

THE DAY THE DAM BROKE

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# the morning



STATE OF PUBLIC EMERGENCY AND ISLANDWIDE CURFEW

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AUSTRALIA WINS WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

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EMERGENCY, CURFEW DEEPEN TOURISM, EXPORT, SME WOUNDS

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# New Cabinet to be formed?

## SJB to focus on abolishing 20A initially

● In discussions with dissenting Govt. parties | ● No no-confidence motion right now



Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa

● Cabinet discusses possibility of resigning en masse

● Security apparatus struggling to quell protests

● SLFP gives ultimatum to Govt.

BY BUDDHIKA SAMARAWEEERA

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), following its Central Committee meeting yesterday (3), informed the President in a letter that the 14 SLFP Parliamentarians (MPs) would sit as independent MPs in Parliament if the Government does not form an Interim Government with the participation of all parties represented in Parliament within the next week.

When inquired about this, SLFP Senior Vice President Prof. Rohana Luxman Piyadasa stated that the President should take action to find a solution to the crisis situation that has arisen with the formation of an Interim Government.

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SJB and Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa and other SJB MPs having an argument with police officers yesterday (3)

PHOTO LALITH PERERA

BY SHAHAEN VISHAK AND PAMODI WARAVITA

The Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) said yesterday (3) that they are in discussions with a number of political parties, organisations, and individuals on what next steps to take, with priority being given to revoke the 20th Amendment from the Constitution.

“We are going step by step. We are telling those who are saying that they are opposed to the Government,

but within the Government, let's get together and vote against the 20th Amendment. That is step one. Then we can see all these people who professed to be against the Government, whether they are actually against the Government,” SJB MP Eran Wickremaratne told *The Morning* yesterday, speaking during the protest organised by the main parliamentary Opposition...

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## NPP to legally challenge emergency and curfew gazettes

The lawyers of National People's Power (NPP) said yesterday (3) that they would legally challenge both the gazettes that declared a state of emergency in the country and the one that imposed a curfew, and claimed that both are unconstitutional. “The President's reasons and goal for a state of emergency do

not fulfil the legal provisions of the Constitution and the Public Security Ordinance. Similarly, the details in the gazette declaring a curfew are not covered in any way by the law,” said NPP member Attorney-at-Law (AAL) Sunil Watagala at a media briefing held yesterday.

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## PUCSL pledges to reduce power cuts considerably

● Chairman says CEB will be provided sufficient fuel

The Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka (PUCSL) has informed the Secretaries of the Energy and Power Ministries that sufficient fuel will be provided to the Ceylon

Electricity Board (CEB) for power generation purposes and, therefore, the scheduled power cuts will be reduced considerably in the days to come, PUCSL Chairman Janaka Ratnayake announced

yesterday (3). Later in the day, PUCSL declined to approve the request made by the CEB for power cuts of over seven hours to be imposed today (4).

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PUCSL Chairman Janaka Ratnayake

## No clarity on whether transformer death was suicide or accident

The Mirihana Police Station is unsure if yesterday's (3) death of a man atop a transformer close to the President's residence was a suicide or an accidental electrocution, *The Morning* learns.

Speaking to *The Morning* yesterday, an officer attached to the station said that the person stood on top of a transformer before being electrocuted to death.

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The man, pictured atop the transformer yesterday (3)

## Prez's website hacked by Anonymous India?

BY DINITHA RATHNAYAKE

The official website of the President of Sri Lanka was inaccessible for some time yesterday (3) due to heavy traffic, stated President's Media Division Director General and senior journalist Sudewa Hettiarachchi.

Speaking to *The Morning*, he said the website was down due to heavy traffic, and that the incident had been orchestrated by an individual or group.

“The situation is under control and we have rectified the site now. However, the Air Force and Sri Lanka Computer Emergency Readiness Team (SLCERT) carried out an investigation into the matter,” he stated.

Although Hettiarachchi said that they were yet to confirm the party or parties involved, the hacker group Anonymous India...

Contd. on page 2

## HRCSL summons IGP, TRCSL Chair, and Defence Secretary

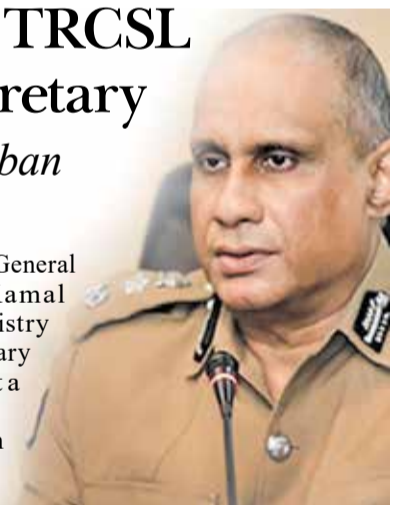
● To inquire about social media ban and alleged protest assaults

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) has summoned Inspector General of Police (IGP) C.D. Wickramaratne, Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) Chairman Jayantha De Silva, Ministry of Defence and State Ministry

of Defence Secretary General (Retd.) G.D.H. Kamal Gunaratne, and Ministry of Mass Media Secretary Anusha Palpita tomorrow (5).

They have been summoned to inquire into the...

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IGP Chandana D. Wickramaratne

## State Minister Dayasiri likely to resign today

State Minister of Batik, Handloom, and Local Apparel Products and Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) General Secretary Dayasiri Jayasekara is due to resign from his post of State Minister, and this will most likely happen today (4).

This was confirmed to *The Morning* by a top-level official of the SLFP last evening.

Claiming that the SLFP, during its Central Committee meeting yesterday, has already decided to sit independently in Parliament if President Gotabaya Rajapaksa does not take action to form an Interim Government and resolve the crisis situation in the country, he said that Jayasekara has, however, decided to step down as the latter is the party's General Secretary.

## Social activist Bandara before Modara Magistrate tomorrow

● HRCSL to investigate controversial arrest

Anuruddha Bandara, a social activist arrested last Saturday (2) is to appear before the Modara Magistrate's Court tomorrow (5).

His lawyers said he was produced before the Modara Magistrate's Court around 1.30 a.m. yesterday (3), and released on bail after considering the bail applications of 60 lawyers who appeared for him.

Providing the B report to the Magistrate, the Assistant

Superintendent of Police (ASP) stated that Anuruddha Bandara had created the hashtag #GoHomeGota2022 on his Facebook social network.

Bandara had been arrested and was being detained at the Modara Police Criminal Investigations Unit. He was arrested in the Gampola area. It is understood that Bandara had been arrested under Article 120 of the Penal Code.

The Human Rights

Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) last Saturday visited Bandara at the Crime Division of the Modara Police Station, and has begun an investigation into the controversial arrest.

It is understood that Bandara's arrest is linked to a Facebook page the suspect is connected to, which carried criticism of the Government and the President.

A number of media organisations raised concerns

when social media reports indicated that Bandara had been abducted by individuals in civilian clothing claiming to be from the Modara Police, but was later believed to be held by the Terrorism Investigation Division (TID), before Modara Police confirmed that they had arrested him.

The Sri Lanka Young Journalists' Association wrote to the HRCSL requesting it to investigate the arrest.

## Social media restrictions lifted after nearly 14 hours

● Namal points out futility of ban; BASL, HRCSL decry rights violation | ● Lankans' use of VPNs results in protest hashtags going viral abroad

The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) lifted the restrictions imposed on social media platforms in the country yesterday (3) at 3.30 p.m., which, it stated, was on the advice of the Defence Ministry.

The Government, through the TRCSL, had blocked access to

all social media sites, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube, through an order late last Saturday (2). It said the decision was taken to stem “misinformation”. At the time, the TRCSL Director General had said that service providers had been advised to temporarily restrict access to social media websites, on the request of the Ministry

of Defence. The move was criticised by the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) as well as the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) as a violation of the people's fundamental rights. Both parties called on the Government to reinstate public access to these platforms.

Contd. on page 2



**COVID-19 CASES**

ACTIVE CASES: 8,129

DEATHS: 16,480

RECOVERED: 637,276

TOTAL CASES: 661,885

SOURCE: HEALTH PROMOTION BUREAU

## Sri Lankans abroad protest against SL Govt.

● Protests in Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and Maldives



Sri Lankans protesting in Melbourne yesterday (3)

Sri Lankans living or working abroad were seen protesting against the Government, similar to the protests seen all around Sri Lanka since last week, with the most notable being in Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and the Maldives.

The protests are reported to have been peaceful and unaligned with any local or foreign political parties.

Protests have become a common sight around the island in the past three months, as citizens' calls for the supply of basic essentials such as fuel, electricity, food items, and gas have been increasing. Alongside this, the “#GoHomeGota” hashtag has been popularised across social media.

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# Identification parade for six Mirihana protestors to be held as scheduled

BY DINITHA RATHNAYAKE

**P**olice Spokesperson Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Attorney-At-Law (AAL) Nihal Thalduwa said yesterday (3) that the identification parade for six of the protestors who were arrested following the protest near the President's residence in Mirihana last Thursday (31) night will happen today (4), as per the court order issued last Friday (1).

Speaking to *The Morning* yesterday, Thalduwa said: "As of now, there have been no reports of the identification parade being postponed, as this is a court order. If there is a postponement, that will only happen at the court tomorrow (today). Thus, it will go ahead tomorrow (today)."

Last Thursday night, a people's protest was held in Mirihana, Nugegoda, close to

Pangiriwatte Lane, which houses the private residence of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. Video reports show an individual setting fire to a bus, as well as protestors attempting to topple the barricades at the entrance to the lane. Tear gas and water cannons were used against the protestors by the Police, and 53 suspects were arrested following the incident. Many among them alleged that they were severely

assaulted and tortured by the Police and the armed forces, which has since led to a large public outcry.

Out of the 53 suspects who were arrested, 27 were produced before the Gangodawila Magistrate Court last Friday. While 21 of them were granted bail, six of them were ordered to be produced before an identification parade today. Twenty-six of the arrested suspects who were not produced before the court last Friday, as they were undergoing treatment at the Kalubowila Hospital, will also be produced in court today. The Mount Lavinia Magistrate visited them over the weekend. In total, 32 of them still remain in remand custody.

Speaking at a media briefing held yesterday, National People's Power (NPP) member AAL

Sunil Watagala explained the court proceedings that took place last Friday.

"About 52 people were arrested and some were produced in front of the Gangodawila Magistrate's Court. The Attorney General (AG) requested that they be put in jail under the Offences Against Public Property Act (No. 12 of 1982), as a bus was set on fire and several other vehicles were destroyed during the protest. This is a usual tactic in this country when the rulers want to put somebody inside," he claimed.

"The Magistrate only asked one question – were any of the individuals involved in the burning of the bus or the destruction of vehicles amongst those produced in court? The answer was no. The main reason that

some were granted bail is because there was no proof at all for the alleged actions."

Protests have become a common sight around the island in the past three months, as citizens' calls for the supply of basic essentials such as fuel, electricity, food items, and gas have been increasing. Alongside this, the "#GoHomeGota" hashtag has proven popular across social media.

A large protest was also planned by several groups of people to be held yesterday. However, following the incidents of last Thursday, the President declared a state of emergency, imposed a curfew, and temporarily blocked several social media applications over the weekend, resulting in several smaller protests occurring around the country instead.

## Contd. from page 1

### New Cabinet...

However, when asked if there are any plans to compel the Government to abolish the executive presidency if such an Interim Government is to be formed, he said there is no such plan.

Meanwhile, *The Morning* learnt that the Cabinet of Ministers is likely to resign to allow the President to appoint a new Cabinet amid mounting pressure on the President and the Government to resign. At the time of printing, there was no confirmation on whether the Cabinet would resign.

However, these matters were discussed at length at an emergency cabinet meeting held last night, which was preceded by a meeting between President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa.

It had earlier been proposed that Minister of Education Dinesh Gunawardena be appointed as the Premier of the Government to be appointed, but a consensus was not reached. Meanwhile, when inquired whether the post of Premier of an Interim Government to be formed will be handed over to United National Party (UNP) Leader and MP Ranil Wickremesinghe, UNP Media Co-ordinator Dinuk Colombage stated that Wickremesinghe is not ready to accept such a post.

It was also reported that Minister of Youth and Sports, Minister of Development Co-ordination and Monitoring, and State Minister of Digital Technology and Enterprise Development Namal Rajapaksa will be the first to resign from the ministerial posts if the cabinet resignation takes place. It was also learnt that Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa would not be provided a position in the new Cabinet to be appointed.

It is further said that the issues discussed at a special meeting of the National Security Council (NSC) held last evening also contributed to the crucial decision taken by the Government.

During the said NSC discussion, the defence and security apparatus has pointed out that the police and security forces

would not be able to control the growing protests unless a speedy political solution is found on the political front.

### SJB...

...Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) near Independence Square in Colombo yesterday, demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and the incumbent Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP)-led Government.

He added that there were discussions yesterday regarding the matter.

"Today, a lot of the Opposition came together and discussed it. We will build on that," said Wickremaratne, adding: "Ultimately, we are the alternative government – we are doing our homework. We have two main objectives: in the short term how to end the queues and secondly, how to reform the economy and make some hard decisions."

Speaking to *The Morning*, SJB National Organiser and MP Tissa Attanayake said that the SJB has appointed a four-member committee to reach out to political parties, organisations, and individuals who are not sitting with the SJB.

The four-member committee includes Attanayake, SJB General Secretary Ranjith Madduma Bandara, and SJB MPs Kabir Hashim and Eran Wickremaratne.

Meanwhile, SJB MP Field Marshal Sarath Fonseka told *The Morning* that a no-confidence motion against the Government will not take place at the time.

Protests have become a common sight around the island in the past three months, as citizens' calls for the supply of basic essentials, such as fuel, electricity, food items, and gas have been increasing. Alongside this, the "#GoHomeGota" hashtag has been popularised across social media. A state of emergency was declared over the weekend, followed by a curfew and a ban on social media applications, as dissent against the Government continues to grow.

A tense situation arose at around 9.30 a.m. yesterday, when a group of SJB Parliamentarians, including SJB and

Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa, attempted to enter the Independence Square premises in Colombo. However, the Police and the Army had set up roadblocks at the scene.

Speaking to police and army personnel at the time, Premadasa said that the Police and the Army were bound not to protect the Rajapaksa family (a reference to the family of President Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa), but to protect the people of the country. He also said that no one can violate the Constitution of the country for the protection of one family.

"Neither the Government nor the President nor anyone else can suppress public opinion. We have come to this place today (3) for the sake of the millions of people. Today the people have become helpless to the fullest. They have no milk powder, no gas, no electricity. However, the Government is suppressing the people's voice against the current rule," he said yesterday.

Claiming that not a single person or property would be harmed in the protest, Premadasa called on the security personnel to allow them to enter Independence Square. He also said that no one has the power to obstruct the activities of the elected MPs, including the Opposition Leader.

"We do not threaten anyone in the security forces, but do not act in a way that destroys our respect towards you. What you are doing today is completely unconstitutional. The Rajapaksas will finally flee to the US, but you all will have to end up going to courts," he told the police and army personnel.

Meanwhile, commenting during the protest, SJB MP Field Marshal Sarath Fonseka said: "The current President and Government are misusing the emergency law and oppressing the people. Therefore, the security forces should not turn their guns on us, instead, guns must be aimed at corrupt rulers."

After protesting near the Independence Square for about one hour, the group of SJB MPs including Premadasa was seen leaving the premises.

Over the past few months, several protests have been held on a daily basis during which people demanded solutions for the issues including the prevailing shortages of essential commodities. Moreover, despite the President having declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew until 6 a.m. today (4), both political and non-political groups had organised several protests islandwide yesterday.

### PUCSL...

The PUCSL directed the CEB to reduce the duration of the power cuts to less than five hours in total, spread over two time slots for consumer convenience. The PUCSL has proposed that the power cuts be split as three to four hours during the day and one to two hours during the night, before 10 p.m.

Similarly, the power interruptions scheduled for yesterday were reduced to one hour and 40 minutes, while the electricity sector regulator had previously announced six-hour power cuts for yesterday.

### Sri Lankans...

Last Thursday (31 March) night, a people's protest was held in Mirihana, Nugegoda, close to the Pangiriwatte Lane which houses the private residence of the President.

Video reports show an individual setting fire to a bus, which the protestors claimed was not one of them but an individual affiliated with the Government, and protestors attempting to topple the barricades at the entrance to the lane. Tear gas and water cannons were used against the protestors by the Police and 53 suspects were arrested following the incident. Many

amongst them have alleged that they were severely assaulted and tortured by the Police and the armed forces, which has since led to a large public outcry. Following these incidents, the President declared a state of emergency, imposed a curfew, and temporarily blocked several social media applications over the weekend.

### NPP...

Last Friday (1), President Gotabaya Rajapaksa declared a state of public emergency in Sri Lanka. Last Saturday (2), he issued a gazette declaring a curfew under Section 16 of the Public Security Ordinance, declaring that no person shall be on any public road, railway, public park, public recreation ground or other public ground, or the seashore in such areas, from 6 p.m. of Saturday to 6 a.m. today (4), except under the authority of a written permit granted by the Defence Ministry, Public Security Ministry, or the Inspector General of Police or any officer authorised by them.

He said that the problem was that the Government failed to supply diesel, petrol, and gas necessary for the livelihoods of the public, which led to peaceful demands from the people.

"Is that a reason to declare a state of emergency?" questioned Watagala.

"As the lawyers of the NPP, we are stating that this is completely unconstitutional. There are reports that many parties will challenge these gazettes. We will also challenge both gazettes in the Supreme Court," said Watagala.

Protests have become a common sight around the island in the past three months, as citizens' calls for the supply of basic essentials such as fuel, electricity, food items, and gas have been increasing. Alongside this, the "#GoHomeGota" hashtag has been popularised across social media.

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Following these incidents, the President declared a state of emergency, imposed a curfew, and temporarily blocked several social media applications over the weekend.

### No clarity...

"We cannot confirm whether he was accidentally electrocuted or if he intended to end his life," the officer said.

According to the Police, the man had mentioned that he was ready to die because of the prevailing situation in the country.

"The man was screaming in front of the President's residence in Mirihana. He was fed up with the power cuts and the rising cost of living. While shouting, he stood on top of the transformer and said he was ready to die, before suddenly being electrocuted. He died instantly," the officer told *The Morning*.

The said individual was 53 years of age and a resident of Nugegoda.

### Social media...

"The ban on social media is the modern-day equivalent of closing down a television channel or a newspaper. This ban has clearly been imposed to thwart the fundamental right of the people of Sri Lanka, the freedom of expression,

including speech and publication, which is unacceptable," noted the BASL in a statement.

The Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka (PUCSL) had also requested the TRCSL and service providers to restore access to all social media platforms, as it was unable to inform electricity consumers about the impending power cuts.

Additionally, Minister of Youth and Sports, Minister of Development Co-ordination and Monitoring, and State Minister of Digital Technology and Enterprise Development Namal Rajapaksa yesterday urged the Government to reconsider the restriction when it was in effect, claiming that such bans are "completely useless".

On his official Twitter account, Rajapaksa had stated: "I will never condone the blocking of social media. The availability of VPN, just like I'm using now, makes such bans completely useless. I urge the authorities to think more progressively and reconsider this decision."

VPN stands for "virtual private network", which is a technology that can be used to protect yourself from being snooped on, access content restricted to some locations, and to bypass censorship, by rerouting a user's signal through servers in other locations.

With several Sri Lankans resorting to the service to access social media yesterday, hashtags being used in protest, such as #GoHomeRajapaksas, ended up trending in several countries including the US with over 12,000 Tweets, as users' messages were detected as originating from those nations.

Similar hashtags were also trending in the UAE with 16,400 Tweets, the UK with 13,100 Tweets, in India with 10,700 Tweets, in Singapore with 13,100 Tweets, and in Germany with 11,100 Tweets.

### HRCSL...

...social media ban over the weekend, which was lifted last afternoon (3) and the alleged assault on journalists and civilians at the Mirihana protest.

HRCSL Chairman and Supreme Court Judge (Retd.) Rohini Marasinghe has said that the commission came to these conclusions at a special meeting held yesterday consisting of all its members.

### Prez's...

...posted a Twitter message that read: "#TangoDown <https://president.gov.lk> President site of Sri Lanka down. #Anonymous will support the citizens of Sri Lanka (sic)", inferring that it was behind the incident.

Anonymous is a decentralised international "hacktivist" collective that has been known to get involved in such issues through various methods, such as by carrying out distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks to take down websites, or by releasing hidden or classified information to reveal corrupt practices.

Members of the Sri Lankan community on Twitter had reached out to the collective under the hashtag #AnonymousexpSriLanka, calling on it to expose illegal assets and transactions by politicians.

The collective's central account had responded by sharing a cartoon with the caption "President Rajapaksa invoked 36-hour curfew and state of emergency allowing the military to arrest and imprison suspects for long periods without trial, deployed soldiers armed with automatic assault rifles for 'crowd control' (sic)."

Some Sri Lankan citizens have used the #AnonymousexpSriLanka hashtag to share long messages explaining the state of the country. Most of these alleged acts of corruption by politicians and urged for the collective's support to bring these to light.

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AT A GLANCE

POLICE USE TEAR GAS ON PROTESTING UNI STUDENTS AT PERADENIYA

Police had used tear gas and water cannons to disperse protesting students in front of the University of Peradeniya premises yesterday (3). A large number of university students had reportedly gathered near the university premises in the early hours of yesterday to stage the protest, and Police had resorted to using tear gas and water cannons on them as they attempted to march towards the Kandy town.

OSHADA SENANAYAKE RESIGNS AS ICTA CHAIRMAN

Oshada Senanayake stated yesterday (3) that he had tendered his resignation as Chairman of the Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka (ICTA). On his official Twitter account, Senanayake said he had tendered his resignation formally last week from the ICTA as well, following his stepping down from the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) last December, which would come into effect from the end of the month.

MAN DIES IN MADIPOLA SHOOTING INCIDENT

A person died following a shooting incident in the Madipola area in Galewela yesterday (3). Police said the victim had succumbed to injuries after being admitted to the Madipola Hospital with gunshot wounds. The deceased is a 42-year-old resident of Madipola. The motive for the murder is yet to be ascertained, while the Galewela Police have launched investigations to apprehend the suspects involved.

# Journos, lawyers to protest against Government today

BY DINITHA RATHNAYAKE

**The Young Journalists' Association of Sri Lanka (YJASL) and the Young Lawyers' Association (YLA) are scheduled to stage a protest together against the Government today (4) at Lipton circle.**

Speaking to *The Morning*, Tharindu Jayawardhana from the YJASL said the protest is intended to raise concerns over the current economic crisis, its resulting

shortages, and the Extraordinary Gazette notification declaring a public emergency in Sri Lanka. Artists, and journalists are also to take part in the protest, while

the YJASL urged people from all professions to join the peaceful protest today at 3 p.m.

"Since the public have the right to protest peacefully and it is part of the right of expression of speech, if you, your relative, or friend is going to be arrested or arrested illegally, let us know immediately. We are ready to notify young lawyers and relevant

agencies immediately," he said.

Any such complaints can be made to the YJASL via 076 7241417 or [webyjasl@gmail.com](mailto:webyjasl@gmail.com).

Meanwhile, speaking to *The Morning*, the YLA said that the majority of lawyers in provincial associations are willing to help the public if they are arrested while participating in a peaceful protest. "We urge the public to take

videos of the event you are participating in and keep evidence to prove whatever the status you are in, so it would be easy for the lawyers to help in any illegal arrest," they noted.

The YLA is also in conversation with bar associations islandwide to provide legal support to the public considering the current situation.

## Holidays to begin today for most schools islandwide

The Ministry of Education stated that steps will be taken to provide school holidays for primary students of all schools in the island from today (4).

Education Ministry Secretary Prof. Kapila Perera stated that the school holidays will continue until 18 April. In addition to this, a decision has also been taken to provide school holidays for all Government schools in the Northern, Southern, North Western, and Eastern provinces from today.

However, the principals of all schools in the North Central, Central, Sabaragamuwa, Uva, and Western provinces have been instructed to only call students who are yet to complete their term exams to schools in the coming days, to hold the relevant



exams. Although students will be given holidays from tomorrow, all school staff including principals and teachers have been instructed to report to schools as per usual.

Meanwhile all Catholic private schools and Catholic international schools in the Western Province will have holidays this week.

Considering the present situation

in the country, all Catholic Private Schools and Catholic International Schools in the Western Province will be closed from 4-8 April, stated Catholic Private and International Schools General Manager Fr. Gemunu Dias.

He however added that term tests will be held for the relevant classes as scheduled.

## University of Colombo lecturers urge Govt. to not resort to violence

A group of 40 lecturers attached to various faculties at the University of Colombo, in a statement, urged the Government to refrain from violent methods of curbing dissent, especially referencing the case of the arrest of University alumnus Anuruddha Bandara – who was taken into custody on 1 April over his ownership of the #GoHomeGota facebook page – and to instead implement measures to immediately provide basic needs and immediate relief to the people.

The statement is reproduced in full below:

We, the undersigned, wish to express our strong concern about recent developments where public frustration and anger with the extreme economic difficulties Sri Lankans are experiencing have been met with repressive measures by the State. The clamping down on citizen protests, numerous arbitrary arrests, and the use of various intimidation tactics to silence dissent are signs of the fast unravelling of democratic practices in the country.

We note that this is the same playbook that the State has followed for years, dismantling and attacking democratic rights and processes in favour of growing authoritarianism. Sri Lanka is currently facing an unprecedented economic crisis, and the frustration of the general public has resulted in protests across the country.

The Government has declared a state of emergency and curfew to curb dissent and intimidate protesting citizens, effectively abrogating its responsibilities towards the Sri Lankan people. We demand that the Government addresses public anger through urgent measures to provide basic needs and immediate relief, instead of mobilising state violence and repression in response to a desperate people pushed beyond their limits.

Anuruddha Bandara, an alumnus of the University of Colombo, was taken into custody by the Police on the night of 1 April 2022, reportedly for exercising his democratic rights to dissent and free expression through a social media intervention critiquing the Government. We are conscious that he is the most recent example of the State's use of legal and extra-legal means to suppress dissent.

We demand that the State ensures Bandara's legal rights, including a fair trial in a court of law. We strongly believe that these acts of threat and intimidation are signs of worse times to come and wish to express our objection to the continuation of such practices. We urge the Government to cease the use of force to intimidate and suppress the public and revoke the emergency regulations with immediate effect.



The University of Colombo

## Pakistan's President dissolves Parliament at PM's request

Pakistani President Arif Alvi dissolved Parliament yesterday (3), setting the stage for early elections after Prime Minister Imran Khan sidestepped a no-confidence move earlier in the day.

Khan asked President Alvi to dissolve the National Assembly, or law-making lower house of Parliament, accusing his political opposition of working with the US to overthrow his Government.

The political chaos caused a constitutional crisis that was left to the country's Supreme Court to sort out. The court must decide whether Khan defied the Constitution when Parliament's Deputy Speaker, at the request of the Minister of Information Fawad Chaudry, threw out the no-confidence resolution.

Chaudry said opposition lawmakers violated the Constitution's Article 5 demanding loyalty of its citizens, by colluding with a foreign power to stage a "regime change".

The Opposition has challenged the Deputy Speaker's constitutional authority to throw out the no-confidence vote, which



Pakistani PM Imran Khan

they said they had the numbers to win.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial has convened a hearing into the constitutional question later Sunday.

The battle between Khan, a cricket-star-turned-conservative-Islamic-leader, and his political Opposition has mired the nation in political turmoil.

Khan, who was not in Parliament yesterday, went on national television to say he would ask Pakistan's President to dissolve the body and hold elections.

"I ask people to prepare for the next elections. Thank

God, a conspiracy to topple the Government has failed," Khan said in his address.

Pakistan's Constitution calls for the establishment of an interim Government to see the country toward elections, which are to be held within 90 days. According to the Constitution, the interim Government is to be established with input from the Opposition.

The opposition arrived in Parliament ready to vote Khan out of power. They needed a simple majority of 172 votes in Pakistan's 342-seat Parliament to unseat Khan. Khan's small but key coalition partners along with 17 of his own party members joined the Opposition to oust him.

The political turmoil also caused the country's security agencies to lock down the capital of Islamabad.

Giant metal containers blocked roads and entrances to the capital's diplomatic enclave and to Parliament and other sensitive government installations in the capital. A defiant Khan had called for supporters to stage demonstrations countrywide.

(AP)

## Minimum salary of Rs. 25,000 for private sector in the works

● National Labour Advisory Council to reach agreement within a month

BY BUDDHIKA SAMARAWEEERA

The Government is currently focusing on raising the basic salary of private sector employees to Rs. 25,000 against the backdrop of a number of requests to increase the salaries of private sector employees in the current economic climate.

Speaking to *The Morning*, Labour Ministry Secretary M.P.D.U.K. Mapa Pathirana stated that raising the salaries of



Labour Ministry Secretary M.P.D.U.K. Mapa Pathirana

private sector employees has been discussed at the National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC) over the past few months, taking into account calls for an increase in the basic pay of private sector employees by several parties.

"The minimum basic salary of private sector employees at present is Rs. 16,500, including two budgetary relief allowances. During the said discussions, a proposal was made to the NLAC that this amount should be raised to Rs. 25,000. Subsequently, a sub-committee was appointed to look into the matter," he said.

Speaking further, Mapa Pathirana said that the relevant sub-committee has held discussions about three times so far. He further stated that a final agreement will be reached after further discussions within about one month, adding that Labour Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva would then introduce a Bill in Parliament to increase the salaries of private sector employees.

De Silva recently told the media that they were holding discussions at present with employers and trade unions within the private sector regarding the demands to increase private sector employees' salaries.

In the face of the prevailing economic situation caused by the foreign exchange crisis in the country, several parties, including the civil organisations and trade unions, have been urging the Government to increase the private sector employees' salaries.

# NMSJ casts doubt over intentions behind restrictions

● Karu Jayasuriya questions if Government is pushing for violence through suppression tactics

BY BUDDHIKA SAMARAWEEERA

The National Movement for Social Justice (NMSJ) claimed it is questionable whether the Government is taking away the right of the people to express their views with the ulterior motive of further oppressing the people and leading them towards violence.

In a statement issued yesterday (3), NMSJ Chairman Karu Jayasuriya said: "Today the Government has blocked social media platforms and even violated the right of the people, especially the youth, to express their views. What we are asking the Government is whether there is an underlying motive behind the blocking of social media platforms to further destabilise and oppress the people and to direct them

towards violence?"

He has also pointed out that all MPs should work without party affiliation to repeal the 20th Amendment to the Constitution and curtail the powers of the Executive President, adding that the same would enable the formation of a new interim government.

Jayasuriya, who is also a former Speaker of the Parliament, also called on all MPs to abide by their hearts, before supporting the passage of emergency regulations imposed by the President to quell the just protests of the people that are happening around the country at present.

"We see the Government's crackdown on social media and the usurpation of the right of MPs and the people to protest as a dictatorship. Also, next week's emergency

regulations debate will allow people to identify the real people's representatives and the vulnerable who have been subjected to the regime for personal gain," he added.

Following several protests that are daily being held around the country demanding President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and the Government to resign, the President had declared a state of emergency on 1 April. Another massive protest which was organised by social media groups, was to be held yesterday. President Rajapaksa, however, imposed an islandwide curfew on 2 March. Furthermore, since early morning yesterday, access to several social media platforms including Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Instagram had been blocked.



NMSJ Chairman Karu Jayasuriya

### Enumeration of Electors 2022 begins

The enumeration of electors for the year 2022 has commenced on 01.02.2022. Enumeration forms are not distributed to every household.

Contact the Grama Niladhari or District Elections Office

if not registered in the year 2021 or if the address of the registration in the year 2021 need to be amended; for registration of persons born on or before 31.01.2004;

and

to register the citizens aged 16 - 18 years (born before 31.01.2006)

**for obtaining voting right as soon as attaining the age of 18 by supplementary registers prepared every 4 months**

Election Commission

011-2868441 / [www.elections.gov.lk](http://www.elections.gov.lk)



# Power of the people's protest

What started out as a somewhat tepid protest of placard bearing against the Government's failure to address and provide immediate solutions to pressing issues (fuel shortage, power crisis, gas shortage, soaring commodity prices, and the rising cost of living, etc.) and held towards the evening of last Thursday (31 March) at Jubilee Post in Nugegoda soon gathered numbers, a repertoire of animus infused slogans, assorted four-letter epithets, bars/clubs/rods/sticks and handy projectiles, and thus momentum à la the Ides of belated March, and voila, Rajapaksa of Pangiriwatta had a mini resistance on his hands (only, he was not at home). Perhaps, the protestors creatively interpreted the request made by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation's (CPC) Chairman the day before (30 March), to not queue up at filling stations as they lacked adequate diesel stocks to supply, and therefore decided to take this respite from the rat race to obtain essentials and instead sought to ferret out the pied piper of economic disembowelment and his family who seem to be flying high whilst the hapless masses are flung from rickety financial pillar to penury post.

In the throes of untreated persecution mania and ever quick to resurrect the hydra of extremism, the President's Media Division (PMD), surveying the violent riot's damages to property (vehicles including those belonging to the Army and Police being set alight) and injuries to police and STF personnel and journalists which required hospitalisation, claimed that the protest in Mirihana, described by the Public Security Minister as an act of sabotage, was the work of a group of organised extremists and have made arrests in the double-digit range (ironically, a Government Parliamentarian was acquitted of murder the same day) – arrestees who were then produced before court and were subsequently either enlarged on bail or remanded. Curfew too was subsequently, albeit briefly, imposed on several areas.

What's more, after it was announced that similar agitations supposedly organised by social media-based online citizens' groups, and which are purportedly not politically driven, and from which the political Opposition has distanced itself, were to be held yesterday (3), the President, in a preemptive move "in the interests of public security" to allegedly protect "public order" declared a state of public emergency and imposed islandwide curfew last Saturday (2) evening until today (4) dawn, along with the restriction of access to and the use of social media sites. The move has the chilling effect of suspending the people's sovereignty and violating the fundamental rights, and instead provides the cloak of legal impunity for the stifling of legitimate dissent and arbitrary arrests and detentions.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his Government's chickens have most certainly come home to roost.

The public's exercise of civil disobedience and the constitutionally guaranteed rights to the freedom of peaceful assembly and the exercise of the freedom of speech and expression, including publication, are of vital essence at this particular juncture. They serve two purposes; one, providing a palpable motif of the people's pulsating pain which the "leaders" must be pressured to feel owing to the rulers' complacency and insouciance as regards their efforts to overcome the crises that have beset the nation, and two, to rouse up the administrators from their repose within echo chambers. The prospect of losing power may, and who knows, put the fear of god into them and in turn, stir them into action to embark upon important course correction.

These protests are therefore a necessary first step. But to what?

It is easy for anyone, not just life "style" anarchists, to be swept up in the adrenaline rush, thrill-seeking hysterics, and happy-go-lucky bacchanals of the madness of crowds and protests for the sake of protesting, when after all, the strength is in the numbers and history may be in the making. Similar fervour has accompanied previous regime changes. But the work of democracy is not the theatrics of the corrida; it is the work of episteme, craft, and logos. It is apt therefore to remind the zealous amongst us of the dangers of collective zealotry, and also of the instability and oppression that become realities in the aftermath of a coup d'etat (not that the present bunch of Lankans are capable of pulling one off). As Scottish journalist Charles Mackay observes: "Men, it has been well said, think in herds; it will be seen that they go mad in herds, while they only recover their senses slowly, and one by one." Where then is the method to be found in this madness?

It appears this fervour of resistance is becoming a revolution of change, but can the revolution of change become a reform of hope? The options in this regard on the political front are utterly desultory. Since the democratically elected Gotabaya Rajapaksa is unlikely to step down, a motion of no-confidence against the Government coupled with a resolution for the impeachment of the President on the basis of the Constitutional Article 38(2)'s ground of him being "incapable of discharging the functions of his office by reason of mental infirmity" should seriously be considered. This is where the plan runs its course. Who is to succeed this Rajapaksa and take over if this Government is toppled? The answers lie in the future, once the primary objective of the protests are achieved.

# The lack of common good in society



Despite the corrupt political culture in Sri Lanka, citizens still look out for each other in small ways, like these people who distributed ice creams to people sweltering in a queue

PHOTO SAMAN ABESIRIWARDANA

BY THE CENTRE FOR PROGRESSIVE NETWORK

**T**he idea of "common good" has completely disappeared from our society. We remember hearing about a time when Sri Lanka was a much close-knit society, in which everyone used to care about one another. However, with the rapid expansion of capitalism and free market ideologies, we gradually changed. Today, we live in a capitalist society – a capitalist system with capitalist rules – where the businesses only think about maximising profits for their investors and employers completely neglect employees.

Most people are hardwired for some degree of co-operation and compassion towards others. Human beings would not have survived on earth to this point if we were entirely selfish. Take for example, the 1990 Suwaseriya first responders who have been heroic during our fight against Covid-19, the armed forces who stay up late to make sure that we are safe at home, whistleblowers and journalists who put their lives at risk in bringing us the most accurate news on a tyrannical Government.

However, the term "common good" is no longer a fashionable idea. From a very young age, children witness their parents or their parents' friends or close ones living a very luxurious, flashy lifestyle, which they strive to have when they are older, regardless of what it takes to get there. We

witness it all around us, beginning with the chief executive officers (CEOs) trying to exploit their customers or investors, athletes involved in doping scandals, doctors who do unnecessary procedures to collect bigger checks, lawyers and accountants who look the other way when corporate clients act immorally, police officers that look the other way when they are paid off or are told to look the other way, film producers and directors that look the other way when young girls are sexually harassed, and, most importantly, politicians who take donations from wealthy donors and businesses to enact laws that benefit a few.

We live in a system where people have forgotten what it means to do good. Nonetheless, common good does exist, as it is essential for a society to function; the most basic example being regard to the people's widespread and voluntary willingness to abide by the laws. Consider what would happen if no one voluntarily obeyed the law without first calculating what they could gain by violating it, as compared with the odds of the violation being discovered multiplied by the size of the likely penalty; we would be living in chaos.

If everyone acted similarly to the actions of Cabinet Ministers that take hefty commissions on projects that are unfeasible, or government cronies that continue to break the law because they believe that they are above it or the politicians they backed would get them out, we

would be living in anarchy.

Why we believe that we should reinvigorate the "common good" ideology is, for example, if education is viewed as a private investment yielding private returns, there is no reason why anyone other than the "investor" should pay for it, but when it is understood as a public good underlying our democracy, all of us have a responsibility to ensure that it is of high quality and available to all. Thanks to Dr. C.W.W. Kannangara, we Sri Lankans are able to enjoy free education, although the quality of the education and the job opportunities post graduation are questionable.

Nevertheless, our central obligation as citizens is to preserve, fortify, and protect our democratic form of government – not allow it to be flooded with big money and buy off politicians. We must protect the right to vote and ensure that more citizens are heard, not fewer. The way things are progressing in Sri Lanka under the Government of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, it seems that democracy will cease to exist.

We cannot hate our Government, as the Government is the way in which we can come together to help solve common problems. We may not like the people in the Government, but then again, that is once again our choice, our vote. Our obligation should be to improve the Government and not let special interest groups or the wealthy gain too much power over it.

The biggest factor eroding the common good is the "whatever

it takes" politics; it removes all constraints on gaining and keeping political power. We have big money pouring into politics in order to change the rules of the game in favour of wealthy donors and businesses, so that they could rake in even more profits. The "whatever it takes to win" politics disregard what has been the unwritten rules of good government, based on equal political rights – thus enabling the most powerful players to extract all the political gains, similar to what is currently happening. The Government and their cronies continue to profit, while the majority of the country is in darkness or in queues for most essential items.

Whatever it takes to rig the economy dismissed what had been the unwritten rule that the "free market" should work for everyone – permitting the most powerful economic actors to extract almost all economic gains. As a result, the key political and economic institutions of our society – political parties, corporations, and the free market – have abandoned their commitment to the common good. The consequence of this has been over 500,000 people being pushed into poverty in the past two years, as there was no "cushion" or social protection programme to help them transition.

More importantly, according to a former Central Bank Director Dr. Roshan Perera, Government revenue fell by at least Rs. 500 billion in 2020 as well as in 2021, signaling a loss of over Rs. 1 trillion in total revenue in the last two years, due to unwise tax cuts that benefitted only the top layer of Sri Lankans. Moreover, the bottom 20% of Sri Lankans represent merely 5% of the total income while the top 20% account for over 50% of the total income as a result of the "whatever it takes" politics. The middle class is shrinking and most Sri Lankans are working longer hours and still not making enough to make ends meet. The majority of Sri Lankans no longer have faith in the Government or the political system as a whole, as they believe that they are vessels for the few.

Special interest groups and campaign donations that result in laws and regulations favouring special interest groups or wealthy donors are not triumphs if they weaken public confidence in our democracy, as they too are huge failures of leadership. But how can leaders ignore the pressures to do whatever it takes to win when not doing so allows their political or economic competitors to prevail and puts them out of a job?

This is why it is of utmost importance to bring in campaign finance reforms in Sri Lanka. This will even the playing field for potential youth and female candidates who would otherwise be neglected by the system due to the lack of funds or influence. Unregulated campaign finances lead to a huge gap between the politician and the elector, as we are currently witnessing. The politicians have no sense of responsibility or empathy towards the thousands of people struggling to make ends meet or standing in queues in the hot sun to keep food on the table for their children.

"Whatever it takes" politics have created politicians that only care about making their pockets larger, while largely ignoring the majority of the country, and making their donors even richer. Giving others an equal opportunity is an essential aspect of the common good. That is why we believe that we need to reinvigorate the common good in people, in order to help ourselves as well as the others around us.

*(The CPN is a youth-led and youth-focused think tank seeking to get more young people involved in important policy discussions and anti corruption practices and efforts, including focusing on campaign finance)*

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of this publication.*





# Citizens' causes for concern

● People voice out their issues with and recommendations for the country's leadership



People have long-raised numerous concerns over the quality of Sri Lanka's leaders

PHOTOS KRISHAN KARIYAWASAM

BY SUMUDU CHAMARA

**W**hat began as a mere criticism against the Government's failure to manage the prevailing economic crisis has now morphed into a nationwide opposition against the Government, especially heads of the Government. Most people are questioning the decisions they made during the most recent elections, and they demand change in leadership.

To look into the people's concerns about the country's overall leadership and what sort of leadership they think can save the country from the ongoing crises, *The Morning* spoke to several members of the general public.

### Missing leadership

According to Asela\*, a 33-year-old electrician, Sri Lanka has not been governed by a proper leader for decades and the culture of seeing politicians as leaders should change. "The politicians we have elected are in fact rulers who came to power because they want power and money, not leaders who have a desire to lead the people, or at least their own voters, to prosperity. They were elected by people who think they are inferior to politicians, not citizens who are concerned about who they choose to represent them in Parliament."

**'Education system, society must create leaders, voters who can choose proper leaders'**

"Leaders are people who deal with challenges, take risks, sacrifice things, take responsible decisions, set examples, and are brave enough to accept their mistakes. How many politicians with such qualities do you see in our Parliament? I see none. Sri Lanka's leadership is actually quite weak, and is therefore not stable. If we take the President into consideration, who is the head of the State, he seems quite unstable as far as managing the country in crisis situations is concerned. He takes decisions that actually make the situation worse instead of alleviating it. Then, when the situation worsens, he takes stricter actions which further worsen the situation. Those are not really the qualities of a good leader." He also noted that the qualities of a leader should depend on the country's situation. "At this juncture, the kind of

leadership Sri Lanka wants is quite complex. We need leaders who prioritise the people's interests over their own or their parties' interests. These leaders should be educated and intelligent people, although they do not have to know everything. They should be humble enough to listen to others' opinions. Without such qualities, the current leaders, be it Opposition politicians or Government politicians, are unlikely to save the country from the sorry state it is in. The worst thing is, they make it extremely difficult for proper leaders to emerge, and we do not have leaders now."

### Space for leaders

However, according to Samantha\*, a 40-year-old private sector employee, the issue with leadership in Sri Lanka is not the lack of leaders, but the lack of a proper environment for leaders to take decisions and influence the existing government system.

He added: "There are a number of politicians in Sri Lanka's politics who have leadership qualities. However, unfortunately, the existing political culture does not allow them to rise as leaders. There are many reasons behind this situation. Leaders of political parties do not allow these potential leaders to implement progressive plans – sometimes merely because it goes against the overall policies of those political parties. Sometimes, power-related matters also play a certain role in these matters – broadminded and innovative politicians cannot implement their ideas because those ideas may affect high-ranking politicians' powers and image, and also the political culture that has been created over the years. In fact, senior, old politicians' images depend on outdated practices to which the people have got used to, and that is one of the main reasons why proper leaders cannot rise. "At the same time, Sri Lanka should do away with the current political system that allows politicians to remain in power indefinitely. Most Members of Parliament (MPs) are quite old, and what they have are outdated ideas and beliefs, not new, innovative ideas. This directly affects the type of leadership Sri Lanka wants, because the majority of MPs cannot give it, and they are unlikely to

allow any potential leader to show their talents. At the same time, even if new suggestions were brought forward, they do not receive support from those narrow-minded leaders. Sri Lanka needs young, educated, and broadminded politicians, who are receptive to new ideas and trends and are willing to hear what the people have to say when making decisions. Having those few qualities is actually more than enough to be good leaders, and there is a severe lack of those qualities among politicians."

### Creating leaders

According to Udara\*, a 34-year-old painter, paying attention to creating leaders is of utmost importance, and the education system and society have massive responsibilities in this regard. "Sri Lanka is actually too late. Uneducated and unqualified politicians have already caused irreversible damage to Sri Lanka. It would not be wrong to say that this is actually the last time to save the country, which politicians have been using as a slogan to fool the innocent for years. Now is actually the last time, and the more time Sri Lanka exists without proper leadership, the more difficult it will be to save the country."

**'Sri Lanka has leaders, but existing political culture does not allow them to rise as leaders'**

"In this context, Sri Lanka should urgently start creating leaders by identifying and shaping proper leaders, and the education system and the society have a big role in this process. Children or aspiring leaders should be given the message that being a leader is not just about running a country, but is also about leading a country. At the same time, creating people who are capable of choosing proper leaders is also something the education system and the society must do."

### The kind of leadership Sri Lanka wants

In response to *The Morning's* question as to what sort of leadership Sri Lanka wants, several persons said that Sri Lanka needs

fresh leadership that is not affiliated with any of the current political parties.

Saranga\*, a 25-year-old university student, was of the opinion that there is no room for uncorrupt leadership within the existing political culture, and that therefore, a new leadership must rise from outside Sri Lankan politics. He noted that, however, the people have to be extremely careful about who they bring into politics, because they have made wrong choices in the recent past.

"Everyone who supported the current President wanted him to be a strict leader. Now he has become one, and everyone regrets their decisions. Learning a lesson from this incident, people have to be extremely careful when electing a leader in future, otherwise, we will have to deal with worse situations than the situations a new leader was appointed to address."

He also noted that for this purpose, massive attitudinal changes need to be made, in order to encourage the people to demand concrete plans from politicians without succumbing to attractive promises. In this regard, civil society organisations, human rights activists, and academics have a huge responsibility to fulfil, according to Suranga.

With regard to the type of leadership Sri Lanka wants, Jayawathi\*, a 52-year-old businesswoman, said that to elect proper leaders, Sri Lanka should identify the qualities of a proper leader and set standards.

"Sri Lanka wants a leader who listens to the people's voice, not someone like the President who seems to be running away from it. The leader should know that he is merely the guardian of the country and of the people, not the owner, and that his powers depend on what the people want. If Sri Lanka is truly a democratic country, it is the people's interests that should always receive priority, and this aspect seems to have been forgotten during the past few years. Politicians are acting as if people are their slaves, when in reality, they are the people's servants."

"At the same time, there need to be some standards. I think we have voted for too many incompetent politicians during the past few decades after independence to understand that having public support does not necessarily create a leader. A leader needs to be knowledgeable, intelligent, considerate, and more than anything, know his role. However, unfortunately, most current

politicians are not leaders; they are merely public representatives who are not suitable to be public representatives.

"Changing this situation is the people's responsibility. Even though some MPs are chosen through the National List, most MPs are elected directly by the people. Therefore, the people have a big role, responsibility, and also a massive power, but they do not seem to understand their responsibility or powers. Every time a politician does something detrimental to the country, people vow to not vote for them again. However, with some patriotic speeches and some relief programmes, the people make the mistake, resulting in unsuitable people being elected to make the country's situation worse for another few years."

**'People should not be afraid to question politicians, judge politicians' future actions based on their past'**

"In this context, the people need to pick up the habit of looking at the past of politicians, and judging their future actions based on what they have done in the past. In addition, they should not be afraid to question politicians or candidates. Instead of believing and relying on everything politicians or candidates say and promise, people should be wise and brave enough to question the intentions and practicality of what politicians or candidates promise. However, to reach this state, the people must first understand that politicians are there to serve them, and that politicians depend on the people's vote."

She emphasised that sending true leaders to Parliament will not be impossible, if people changed the way they think about what they expect from politicians.

At a time when the country's crises are taking a turn from bad to worse, it is not only short-term solutions the country must seek. Long-term solutions, such as creating good leaders, should be the priority, and the people have a massive responsibility which goes beyond merely exercising their franchise.

\*Names have been changed on request



# The day the dam broke

● How citizens exercised their right to peaceful assembly amidst the curfew



**BY SHAHAEN VISHAK**  
**A**midst Sri Lanka's worst economic crisis, which has led to shortages of various essentials in the country, from food to fuel to medicines and even electricity, tensions have peaked among common citizens, as evidenced by the numerous social media campaigns that can be seen calling for an end to the current administration.

These social media campaigns led to the formulation of a series of citizens' protests across the country, which were scheduled to be held yesterday (3). One factor these had in common, at least ostensibly, was that they were organised by anonymous groups and

not by any political parties; in fact, the main Opposition party, the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB), issued a statement noting that it would not be joining any protests organised by anonymous groups. Similarly, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) advised the public

to exercise caution when taking part in protests organised by such anonymous groups.

**A buildup of pressure**  
However, before this mass-scale protest could take place yesterday, hundreds of people gathered near the personal residence of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at Pengiriwatte Mawatha in Mirihana last Thursday (31 March) night, demanding immediate solutions to the various issues they faced, including the fuel shortage, power crisis, gas shortage, and soaring commodity prices. This agitation

had subsequently turned violent, resulting in Police firing tear gas to disperse the crowd before arresting a number of those involved. The next two days (1 and 2 April) saw a string of Extraordinary Gazettes being published declaring a state of emergency, as well as an islandwide curfew under the emergency regulations from 6 p.m. on 2 April until 6 a.m. today (4), which the Government justified as having been invoked to ensure peace and safety of public life, and public and private property. At the same time, access to social media platforms

such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Telegram was restricted in Sri Lanka, which the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) stated had been carried out on the orders of the Ministry of Defence.

What this effectively meant was that the scheduled people's protest would not be allowed to continue – but the citizens proved not to be so easily deterred.

PHOTOS KRISHAN KARIYAWASAM, SHAHAEN VISHAK, SKANDHA GUNASEKARA



A protest staged by the SJB at the barricaded entrance to Independence Square

## Political backlash to the curfew

While the SJB and JVP had initially not been part of the people's protest, the two groups took to the streets yesterday (3) morning with their supporters, against what was seen as the unfair imposition of curfew.

Members of the SJB, including SJB Leader Sajith Premadasa, and MPs Eran Wickramaratne, Field Marshal Sarath Fonseka, and Dr. Harsha de Silva, among others, protested outside the barricades set up by the Police around Independence Square, which was originally intended to be a point of convergence for the people's protests scheduled to be held in Colombo.

Here, they raised the issue that the curfew had been imposed merely to prevent the citizens from exercising their right to protest. An SJB MP at the protest told *The Morning*: "As MPs, we are responsible for making laws in Parliament. Thus, we are here to tell the people that this law is unfairly being implemented to suppress the people. We did not come here to conduct the people's planned protest; we are here against the fact that they did not allow the people to conduct this protest by resorting to emergency regulations and curfews. We have to say we do not care for these laws because these regulations were brought about to protect a particular family, and not in service of the citizens of this country."

Similarly, members of the National People's Power (NPP) coalition, which includes the JVP,



A protest staged at Wijerama by the Inter-University Students' Federation

staged a protest in Maharagama yesterday, where they charged that the Government had merely imposed the curfew to prevent people from taking to the streets against the ruling administration.

NPP MP Dr. Harini Amarasinghe stated: "This Government has been labelling the people coming out to the streets to express their outrage and release some of the frustration over the past several weeks. There are mothers with children coming out to protest because they cannot bear the pressures that this Government is inflicting upon them. This Government has lost all legitimacy to govern this country. There is no way that any law, or any kind of curfew, is going to stop the people from coming out to the streets and expressing their outrage. We stand with the people at this moment, and we will not let the Government suppress our democratic rights to express our views."



A protest staged by the JVP near Maharagama

## People gradually pour out



A family protesting at the top of their lane

Although the Government had restricted access to social media platforms, Sri Lankans used Virtual Private Network (VPN) technology to bypass the restriction and resume their communication. Even as the two political protests were drawing to a close, a flurry of activity on social platforms took place as people reached out to others in their neighbourhoods, organising small-scale protests at roadsides and lane-tops, and within a few hours, several scattered groups were visible along main roads, holding up placards in peaceful protest.

These groups comprised all sorts of people; a small family standing outside despite the daytime heat, labourers gathered outside their place of employment, and friends and neighbours chanting slogans to passers-by.

Many of them told us that they had planned to attend the scheduled people's protest, but due to the curfew, instead chose to protest close to their places of residence.

One of these small-scale protesters was Samantha, who works as a tobacco distributor, who told us that he had planned to join the people's protest at Independence Square, but due to the curfew, decided to protest at the top of his lane instead. He added: "They cannot keep up this curfew forever. The moment they lift it, we will come outside and protest together."

Similarly, a family taking part in a similar small-scale protest stated: "We were going to attend the protest in Diyatha, but not as part of any politically-affiliated protest; we are just doing our duty as citizens. We want our children to be able to play on Sunday; not to be locked up inside the house. Once the curfew lifts on Monday (today [4]), we will be back to the streets to protest properly."

While these small-scale protests by different groups were taking place, we saw members of some of them wave at each other, or run towards a nearby group, in an invitation to join together. While initially reluctant, these smaller groups began to gather, slowly gaining numbers and taking to more prominent locations to have their message heard.



Samantha (left), who works as a tobacco distributor



A group of people protesting near Kirimandala Mawatha



A protest down Nawala Road



A protest beneath the Rajagiriya flyover

## United at the end of it

As the sun began to set, the curfew ceased to matter. As these groups continued to join up, more and more citizens were emboldened to join the impromptu protests, resulting in the people gathering en masse. Vehicles passing by these groups would toot their horns in support, with some even rolling their shutters down to yell, "Jayaweve!" – which never failed to receive a rousing cheer from those assembled.

One of the organisers of such a protest in Rajagiriya, which grew to a considerable size by nightfall, told us: "We saw a lot of activity on social media platforms, where people were riled up to protest despite the law. The law was arbitrarily imposed, and people know their rights. We started out here with around 30

people, but then we just saw them all getting together, and now we have a good group going, and everyone here is standing together peacefully. We are not backing any political party, this is for our own voices and our own views, and for freedom."

As of the time of going to print, these protests had been largely peaceful on both ends, with no agitation on the part of the protestors, nor violent crackdowns being carried out by the Police or the armed forces.

As another protestor told *The Morning*: "Finally the people have realised that they have a voice, and they cannot be stifled. Hopefully this will be kept in mind by all future leaders of this country; we are not meant to be ignored!"



A protest staged in Dehiwala



ASPI	S&P SL20	Market
8,471.43	2,830.93	Market Closed
-432.44	-200.23	Share Volume
-4.86%	-6.61%	25,512,239
		Turnover
		1,253,161,110.60

# Emergency, curfew deepen tourism, export, SME wounds



PHOTO PRADEEP DAMBARAGE

- Business community blames Govt.'s policy uncertainty
- Colombo Chamber concerned over negative international perception
- Rubber exporters worried foreign orders would be cancelled
- CNCI says many companies on the verge of bankruptcy
- THASL expects drop in dollar earnings from tourism
- Tourism Min. to allow tourists to visit sites free of charge today

BY SHENAL FERNANDO AND IMSHA IQBAL

**T**he recent proclamation declaring a state of emergency in Sri Lanka by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and the imposition of a 36-hour islandwide curfew has proved to be a double whammy on the micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), export, and tourism industries which were already struggling due to power cuts and diesel and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) shortages in the country.

Speaking to *The Morning Business*, sources from the SME, export, and tourism industries lamented over the Government's lack of policy certainty and the failure to present a feasible action plan to address the economic

crisis, which is the root cause for the energy crunch in the country and has also led to rising inflation, which has resulted in the outbreak of protests, islandwide.

According to the sources, many entrepreneurs are frustrated by the



CNCI Chairman Canisius Fernando

THASL President M. Shanthikumar

SLAMERP Director General Rohan Masakorala

Ministry of Tourism Secretary S. Hettiarachchi

Colombo Chamber of Commerce President Saranga Wijayarathne

current events and have lost faith in the political and economic system in Sri Lanka, as their business ventures are being affected by factors beyond their control, which could have been averted by effective

policy making by the Government. They further highlighted the disproportionate effect of the recent power outages in the country on the SME sector, which usually neither has access to energy

infrastructure, available to large companies who can afford such significant investments, nor is located in economic zones which enjoy priority in electricity supply.

Contd. on page 8

## Trade deficit widens in January

Import expenditure continued to expand, in spite of high earnings from exports exceeding \$ 1.0 billion for the eighth consecutive month, thereby widening the deficit in the trade account in January 2022, compared to January 2021, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) noted.



recorded in December 2021. Earnings from exports in January 2022 grew by 17.5% over January 2021 to reach \$ 1,101 million, recording the highest level of exports in the month of January.

While increases in earnings were observed across all main categories, industrial exports mainly contributed to the expansion.

Expenditure on

merchandise imports increased by 23.1% to \$ 1,959 million in January 2022, compared to \$ 1,592 million recorded in January 2021, although it decreased compared to December 2021. Increases in expenditure were observed across all main categories, while intermediate goods imports mainly contributed to the expansion.

## Ceylon Chamber wants reasons for 'harsh' measures

- Has 'grave concerns' about tourism, trade, and e-commerce
- Requests authorities to disclose availability of fuel, electricity, and gas

The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC) last evening (3), through a statement, called upon the Government to communicate the reasons that have led to the introduction of harsh measures introduced by the Government in the past few days. The CCC also requested the

various authorities responsible for the availability of fuel, electricity, and gas to communicate clearly on the current status, which is of immediate concern to both businesses and the public at large, particularly whether improvement can be expected in the near future.

It also expressed its concerns about the far-reaching adverse consequences of certain actions being taken by the Government on economic activity such as tourism, trade, exports, and e-commerce dependent on social media platforms, while appreciating the need to maintain law and order and public security in the country.

Contd. on page 8

## CCC proposes tariff rate revision to end energy crisis

- Recommends eight other key proposals to Energy Ministry



PHOTO PRADEEP DAMBARAGE

The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC), through its Energy Sector Committee, yesterday (3) proposed immediate revision of the electricity tariff

and band structure along with eight key short, medium, and long-term recommendations to address the current energy crisis.

Contd. on page 8

## SriLankan ceases two Colombo-Bahrain flights

- Fails to mention reason for suspension

Issuing a statement, SriLankan Airlines has decided to cease flights between Colombo and Bahrain operated under flight numbers UL 201 and UL 202 with effect from 12 May 2022.

In a media notice, the national carrier clarified that it is only ceasing the aforementioned flights, and operations to other destinations within its online network will continue without any changes. It further stated that any reports stating

otherwise are incorrect and based on an internal company notice that was circulated in Bahrain which contained an ambiguous title.

"SriLankan Airlines regrets any inconvenience caused by this company notice intended only for Bahrain being circulated by various external parties in unintended markets."

The airline reiterated that flights to its other online destinations will operate as usual.



## Exterminators Ltd. debuts trading on the CSE

The shares of Exterminators Ltd. (CODE: EXT-N-0000) commenced trading on the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) last Wednesday (30 March). The shares have been listed on the

Empower Board of the CSE under the "2022 - Commercial and Professional Services" sector. The occasion was marked with a bell ringing ceremony.

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## CL Synergy postpones IPO in light of crisis

Given the short-term uncertainty prevailing in the capital markets as well as the power outages expected to continue during the month of April, the Board of CL Synergy has decided to postpone its initial public offering (IPO), which was scheduled to open on 7 April.



## US EXIM Bank formalises Russia pullout; approves Sri Lanka, Albania, Iraq deals

The US Export-Import (EXIM) Bank's Board of Directors last Thursday (31 March) voted to formalise the bank's withdrawal from Russia and approved financing and guarantee deals worth up to

\$ 381 million for Iraq, Sri Lanka, and Albania.

The US Government export credit agency said its Board also voted to notify Congress of a proposed renewal of a \$ 450 million credit guarantee to Citibank

(C.N) that backs a \$ 500 million facility to allow 365 suppliers of aircraft maker Boeing (BA.N) to receive accelerated receivables payments related to export sales of Boeing aircraft.

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## Two more money changers warned

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) last Friday (1) issued notices to two money changers, ordering them to comply with the relevant directions issued by the CBSL in terms of foreign exchange rates, with immediate effect.

Through a statement, the CBSL stated that its continued spot examinations at the places of authorised money changers have revealed that two money changers - Swiss Money Exchange (Pvt.) Ltd. and Western Money Exchange (Pvt.) Ltd. - have transacted at rates beyond the rates offered to them by licensed banks, thereby violating the directions issued to them under the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Act, No. 12 of 2017.

"In the event, the errant money changers fail to rectify the matters communicated through the warning notices, the Central Bank will suspend/ revoke the permits issued to them," the statement added.



# { NEWS }

## CSE Corporate Debt Securities

The Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) facilitates the secondary trading of Corporate Debt Securities (Debentures). Debentures are unsecured, medium or long term, interest-bearing bonds issued by private sector companies.

The holders of debentures are considered creditors and are entitled to payment before shareholders in the event of the liquidation of the issuing company. An investor in a debenture is essentially providing a loan to the company, and is entitled to receive interest on that loan. In market terminology, the loan interest is referred to as coupons and there are different types of debentures available in the market depending on the basis of the coupon paid.

- In most debentures the coupon rate would be fixed and will be paid based at promised intervals (monthly, quarterly, semiannually or annually) mentioned at the point of issue
- Some debentures carry floating rate coupons where the coupon rate changes

with market interest rates. If interest rates in the market are going up, investors would receive higher cash flows from these types of debentures and vice versa

- In zero coupon debentures a coupon is not paid until it matures. The investment will accrue interest during the tenure of the debenture, however, will not be paid to the investor till maturity

Trading debentures in the secondary market will pave the way for investors to possibly make capital gains on their investment in addition to interest payments mentioned above.

The following list shows the latest trade details of Corporate Debt Securities that are currently listed on CSE. CDS account holders have the ability to trade in the corporate debt market. Contact your stock broker for more information on opportunities on trading Corporate Debt Securities in the secondary market.

Company Name	Security Code	Coupon Rate	Coupon Frequency	Issued Date	Maturity date	Next interest due date	Par Value
ABANS PLC	ABNS/BD/19/12/24-C2436-12.5	12.50	1	19-Dec-19	19-Dec-24	17-Dec-22	100
ACCESS ENGINEERING PLC	AEI/BD/17/11/23-C2325-10.95	10.95	2	18-Nov-15	17-Nov-23	17-May-22	100
ACCESS ENGINEERING PLC	AEI/BD/18/11/22-C2327-10.72	10.72	2	18-Nov-15	18-Nov-22	17-May-22	100
ASIA ASSET FINANCE PLC	AAF/BD/20/08/26-C2489-9.26	9.26	1	20-Aug-21	20-Aug-26	19-Aug-22	100
ASIA ASSET FINANCE PLC	AAF/BD/20/08/24-C2488-8.76	8.76	1	20-Aug-21	20-Aug-24	19-Aug-22	100
ASIA ASSET FINANCE PLC	AAF/BD/20/08/24-C2486	14.47	12	20-Aug-21	20-Aug-24	18-Apr-22	100
ASIA ASSET FINANCE PLC	AAF/BD/20/08/26-C2487	9.43	1	20-Aug-21	20-Aug-26	19-Aug-22	100
ASIA ASSET FINANCE PLC	AAF/BD/05/10/23-C2455-10.28	10.28	1	5-Oct-20	5-Oct-23	1-Oct-22	100
ASIA ASSET FINANCE PLC	AAF/BD/05/10/23-C2456	10.76	1	5-Oct-20	5-Oct-23	1-Oct-22	100
BANK OF CEYLON	BOC/BD/24/10/23H13-7.5	13.75	1	25-Oct-13	24-Oct-23	22-Oct-22	100
BANK OF CEYLON	BOC/BD/28/12/24-C2377-12.75	12.75	1	29-Dec-16	28-Dec-24	27-Dec-22	100
BANK OF CEYLON	BOC/BD/05/10/23-C2317-9.5	9.50	1	6-Oct-15	5-Oct-23	4-Oct-22	100
BANK OF CEYLON	BOC/BD/21/09/22D8-25	8.25	1	22-Sep-14	21-Sep-22	17-Sep-22	100
BANK OF CEYLON	BOC/BD/24/10/22F13-25	13.25	1	25-Oct-13	24-Oct-22	22-Oct-22	100
BANK OF CEYLON	BOC/BD/28/12/24-C2378	9.35	2	29-Dec-16	28-Dec-24	27-Jun-22	100
BANK OF CEYLON	BOC/BD/21/09/22E7-42	11.55	2	22-Sep-14	21-Sep-22	18-Sep-22	100
BANK OF CEYLON	BOC/BD/05/10/23-C2321	8.24	2	6-Oct-15	5-Oct-23	4-Apr-22	100
BOGAWANTALAWA TEA ESTATES PLC	BOPL/BD/23/07/26-C2425-13.5	13.50	4	24-Jul-19	23-Jul-26	21-Apr-22	100
BOGAWANTALAWA TEA ESTATES PLC	BOPL/BD/23/07/25-C2423-13.25	13.25	4	24-Jul-19	23-Jul-25	21-Apr-22	100
BOGAWANTALAWA TEA ESTATES PLC	BOPL/BD/23/07/24-C2424-13	13.00	4	24-Jul-19	23-Jul-24	21-Apr-22	100
CEYLON ELECTRICITY BOARD	CEB/BD/15/04/26-C2475-9.35	9.35	1	16-Apr-21	15-Apr-26	15-Apr-22	100
CITIZENS DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS FINANCE PLC	CDB/BD/27/03/23-C2392-13.75	13.75	2	28-Mar-18	27-Mar-23	25-Sep-22	100
CITIZENS DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS FINANCE PLC	CDB/BD/09/12/24-C2434-13.43	13.43	2	10-Dec-19	9-Dec-24	8-Jun-22	100
CITIZENS DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS FINANCE PLC	CDB/BD/30/01/24-C2414-15.5	15.50	1	31-Jan-19	30-Jan-24	28-Jan-23	100
CITIZENS DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS FINANCE PLC	CDB/BD/09/12/24-C2435-13.88	13.88	1	10-Dec-19	9-Dec-24	8-Dec-22	100
CITIZENS DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS FINANCE PLC	CDB/BD/30/01/24-C2413-15	15.00	2	31-Jan-19	30-Jan-24	28-Jul-22	100
CITIZENS DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS FINANCE PLC	CDB/BD/27/03/23-C2391-14.2	14.20	1	28-Mar-18	27-Mar-23	25-Mar-22	100
COMMERCIAL BANK OF CEYLON PLC	COMB/BD/08/03/26-C2342-11.25	11.25	2	9-Mar-16	8-Mar-26	7-Sep-22	100
COMMERCIAL BANK OF CEYLON PLC	COMB/BD/27/10/26-C2359-12.25	12.25	2	28-Oct-16	27-Oct-26	26-Apr-22	100
COMMERCIAL BANK OF CEYLON PLC	COMB/BD/20/09/28-C2492-9.5	9.50	2	21-Sep-21	20-Sep-28	18-Sep-22	100
COMMERCIAL BANK OF CEYLON PLC	COMB/BD/22/07/23-C2404-12	12.00	2	23-Jul-18	22-Jul-23	21-Jul-22	100
COMMERCIAL BANK OF CEYLON PLC	COMB/BD/20/09/26-C2491-9	9.00	2	21-Sep-21	20-Sep-26	18-Sep-22	100
COMMERCIAL BANK OF CEYLON PLC	COMB/BD/22/07/28-C2405-9.25	12.50	2	23-Jul-18	22-Jul-28	21-Jul-22	100
COMMERCIAL CREDIT AND FINANCE PLC	CCFR/BD/04/03/26-C2471-9	9.00	1	5-Mar-21	4-Mar-26	3-Mar-23	100
COMMERCIAL LEASING & FINANCE PLC	CLC/BD/23/09/25-C2453	16.23	2	24-Sep-20	23-Sep-25	22-Sep-22	100
COMMERCIAL LEASING & FINANCE PLC	CLC/BD/23/09/25-C2454-10.5	10.50	2	24-Sep-20	23-Sep-25	22-Sep-22	100
DFCC BANK PLC	DFCC/BD/09/11/23-C2367-12.75	12.75	1	9-Nov-16	9-Nov-23	5-Nov-22	100
DFCC BANK PLC	DFCC/BD/23/10/27-C2457-9.25	9.25	1	23-Oct-20	23-Oct-27	21-Oct-22	100
DFCC BANK PLC	DFCC/BD/29/03/25-C2394-13	13.00	1	29-Mar-18	29-Mar-25	25-Mar-23	100
DFCC BANK PLC	DFCC/BD/28/03/26-C2418-13.75	13.75	1	28-Mar-19	28-Mar-26	25-Mar-23	100
DFCC BANK PLC	DFCC/BD/28/03/24-C2416-13.5	13.50	1	28-Mar-19	28-Mar-24	25-Mar-23	100
DFCC BANK PLC	DFCC/BD/28/03/29-C2417-13.9	13.90	1	28-Mar-19	28-Mar-29	25-Mar-23	100
DFCC BANK PLC	DFCC/BD/23/10/25-C2458-9	9.00	1	23-Oct-20	23-Oct-25	21-Oct-22	100
DFCC BANK PLC	DFCC/BD/29/03/23-C2393-12.6	12.60	1	29-Mar-18	29-Mar-23	25-Mar-23	100
FIRST CAPITAL HOLDINGS PLC	CFV/BD/07/02/26-C2467	10.86	1	8-Feb-21	7-Feb-26	7-Feb-23	100
FIRST CAPITAL HOLDINGS PLC	CFV/BD/07/02/26-C2465-10	10.00	1	8-Feb-21	7-Feb-26	3-Feb-23	100
FIRST CAPITAL HOLDINGS PLC	FCT/BD/30/01/25-C2445-12.75	12.75	2	30-Jan-20	30-Jan-25	28-Jul-22	100
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	HNB/BD/22/09/26-C2431-12.8	12.80	1	23-Sep-19	22-Sep-26	21-Sep-22	100
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	HNB/BD/22/09/24-C2430-12.3	12.30	1	23-Sep-19	22-Sep-24	21-Sep-22	100
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	HNB/BD/01/11/23-C2361-13	13.00	1	1-Nov-16	1-Nov-23	29-Oct-22	100
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	HNB/BD/28/07/31-C2480-9.5	9.50	1	28-Jul-21	28-Jul-31	27-Jul-22	100
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	HNB/BD/29/08/23A08	8.00	1	30-Aug-13	29-Aug-23	27-Aug-22	100
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	HNB/BD/31/03/2400F		0	7-Jun-07	31-Mar-24		100
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	HNB/BD/31/07/22B16-75	16.75	1	1-Aug-07	31-Jul-22	29-Jun-22	100
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	HNB/BD/14/12/24-C2275-8.33	8.33	2	15-Dec-14	14-Dec-24	30-Jun-22	100
HAYLEYS PLC	HAYL/BD/26/08/24-C2428-13	13.00	2	26-Aug-19	26-Aug-24	24-Aug-22	100
HAYLEYS PLC	HAYL/BD/31/07/23-C2406-12.5	12.50	2	31-Jul-18	31-Jul-23	28-Jul-22	100
HAYLEYS PLC	HAYL/BD/26/08/24-C2427	10.42	2	26-Aug-19	26-Aug-24	24-Aug-22	100
HAYLEYS PLC	HAYL/BD/31/07/23-C2407	9.52	2	31-Jul-18	31-Jul-23	28-Jul-22	100
HNB FINANCE PLC	HNB/BD/30/12/24-C2443-13.2	13.20	1	30-Dec-19	30-Dec-24	28-Dec-22	100
HNB FINANCE PLC	HNB/BD/30/12/24-C2444-12.79	12.79	2	30-Dec-19	30-Dec-24	28-Jun-22	100
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FINANCE CORPORATION BANK OF SL	HDFC/BD/20/11/25-C2330-12	12.00	1	20-Nov-15	20-Nov-25	19-Nov-22	100
KOTAGALA PLANTATIONS PLC	KOTA/BD/31/08/26-C2464-7.5	7.50	1	1-Sep-20	31-Aug-26	30-Aug-22	100
KOTAGALA PLANTATIONS PLC	KOTA/BD/31/08/25-C2463-7.5	7.50	1	1-Sep-20	31-Aug-25	30-Aug-22	100
KOTAGALA PLANTATIONS PLC	KOTA/BD/31/08/23-C2460-7.5	7.50	1	1-Sep-20	31-Aug-23	30-Aug-22	100
KOTAGALA PLANTATIONS PLC	KOTA/BD/31/08/24-C2461-7.5	7.50	1	1-Sep-20	31-Aug-24	30-Aug-22	100
KOTAGALA PLANTATIONS PLC	KOTA/BD/31/08/22-C2462-7.5	7.50	1	1-Sep-20	31-Aug-22	30-Aug-22	100
L O I C HOLDINGS PLC	LOIC/BD/24/02/26-C2470-10.25	10.25	1	24-Feb-21	24-Feb-26	22-Feb-23	100
L O I C HOLDINGS PLC	LOIC/BD/27/09/24-C2432-15	15.00	2	27-Sep-19	27-Sep-24	25-Sep-22	100
L O I C HOLDINGS PLC	LOIC/BD/27/09/24-C2433	12.21	2	27-Sep-19	27-Sep-24	25-Sep-22	100
L O I C HOLDINGS PLC	LOIC/BD/24/02/26-C2469-9.85	9.85	4	24-Feb-21	24-Feb-26	22-May-22	100
L O I C HOLDINGS PLC	LOIC/BD/24/02/31-C2468-12	12.00	1	24-Feb-21	24-Feb-31	22-Feb-23	100
L O I C HOLDINGS PLC	LOIC/BD/30/07/22-C2385-13	13.00	2	31-Jul-17	30-Jul-22	28-Jul-22	100
LB FINANCE PLC	LFIN/BD/11/12/22-C2388-13.25	13.25	2	11-Dec-17	11-Dec-22	10-Jun-22	100
LB FINANCE PLC	LFIN/BD/11/12/22-C2387-12.75	12.75	2	11-Dec-17	11-Dec-22	10-Jun-22	100
LOL CEYLON HOLDINGS PLC	LOCH/BD/06/10/23-C2493-9.5	9.50	1	6-Oct-21	6-Oct-23	5-Oct-22	100
LOL FINANCE PLC	LOFC/BD/31/07/23-C2409-0	-	0	31-Jul-18	31-Jul-23		100
LOL FINANCE PLC	LOFC/BD/31/07/23-C2408-14.75	14.75	2	31-Jul-18	31-Jul-23	28-Jul-22	100
MERCHANT BANK OF SRI LANKA & FINANCE PLC	MBSL/BD/02/05/22-C2382-15	15.00	1	3-May-17	2-May-22	30-Apr-22	100
MERCHANT BANK OF SRI LANKA & FINANCE PLC	MBSL/BD/02/05/22-C2381-14.5	14.50	2	3-May-17	2-May-22	1-May-22	100
MERCHANT BANK OF SRI LANKA & FINANCE PLC	MBSL/BD/02/05/22-C2380	10.00	2	3-May-17	2-May-22	1-May-22	100
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC	NDB/BD/19/12/23C13-9	13.90	1	19-Dec-13	19-Dec-23	30-Dec-22	100
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC	NDB/BD/30/03/24-C2419-13.5	13.50	2	31-Mar-19	30-Mar-24	29-Sep-22	100
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC	NDB/BD/23/11/26-C2494-11.9	11.90	2	24-Nov-21	23-Nov-26	23-May-22	100
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC	NDB/BD/31/12/25D14	14.00	1	19-Dec-13	19-Dec-25	30-Dec-22	100
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC	NDB/BD/24/09/25-C2452-9.5	9.50	1	25-Sep-20	24-Sep-25	23-Sep-22	100
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC	NDB/BD/23/11/28-C2495-12	12.00	2	24-Nov-21	23-Nov-28	23-May-22	100
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC	NDB/BD/30/03/24-C2420-13.95	13.95	1	31-Mar-19	30-Mar-24	29-Mar-23	100
NATIONS TRUST BANK PLC	NTB/BD/20/04/23-C2402-12.65	12.65	2	20-Apr-18	20-Apr-23	18-Apr-22	100
NATIONS TRUST BANK PLC	NTB/BD/23/12/24-C2441-12.8	12.80	1	23-Dec-19	23-Dec-24	21-Dec-22	100
NATIONS TRUST BANK PLC	NTB/BD/23/12/26-C2442-12.9	12.90	1	23-Dec-19	23-Dec-26	21-Dec-22	100
NATIONS TRUST BANK PLC	NTB/BD/20/04/23-C2401-13	13.00	1	20-Apr-18	20-Apr-23	16-Apr-22	100
NAWALOKA HOSPITALS PLC	NHL/BD/30/09/23F14-45	14.45	4	30-Sep-13	30-Sep-23	30-Jun-22	100
NAWALOKA HOSPITALS PLC	NHL/BD/30/09/22E14-4	14.40	4	30-Sep-13	30-Sep-23	30-Jun-22	100
PEOPLE'S LEASING & FINANCE PLC	PLC/BD/05/08/24-C2483-0	-	0	5-Aug-21	5-Aug-24		100
PEOPLE'S LEASING & FINANCE PLC	PLC/BD/05/08/26-C2485-0	-	0	5-Aug-21	5-Aug-26		100
PEOPLE'S LEASING & FINANCE PLC	PLC/BD/18/04/22-C2399-12.4	12.40	1	18-Apr-18	18-Apr-22	16-Apr-22	100
PEOPLE'S LEASING & FINANCE PLC	PLC/BD/18/04/23-C2398-12.8	12.80	1	18-Apr-18	18-Apr-23	16-Apr-22	100
PEOPLE'S LEASING & FINANCE PLC	PLC/BD/05/08/26-C2482-9	9.00	1	5-Aug-21	5-Aug-26	4-Aug-22	100
PEOPLE'S LEASING & FINANCE PLC	PLC/BD/05/08/24-C2484-8	8.00	1	5-Aug-21	5-Aug-24	4-Aug-22	100
SAMPATH BANK PLC	SAMP/BD/20/03/23-C2390-12.5	12.50	2	20-Mar-18	20-Mar-23	18-Sep-22	100
SAMPATH BANK PLC	SAMP/BD/28/02/24-C2415-13.9	13.90	1	28-Feb-19	28-Feb-24	25-Feb-23	100
SAMPATH BANK PLC	SAMP/BD/12/04/28-C2474-9	9.00	1	12-Apr-21	12-Apr-28	11-Apr-22	100
SAMPATH BANK PLC	SAMP/BD/21/12/22-C2389-12.5	12.50	2	21-Dec-17	21-Dec-22	17-Jun-22	100
SANASA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED	SIC/BD/04/05/31-C2479-9.28	9.28	2	5-May-21	4-May-31	3-May-22	100
SANASA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED	SIC/BD/04/05/26-C2478-9.05	9.05	2	5-May-21	4-May-26	3-May-22	100
SENKADAGALA FINANCE COMPANY PLC	SFCL/BD/30/08/24-C2429-12.875	12.875	2	30-Aug-19	30-Aug-24	25-Aug-22	100
SEYLAN BANK PLC	SEYB/BD/18/04/24-C2421-14.5	14.50	2	18-Apr-19	18-Apr-24	15-Apr-22	100
SEYLAN BANK PLC	SEYB/BD/29/03/28-C2397-13.5	13.50	2	29-Mar-18	29-Mar-28	25-Sep-22	100
SEYLAN BANK PLC	SEYB/BD/29/03/23-C2395-12.85	12.85	2	29-Mar-18	29-Mar-23	25-Sep-22	100
SEYLAN BANK PLC	SEYB/BD/15/07/23-C2354-13.75	13.75	2	15-Jul-16	15-Jul-23	13-Jul-22	100
SEYLAN BANK PLC	SEYB/BD/12/04/26-C2473-9.25	9.25	4	12-Apr-21	12-Apr-26	10-Apr-22	100
SEYLAN BANK PLC	SEYB/BD/12/04/26-C2472-9.75	9.75	1	12-Apr-21	12-Apr-26	11-Apr-22	100
SEYLAN BANK PLC	SEYB/BD/29/03/25-C2396-13.2	13.20	2	29-Mar-18	29-Mar-25	25-Sep-22	100
SEYLAN BANK PLC	SEYB/BD/18/04/24-C2422-15	15.00	1	18-Apr-19	18-Apr-24	16-Apr-22	100
SINGER FINANCE LANKA PLC	SFIN/BD/19/05/23-C2448-13	13.00	1	19-May-20	19-May-23	18-May-22	100



# the morning brunch



## Netflix pumps brakes on Will Smith action film 'Fast and Loose'

The week before the Oscar ceremony, director David Leitch withdrew as the director of a planned Netflix movie *Fast and Loose*, starring Will Smith. Instead, he moved on to *Fall Guy*, starring Ryan Gosling. According to sources, Netflix put out an urgent call for another director to take over a project featuring the star who was heavily favoured to win Best Actor at the Oscars. But soon after Smith's attack on Chris Rock on the Oscars stage, Netflix quietly moved the project to the back burner. *Fast and Loose* was to tell the story of a crime boss who loses his memory after an attack. (Hollywood Reporter)

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



"I can promise you that women working together – linked, informed, and educated – can bring peace and prosperity to this forsaken planet."  
- ISABELLE ALLENDE

BY DIMITRI WIJESINGHE

**We can all agree that Sri Lanka is not in the best shape right now and over the weekend, we experienced some good and some bad, depending on who you ask.**

What transpired over the past two days was that, on 1 April, the President declared that the country was in a state of emergency and then on 2 April, implemented an islandwide curfew from 6 p.m. on 2 April to 6 a.m. today (4).

The regulations were brought into place by the issuing of a Gazette Extraordinary No. 2273/86, declaring a public emergency in Sri Lanka.

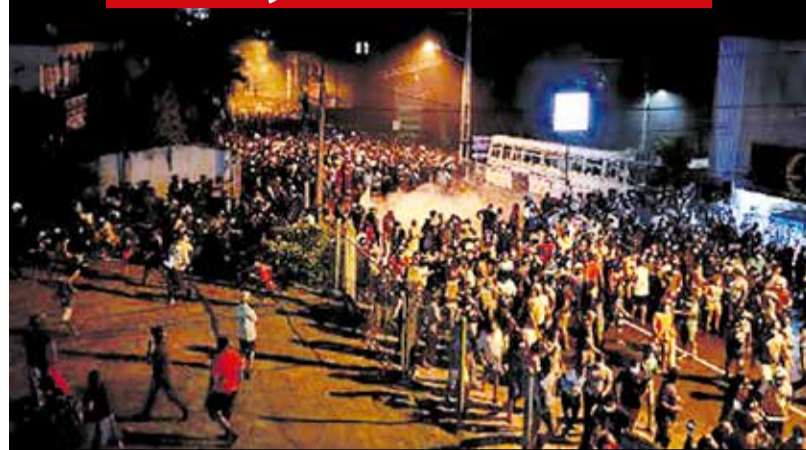
The gazette stated: "By reason of a public emergency in Sri Lanka, it is expedient, so to do, in the interest of public security, the protection of public order and the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the life of the community" and for these reasons, the President by virtue of the powers vested in him by Section Two of the Public Security Ordinance, will be issuing a proclamation declaring that provisions of Part Two of the said Ordinance shall come into operation throughout the island.

From our experiences in the past, when the President proclaims a state of emergency, what we have come to assume is that it automatically imposes the entire barrage of regulations under the Ordinance, which includes the power of the President to make emergency regulations, call out the armed forces, implement curfew, etc.

However, we saw on 2 April that these things do not automatically come into play and the President had to manually implement an islandwide curfew; it was not simply part and parcel of the state of emergency. So what does it mean to be in a public state of emergency?

According to Attorney-at-Law Harshana Nanayakkara, the proclamation of a state of emergency is provided for by the Constitution under Chapter XVIII of the Public Security Article 155.

## What you didn't know



# State of public emergency and islandwide curfew

The Article provides that the these powers are granted by virtue of the Public Security Ordinance and vests with the President the "...power to make emergency regulations under the Public Security Ordinance... shall include the power to make regulations having the legal effect of overriding, amending, or suspending the operation of the provisions of any law, except the provisions of the Constitution".

Nanayakkara made a special note of the final sentence where it states that these regulations made under the Public Security Ordinance are not to override the Constitution, which would mean that despite there being a proclamation of a state of emergency, citizens still maintain their fundamental rights, which include their freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; freedom

from torture; freedom of speech, assembly, association, occupation, and movement; among others.

Considering the situation over the weekend, we are all aware that there was a massive protest scheduled for yesterday (3) in the Western Province, where the public would have exercised their freedom of peaceful assembly, and as per Article 155, this right remains. However, Nanayakkara noted that within the Constitution itself there are certain limitations imposed on select few fundamental rights as per Article 15 of the Constitution.

Article 15 (3) notes: "The exercise and operation of the fundamental right declared and recognised by Article 14 (1) (b) shall be subject to such restrictions as may be prescribed by law in the interests of racial and religious harmony."

## What about curfew?

Curfew is imposed as per Section 16 of the Public Security Ordinance. "Where the President considers it necessary to do so for the maintenance of public order in any area...no person in such area shall, between such hours as may be specified in the Order, be on any public road, railway, public park, public recreation ground or other public ground, or the seashore except under the authority of a written permit granted by such person as may be specified in the Order."

This here is pretty straightforward; if there is a curfew and you are to break it, then you will be committing a crime.

## What's next?

Nanayakkara noted that while the law and regulations are readily available for citizens to educate themselves, when it is practically applied, the law of the land and its effective implementation depends largely on the nature of the rulers who are willing to abide by it.

He shared that considering the three pillars of democracy, we can make an attempt to evoke the intervention of the Judiciary with regard to any violations in terms of these regulations. The Legislature, that is the Parliament, being the second pillar, often tends to side with the Executive, who is the third and final pillar holding up our country's democracy.

He shared that a further element of the proclamation of the state of public emergency is that as per the Ordinance, the Parliament must be called immediately and they are vested with the power to, firstly, vote on the regulations being made under the vested power and decide upon them, and secondly, make the final call on whether to allow this state of emergency to continue to be effective or not.

He said that we can wait and see what kind of decision the Legislature makes at this juncture.

## 'Children of the Sun' to be screened in North America

Prasanna Vithanage shares his thoughts

BY VENESSA ANTHONY

Indie distribution outfits, Deaf Crocodile Films and Gratitude Films, are collaborating to give limited theatrical releases this year to a pair of foreign language titles. One such title is our very own, locally produced *Children of the Sun (Gaadi)* – a historical drama from Sri Lanka. Set in 1814 during the era of repressive British colonial rule in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), the film depicts what happens after a collaborationist English agent convinces the local Sinhala Buddhist nobility to attempt to overthrow the rival Tamil king. The subsequent military disaster forces a Sinhala noble woman to choose between suicide and marriage to a low-caste outcast.

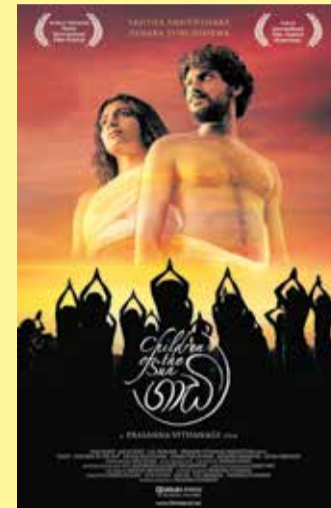
Prasanna Vithanage

directed the film, which is in the Sinhala language, and will be released with English subtitles. *The Morning Brunch* had a chat with him to learn more about this achievement and what it means for the local film industry.

Explaining how this achievement came about, Vithanage informed us that distribution cannot be obtained by applying for it, because "even though Sri Lanka has a number of talented filmmakers, it is always difficult to obtain distribution in countries like Europe and the US". He added that their films have been screened at film festivals through an application process based on the film's merits, but in terms of distribution, it is a different process entirely. Once the movie is screened in theatres, Vithanage explained that it will then be selected for over-the-top (OTT) platforms for streaming purposes. "This film will receive a cinema run in the fall, followed by a digital release through partner Grasshopper Films for TVOD and SVOD," he informed us.

Upon his visit to India last year, the head of Gratitude Films commended him on the film and conveyed her enjoyment of it. "This isn't the first time Gratitude Films is collaborating with Deaf Crocodile Films in the USA; they have promoted a few South Asian films before. So, the head of Gratitude Films contacted me for a chat about the possibilities of my film," he told us. Later, it was shown to the management behind Deaf Crocodile Films, who also had only praise for the movie, adding that the film had to be seen by an American audience. Vithanage added: "Deaf Crocodile Films only releases four films a year, so this was quite the honour and achievement."

Vithanage also told us that unfortunately, the film wasn't able to see its full potential due to the pandemic



and now the economic crisis. "We had our European premiere in Notre Dame in January and in March, the pandemic hit. Even in Sri Lanka, I'm still unable to release it due to the various issues we've had to face in the last few years," he stated.

In addition to Vithanage's *Children of the Sun (Gaadi)* being released, Indian feature *Boomba Ride* by director Biswajeet Bora, is also getting an American release.

Deaf Crocodile Co-Founder and Head of Acquisitions and Distribution



Prasanna Vithanage

Dennis Bartok stated to foreign media that they are thrilled to be releasing these two remarkable movies that demonstrate some of the phenomenal range and creativity in Indian and Sri Lankan filmmaking right now. "Prasanna Vithanage's *Gaadi* is such a lush and visually stunning portrait of political conflict, caste conflict, and the clash of faiths in Sri Lanka's history."

We asked Vithanage if he believes that *Children of the Sun* will have an impact on Western audiences as well, to which he explained that when a filmmaker makes a film, it is structured for the audience – whether they are in Colombo, or New York. "The language of cinema is visual, since film is a visual medium. If the film is good, it should speak to any audience, especially since it's in an international language, it should affect the Western market," he stated.

Sharing one experience with *Children of the Sun* being screened to a foreign audience, Vithanage told us that it was shown in one of the biggest theatres in San Francisco during the South Asian Film Festival. "It was shown to a full house; I think there were 1,000 members in the audience and it was one of the best receptions I have received so far," he shared, adding that the audience reacted to the film, they laughed along, and observed every subtlety.

Concluding, he added that as a Sri Lankan filmmaker, this achievement is a leap forward and he believes it will pave the way for other Sri Lankan films to be released in North America, and hopes it will work out positively for the local film industry.

## 'Contemporaries: Considering Architectural Archives'

BY NAVEED ROZAIS

The last few months, though troubled on so many other fronts and with little signs of immediate improvement, have however been something of a renaissance for Sri Lankan art following the pandemic, with an eminent group of Sri Lanka's arts and cultural organisations and galleries coming together in January to form an informal coalition of sorts to amplify the power of their individual events, exhibitions, and initiatives and build a cultural calendar for 2022.

One key exhibition of the first half of 2022, "Geoffrey Bawa: It is Essential to be There" opened on 1 February, and concluded yesterday (3). Over the course of the exhibition, the Geoffrey Bawa Trust also held several other small events and discussions to further push the envelope of discussions around Geoffrey Bawa, post-colonial Sri Lankan architecture, and the architects of the time who would go on to play pivotal roles in shaping modern Sri Lankan architecture.

Leading up to the conclusion of "It is Essential to be There", the Trust hosted its final discussion, "Contemporaries: Considering Architectural Archives", a panel that examined four of Sri Lanka's most renowned modern architects (and contemporaries of Geoffrey Bawa) – Justin Samarasekera, Minette de Silva, Valentine Gunasekera, and Panini Tennakoon – and what formats each of their archives might take through the eyes of architects who have interacted with these architects or conducted in-depth study of their work. The panel comprised Nela De Zoysa, Anooradha Siddiqi, Milinda Pathiraja, and Sumedha Kelegama and was moderated by Geoffrey Bawa Trust Chairperson Channa Daswatte and Geoffrey Bawa Trust Curator of Art and Archival Collections Shayari de Silva.

### Justin Samarasekera

Nela De Zoysa spoke on the work of her father Justin Samarasekera, who studied in India and the UK before coming back to Sri Lanka where he would spend his life building up architectural education in Sri Lanka, going on to help create the Ceylon Institute of Architecture (now the Sri Lanka Institute of Architecture) in collaboration with the



From left: Channa Daswatte, Anooradha Siddiqi, Sumedha Kelegama, Milinda Pathiraja, Nela De Zoysa, and Shayari De Silva

Royal Institute of British Architects, to sit as First Chair of the Board of Education at the City School of Architecture, and set up his own practice – Justin Samarasekera Associates. Samarasekera worked tirelessly to make architectural education available at all levels, setting up educational frameworks in many institutions and making a name for himself as the father of Sri Lankan architecture education.

### Minette de Silva

For a very long time, Minette de Silva was an unsung hero of Sri Lankan architecture, despite her being a trailblazer for being the first-ever registered female Sri Lankan architect.

Through her years of study of de Silva's work, Anooradha Siddiqi shared that the most accurate definition of de Silva as a practitioner was experimental. A cornerstone of de Silva's was working local arts and crafts into her projects, and one thing that set her apart, back in her heyday (the 1950s and 1960s), was how she would approach designing buildings, introducing concepts like questionnaires for clients, something that is still relatively unusual even today.

### Valentine Gunasekera

Milinda Pathiraja spoke about Valentine Gunasekera's work and how it explored the idea of modernity and technology at a very critical time in our postcolonial history. Gunasekera's work evidence his thought process of building a new Sri Lankan style – moving away colonial and vernacular precedence of the time and exploring raw, new forms of modern architecture that met the needs of the rising middle class in a context that made sense in our urban context.

### Panini Tennakoon

Much of old Colombo's cityscape is defined

by Panini Tennakoon and his tenure at the Public Works Department. Some of his more iconic buildings include the Department of National Archives building and the Colpetty Police Station, work that directly brook the topic of archiving and why it is important, given the renovations these buildings are currently undergoing.

Tennakoon's work saw great effort taken to account for the harsh edge our climate can have and protect his work from the sun, while also finding ways to take the edge off the heat.

### Archiving the work of architects who have shaped our identity

Each of these architects have explored concepts of modernism, and as the panel discussed, the connotations of the word modernism can vary; some, like Minette de Silva, never used the word or encouraged it, others while not using the word, were proponents of the modernist movement through their work.

In Pathiraja's words: "They practised in a pivotal point of our post-colonial history. It was 10-15 years after independence, and we were building our modern society; they contributed to it."

But what of archiving? "Geoffrey Bawa: It is Essential to be There" is an exhibition put together almost exclusively off of Bawa's archives and archival work; it provides an insight into Bawa's mind that looking at his completed buildings or books on his work does not. So what of these other great architects and their archives?

First, it is important to note that archives are more than a collection of drawings and photos; sometimes they are environments – like the house of the artist Ena De Silva, which was methodically dismantled and reassembled in Lunugama after the property on which the original house stood was sold. "Archiving is recording," Channa Daswatte said. "It doesn't mean drawings alone; it's conversations, oral histories, recording buildings as they are."

In a sense, as can be drawn from the name of this most recent Geoffrey Bawa exhibition, part of archiving is being there, which is why it is essential to be there – to look, to understand, to record, to become part of that archive ourselves, and to carry it forward – to not lose valuable parts of our history to time.



# Bulls on parade

## The right to survive

BY SURESH DE SILVA



**A citizen's right to protest peacefully is a quintessential constituent of democracy. People in a time of dire crisis and catastrophe are within their constitutional rights to demonstrate and exercise the said rights, especially in a case of emergency.**

According to the United Nations (UN); Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status.

Some of the mandatory human rights include and are depicted below:

- The right to life and liberty
- The right to peaceful assembly
- Freedom from slavery and torture
- Freedom of opinion and expression
- Equality before the law
- Prohibiting arbitrary arrest or detention
- Protection of minority rights
- The right to fair trial and presumption of innocence
- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- The right to work and education
- The right to work in just and favourable conditions
- The right to social protection, to an adequate standard of living and to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental wellbeing
- The rights to enjoy benefits of cultural freedom and scientific progress

(Source: [www.un.org/en/global-issues/human-rights](http://www.un.org/en/global-issues/human-rights))

Everyone is entitled to the above said rights without discrimination. No one who is part of a civil, morally aspiring, law abiding, cultured, progressive society can be deprived of their basic human rights.

Society embodies certain key values such as equality, justice, fairness, respect and dignity, and by preserving and inculcating these values into the fibre and core of every system and social framework it avails those who face abuse, exploitation,



unfair treatment, neglect, isolation and vulnerability to have a voice, to be able to fight for safety and security, and work for their basic needs to be met, to be protected from the misdemeanours and injustices of injury, harm and detrimental defilement to one's family, self and community.

German Ambassador to Sri Lanka Tweeted: "True, there is an emergency in Sri Lanka. However, let's not confuse cause and effect. People demonstrating for their rights are no emergency. It's the emergency that brings them to the streets."

US Ambassador to Sri Lanka Julie Chung Tweeted: "Sri Lankans have a right to protest peacefully – essential for democratic expression. I am watching the situation closely, and hope the coming days bring restraint from all sides, as well as much needed economic stability and relief for those suffering."

### Downward spiral

Our nation was placed under a 36-hour curfew, propelled and instigated as a state of national emergency. The curfew is interspersed with electricity cuts, while essential shortages islandwide are still rampant.

Businesses are under duress and severe pressure without gas, diesel and oil. Supermarket chains are shut down, medium and small shops and stores are closed from restaurants and eateries to other essential services that are unable to operate due to the fuel shortage.

Children are deprived of their education, unable to go to school due to the

fuel shortages, unable to study online with the signals and transmissions of towers and networks down during this time.

Adults cannot work at home due to the sporadic power cuts, and they are not able to work at their corporate strongholds and offices – as only a few could afford and have generators, and the ones that do, lack diesel to run or operate.

Travelling is impossible due to the shortages of fuel. The queues stretching serpentine for miles at fuel stations is testament to the impending and prevailing crises.

Families are unable to cook or provide for their loved ones because of the shortages of gas and oil, and where those who could afford it could switch to electric cooking means are unable to do so due to the power cuts.

Sri Lanka faces a national crisis of utility cuts and blackouts up to 13-15 hours. This is at large due to the prevailing economic and financial crisis resulting in shortages of fuel and has handicapped and thereby crippled the island nation's electricity grid.

The depleted foreign reserves are at the epicentre of driving the worst economic crisis our island has faced in decades.

The currency crunch has hindered imports of fuel, milk powder, petrol, and cooking gas.

While the Covid-19 pandemic dealt a fatal blow to our economy, affecting tourism and trade – today inflation has surged, the cost of living having risen to unfathomable levels vehemently suffocating and stifling

the livelihoods of nearly every Sri Lankan.

People cannot eat, people have no medicines, people cannot cook, they cannot travel, they cannot work outside or from their homes, children are deprived of education, people cannot afford let alone acquire the basic needs they require to survive. Living in Sri Lanka has transpired into hell on earth... and unfortunately there are no more straws left to break the camel's back.

### The right to protest

For the first time in many decades every race, every ethnic group has laid aside their differences and united to voice their anger, frustrations, sorrow, disappointment and suffering. Demonstrations across the island have begun, people en masse are gathering in every city and town, state and region to protest their woe, bereavement and misery.

Even the tamest animal once pushed to a corner, left with no choice will defend itself and retaliate.

Let us not mince words and feign dilly dallying sentiments here. *We are facing the worst economic crisis in decades with colossal shortages of food, medicine, fuel, gas and basic essentials.*

Electronic devices are impacted, computers, phones, fridges, fans, air conditioners are all dysfunctional, or have conked.

The mobs of the populace taking to the streets and echoing their frustrations are justified when you can no longer survive or endure the hardships that are piling up upon them.

Can you blame them?

At the point of this article being penned, social media networks have been blocked by the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) in attempts to stem misinformation and discourage disseminated panic of mobilising to orchestrate protests. Over 8.20 million people competently and fervently utilise social media. It's not a far stretch to assume that at least 75% of people who are tech savvy, fluent with the advent of modern technology are capable of using VPNs.

So what choice is left for a public in disarray, for a nation in turmoil and people stripped off their inherent rights to spiral into violence and clash with the authorities at a time like this?

### End game

We are currently at a juncture where children's human rights, women's health and human rights, every citizen's right to stand up against social corruption, our right to encourage freedom of speech and expression, to stand up for equality, fairness, justice, dignity and fight cohesively and peacefully to hold the powers that be accountable for the current crisis is snuffed.

It is no easy thing to control people who are pushed to breaking point.

This writer implores that we try to mitigate the situation and flip the formulated higher narrative by practising our rights to protest, but done in a manner that is

# SM &

devoid of violence, vandalism, arson, social and community disruption and bedlam.

Leadership and governments will come and go. It's the people who are always left to cope with the aftermath, scraping the remains to try and survive, sustain and secure ourselves. This is a moment in time where every Sri Lankan should *not stoop to physical ferocity, wreckage, destruction and carnage* – simply because this will only justify the declared state of emergency and drive the forces and law enforcement to acquiesce to the notion that retaliation and response in equal measure is the answer and rendered unto them.

We must remain indomitable, our collective consciousness and conscience untainted, our resolve unmarred. We must not be shaken, stirred, bent or have our will, sense of higher virtue and values questioned or be sullied by emotional and irrational actions or acts of terror.

Because we will become the very things that we abhor.

Sometimes one must fight fire with fire. This is true. But context is key here.

This is a new age, an era where everyone is connected, where global networks are more coalesced than ever before. Where information and data are widespread. Where the world sees what every nation does, be it in broad daylight or in the shadows.

*We must adapt, re-align ourselves and do what we can, all we can, peacefully, strategically and in harmony.*

We need to change the narrative. We need to be intelligent, cognisant, fearless and formidable.

We need to cast aside religion, culture, heritage, class, status and race – anything that divides and polarises us, detaching us from the universal pulse that embodies the Sri Lankan spirit.

We need to work together to start repairing, stitching and healing the wounds of our nation right now, right here, or our future generations will have naught but a dystopian wasteland to inherit.

Sri Lanka needs a miracle, it needs to start with us doing the important and necessary things, in the honourable way, which is well within our rights.

For don't we all have the right to survive?

*(The writer is the frontman and lyricist of Stigmata, a creative consultant and brand strategist by profession, a self-published author and poet, thespian, animal rescuer, podcaster, and fitness enthusiast)*

*The views and opinions expressed in this column are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of this publication.*

## Lighting the way to a brighter and greener tomorrow



Taj Samudra Colombo showed its commitment to the planet by switching off the building façade lights, public area lights as well as the restaurant lights from

8.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. on Earth Day, which fell on 26 March. Taj Samudra Area Director/General Manager Pankaj Sampat and the team lit votive candles that were placed decoratively in the shape of "60+" in the lobby.

The restaurants and lobby areas were candle lit during this hour. Inhouse guests were also requested to show their commitment to this initiative by turning their lights off in their respective rooms.

The guests who were present at the hotel during this time, also contributed by lighting votive candles in the lobby. Taj Samudra Colombo showed commitment to the planet through this act of switching off the lights for one hour, thus creating awareness towards fostering a more sustainable lifestyle.

## La Vivente wins at SLIM Awards 2021

La Vivente is a female clothing brand that caters to a wide range of women with modern designs of international quality. It is a homegrown brand for women in celebration of their many roles. Whether she is a homemaker, a career woman, an entrepreneur, a caregiver, a mom – La Vivente has got it all for you.

They were recently awarded their first gold award for "SME Local Brand of the Year" and the bronze award for "Best New Entrant Brand" at the SLIM Brand Excellence Awards 2021. La Vivente is the first women's fashion brand in Sri Lanka to win two awards in this genre at the SLIM Awards. The ceremony is organised by the Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing, which celebrates the outstanding performances of corporates and brands, their dedication and commitment to consumer-driven initiatives and innovative market approaches. SLIM endeavours and encourages best practices in branding and raises local brands to global standards, thereby enhancing the image of marketing in the country.

The duo behind the brand are husband and wife Co-Founders and Co-Directors Dr. Dilesha Perera and Suneth Korala. La Vivente falls under Dilchand (Pvt.) Ltd. and was founded only two years ago. Starting as an online business, it has now grown with three physical stores located in Galle, Koswatt, and Negombo. Dilchand was established in 2009 and has now expanded into a large clothing supplier. From supplying many leading outlets across Sri Lanka, they are currently involved in retail and exclusively supply only for La Vivente.



La Vivente Co-Founders and Co-Director Dr. Dilesha Perera (left) and Suneth Korala

Speaking about their achievement, Dr. Dilesha said: "We are honoured to receive this prestigious award. It is a testimony to our untiring efforts, commitment to continuous innovation, validation of the tireless efforts of our team, resilience in troubled times and our drive to reach greater heights."

La Vivente is a go-to brand for the latest fashionable ladies' apparel – from simple to fancy office wear, casual to formal wear, active to loungewear. The brand takes pride in being affordable, and they have a strong online presence through their website and social media channels. They are the first local brand to showcase each piece of clothing via a video to allow online customers to have a better idea and look at the clothing. Additionally, they launch a new collection every week.



La Vivente Co-Founders and Co-Directors Dr. Dilesha Perera and Suneth Korala (both on extreme right) receiving the SLIM award

"We respond to the evolving needs of women by making our pieces relevant to the times. This allows them to wear functional fashion while being creative and expressive. We are committed to empower our employees for a happier and fulfilling life, ensuring a decent wage and a better working environment," added Dr. Dilesha.

La Vivente strongly believes in creating an environment for women to grow their careers and maximise their potential. The company has been continuously supporting women through their initiative programmes. "We support female entrepreneurs to reach their potential through programmes that empower their businesses and enrich their lives. Each creation purchased from La Vivente directly contributes towards empowering local women

and their families, adding essence and meaning to the brand's definition," explained Suneth. It is quite a unique organisation as it believes in nurturing women by building an ecosystem that encourages entrepreneurship and improves their livelihood.

The brand gives utmost importance to the quality of its products, starting from purchasing raw materials to the final design on the rack, whilst following strict built-in mechanisms to conduct quality checks and meet the specified quality standards. Standing at the pinnacle of success Dr. Dilesha Perera and Suneth Korala have not forgotten their humble roots and have been actively involved in multiple social work and the empowerment of women.





{ SPORTS }

# Man United dent their chances of top-four finish

● *Man City get back on top of English Premier League table*



Christian Eriksen scored the first goal for Brentford in their 4-1 win over Chelsea last Saturday (2)

COMPILED BY RANJIKA PERERA

Manchester United's top-four hopes suffered a blow despite coming from behind to earn a 1-1 draw with Leicester City at Old Trafford, England last Saturday (2). It was Leicester who carved out the better openings in a tepid first half, but the visitors failed to register a shot on target to trouble David De Gea, while United's one big chance saw Kasper Schmeichel deny Bruno Fernandes with an outstretched boot.

The game opened up following the break and the Foxes stole in front in the 63rd minute when Kelechi Iheanacho headed home James Maddison's superb cross. The "United faithful" feared the worst but their side levelled just four minutes later when Fred lashed home a rebound after Schmeichel had parried a Fernandes shot into his path.

### Brentford stun Chelsea

Brentford stunned neighbours Chelsea with an incredible 4-1 victory also Saturday at Stamford Bridge in South West London, despite falling behind in the second half.

After a goalless first period, where Ivan Toney had three fine chances to put the Bees in front, Chelsea took the lead three minutes after the restart when Antonio Rudiger smashed home an unstoppable curling effort from beyond 30 yards leaving David Raya with no chance. This lead lasted just two minutes until Bryan Mbeumo set up Vitaly Janelt to slam home from the edge of the box and the former was again the creator as the visitors went in front, courtesy of long-time Chelsea nemesis Christian Eriksen, who dinked home from close range.

Seven minutes later, the match was all but settled when Toney slid a pass through to Janelt and, despite getting a hand to his lofted effort, Eduoard Mendy could not keep the ball out of the goal. The humiliation was complete when Eriksen's free-kick found its way

**La Liga results:**  
 Getafe 1-0 Mallorca  
 Levante 2-0 Villarreal  
 Real Madrid 2-1 Celta Vigo  
 Atletico Madrid 4-0 Alaves

**Bundesliga results:**  
 Union Berlin 1-0 Koln  
 Arminia 1-1 VfB Stuttgart  
 VfL Bochum 2-1 Hoffenheim  
 Leverkusen 2-1 Hertha  
 Eintracht Frankfurt 0-0 Furth  
 Bayern 4-0 SC Freiburg  
 RB Leipzig 4-1 Dortmund

to substitute Yoane Wissa who lashed home with three minutes remaining.

### City get back to winning ways

Manchester City returned to the top of the Premier League table after a comfortable win against Burnley at Turf Moor, Burnley, Lancashire, England with goals from Kevin De Bruyne and Ilkay Gundogan. Burnley remain in the bottom three and could be seven points from safety if Everton beat West Ham, in their match scheduled for yesterday (3).

The hosts started the better of the two teams, but quickly found themselves behind when De Bruyne unleashed a powerful shot high and into the centre of the goal after Raheem Sterling cut the ball back to the Belgian with just five minutes had played. City nearly made it two when Rodrigo Hernández Cascante aka Rodri saw his curled effort saved by Nick Pope before Gundogan's volley sailed over the bar after De Bruyne picked him out from a corner.

Gundogan did get his goal, though. In what was a similar combination for the visitors, second after a quick give and go down the right-hand side between Sterling and De Bruyne, saw the former find the German who slotted it past Nick Pope with just 25 minutes on the clock.



La Liga emblem

# IOC's Tokyo 2020 payments to international federations set to rise

● *At least 5% rise from Rio 2016 expected*

**F**édération Internationale de Football Association or International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) has become the first major international sports body to publish its financial statements for 2021, disclosing that world football's governing body made a net loss of \$ 312.2 million (Rs. 93 billion) on revenue of \$ 766.5 million (Rs. 228 billion) for the year immediately preceding the next men's World Cup – Qatar 2022 – its all-important cash-cow.

The document is well worth perusing for anyone who derives income from a Summer Olympic International Federation since it provides the first hard information outside the uber-privileged Olympic bubble regarding the size of payments made by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to the majority of international federations (IFs) whose sports were part of the Tokyo 2020 programme, said David Owen on *Inside the Games* last Saturday (2).

### The good news

The payments are of little significance to FIFA, the richest Summer Olympic IF by a country mile. But they are of vital importance to most other governing bodies of Tokyo 2020 sports.

The good news is that FIFA's payment - \$ 25.95 million (Rs. 7.7 billion) - suggests very strongly that the Covid-19 pandemic and consequent postponement of the Olympic and Paralympic Games which should have been held in the summer of 2020 have not stopped the IOC from paying the 28 concerned IFs slightly more than they received after Rio 2016.



A Group 'D' sport like sailing can expect to receive more than \$ 16 million (Rs. 4.7 billion) from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as part of its dividend from Tokyo 2020

PHOTO © INSIDE THE GAMES

### Increase of 5%

The new payment to FIFA compares with \$ 22.09 million (Rs. 6.5 billion) received by the football body in 2016. That would imply a more than satisfactory uptick for Summer Olympic IF of 17.5%. The final calculation is not quite that simple; however, FIFA also got a \$ 2.64 million (Rs. 786 million) top-up payment in 2017.

That implies an increase of a much more modest 5% – except that FIFA will probably get another small top-up in the current financial year.

### Other Group 'B' sports

But the more sensible international sports leaders are likely to reflect that things could have been much, much worse and the next IOC payment, relating to Paris 2024, should materialise after an interval of three years, not the usual four. "Football is one of five Group 'B' sports in Olympic terms; so I think we can be

pretty sure that the world governing bodies of basketball, cycling, tennis, and volleyball will also have received \$ 25.95 million (Rs. 7.7 billion) from the IOC," said the writer.

### For Group 'A' big guns

The same 5% increase for the Group "C" sports, including rowing, badminton, judo, table tennis, and archery, applied to their Rio total, would take them to around \$ 18.6 million (Rs. 5.5 billion) each.

For Group "D" sports like equestrian, handball, fencing, and sailing, the same calculation suggests their overall payment ought to advance to just over \$ 16 million (Rs. 4.7 billion), while golf and rugby unions should get about \$ 13.6 million (Rs. 4 billion).

As for the big guns in Group "A", their payments should move to at least \$ 33.5 million (Rs. 9.9 billion).

### IFs which borrowed money

A 5% advance would take the overall sums paid by the IOC to the 28 IFs post-Tokyo 2020 to about \$ 567 million (Rs. 168.9 billion), up from \$ 540 million (Rs. 160 billion) post-Rio 2016 and \$ 520 million (Rs. 154.9 billion) post-London 2012.

A 17.5% uptick would take the IOC's total payment to more like \$ 635 million (Rs. 189 billion). IFs which borrowed money from the IOC that will need to be paid back include World Athletics \$ 7.5 million (Rs. 2.2 billion), World Sailing \$ 3.1 million (Rs. 923 million), the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) around \$ 1.5 million (Rs. 446 million), the International Tennis Federation \$ 3 million (Rs. 893 million), and the International Cycling Union \$ 5 million (Rs. 1.4 billion).

## FOREIGN SPORTS IN BRIEF

# 'Senegal vs. Netherlands' in Qatar World Cup first match

Senegal and the Netherlands are set to play the first match of the 2022 Fédération Internationale de Football Association or International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) World Cup in Qatar with the hosts opting to play in the evening to maximise viewership on Monday, 21 November.

The Qatar World Cup is to be staged from 21 November to 18 December with the participation of 32 teams across eight venues in five cities.

Qatar are scheduled to meet Ecuador at 7 p.m. local time in the Al Bayt Stadium in what is still labelled as match one, despite starting four hours later than the other Group "A" fixture, being played in the Al Thumama Stadium in the capital Doha.

Elsewhere on the opening day, the first Group "B" fixture is set to be played with England taking on Iran at 4 p.m. in the Khalifa International Stadium.

The US are then due to finish the day's proceedings at 10 p.m. with a match against the European playoff winner, which could be one of Wales, Scotland or Ukraine, in Al Rayyan's Ahmad bin Ali Stadium.

Defending champions France are set to begin their campaign on 22 November against either Australia, the United Arab Emirates or Peru, who are competing for the final spot in Group "D".

The match is scheduled to take



La'eeb, the official mascot for the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar was unveiled last Friday (1) with the name meaning 'super skilled player' in Arabic. The mascot is a portrayal of a 'keffiyeh', which is a traditional Arabian headdress, and an 'agal', the black code

place in the Al Janoub Stadium in Al Wakrah while Denmark and Tunisia are set to clash in the Education City Stadium in Al Rayyan in the group's other opening fixture.

The world No. 1 men's team Brazil are in one of the tougher groups alongside Serbia, Switzerland, and Cameroon.

### OTHER INTERNATIONAL SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

● **Pakistan vs. Australia: Babar Azam dominates as hosts win ODI series**

**Third One-Day International (ODI), Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore: Brief scores: Australia 210 all out in 41.5 overs (Alex Carey 56; Haris Rauf 3/39,**

Mohammad Wasim 3/40) **Pakistan 214/1 in 37.5 overs (Babar Azam 105 n.o., Imam-ul-Haq 89 n.o.)**

**Result:** Pakistan win by nine wickets

**Series:** Pakistan win 2-1

**First ODI:** Australia won by 88 runs on 29 March

**Second ODI:** Pakistan won by six wickets on 31 March

**Player of the Match and Series: Babar Azam (276 runs)**

**Next match:** One-off Twenty20 International at Lahore tomorrow (5) from 9 p.m. Sri Lanka time Pakistan skipper Babar Azam scored his second century in two matches as Pakistan beat Australia by nine wickets in the third ODI to win the series 2-1 last Saturday (2) at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. Azam



Babar Azam (left) and Imam-ul-Haq shared a stand of more than 100 for the second game in a row as Pakistan won the series against Australia last Saturday (2) in Lahore, Pakistan

followed Thursday's (31 March) impressive 114 in the second ODI with an unbeaten 105 last Saturday. Australia were bowled out for 210 in the first innings. The hosts lost Fakhar Zaman for 17 before Babar and Imam-ul-Haq shared a 190-run partnership to seal victory.

### South Africa take 174-run lead in first Test against Bangladesh after day three

**Brief scores: South Africa 367 all out (Temba Bavuma 93, Dean Elgar 67; Khaled Ahmed 4/92, Mehidy Hasan Miraz 3/94) and 105/1 (Mahmudul Hasan Joy 137; Simon Harmer 4/103, Lizaad Williams 3/54) Bangladesh 298 all out (Dean Elgar 62 n.o.)**



Thailand's Patty Tavatanakit wins her first LPGA Tour event

## ON THIS DAY

### ACHIEVEMENTS/HISTORIC EVENTS

**1959** France beat Wales 11-3 at Stade Colombes to win the Five Nations Rugby Championship outright for the first time

**1988** Eddie Hill, the American drag racer, became the world's first driver to cover the quarter mile in under five seconds. Drag racing is a type of motor racing in which automobiles or motorcycles compete, usually two at a time, to be first to cross a set finish line

**2021** At the ANA Inspiration Women's Golf, Mission Hills Country Club, California, U.S.A., Patty Tavatanakit

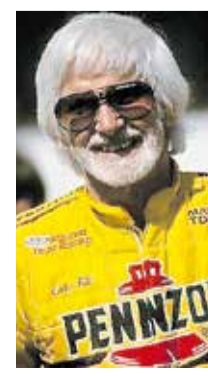
of Thailand won her first Ladies' Professional Golf Association (LPGA) Tour event by two strokes from New Zealand's Lydia Ko, who cards a 10-under-par final round

### BIRTHS

**1957** Birth of Paul Downton, the England wicket-keeper whose career ended prematurely when a bail hit him in the eye in 1990, permanently impairing his vision, although by then he had lost his Test place to Jack Russell

**1976** Birth of Brazilian soccer star Emerson Ferreira da Rosa

**1989** Birth of the six feet seven inches Steven Finn, who made his county debut at 16, the youngest to do so since Fred



American drag racer Eddie Hill

Titmus in 1949. In his third Test, at Lord's against Bangladesh in 2010, he took nine wickets, and finished with 28 Test wickets that summer. Finn became the youngest Englishman to 50 Test wickets in 2011, though he only played one Test that year and saw Tim Bresnan and Chris Tremlett move up the pecking order. It didn't help that he struggled with his habit of knocking the bails over during his run-up to bowl



Paul Downton, the England wicket-keeper whose career ended prematurely when a bail hit him in the eye



# the morning sports



### He is in the act once again!

The tall man holds the leadership of the Super Sport short people's team in the Paradise Isle. Some say he was raised to that leadership as payback for cutting a successful deal with the controllers of the Super Sport in the Isle. When the Super Sport players refused to sign their annual contracts last time, citing pay cuts, this man had secretly pushed the youngsters to sign them. This angered the seniors of the side. The reward our man got for the secret manoeuvring was the Super Sport short people's captaincy. With this year's contract signing too around the corner, the fellow has started his usual business – cutting a deal with the controllers for his own benefit. This is a time questions are being raised about his leadership credentials. So, making the controllers happy is a ploy to safeguard his leadership role. As the seniors are again reluctant to sign the contracts for under-par wages, our man is trying to push the juniors to sign them to be in the good books of the controllers, and, by doing so, he can keep the leadership despite all the criticism.

# Australia's dominant era continues with Women's World Cup win

● *Alyssa Healy's record-breaking 170 propels Australia to huge victory*



Alyssa Healy holds up the ICC Women's World Cup. She became the Player of the Final and the Tournament as well. PHOTO © ICC

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## THE FINAL

The final match of the 12th International Cricket Council (ICC) Women's (50-over) World Cup, was held day and night at Hagley Oval, Christchurch, New Zealand yesterday (3)

### Brief scores:

**Australia Women** 356/5 in 50 overs (Alyssa Healy 170 in 138 - 4x26, Rachael Haynes 68, Beth Mooney 62 in 47; Anya Shrubsole 3/46)

**England Women** (won toss) 285 all out in 43.4 overs (Nat Sciver 148 n.o. in 121 - 4x15, 6x1, Tammy Beaumont 27; Jess Jonassen 3/57, Alana King 3/64)

**Result:** Australia Women win by 71 runs  
**Player of the Final:** Alyssa Healy of Australia  
**Player of the Tournament:** Alyssa Healy (509 runs)



ICC WOMEN'S CRICKET WORLD CUP NEW ZEALAND 2022

"It was probably a 50-50. The stats at the ground, particularly under lights, are strongly in favour of chasing," said Knight. "You can judge the decision in hindsight, but I wouldn't change it."

**A**lyssa Healy has ensured Australia's date with destiny has ended in triumph, producing a record-breaking master-class that paved the way to a seventh One Day International (ODI) World Cup title yesterday (3) at Hagley Oval, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Healy produced one of the most remarkable innings in ODI history, smashing 170 from 138 balls, the highest score by any batter – male or female – in a 50-over World Cup final.

That was before a valiant unbeaten hundred from Natalie Sciver, which went in vain, as Australia sealed a 71-run win over defending world champions England. Australia's total yesterday was the highest in a women's final.

### England faced an almighty task

The wicketkeeper-batter's ton – her second in as many innings – combined with Rachael Haynes' 68 and Beth Mooney's 62, powered Australia to 5/356, the highest total England's women have conceded in an ODI, noted Laura Jolly at Hagley Oval writing to cricket.com.au yesterday.

It left England facing an almighty task to defend their World Cup trophy, but Sciver made sure it was not a simple march for Australia, as she struck a brilliant hundred of her own, becoming the third woman to score a century

in a World Cup final alongside Healy and Karen Rolton.

### Seventh ODI World Cup

Her 121-ball 148 (not out) kept the required run rate within reach throughout the chase, at times testing the nerve of the Australian bowlers, but she sorely lacked partners, with Tammy Beaumont (27), the next highest scorer as England, ultimately bowled out for 285 in 43.3 overs.

It sealed Australia's seventh ODI Women's World Cup title, their first since 2013, and was the icing on the cake of a month of domination that saw Meg Lanning's team progress undefeated through nine matches.

### End of England's Cinderella story

The ODI World Cup now joins a bursting Australian trophy cabinet that also contains the T20 World Cup and the Ashes, and is the crowning moment of a five-year journey of redemption for Australia after their shock semi-final exit in 2017.

Sunday's final also ended England's dreams of a Cinderella story, having been on the cusp of elimination early in the round-robin

stage before fighting their way back into the tournament.

### Magnificent knock

Healy's half-century came off 62 balls, then her second fifty took just 38 deliveries as she hit the accelerator, removing her helmet and raising the bat, in consecutive ODIs for the first time in her career.

Aussie Karen Rolton's record high score for a women's World Cup final (an unbeaten 107 against India in 2005) was reeled in, yet Healy's relentless attack continued, passing Rachael Haynes' record and 500 runs for the tournament in the process.

### Knight defends 'toss decision'

Dropped again on 136, Healy's 150 came off 129 deliveries, and despite struggling with what appeared to be a sore back, still, she tormented England, treating Sophie Ecclestone with disdain as she whacked three consecutive boundaries off the tournament leading wicket-taker.

England Captain Heather Knight had said after the final that she has "no regrets" over her decision to field first.



Sad end to their Cinderella story: England's Katherine Brunt consoles Nat Sciver after the final yesterday (3) at Christchurch

## Namal to resign as Sports Minister?

News was circulating last evening (3) that Youth and Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa had decided to step down from his ministerial portfolio.

As a result of the volatile situation and growing mass protests around the country amid curfew, the Government had allegedly decided to dissolve its Cabinet and run affairs under an interim caretaker government consisting of all parties in Parliament.

As a result of the arrangement, a new Sports Minister is likely to be sworn in, it was learnt.

Unconfirmed reports said last evening that Minister Namal Rajapaksa and his family had left the island to an unnamed destination via Dubai airport.

# PCB to propose to ICC a four-team annual T20I competition

● *Australia, England, India, Pakistan event can generate up to \$ 650 mn a year*

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) proposed a four-team annual series that can generate revenue up to \$ 650 million (Rs. 193.6 billion) per year.

The proposal includes Australia, England, Pakistan, and India playing a single-league Twenty20 International (T20I) tournament every year.

The concept will be presented officially at the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board Meeting next week in Dubai.

### September-October window

The PCB has proposed a window for the event in September-October that could prove ideal, as it is the beginning of the cricket season for Australia, India, and Pakistan, and the end of the season for England.

The format is planned to be played as a single-league

tournament structured as six league games, concluded by either one-off or best-of-three finals, played over two weeks.

As far as the hosting rights are concerned, they will be moving on a rotational basis, with ICC taking full control of the event.

### At next week's ICC Board Meeting

The estimation made by PCB suggests that the event can bring \$ 650 million of revenue through media and commercial rights and the money would be distributed among the four sides as well as the other ICC members.

The distribution share of the venue is not confirmed yet. Still, the thought has been passed that the majority of funds can go to the non-participating full members and associate members for their development.



The proposal is deemed good for both Pakistan and Indian cricket, as they have not played a bilateral series since 2012 due to political tensions in the region. Pictured are Pakistan Captain Babar Azam (left) and former India Captain Virat Kohli

PCB Chairman Ramiz Raja has mentioned this concept a lot of times since he took over the seat last year, but no details have been revealed yet. Raja will officially present the idea in Dubai next week alongside the board Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Faisal Hsain.

### Indo-Pakistan rivalry

The meeting also holds great value for shaping the next Future

Tour Programme (FTP) of the countries.

The response from the other participants has not been aired yet and it will be good for Pakistan and Indian cricket, as both countries haven't played a bilateral series since 2012-23 due to political tensions in the region. Since then, they have been facing each other in the ICC events, said Pakistan-based parimatchnews.com in a write-up from Virat Verma.

## 'Sangakkara to become Sri Lanka Head Coach'

● *...was an April Fools' Day joke*

The back page (page 12) news item that appeared on Friday, 1 April 2022, under the headline "Sangakkara to become Sri Lanka Head Coach" is an April Fools' Day (1 April) joke.

The custom of forgetting all ill wills on this day of the year is dedicated to playing harmless pranks upon one's friends and neighbours, which has been relatively common in the world, historically.

Mass media, too, are involved in these pranks, which may be revealed as such in their very next publication.

Former Sri Lanka Cricket Captain Kumar Sangakkara is presently in India for his involvement with the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL).

### Sangakkara to become Sri Lanka Head Coach

Legendary Sri Lanka batsman Kumar Sangakkara is to become the head coach of the Sri Lanka national cricket team, it was reported on Friday (1 April) in a news item that appeared on the back page of the morning edition of the newspaper.

The 2011 President of the Cricket Council, Mahinda Rajapaksa (MRC) - the brother of the former Prime Minister Rajapaksa - who is currently in exile in the United Kingdom - is to take up the baton from Sri Lanka's current coach, Chandana de Silva, who is stepping down after the 2022 World Cup.

The news item was a prank, as it was revealed on the back page of the newspaper on the following day (2 April) that the news item was a joke.

The news item was a prank, as it was revealed on the back page of the newspaper on the following day (2 April) that the news item was a joke.