micro matter.

"As the above natural chelated minerals and micro matter were already being imported under the HS Code, but currently prohibited by the Gazette Notification No. 2226/48, and in order to grant Cabinet approval to the aforesaid Cabinet paper submitted by the Minister of Agriculture, the Gazette Notification No. 2226/48 was amended."

MORE ON P12

Tourist arrivals to the country up for third consecutive month in July

■ 19,337 visitors arrive during first seven months

■ Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Germany, China and the United Kingdom were top five int'l tourist generating markets for SL for the January to July period this year

Sri Lanka saw a pickup in the number of tourist arrivals for the month of July with 2,429 visitors coming in.

The total number of visitors to the country for the first seven months was 19,337.

Following the steep decline witnessed in April, the number of tourist arrivals is now on an upward trajectory. The numbers have increased, marginally, for the third consecutive month.

According to the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), the improvement in international arrivals is largely due to factors such as vaccination programmes around the world, softer restrictions for vaccinated travellers and growing consumer confidence.

The United Kingdom, Maldives, and United States emerged as the largest source markets for the month of July.

The United Kingdom accounted for 14.1 percent of the total traffic, while Maldives accounted for 10.3

percent, and the United States 10 percent.

Region wise, Europe became the largest source of tourist traffic to Sri Lanka with 53.4 percent of the total traffic for the month. Asia and Pacific accounted for 26.8 percent of the total traffic while Americas accounted for 17.4 percent.

"The presence of countries from the Americas, Western, Central & Eastern Europe and Asia Pacific regions among the top source markets reflects the gradual revitalisation of tourism industry fuelled by factors such as gradual improvement of traveller confidence, lifting of travel restrictions and roll out of the COVID 19 vaccine," SLTDA said.

MORE ON P12

Sri Lanka Vanithabhimana launched for 2nd consecutive year

Sri Lanka Vanithabhimana, an awards programme to empower the women of Sri Lanka, has been launched for the second consecutive year by NDB Bank and Sirasa News 1st.

Similar to the very successful awards ceremony that was held at the Nelum Pokuna Mahinda Rajapaksa Theatre on March 8, 2021, Sri Lanka Vanithabhimana 2021 too will be held throughout the year, ending in a grand award ceremony.

This year's programme will be held in two stages, under the corporate field and provincial competition. Applications are accepted for the tournament for a period of one month from August 5 onwards.

Corporate field

The professional category of the Sri Lanka Vanithabhimana this year will be held under 10 categories.

These categories are 1. Human Resources 2. Financial Management 3. Marketing and Advertising 4. Legal Division 5. Government Division 6. Information Technology 7. Tourism 8. Arts 9. Sports and 10. Entrepreneurship.

Women holding senior level positions in the relevant fields can apply for this competition.



Provincial tournament

The Sri Lanka Vanithabhimana Provincial Competition will be held to recognise the courageous women who excel at rural level.

The competition, which was held under eight categories in the previous year, is scheduled to be held under 10 categories, with two new categories added this year.

1. Entrepreneurship (Small Scale) 2. Entrepreneurship (Micro Scale) 3. Entrepreneurship (Emerging) 4. Youth Leadership 5. Environmental

Management 6. Sport 7. Volunteer Services 8. Innovation 9. Literature and 10. Education Services are thus included.

Parallel to the awarding ceremony of the winners of the provincial competition, a Women's Day festival will be held in each province. It is expected that this programme will provide workshops, seminars, lectures as well as valuable market opportunities for female entrepreneurs.

These activities are being carried out with the full support of

the Manpower and Employment Department.

Women's summit

A key feature of this year's Sri Lanka Vanithabhimana programme is the convening of a women's summit with the participation of 500 women from various walks of life.

Colombo National Hospital National Coordinator Training Pushpa Ramyani Zoysa won the award for the most popular woman in the country by popular vote.

Jetwing Hotels launches Plated by Jetwing food delivery platform



Jetwing Hotels, Sri Lanka's leading hospitality company, launched Plated by Jetwing (www.platedbyjetwing.com), its latest online, culinary experience, bringing mouth-watering dishes from around the world to your home table.

With a wide selection ranging from traditional Sri Lankan favourites to iconic dishes from the Orient, India and the West, Plated by Jetwing offers you the freedom to take a day off cooking and enjoy delicious meals from the comfort and safety of your home.

This latest venture delivers from two of the chain's pioneering properties - Jetwing Colombo Seven and Jetwing Blue - covering selected areas in and around

Colombo and Negombo. Both menus offer quick bites, individual plates, as well as generous family combos and sawans of biriyani and kottu, perfect for your family and friends. The menus are curated using the freshest, most healthy ingredients and also provides a wide array of vegetarian dishes to suit your preferences.

Your health and safety are the primary consideration of Jetwing Hotels and each dish is prepared with the highest safety protocols in place and delivered right to your doorstep by the hotels' fleet of vehicles and associates, ensuring you can enjoy your meals with peace of mind and a touch of Jetwing's legendary hospitality.

KPMG Friday Mid-Afternoon Chat on Port City Act on Aug. 6

The KPMG Academy presents the 23rd virtual session of the Friday Mid-Afternoon Chat series on August 6, 2021, at 3:00 p.m.

This session will have KPMG experts deliberate on the Port City Act: an in-depth analysis (including tax ramifications on distinct scenarios).

An in-depth understanding of the key provisions of Colombo Port City Economic Commission Act, No. 11 of 2021, which was certified on May 27, 2021, is of utmost importance for decision makers to strategise the future path of their respective businesses.

The discussion will focus on an overview of offshore companies, establishing banking operations in the port city, forex rules within the port city, persons liable for income tax within the port city, application of double tax treaty provisions, application of Sri Lanka income tax and VAT rules for the port city on intra-supplies, application of stamp duty on different types of transactions, etc.

The enactment of the Port City Act, with



Suresh R.I. Perera Sachithra Chandrasena Rifka Ziyard

exemptions from statutes listed in the 'Schedule III' and scope for exemptions to be granted (within a set framework) from the Statutes in the 'Schedule II' of the act, has many permutations and combinations for prospective investors, residents and other stakeholders. This webinar will analyse these interesting aspects.

"Application of myriad of direct and indirect tax laws of Sri Lanka on both companies and individuals establishing and operating in the Port City Area have many interesting dimensions that are far removed from the picture painted at the first glance of reading of

the act, that would have to be considered by strategic decision makers," said KPMG Sri Lanka Principal Tax and Regulatory Suresh Perera.

The speakers will also deliberate on the right of the Sri Lankan professionals (architects, lawyers, doctors, engineers) in establishing/residing in the port city.

The session will be conducted by Perera, Director Tax and Regulatory Rifka Ziyard and Sachithra Chandrasena, Senior Manager Tax and Regulatory at KPMG Sri Lanka.

For registrations please contact Seneli Jayatunge on sjayatunge1@kpmg.com or 074 061 0783.

LNBTI special UK honours degree to produce professionals for Japanese IT industry

LNBTI has introduced properly structured honours degrees in ICT (two programmes) from a reputed university in the UK, customising to make it to the level where any student going through the superior learning experience offered in this programme.

With students' commitment and dedication, a well-moulded professional will be produced

at LNBTI, in order to meet the high standards of the Japanese IT industry requirements.

During this honours degree programme, LNBTI imparts students with the skills required for the Japanese professional ICT job market, which include a degree, Japanese language up to N3 level and a good understanding about the Japanese society and business practices.

Why choosing private label products helps you save



Private label or own label products are products that carry the supermarket brand that sells it and are widely found in Sri Lanka. Since the marketing and distribution costs are at a minimum, these products are priced much less in comparison to other products. These products cover a wide variety of essential household food products and cleaning aides just to name a few.

Keells identified the potential that carrying a range of own label products at attractive prices can provide a substantial saving to customers and provides affordability to anyone by providing products at an entry level price point whilst ensuring the right level of quality. This journey of own label products commenced in 2012 and the full product portfolio no consists of over 350 products.

The range consists of essentials such as rice, brown sugar, wheat and atta flour, dhal, chick peas to other pulses, the entire range of spices, curry mixes, noodles, brown eggs, tea, coffee to biscuits, jams, sauces and much more grocery items. Some have become instant best sellers, such as the range of biscuits from marie biscuits, wafers, cream crackers, chocolate to custard cream biscuits.

There is also an extensive range of household items, which include dish wash liquid, detergents, paper products and cleaners. New additions include toiletries such as men's

and unisex shampoos and Tea Tree and Kohomba Kaha face washes. Packed in attractive and bright colours synonymous with the Keells brand these products are easy to find on the supermarket shelves at Keells.

Keells Supermarkets Head of Private Label and Direct Imports Ranella Jayasuriya said, "The range of Keells products are priced at 10 percent lesser than regular branded products of comparable quality."

These prices are valid every day and not for a promotional period, thus providing customers a significant saving every day."

She further added that this saving unlike other promotions is continuous and available any day, any time someone shops at Keells offering an everyday low price.

At a time all households are feeling the strain on the home economy, there is an even bigger need to stretch the cash one has in hand. Similar to the saving that own label products offer, Keells also has introduced a budget pack named 'Wasi Malla' with key essentials priced at Rs.1199 and continuing to offer great prices for fresh produce, 25 percent off on selected essential items for Nexus members, total bill and discounts on essentials, groceries and fresh for range on credit cards to also offering essentials at controlled prices. Customers can now shop with the assurance that they can buy everything, every day at Keells, at affordable prices.

Contd. from Page 11

UK think...

Sri Lanka's food inflation has been growing by double digits during the last few months, while the real wages of private sector and informal sector workers have recorded a contraction due to the pandemic.

According to 2020 Global Food Security Index (GFSI), high agricultural import tariffs (above global average), food inflation and absence of comprehensive food safety-net programmes with a national coverage remain key weak indicators in food affordability.

The top 10 countries where basic food was least affordable were Syria, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Ghana, Indonesia, Algeria, Iran and Uzbekistan.

Teejay Lanka...

Based on these results, Teejay Lanka PLC has proposed an interim dividend of Rs. 1.15 per share in respect of the quarter reviewed. The Group has continued its strong debt-free balance sheet from the previous year with a net cash balance of Rs. 4.8 billion.

Elaborating on the Group's performance, Teejay Lanka CEO Pubudu De Silva said raw materials and cotton prices are at a peak level

while the global market remains competitive with changing dynamics.

"The Group foresaw these challenges during the last financial year and strategically approached its customers to minimise the impact on profits and margins," he said, adding that "Our operational excellence journey has enabled the Group to increase productivity while reducing overheads and wastage to reduce the impact on margins."

He disclosed that expansion of the Group's Indian plant is within the planned timeline despite the turbulent environment and investments made are progressing well. "These investments will undoubtedly position Teejay as the leader in the Textile arena in South Asia," De Silva said. Teejay has invested US\$ 26 million to increase the India plant's daily output to 20 tons, which would contribute to the Group's target of becoming a US\$ 300 million business.

Pandemic fuels...

Nevertheless a prolonged pandemic could provide a reason for more households to own computers as they provide convenience in terms of distant learning and work-from-home arrangements.

The highest computer ownership is in the Western Province with 35.1 percent of

the households having a computer while the lowest of 11.9 percent is in the Uva Province in 2020.

Further the urban population demonstrates higher computer and digital literacy than the rural and estate community, the survey results found.

Cruise ship 'Navigator'...

Sinopec with their vast resources guarantees the supply of VLSFO in Hambantota currently and MGO in the near future, enabling the Port to service all vessels plying the principal sea route in the Indian Ocean."

Chevron Lubricants...

The local unit of the global energy giant engages in both upstream and downstream operations as it is engaged in importing, blending, distributing and marketing of lubricant oils and greases for vehicles and industrial use.

Chevron commanded a market share of 41.51 percent of the Sri Lankan lubricant market as of the third quarter in 2020.

Chevron Corp. via Chevron Ceylon Limited owns 51 percent stake in Chevron Lubricants Lanka PLC, while Employees'

Provident Fund has 0.42 percent stake in the company being its eighteenth largest shareholder.

President's office...

Therefore, in accordance with the Imports and Exports (Control) Regulations No. 11 of 2021 issued by the Minister of Finance on 30th July 2021, only the following types of specialised fertilizers are allowed to be imported through the Department of Agriculture and other relevant institutions under a special licensing system. Only the organic fertilizers, which are up to the international organic fertilizer standards, will be allowed to be used for local agricultural purposes," the statement said.

"According to the census conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Department of National Botanic Gardens and other relevant government institutions, licenses have been issued for a period of six months under the direct supervision of institutions registered for protect agriculture in greenhouses and for hydroponics, aeroponics and floriculture to import nitrogen minerals or chemical fertilizers and chelated minerals and nutrients.

The above licenses also permit packets of compound fertilizers containing the three

plant nutrients, namely mineral or chemical nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, or capsules containing a mixture of two of them or packets weighing 10kg or less containing such products.

All these fertilizers are allowed to be imported only by the relevant agencies as per the requirements or under special licenses issued only for limited quantities to suit those requirements," it added.

In addition, nitrogen extracts (organic) and mineral potassium can be imported, which are not classified as chemical fertilizers, the statement said.

Tourist arrivals...

It pointed out that Pakistan being listed among the top 10 source markets, securing 9th position, is noteworthy.

For the January to July period this year, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Germany, China and the United Kingdom were Sri Lanka's top five international tourist generating markets.

Kazakhstan was the largest source of tourist traffic to Sri Lanka with 21 percent of the total traffic for 2021. Ukraine accounted for 18 percent of the total traffic; while Germany, China and the United Kingdom accounted for 12 percent, 9 percent, and 9 percent respectively.

ComBank ranked as Sri Lanka's Most Respected Bank for 17th successive year

Commercial Bank of Ceylon has been ranked the Most Respected Bank in Sri Lanka for the 17th consecutive year in the 2021 listing of the Most Respected Entities in Sri Lanka compiled by LMD.

With this latest ranking, the country's largest private sector bank also enjoys the distinction of being among the top five Most Respected entities in Sri Lanka in every one of the 17 years since the publication launched the ranking in 2005. The latest edition of the LMD ranking of Sri Lanka's most respected companies includes the largest and

most diversified conglomerates in the country, as well as leading players in apparel and telecommunications and some of the world's best-known multinational companies.

LMD added two new attributes this year to the 10 by which companies are ranked as part of the survey. Besides the two debuting attributes – 'HR and people management' and 'crisis management' – the survey ranked companies according to financial performance, quality consciousness, management profile, honesty, innovation, dynamism, corporate culture,

CSR and sustainability, vision and national perspective.

Notably, Commercial Bank was ranked among the top 10 corporate entities in Sri Lanka in 2021 in seven of the 12 attributes and was the highest-ranked bank for financial performance, CSR and sustainability and crisis management.

Replacing the Olympic Ranking System it adopted in 2015 to record peer perceptions of corporate admiration, LMD used a weighted ranking system based on the opinions of surveyed respondents this year too. The ranking system operates by

weighting three nominations for each company by assigning a weight of five points for the first mention, a weight of three for the second and one for the third mention. The final rankings were based on the total sum value of the weighted scores for each company.

This survey commissioned and conceptualised by LMD and conducted by NielsenIQ, covered a sample of 800 respondents who are managers and above in companies listed in the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), the LMD 100 (2019/2020) and Brands Annual 2020.

Union Bank announces appointment of new Deputy Chairman and changes to board

The board of directors of Union Bank announced the appointment of Trevine Fernandopulle as the new Deputy Chairman, with effect from August 30, 2021.

The board also announced the retirement of the current Deputy Chairman Sabry Ghose from his services on the board from August 29, 2021, upon completion of his nine-year service period as per the corporate governance directions issued by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.



Deputy Chairman Trevine Fernandopulle



Independent Non-Executive Director A.S. Ibrahim

It further announced the appointment of A.S. Ibrahim as an Independent Non-Executive Director to the Union Bank board, with effect from August 15, 2021.

Fernandopulle has served the Union Bank board since 2017 as an Independent Non-Executive Director and he also serves on a number of board committees of the bank, providing astute counsel and guidance to the bank's management in driving its operations. He is a veteran banker with over 40 years' experience in the financial services sector. Prior to joining the Union Bank board, he served as Group Chief Risk Officer/Executive Vice President Risk of the DFCC group and as Chief Risk Officer at Bank of Ceylon.

He was also Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) of HSBC Sri Lanka, where he served for 30 years and acquired wide knowledge and exposure to international banking and risk management specialisms, having provided leadership to numerous functions including risk management, foreign exchange and treasury, international trade, corporate banking and retail operations.

Fernandopulle is Chairman of AMW Capital Leasing and Finance PLC (an Al Futtam Group Dubai-owned company) and the Board of Trustees of Joseph Frazer Memorial Hospital.

He also serves on the board of Continental Insurance Lanka Ltd, Enterprise Ceylon Capital (Pvt.) Ltd and National Insurance Trust Fund. He is a Past President of Chartered Institute of Bankers (Sri Lanka Branch) and a Founder Member/past Vice President of the Association of Banking Risk Professionals of Sri Lanka.

Fernandopulle holds a BSc. (Mathematics) from Imperial College, University of London (UOL), an MSc (Statistics) from the London

School of Economics, UOL and is also an Associate/Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Bankers, London.

The newly appointed board member A.S. Ibrahim has over 37 years of banking experience primarily in the areas of corporate banking, treasury management and risk management. He served as Chief Executive Officer of People's Leasing & Finance PLC from July 2017 to November 2020.

Ibrahim has held very senior positions both locally and internationally including, Senior Deputy General Manager Wholesale Banking and Senior Deputy General Manager Risk Management of People's Bank, Deputy General Manager, Head of Treasury, Head of Corporate Banking and Recoveries, Chief Risk Officer and Chief Credit Officer of Hatton National Bank PLC and Head of Credit and GSAM of Standard Chartered Bank.

Ibrahim was a Director of People's Insurance PLC, People's Merchant Finance PLC, People's Leasing Fleet Management Limited, People's Leasing Havelock Properties Limited, People's Micro-Commerce Limited, People's Leasing Property Development Limited and Lankan Alliance Finance Limited in Bangladesh and currently serves on the board of Fintrex Finance Limited. He holds an Honours Degree (BSc) from the University of Colombo and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Bankers - UK (FCIB).

The appointments further consolidate the strength of the Union Bank board and will add immense value and distinction to the strategic direction of the bank. The board also expressed their sincere thanks and gratitude to Sabry Ghose, the retiring Deputy Chairman for his valuable contribution to the bank over the years.

HNB-Singer partnership to offer exciting deals on John Deere tractors and agri machinery

Sri Lanka's leading private sector bank HNB PLC partnered with Singer, Sri Lanka's premier consumer durable retailer and sole agents for John Deere in Sri Lanka, to offer customers convenient leasing solutions on tractors and agri machinery.

The partnership was inked with a ceremony held at the Singer head office in the presence of HNB Head of Personal Financial Services Kanchana Karunagama and Singer Chief Executive Officer Mahesh Wijewardene.

"We're aware of the difficulties many of our SME customers are facing due to the extremely challenging market conditions in the country. In order to better support their needs, we are delighted to partner with Singer to offer for valuable deals and discounts on its internationally renowned brand of John Deere tractors and agri machinery, which could help many SME customers enhance their productivity and get back on their feet," Karunagama said.

HNB will offer customers an attractive leasing package



From left: Singer Sales Manager Nandana Wijesundara, Singer Senior Product Manager Hiranya Hewanayake, Singer Director Marketing Shanil Perera, Singer Chief Executive Officer Mahesh Wijewardene with HNB Head of Personal Financial Services Kanchana Karunagama, HNB Head of Microfinance Vinodh Fernando, HNB Head of Leasing Niluka Amarasinghe, HNB Assistant Manager Leasing Roshan De Silva and HNB Executive Business Development Leasing Mahesh Ratnayake at the ceremony

inclusive of special low interest rates and a free credit card, with the bank waiving off the first year annual fee. The package is also anchored to attractive benefits from HNB General Insurance, including a free life insurance cover worth Rs.4.5 million and discounted vehicle premiums for Singer customers.

"Singer has always been committed to enhancing the agriculture sector in Sri Lanka. With John Deere, we are able to provide globally recognised tractors and agri machinery to our consumers across the country. This

partnership with HNB PLC will no doubt help make these world-class machinery more accessible," Wijewardene said.

Customers availing themselves of the promotion will also be entitled to free warranties and insurance covers from Singer, as well as exciting discounts on JD spare parts for the duration of the partnership. Additionally, Singer will offer an extensive range of exclusive services completely free of charge, including 24/7 service support, vehicle registration and vehicle transport to the customers' doorstep.

Fitch Ratings affirms NDB's National Long-Term Credit Rating at A+; Outlook Stable

Fitch Ratings has affirmed NDB's National Long-Term Rating at A+, with the Outlook as Stable, in its annual rating action on National Development Bank PLC for 2021.

This comes on the backdrop of a successfully concluded rights issue and a private placement by the bank, which netted Rs.9.5 billion in Tier I equity capital and consistent growth the bank has achieved over the past years in line with its business strategy, unabated by the macro challenges. The rating affirmation comes at a time where the operating environment is stressed with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors as observed by Fitch in its rating announcement and where at an industry level, asset quality is under pressure with industry-wide NPL ratios on an upward trend. At the same time, Fitch affirmed NDB's

outstanding subordinated debt at A-(lka). Amidst the multiple challenges impacting the performance of banking institutions, NDB's profitability is supported through improved cost efficiencies and increased focus on non-interest income, as per Fitch's rating announcement. The bank has been driving digitisation and tech-based automations in its customer solutions as well as in internal process automations, which have led to considerable cost savings and an industry best cost-to-income ratio in the low 30 percent range. The bank's innovative and rapid digital drive and the large uptake of same by customers together with increase in business operations have enabled enhancements in non-interest income.

With the aforementioned capital infusion, NDB's

capital ratios have enhanced (Tier I ratio – 10.8 percent) and has placed the bank on a strong platform for envisaged strategic growth. Notwithstanding this enhancement in capital, consistent business performance and other positives cited above, a rating upgrade or a revision to the outlook to positive has not been considered at this point in time owing to the macro-economic challenges, the impact and the intensity of the pandemic, rate of economic recovery and the overall health of the banking industry.

Guided by its five-year strategy, NDB is on a steady growth trajectory, as the only financial services group of its kind in Sri Lanka, whilst supporting customers and making valid contribution towards national economic revival amidst the prevailing challenges.

Kanrich Finance relocates Wennappuwa branch



Kanrich Finance Director/Chairman Dr. Ravi Ratnayake opens new branch

Kanrich Finance Limited, intending to deliver an advanced and highly efficient service to its trusted clientele, opened its newly-relocated Wennappuwa branch at No. 7, Chilaw Road, Lunuwila Junction, Wennappuwa.

Kanrich Finance Limited has a prestigious history of 50 years and trusted excellence, backed by loyal customers who have been the source of its strengths. The company ensures to offer customised unique services to its customers in a finer way. The inaugural ceremony was graced by Kanrich Finance Limited Director/Chairman Dr. Ravi Ratnayake, Director/Deputy Chief Executive Officer Eranda Godage, Deputy General Manager Pradeep Basnayake, Assistant General Manager

Gold Loan Sarath Thilakarathne, Head of Recoveries Ranasinghe Karumathilake, Chief Manager Ananda Dias, Senior Manager Manoj Wariyagoda and Branch Manager Sudarshan Peiris.

Kanrich Wennappuwa branch would extend its fullest support to cooperatively work alongside the residents of Wennappuwa in bringing their dreams closer to their lives. Taking the services to another level and further initiating a long-standing reputation as a reliable and trusted financial service provider, Kanrich Finance intends to serve its customers with an unmatched service to fulfil all the financial requirements of its customers. Kanrich Finance invites you to experience its unparalleled excellence in financial solutions.

Softlogic Life lauded among Top 100 Best Global MDRT companies in world

Sri Lanka's fastest-growing life insurance company Softlogic Life was recently honoured among the Top 100 Best Global MDRT companies in the world by the premier global association for finance professionals, Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT).

Softlogic Life produced 170 MDRT members, strictly taking into consideration only 2020 performance, which is a clear testament to the young company's unwavering commitment to produce high calibre advisors capable of providing holistic, customised life insurance solutions to their customers.

MDRT is internationally recognised as the highest standard of excellence in the life insurance and financial services businesses, where all members are required to demonstrate up-to-date professional knowledge, strict ethical conduct and outstanding client service.

"As one of the youngest and fully-homegrown life insurance brands in Sri Lanka, being celebrated among the top 100 MDRT companies in the world is a massive feat of excellence. MDRT is the highest global standard in ethical and informed client servicing, something we actively work to achieve in a global environment and industry where professionalism is paramount, particularly due to the absence of organic demand for life insurance. Therefore, I believe the professionals we groom remain our greatest strength and this recognition reiterates our commitment to continuously invest in them through the best training, advanced technological



Iftikar Ahamed

support and opportunities for career progression. This also underscores Softlogic Life's deep commitment towards innovating and our efforts to keep pushing the bar towards world-class insurance standards," remarked Softlogic Life Managing Director Iftikar Ahamed.

Serving over 1.5 million clients across Sri Lanka, Softlogic Life enjoys a superior position in the country's highly competitive insurance landscape. The key to this exceptional success is attributed to the high standards of professionalism the organisation actively drives towards, including the roll out of continuous extensive training programmes to ensure that all advisors follow one powerful, streamlined sales approach. This strategic business model fosters consistency, strong and professional customer relationships and encourages the use of carefully curated digital tools to enhance their service.

Quarterly evaluations are also conducted to identify and rectify challenges advisors face during their time in the field, while a team of experienced sales members are deployed to support and mentor new advisors to overcome roadblocks successfully. With the rapid global shift to the new normal, the company was among the first organisations to introduce a frictionless service experience across the board through strategic digital integration, requiring less paperwork and physical interaction. This also includes a proprietary digital sales platform, Future Advisor, which facilitates advisors to access end-to-end digital support to help close sales more efficiently and accurately.

Sampath Bank rises to Top 5 in Sri Lanka's Most Respected Entities Listing

Sampath Bank PLC has been ranked fifth in LMD's Most Respected Entities in Sri Lanka 2021 rankings, based on a survey commissioned and conceptualised by LMD and conducted by Nielsen.

The rankings are based on ratings received from a sample of 800 respondents – managers and above – from listed companies on a set of 12 different attributes.

Continuing its steady year-on-year rise in one of the country's most prestigious corporate leaderboards, the bank has moved up from the ninth place in 2018 to the fifth place in 2021, despite the challenging market conditions during this period.

Furthermore, Sampath Bank has emerged as the highest rated bank in nine out of 12 of the attributes surveyed for this year's rankings, viz., corporate culture, dynamism, honesty, HR and people management, innovation, management profile, national perspective, quality consciousness and vision. The bank has been ranked ahead of larger, older players in the banking industry in these areas.

These outstanding ratings given to Sampath Bank by representatives of some of the country's leading enterprises are a testament to the high esteem in which the corporate sector and the nation at large holds

the bank. This is shaped largely by the bank's steadfast commitment to delivering greater value to the nation through its focus on innovation and service excellence.

It is worth noting that Sampath Bank has consistently been rated particularly high on honesty and national perspective. This reflects the brand's trustworthiness and its significant contributions to nation building.

"We are honoured to see our peers in corporate Sri Lanka rate us amongst the Top 5 Most Respected Entities in the country. It is our honour to emerge as the highest rated bank in nine out of 12 attributes being surveyed.

Earlier this year, we were ranked as Sri Lanka's 'Most Loved Bank Brand.' We are grateful to our customers, business partners and the nation at large for their love, respect, and trust," said Sampath Bank PLC Managing Director Nanda Fernando.

"These rankings are a result of the vision and guidance of our board of directors and the commitment and relentless efforts of my team at Sampath Bank. Inspired by these awards and recognition, we look forward to delivering innovative solutions that add value to the nation, as we continue to present the future of all Sri Lankans."



Sampath Bank head office

FINANCIAL MARKETS August 05, 2021

ALL SHARE	8,211.31	1.00	0.01%
8224	Last week This week		
8157	M T W T F		
8090	M T W T F		
TOP 10	2,706.14	(75.16)	-2.70%
2795	M T W T F		
2745	M T W T F		
2695	M T W T F		
S & P SL 20	3,037.61	(72.36)	-2.33%
3115	M T W T F		
3075	M T W T F		
3035	M T W T F		
TURNOVER	5,682.22 Mn	-	0.00%
8650	M T W T F		
4225	M T W T F		
1800	M T W T F		
TOP 10 PRICE MOVEMENTS	T BILL RATES		
JKH 138.50	-1.07%	Overnight Repo	5.13%
DIAL 11.30	-0.88%	3 Months	5.17%
COM 83.60	-1.07%	6 Months	5.19%
HNB 128.00	0.00%	12 Months	5.24%
EXPO 73.50	-5.53%	EXCHANGE RATE (BUYING/SELLING)	
MELS 50.50	-3.44%	US \$	198.31 / 202.89
LION 558.50	-0.27%	Pound	273.77 / 281.95
CARG 243.00	0.21%	Euro	233.25 / 240.38
LOLC 449.50	-5.86%	Yen	1.8000 / 1.8516
HHL 78.00	0.00%	Source: www.ccyloassetmanagement.com	

Unit Trust Prices as on 04.08.2021

FUND NAME	UNIT SELLING PRICE	UNIT BUYING PRICE
ASTRUE ACTIVE INCOME FUND	104.0443	104.0443
ASTRUE ALPHA FUND	18.4047	18.4047
ASSETLINE INCOME FUND	17.2541	17.2541
ASSETLINE INCOME PLUS GROWTH FUND	17.6130	17.1426
SENFEN DIVIDEND FUND	10.4503	10.2521
SENFEN DYNAMIC INCOME FUND	10.3415	10.3415
SENFEN GROWTH FUND	9.4800	9.1400
SENFEN MONEY MARKET FUND	15.5357	15.5357
SENFEN SHARIAH BALANCED FUND	12.0800	11.7300
SENFEN SHARIAH INCOME FUND	12.6216	12.6216
CAL CORPORATE DEBT & GILT TRADING FUND	21.6746	21.6746
CAL CORPORATE TREASURY FUND	18.6278	18.6278
CAL GILT FUND	8.6646	8.6646
CAL GILT MONEY MARKET FUND	4.3708	4.3708
CAL GILT TRADING FUND	50.5085	50.5085
CAL HIGH YIELD FUND	25.3165	25.3165
CAL INCOME FUND	21.4092	21.4092
CAL INVESTMENT GRADE FUND	20.5759	20.5759
CAL MEDIUM RISK DEBT FUND	15.7774	15.7774
CAL QUANT EQUITY FUND	22.0639	22.4469
CEYBANK CENTURY GROWTH	79.5000	76.5900
CEYBANK GILT EDGE FUND (A SERIES)	14.7893	14.7893
CEYBANK GILT EDGE FUND (B SERIES)	28.4420	28.4420
CEYBANK HIGH YIELD FUND	14.3014	14.3014
CEYBANK SURAKUM FUND	12.5521	12.5521
CEYBANK UNIT TRUST	27.2700	25.9000
CEYLON DOLLAR BOND FUND (IN \$)	0.8135	0.8094
CEYLON FINANCIAL SECTOR FUND	6.1300	25.4731
CEYLON INCOME FUND	22.4225	22.4225
CEYLON INDEX FUND	61.1200	58.6600
CEYLON IPO FUND	5.7400	5.6200
CEYLON MONEY MARKET FUND	17.9944	17.9944
CEYLON TOURISM FUND	3.9300	3.7600
CEYLON TREASURY INCOME FUND	7.4100	7.1100
COMTRUST ADL MUDARABAH FUND	11.8167	11.8167
COMTRUST EQUITY FUND	19.2000	18.3200
COMTRUST GILT EDGED FUND	10.6481	10.6481
COMTRUST MONEY MARKET FUND	12.2218	12.2218
FIRST CAPITAL EQUITY FUND (FCFP)	1.381.2000	1.312.1400
FIRST CAPITAL FIXED INCOME FUND	1.929.8300	1.929.7800
FIRST CAPITAL GILT EDGED FUND	1.522.6100	1.522.6100
FIRST CAPITAL MONEY MARKET FUND	1.980.0700	1.980.0700
FIRST CAPITAL WEALTH FUND	1.167.7500	1.167.7200
GUARDIAN ACQUITY EQUITY FUND	18.9722	18.5877
GUARDIAN ACQUITY MONEY MARKET FUND	20.7828	20.7828
IB VANTAGE MONEY MARKET FUND	28.6090	28.6090
IB VANTAGE SHORT TERM GILT FUND	15.2284	15.2284
IB VANTAGE VALUE EQUITY FUND	24.8900	23.4300
NAMAL BANK FUND	9.1360	8.7934
NAMAL GROWTH FUND	148.6061	138.7672
NAMAL HIGH YIELD FUND	25.4731	25.4731
NAMAL INCOME FUND	14.9289	14.9289
NATIONAL EQUITY FUND	36.0838	33.7659
NDB WEALTH GILT EDGED FUND	19.0849	19.0849
NDB WEALTH GROWTH & INCOME FUND	47.4900	46.2300
NDB WEALTH GROWTH FUND	10.9900	10.5700
NDB WEALTH INCOME FUND	16.6367	16.6367
NDB WEALTH INCOME PLUS FUND	17.6003	17.6003
NDB WEALTH ISLAMIC MONEY PLUS FUND	16.7234	16.7234
NDB WEALTH MONEY FUND	21.1588	21.1588
NDB WEALTH MONEY PLUS FUND	24.2331	24.2331
PREMIER GROWTH FUND	7.1800	6.8200
PREMIER MONEY MARKET FUND	19.3385	19.3385
SOFTLOGIC EQUITY FUND	126.9905	121.0272
SOFTLOGIC MONEY MARKET FUND	108.2416	108.2416

Exchange Rates 05.08.2021

(1) The average rates of the following currencies quoted by commercial banks in Colombo for Telegraphic Transfers (TT) at 9.30 a.m. are as follows.

CURRENCY	BUYING RATE	SELLING RATE
Australian Dollar	145.9881	150.4806
Canadian Dollar	157.6538	162.4930
Chinese Yuan (Renminbi)	29.8665	31.5841
Euro	233.2523	240.3800
Japanese Yen	1.8000	1.8516
Singapore Dollar	146.0061	150.4398
Sterling Pound	273.7779	281.9524
Swiss Franc	216.8187	224.2807
US Dollar	198.3183	202.8977

(2) The approximate exchange rates of GULF Currencies based on previous day's market weighted average rate for the US\$ are as follows.

COUNTRY	CURRENCY	INDICATIVE RATE
Bahrain	Bahrain Dinar	530.2387
Kuwait	Kuwait Dinar	665.8894
Oman	Oman Rial	519.2343
Qatar	Qatar Riyal	54.9025
Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabian Riyal	53.2910
UAE	UAE Dirham	54.4219

(3) The Average Weighted Prime Lending Rate (AWPR) and the Lowest Prime Rate (LPR) during the week ended 30-July-2021, by all commercial banks was 5.76 percent and 4.96 percent respectively.

(4) The Average Weighted Deposit Rate (AWDR) of commercial banks for the month of July-2021 was 4.77 percent.

Market Indicators 05.08.2021

PRICE INDICES	TODAY	PREVIOUS DAY
CSE ALL SHARE INDEX	8,011.94	8,210.31
S&P SL 20 INDEX	3,037.61	3,109.97
TRI ON ALL SHARES	5,154.31	5,277.08
TRI ON S&P SL SHARES	5,154.31	5,277.08

EQUITIES	VALUE OF TURNOVER(Rs.)	DOMESTIC PURCHASE	DOMESTIC SALES	FOREIGN PURCHASE	FOREIGN SALES	VOLUME OF TURNOVER(NO.)	DOMESTIC	FOREIGN	TRADES (NO.)	DOMESTIC	FOREIGN	LISTED COMPANIES (NO.)	TRADED COMPANIES (NO.)	MARKET PRICE EARNINGS RATIO(PER)	MARKET PRICE TO BOOK VALUE (PBV)	MARKET DIVIDEND YIELD (DY)	MARKET CAPITALIZATION (Rs.)														
5,066,969,917	5,682,217,109	5,000,224,248	5,604,325,256	5,018,639,729	5,337,660,256	66,745,669	77,891,853	48,330,187	344,556,854	242,676,712	245,005,814	241,720,386	232,843,166	956,326	3,917,339	38,392	34,710	38,016	34,248	376	462	285	285	273	264	10.2854	10.5514	1.1293	1.157	3,350,512,328,715	3,638,416,928,654

Interbank - Interest Rates - Mid Rates 05.08.2021

	1 MONTH	3 MONTH	6 MONTH	12 MONTH
US DOLLARS	0.09038	0.12138	0.15513	0.23213
STERLING	0.05363	0.0715	0.09	0.18363
EUR	-0.58357	-0.55886	-0.52677	-0.49943
SWISS FRANCS	-0.7998	-0.7606	-0.7164	-0.5986

CSE Price List

SECURITY	VOLUME	V.W.A	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	V.W.A	CHANGE
A.SPEN.HOT.HOLD	131,972	31.6	31.3	32	29	30.10	(1.50)
ABANS	1,699	172	172.25	172.25	169	169.25	(2.75)
ACCESS.ENG.SL	758,692	23.2	23	23.5	22.5	22.60	(0.60)
ACL	648,781	41.7	41.8	41.9	39.9	40.10	(1.60)
ACL.PLASTICS	1,914	269.5	264.25	264.5	258	259.75	(9.75)
ACME	45,010	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.30	(0.10)
AGALAWATTE	9,855	26.2	26.2	26.2	24.7	25.30	(0.90)
AHOT.PROPERTIES	29,701	40	39.9	39.9	38	38.10	(1.90)
AITKEN.SPENCE	42,957	68	68.1	68.1	65.6	66.10	(1.90)
ALLIANCE	6,307	70.3	71	71	70	70.90	0.60
AMANA.BANK	354,785	3.2	3.2	3.2	3	3.00	(0.20)
AMAYA.LEISURE	98,516	20	20.5	20.5	19.7	20.00	-
ASIA.ASSET	1,329	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.60	(0.10)
ASIRI	105,537	29	29.5	29.5	29	29.40	0.40
ASIRI.SURG	2,578	14.7	14.6	14.9	14.6	14.70	-
AUTODROME	8	81.2	77.7	78	77.7	81.20	-
BAIRAHA.FARMS	73,075	158.75	159	161.75	151	153.25	(5.50)
BALANGODA	261,727	16.1	16	16	15	15.20	(0.90)
BUKIT.DARAH	4,597	301	301	303.75	296.25	296.25	(4.75)
C.M.HOLDINGS	3,672	102.25	100	100.5	96.1	97.20	(5.05)
C.T.HOLDINGS	21,147	185	185.25	188	185	185.25	0.25
CARGILLS	110,153	242.5	242.5	243	242.5	243.00	0.50
CARGO.BOAT	8,931	71.9	73.5	73.5	68.1	68.70	(3.20)
CARSONS	2,576	290	296	296	280	280.25	(9.75)
CDB	9,909	146.25	141.75	141.75	138.25	141.00	(5.25)
CDB [CDB.X0000]	26,145	90.4	90.3	91	88.9	89.10	(1.30)
CENTRAL.FINANCE	32,221	89	88.8	89	87	87.30	(1.70)
CENTRAL.IND.	48,873	112.5	112.5	112.5	102	109.75	(2.75)
CEYLINCO.INS	143	2,017.00	2,017.00	2,017.00	2,017.00	2,017.00	-
CEYLINCO.INS. [CINS.X0000]	283	1,008.25	1,019.00	1,019.00	996	1,000.25	(8.00)
CEYLON.GUARDIAN	3,019	112	114.25	114.25	110.75	110.75	(1.25)
CEYLON.INV	59,009	60.5	60.5	62.5	58.1	58.40	(2.10)
CEYLON.TOBACCO	2,453	959.75	960	960	953	954.75	(5.00)
CHEMANEX	9,683	80.1	81.5	83.1	79.1	79.10	(1.00)
CHEVRON	376,530	117	115	115	109.75	111.75	(5.25)
CIC	380,902	55.2	54.5	54.5	50.6	51.00	(4.20)
CIC [CIC.X0000]	263,656	45.6	44.9	44.9	36	42.20	(3.40)
COLD.STORES	9,162	624.5	628.25	629.25	625	625.50	1.00
COLOMBO.CITY	354	1,153.75	1,125.00	1,125.00	1,100.00	1,100.25	(53.50)
COLOMBO.LAND	79,833	29	29	29	28.4	28.50	(0.50)
COMMERCIAL.BANK	219,163	84.5	84.5	84.5	83.3	83.60	(0.90)
COMMERCIAL.BANK [COMB.X0000]	76.8	76.8	76.8	74.5	74.70	(2.10)	
CONVENIENCE.FOOD	110	1,178.00	1,179.75	1,179.75	1,125.00	1,138.00	(40.00)
DANKOTUWA.PORCEL	387,945	14.1	14.1	14.2	13.5	13.60	(0.50)
DFCC.BANK.PLC.	43,278	58.9	58.9	58.9	58	58.30	(0.60)
DIALOG	789,921	11.4	11.5	11.5	11.3	11.30	(0.10)
DIMO	1,916	500.25	500.25	514.75	500	500.75	0.50
DIPPED.PRODUCTS	6,790,035	57.3	56.5	57.3	54	54.30	(3.00)
DOCKYARD	12,330	72	70.2	70.6	69	70.00	(2.00)
DOLPHIN.HOTELS	2,010	28.2	28	28	28	28.00	(0.20)
DURDANS	3,483	104.75	107	111	105	107.00	2.25
DURDANS [CHL.X0000]	204	103	94.1	101.25	94.1	95.00	(8.00)
E.B.CREASY	65,743	25	24.9	25	24.5	24.70	(0.30)
EAST.WEST	434,480	10	10.1	10.3	9.9	9.90	(0.10)
EASTERN.MERCHANT	65,955	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.1	6.20	(0.20)
EXPOLANKA	17,320,807	77.8	76.9	76.9	72.9	73.50	(4.30)
FORT.LAND	115,759	14.8	14.7	14.9	14	14.10	(0.70)
GESTETNER	13	90.2	88	88	86	90.20	-
GRAIN.ELEVATORS	127,564	140	141	141	137	137.50	(2.50)
HAYCARB	408,294	94.5	94.2	94.4	93	93.20	(1.30)
HAYLEYS	1,888,961	82.1	81.5	81.5	78.1	79.00	(3.10)
HAYLEYS.FABRIC	1,596,900	22.7	22.7	22.7	22	22.20	(0.50)
HAYLEYS.FIBRE	32,763	74.7	74.2	74.2	70.1	71.40	(3.30)
HDFC	2,500	36	35	35	34.1	34.20	(1.80)
HEMAS.HOLDINGS	230,395	78	77.3	79	77	78.00	-
HNB	411,152	128	127.25	128.75	126	128.00	-
HNB ASSURANCE	1,749,616	47	47	47.9	46.5	47.10	0.10
HNB [HNB.X0000]	611,344	110	110	110.5	107.5	110.00	-
HORANA	22,425	22.4	22.3	22.6	21.6	22.50	0.10
HOTEL.SIGIRIYA	760	77	70.6	70.6	68.5	69.00	(8.00)
HOTELS.CORP.	37,855	14.2	14.2	14.5	13.6	14.00	(0.20)
HUNTERS	152						

DailyMirror

Life

FRIDAY
AUGUST 6, 2021 P-15

REESE WITHERSPOON'S MEDIA FIRM TO BE SOLD TO BLACKSTONE-BACKED COMPANY

Academy award-winning actress Reese Witherspoon's media company, Hello Sunshine, is selling itself to a newly formed media firm backed by Blackstone Group Inc for an undisclosed sum. The sale will value the company at about \$900 million, people familiar with the matter told Reuters. **REUTERS**



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OF BRIDGE & GIFTS

The pandemic has brought out the true colours of many amongst us. With lockdowns, travel restrictions, and especially with the virus mutating and being able to spread like wildfire, it has put a stop to many social and human interactions.

Bridge is known as successively being the principal intellectual card game of the English-speaking countries. The socialites of Colombo as well as some serious-minded people who love this game play it all the time. With the onset of the pandemic playing Bridge online has become very popular amongst our players. It is understood that there is no gambling for major stakes amongst this Circle but the competitive angle of some of the players to achieve top position is wellknown amongst the Circle. In the Circle were a couple of women making great bids and achieving impossible wins. It did not take much time for the cyber savvy, wiser and more honest players to realise that these women were cheating big time by either phoning or WhatsApping their partner to discuss each other's hands to play the game and win. Many in



the Circle are astounded as they thought they were playing Bridge with the self-identified crème de la crème in Colombo. Now that they have been found out, the gossip chain of Colombo is aware of these shameless culprits.

Another famous thing in Colombo is the nonsense of gift giving for no good reason. The funniest story was related to me by Trixie. Her sister's daughter owns a fabulous apartment in the heart of London. The apartment has a separate section for her close friends to stay in when visiting. Many of our jet setters have the tendency of scrounging off people by creeping into their friend's abodes. Enjoying such a free stay is quite fine if one does not overstay

Many a time she has spotted that the gifted designer clothes are from outlet malls and the worst part was when some of them had already been worn, washed and parcelled. This type of gift she found to be beyond shocking since the general visitor to her sister's place is a person of means.

their welcome, which becomes a nuisance unless the visitor is very close to the host. Not to be outdone and to show gratitude to the friend they will come bearing gifts to appease the host. This host's sister who is a sharpshooter and knows all about clothing, always has a look at the gifts her sister receives. Many a time she has spotted that the gifted designer clothes are from outlet malls and the worst part was when some of them had already been worn, washed and parcelled. This type of gift she found to be beyond shocking since the general visitor to her sister's place is a person of means. Stopping to gifting such items is not a requirement. It is better to visit empty handed than carry recycled clothing or other odd gifts that are of no use to any living soul.



Disney sails into new LGBT waters with 'Jungle Cruise' film

"Jungle Cruise," Disney's new nostalgia-soaked adventure film based on a 1950s theme park ride, has an unexpectedly modern twist, one of its main characters comes out as gay.

A scene in which Jack Whitehall's character discusses his sexuality with Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson's Amazon boat captain, though far from ground-breaking by modern cinema terms, is a departure for the traditionally conservative studio.

Young British fop MacGregor does not use the specific word "gay," but explains how he broke off three engagements with women because his "interests happily lay elsewhere," prompting skipper Frank to raise a toast to "elsewhere." "I felt that the scene was really exactly what it

was, which was two men talking about what they loved, and who they loved," Johnson the world's top-paid movie star told a press conference this week.

But the exchange is likely to make waves upon the film's release Friday, with each of Disney's tiny steps toward LGBT representation in recent years having been slammed at home and abroad — and not just by conservatives.

US evangelical group One Million Moms (1MM) organised a boycott of "Toy Story 4" in 2019 for briefly depicting two moms dropping their child at school, accusing Disney of "pushing an agenda and exposing children to controversial topics." And a fleeting lesbian kiss in "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" was cut from versions of the film playing in Singapore and Dubai, where same-sex marriage is illegal.

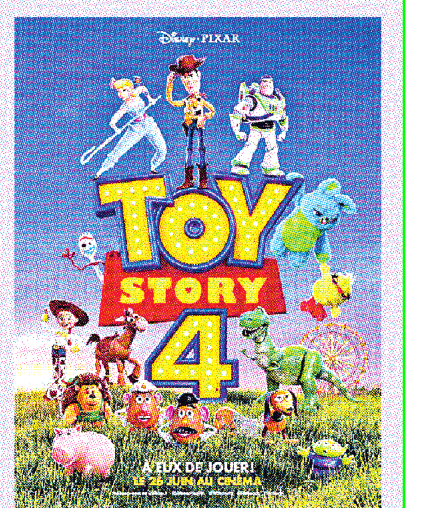
But the historic "Star Wars" lip-lock was also condemned by LGBT rights advocates as tokenistic as was a brief scene in Marvel's record-grossing "Avengers: Endgame" in which an openly gay man participates in a support group.

The "Jungle Cruise" representation goes further — MacGregor explains he joined his scientist sister (Emily Blunt) on her expedition to Brazil because she "stood by" him while others in World War I-era London spurned him because of who he "loved." "It was a scene that we really wanted to get right," said Whitehall, a British comedian-turned-actor, who is straight.

Expanding on the theme at Sunday's world premiere in California, Whitehall told Variety he thought the scene was "significant" and "one that we certainly thought about and talked about a lot." "I hope that it's a scene that audiences enjoy and I certainly felt at the time that I was proud of the work that we'd done," he said, adding that he hoped it would be a positive for LGBT children watching.

'Innuendo'

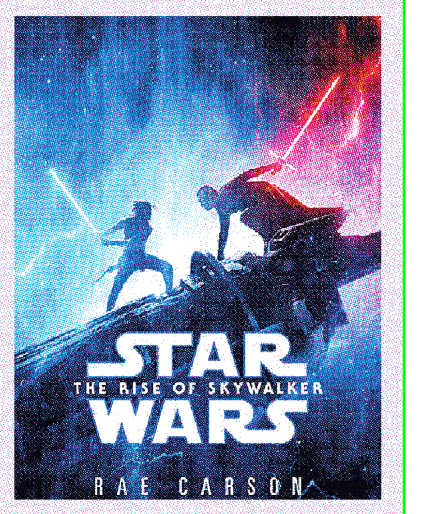
But the film's failure to use the word "gay" has already stoked criticism on social media. "Disney will really do anything to avoid using



the word 'gay' in its mainstream content won't it," wrote Declan Cashion, a curator for Twitter.

GLAAD's "Studio Responsibility Index" counted only 20 LGBTQ characters in films released by major studios last year, and 30 percent of those were only on screen for under one minute.

Blacklow said GLAAD was looking forward to more LGBTQ storylines in upcoming Disney films, and especially in the Marvel superhero movies "Eternals," "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness" and "Thor: Love and Thunder" — all due for release in the next 10 months. **AFP**



BY PANCHALI ILLANKOON

There's something to be said about exploring the waterbodies of Sri Lanka. You could see tens and hundreds of them and each of them will offer something new and unexpected; something so exciting and surprising about each one that you are willing to explore the rest. The Koggala Lake is already famous. It's home to the island of Madol Doova which inspired Martin Wickramasinghe's eponymous book that has brought many curious locals and tourists to the lake and then to the island to recount the adventures of one Upali and Jinna. Over the years, a whole ecosystem has been built around the lake and today, it's a must-stop destination and experience on any southern coastal trip.

We were having lunch at the South Lake Resort at its waterfront restaurant gazing longingly at the still waters of the Koggala lake when we were told that the resort has its own boat and guide and frequently arranges lake safaris for guests and whether we'd like to go on one? The answer was yes; we are excited at the prospect of glimpsing Madol Doova and our curiosity had peaked over the tourism the local community has managed to built for itself over the years.

A short 30-minute drive from Galle, the Koggala Lake is a little oasis embellished with ten small islands; some inhabited but most not. The 30km lake takes almost 2 hours to explore with all its pit stops but it's 2 hours well spent.

THE LAKE

A short 30-minute drive from Galle, the Koggala Lake is a little oasis embellished with ten small islands; some inhabited but most not. The 30 km lake takes almost 2 hours to explore with all its pit stops but it's 2 hours well spent. The depth of the lake varies from as low as 3 feet to a maximum of 12 feet at the very middle of the lake. Our guide told us that the tsunami in 2004 had affected the depth of the water making some areas shallow – and in those areas you will see fishermen standing knee deep in the water casting their nets – and some areas are very deep. It's important to have a boatman who knows the water well to avoid the frequently scattered rocks that may potentially scrape the barrel of the boat.

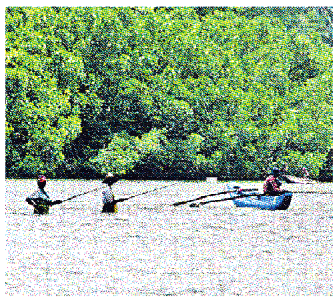
The lake has a very rich biodiversity and eco system with verdant mangrove swamps of kadol trees dotted occasionally with small flowers. It's also alive in birdlife; cormorants and herons perched on a rock or a lone Bonelli's eagle flying overhead as you cruise down the waters. The lake is rumoured to be home to a few crocodiles, but our guide told us they haven't seen them in years as the busy activities on the lake has made them wary of visiting populated areas.

One of the main functions of the Koggala Lake is its role in the fishing community, as the lake is abundant with seafood. Being a traditional fishing ground for centuries, the lake has many popular varieties of fish like barramundi, bull-eyed mackerel and barracuda. Perhaps one of the most unique experiences you can witness on the Koggala lake is prawn fishing that happens at night – a sight that can be witnessed from the South Lake Resort whose waterfront is at the epicentre of all this action. Fishermen come in the night and stay perched on little elevated seats on the water made from sticks with torches and lights cast into the water waiting to cast their nets at the right time.



The Koggala Lake

Exploring the islands hidden within an island



THE COMMUNITY

The locals tell us that the Koggala Lake tourism started back in 1991. Before, the community around the lake focused on sourcing income through fishing and coir(kohu) and while the fishing community still thrives off the lake, the business of coir has faded into nonexistence. In its place, tourism is now their main source of income, evidenced by the plethora of boats docked on the perimeters of the lake. Heavily reliant on tourism, the pandemic has affected the community quite badly. Our guide tells us that there are about 200 people who make their living on just boat safaris and tours of Madol Doova and during season, the lake is usually bustling with boats and Madol Doova will see around a good 1000 people on one weekend alone. On our visit, we were the only boat on the lake.

THE ISLANDS WITHIN AN ISLAND

The Koggala Lake has ten islands; some are inhabited and some aren't. Hath Doova, an uninhabited island is used for cinnamon plantation. When the crops are ready, people would come to the island and carry crops off. Observed from afar, Thambika Doova appears to be a few trees floating on water. What was once an island has eroded over time and all that remains are a few trees and a weathering rock.

THE INHIBITED ISLANDS; AROUND 5 OR SO ARE ALL PIT STOPS ON THE LAKE SAFARI.

MADOL DOOVA
The novelty of seeing a place you've only read and imagined about is the allure to Madol Doova. In all truth, the island itself is a jungle, matted with mangroves and a simple dirt path laid out to explore. It is Martin Wickremesinghe's story that makes the island come alive as you walk through thick shrubs and tangled roots imagining the adventures of Upali and Jinna.



TEMPLE ISLAND
The Talatuduwa Buddhist Temple is reputed to be over a century old and is a peaceful, quiet temple with frescoes depicting Buddha's life. Due to the pandemic, we avoided going into the temple but our guide tells us it is usually busy on poya days and weekends.



WEDUWA BUDDHIST MONASTERY ISLAND
This is an island that many come to meditate. Though it is connected to the mainland for worshippers to have access to the temple, the perimeters of the island facing the lake has spaced out chalets for priests to use as meditation centres. Almost as a testament to the reverence of this island, on a rock adjacent to the island, a small sapling of a Bo tree is growing roots on the rock.

BIRD ISLAND
While this island is destination for avid bird watchers, we opted to observe it from afar. The Koggala Lake has a diverse range of birds within its area and the Bird Island would be flocked with birds during the morning and evening hours.



CINNAMON ISLAND
This island experience is a must on the safari. The cinnamon island is an 8-acre island that is home to 5 families who have been living in the island for decades – some even in their 5th generation. Sri Lanka produces 90% of the highest-quality cinnamon in the world and the families at the Cinnamon Island showcases the art of creating them. At the island, each batch of visitors gets to see how fresh cinnamon bark is cut right from their backyard and how it is meticulously peeled with practised hands and then laid out to dry for a week. They also offer packaged cinnamon sticks, cinnamon powder and oils for purchase (at a price a little above market – but its right from the source and as organic as they can be). The visit is wrapped up with a complimentary cinnamon tea, just hot water and cinnamon powder with no tea or sugar because 'diabetes noh, miss?'



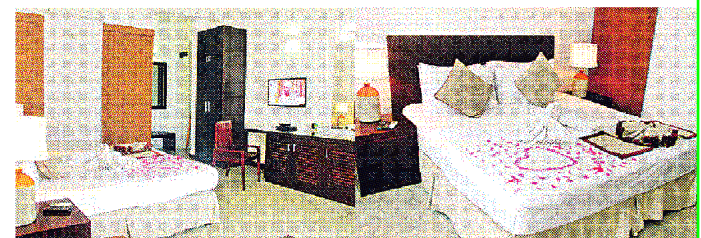
THE EXPERIENCE

It's easy to be charmed by the offerings of the Koggala Lake. A lucky visit on our end, we got to enjoy the peace and serenity of the lake, mull in the picturesque sight of lush greenery and sigh in contentment as we paused at the very heart of the lake, surrounded only by the sound of surface waves lapping at our boat. At Rs. 4000 for a group of 6, South Lake Resort offered us a full guided tour of the Koggala Lake and insight into all its history and interesting tidbits.



SOUTH LAKE RESORT

South Lake Resorts by VC Villas & Resorts is a part of the Vision Care Group of Companies. The 24 roomed resort combines stylish comfort with affordability. The hotel, directly facing the Koggala Lake, offers 180 degree views of its calming waters. The resort is a popular destination for weddings and functions.



ACCOMODATION

The property is divided into two spaces. There are 4 deluxe rooms offering pool and lake views and 20 rooms with pool and garden views. Built as chalets with a two-storied concept, the accommodation with garden views offers a unique setting with a short wooden pier set on a man-made lake giving it a distinctive look and feel of water bungalows. All rooms are fully equipped with luxury amenities including free wifi, cable, DVD player, tea/coffee maker, toiletries and more.



DINING

The waterfront restaurant has a fully licensed bar and offers buffet, a la carte or set menu depending on guest capacity. The menu ranges from Sri Lankan favourites to Western and Asian dishes.

FACILITIES

The resort has a private pool along with a baby pool as well as a deck facing the Koggala Lake. There is also a game lounge equipped with darts, board games, a reading nook and a foosball table. The restaurant is often also used as a reception hall for outdoor weddings and functions and South Lake Resort also has a second reception hall that can also host weddings as well as business meetings and workshops. The resort also has a private beach across the road that is reserved and maintained only for their guests.

EXCURSIONS

South Lake Resort organises excursions to explore the multitude of activities the southern coast has to offer. Tour the Koggala Lake, go whale watching in Mirissa or explore the Dutch fort of Galle; the staff at South Lake Resort is happy to organise it for you.

PIX BY Pradeep Dilrukshana

GAMES & CARTOONS

4583

Sudoku

								1		
								9	6	4
1	8							5		
								6	8	3
			4						5	
		9						3		8
2	6		4							
	8							3		
	5	1						8	7	2

SOLUTION NO. 4583

9	4	1	8	6	5	3	7	2		
6	5	2	7	9	3	1	4	8		
7	8	3	1	2	4	5	9	6		
1	6	7	2	5	9	8	3	4		
2	9	5	3	4	8	7	6	1		
8	3	4	6	1	7	2	5	9		
3	1	8	9	7	6	4	2	5		
4	7	6	5	8	2	9	1	3		
5	2	9	4	3	1	6	8	7		

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3x3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any. The solution will be published on next game page.

Solution for No. 1361

1	P		2	M		3	T		4	E		5	C		6	F
7	G	A	R	I	S	H		8	T	H	R	E	A	T		
	P		S		E		H		U		C					
9	R	A	S	H		10	R	O	O	F	T	R	E	E		
			A			M		S		C		C				
11	D	12	I	S	P	L	A	Y		13	P	H	I	A	L	
	M					L		14	L					R		
15	O	B	E	S	E		17	C	A	T	18	H	O	D	E	
	E		T			19	H		Y		A					
20	S	C	R	I	B	B	L	E		21	P	U	F	F		
	I		F		O		T		P		L					
23	S	L	A	L	O	M		24	T	R	E	M	O	R		
	E		E		B		E		N		G					

DailyMirror CROSSWORD

CLUES FOR CROSSWORD NO. 1362

	1		2		3		4		5		6					
7									8							
9							10									
11	12									13						
										14						
15			16				17				18					
							19									
20											21			22		
23										24						

Across

- Involving financial matters (6)
- Chemical compound (6)
- Abominable snowman (4)
- Output of a computer in printed form (8)
- Make an explosive sound (7)
- The text of a popular song (5)
- Exclamation expressive of regret (5)
- Tar (7)
- Completed (8)
- Preserve (4)
- Assumed (6)
- Blink (6)

Down

- Bicycle (4)
- Handwriting (6)
- Skidded (7)
- Civil disobedience (3-2)
- Quietly (6)
- To reduce a liquid to a fine spray or vapour; (8)
- Relieve (8)
- Take a seat (3-4)
- Inner circle (6)
- Of or relating to bears (6)
- Sturdy twilled cloth of a yellowish brown colour used especially for military uniforms (5)
- Valley (4)

Due to the prevailing situation in the country there will be no crossword competition. The publication of the crossword is purely for your enjoyment.