



More than 30 of Sri Lanka's bondholders launch formal group for debt talks

More than 30 asset managers holding Sri Lanka's international bonds announced on Tuesday the formal launch of a creditor group to start debt restructuring talks with the island nation, according to a statement from legal adviser White & Case LLC.

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Attack on protesters at Galle Face: Johnston released on bail

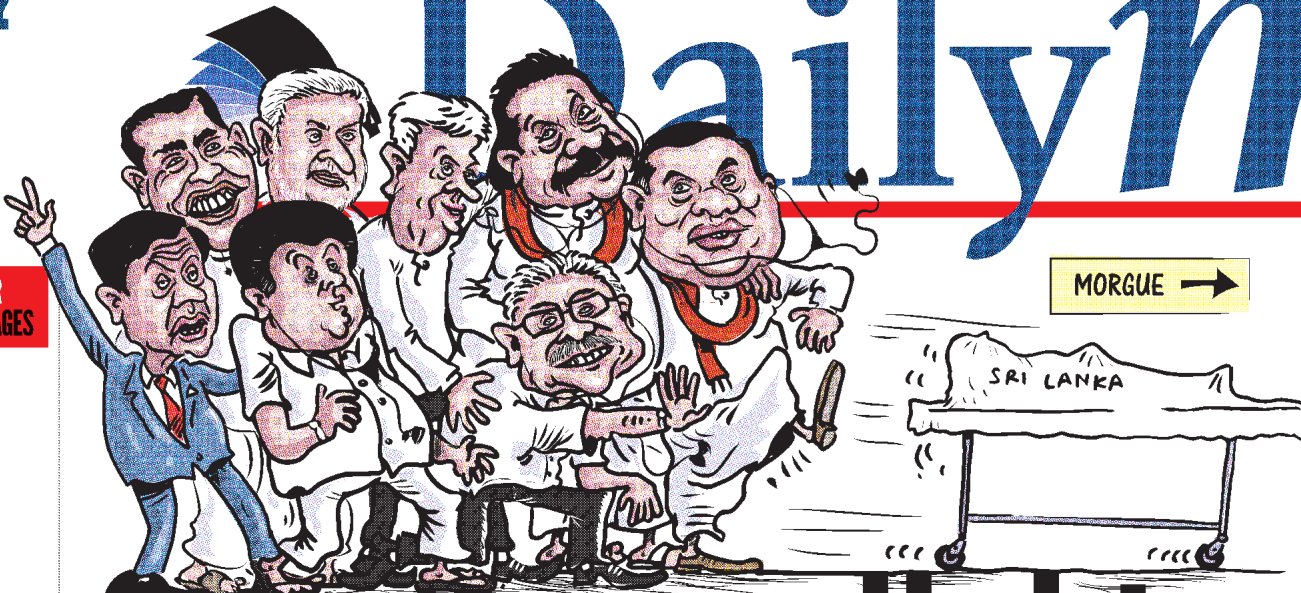
Making a fresh order regarding former Minister Johnston Fernando, the Colombo Fort Magistrate yesterday ordered him to be released on bail in connection with the attacks that took place at Galle Face.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

CID to obtain Interpol assistance to trace ruggierite Sajith Saranga

The Attorney General's Department yesterday informed Court that the CID is expecting to obtain Interpol assistance to trace ruggierite Sajith Saranga for allegedly attacking a disabled soldier during the mob attack on the Galle Face protesters on May 9.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>



SL's sorry plight - who is to blame?

- The nation is yet to hear an apology from any leader for their mistakes.
Sajith Premadasa who was on multiple occasions requested to take the Premiership and take the country out of crisis, today only hurls criticisms at the government
Basil denied he had failed to slow Sri Lanka's descent into financial turmoil saying he was the person to send the first letter to the IMF

BY JAMILA HUSAIN

Current Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, showing a gloomy picture of Sri Lanka's immediate future presently is also no 'Mr. Clean' Sri Lanka is a country that has fallen like no other. A country which was once dubbed as the 'Miracle of Asia', 'Pearl Of the Indian Ocean', 'Investment Hub', 'Must See Destination', is today pleading with open hands, literally begging for fuel, medicines, food, essentials in front of the global community.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

The executive presidential system can only be abolished by enacting a new constitution. This is because the president's powers extend throughout the constitution. Sunday Lankadeepa, May 28 2022. WIJEYADASA RAJAPAKSHE- Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna

FALSE CHECK FACT Justice Minister Rajapakshe does injustice to constitutional interpretation. The minister made this statement in the context of calls for the abolition of the executive presidency. In his statement, he claims that the executive presidential system should be abolished by way of an amendment, but only by enacting a new constitution. This may be read as claiming that (1) an amendment is not legally permissible, OR (2) it is not practically possible. To evaluate this claim, FactCheck.lk examined the provisions of the constitution, and determinations of the Supreme Court (SC). As for claim 1, Article 75 of the constitution describes parliament's legislative power, which includes the power to make laws repealing or amending any provision of the constitution, or to add any provision to it. Parliament is restricted only from making any law suspending the operation of the constitution or any of its parts, or repealing the e

SL intends to enter into an official agreement with the IMF: PM

- Not possible for SL to seek assistance from donors without an assurance from the IMF on assistance

BY YOHAN PERERA AND AJITH SIRIWARDANA

Sri Lanka intends to enter into an official level agreement with the IMF by the end of July, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe informed Parliament yesterday. "It is not possible for Sri Lanka to seek assistance from any donor without an assurance from the IMF on assistance," the Prime Minister said in a special statement in the House.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

Prices of fuel will have to be increased - PM

BY YOHAN PERERA AND AJITH SIRIWARDANA

Prices of fuel will have to be increased because of soaring prices in the global market, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe told Parliament yesterday.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

Investigations against Deshabandu Tennakoon CID acted in biased manner

BY LAKMAL SOORIYAGODA

The Colombo Fort Magistrate Thilina Gamage yesterday observed that the CID has acted in a biased manner when handling investigations against Western Province Senior DIG Deshabandu Tennakoon relating to the attacks on peaceful protesters at Galle Face.

Accordingly, Magistrate Thilina Gamage ordered the IGP to take necessary action against ASP Chanaka Silva for acting in a biased manner when presenting facts to Court regarding Senior DIG Deshabandu Tennakoon.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

Hirunika holds up traffic on 5th Lane



5th Lane on Flower Road was blocked by protesters today where Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's private residence is situated. A group of protesters headed by Hirunika Premachandra have stormed the area causing a major traffic block near Thurstan College. The protesters were trying to break in through the barricades. Picture shows Hirunika Premachandra hugging a police officer, which has become her recent stunt. PIC BY PRADEEP DILRUKSHANA

Cabinet proposal permitting import of electric vehicles - Manusha

BY CHATURANGA SAMARAWICKRAMA

A cabinet proposal is to be presented requesting permission to import electric vehicles by migrant workers who send money to Sri Lanka through legal channels, Labour and Foreign Employment Minister Manusha Nanayakkara said. He said the facility will be granted for migrant workers based on the amount of money they send to the country.

The facility will be granted for migrant workers based on the amount of money they send to the country.



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FROM PAGE 1

SL'S SORRY PLIGHT - WHO IS TO BLAME?

● On March 16, when President Gotabaya Rajapaksa addressed the nation while the Treasury was scraping to find foreign exchange and at the peak of the power crisis, what stuck to mind was his refusal to take responsibility for any of his weak decisions.

Whoever can help us, we plead with them. Whatever global agency that even inquires about our status, we rush to them. So is our desperation, to ensure that 22 million people can continue living, with at least the basics so that each day can pass.

For months, Sri Lankans have been surviving in fear. Every household has only one story to tell - when will a gas cylinder arrive in their home? When can they get some much-needed medicines? When can they buy milk powder and other essentials for their children? When can they fill their fuel and how long are the queues? And when will the power normalize? The fear now haunting Sri Lankans is unimaginable. But it is something they are compelled to now live with.

So how did this once-blooming hub turn into such a desperate failed state?

Who is the blame? Where did we go wrong? While the answer is straight, that mismanagement, theft, corruption, fraud, bribes, commissions, selfishness, greed, nepotism and misuse of power by our so-called politicians and public officials resulted in the suffering of an entire nation, it is not surprising that even to date none of these politicians and officials have accepted their faults and taken responsibility. The nation is yet to hear an apology from any leader for their mistakes.

On March 16, when President Gotabaya Rajapaksa addressed the nation while the Treasury was scraping to find foreign exchange and at the peak of the power crisis, what stuck to mind was his refusal to take responsibility for any of his weak decisions. Staring into the camera he read his written script with no regret in his eyes - "This crisis was not created by me. When those who contributed to the creation of this crisis are criticizing the government in front of the people today, I am attempting to immediately resolve this crisis and provide relief to the people," he said, clearly forgetting that his appointments to public office, his decisions, and his utter organic fertilizer disaster had anything to do with the crisis.

Forgetting that he too is now a politician after being elected to the highest seat in the country, he went on to say that in a crisis situation like this, it was the responsibility of the politicians and intellectuals of a country to collectively find solutions to the issues. Here again, he forgot that he was a President who had all powers under the 20th Amendment.

Former Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa did no better than his brother when in a televised address to the nation a month later in April, he appealed to the country and

protesters to have "patience" and said that the crisis-hit country was losing precious dollars because of protests on the streets.

Still with no apology whatsoever for his government's utter failures and his own, as he had served as the Finance Minister not too long ago, the Prime Minister at least accepted that no matter how honourable the notion of organic fertilizer was, it was not the time for it to be implemented. However his decisions thereafter seemed to be ignored as his own brother, the President began a campaign to oust him thinking that if he did so, his failures would be covered up well and forgotten. On May 9, Mahinda Rajapaksa ultimately had to go, after deadly violence which claimed nine lives.

Then we had another Rajapaksa - the one dubbed as a 'Kaputa' who political sources said took over the Finance portfolio forcefully from his brother Mahinda Rajapaksa, thinking he could be the saviour of the economy. But his failures and weak decisions were no better than the rest. With the economy only blundering further, in a recent media briefing when he finally resigned from Parliament much to the relief of the protesters, Basil had no regret too and in fact went on to say that he was not passing the ball onto anyone else but the little fuel the country was still receiving was because of him. This one time MP denied he had failed to slow Sri Lanka's descent into financial turmoil saying he was the person to send the first letter to the IMF after becoming finance minister. "It is the work I started that is now being taken forward," he said. "I have no regrets."

Shame for this senior politician to say this even while families in Hambantota, which holds the Rajapaksa legacy, and all other districts of the country, go to bed hungry amid the economic failures and skyrocketing cost of living.

Then in an interview with a foreign media agency this month, President Rajapaksa confirmed he will not resign and will complete his 5 years in office clearly ignoring the majority's sentiments of 'Gota Go Home'.

"I can't go as a failed President," he said but admitted his government had waited too long to seek help from the International Monetary Fund. "If we had gone at least six months or a year earlier, it would not have come to this state," he said. But still no apology as the Head of State to his 22 million citizens including the 6.9 million who voted for him.

The ruling MPs and public officials were no better, from blaming the media, to the public, to the protesters, the ball kept

passing. But did they feel they were to blame? No, forgetting that it was they who were elected to office.

In fact even to this date, the only talk we hear from all those in government and who were in office, was that the blame was always on someone else. But they were never the fault. And now their solution to the public - use fuel sparingly, use electricity sparingly, eat less, grow your own food, you will have to wait for medicines, no dollars, limitations on spending overseas, no essential food especially for children, a sky rocketing cost of living, no gas and the worst is yet to come. It then boils down to the public having to sacrifice every step of the way without any accountability, or answers as to who is to blame.

The opposition also does not have a better story. SJB Leader Sajith Premadasa who was on multiple occasions requested to take the Premiership and take the country out of crisis, today only hurls criticisms at the government. He and his party, some senior members who have now broken away from him and his party, spend their days taking to social media and arriving in Parliament just to highlight the faults and insist on the President to go home despite Gotabaya Rajapaksa making it clear he would complete his term. These opposition members were not too long ago in government too, so washing their hands completely away from this crisis cannot do. It is only common sense that this severe crisis has stemmed from the mismanagements of previous governments as well and worsened at the hands of the Rajapaksas, who took the already frail economy into the grave.

Current Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, showing a gloomy picture of Sri Lanka's immediate future presently is also no 'Mr. Clean'. Although he had the courage to take over the country as the Prime Minister at a time when the nation is on boiling point, should remember that he was also the Prime Minister in the previous government when the 'Bond Scam' cost the Treasury millions. However whether he can bring relief to the nation when relief is needed the most is yet to be seen.

Sri Lanka's politicians have long tested the patience of its citizens. While bribery, corruption, nepotism, fraud have long plagued the country's political circle and Parliament, there seems to be no immediate hope as the country keeps depending on the same faces to take us forward. Whether the current public protests will change the system entirely is yet to be seen, if the protesters themselves keep the infiltrators with ulterior hidden motives away, stop harassing those who should not be targeted and do not fall for geo-political agendas and echo only in one voice - "We want change."

Justice Minister Rajapakse does injustice to constitutional interpretation

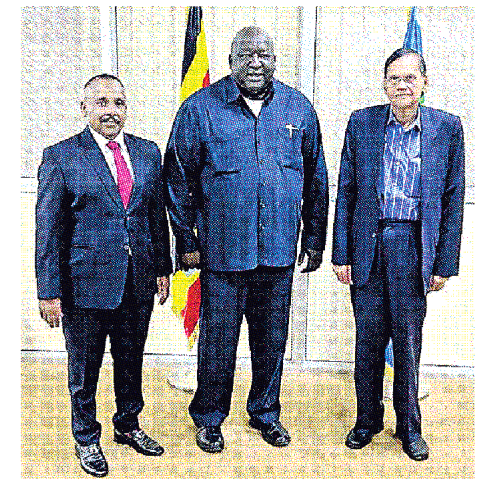
constitution as a whole without enacting a new constitution to replace it. Chapter XII of the constitution is titled 'Amendment of the Constitution' and elaborates the procedural requirements for constitutional amendments.

The SC examined the scope of parliament's power to amend the constitution in its determination on the bill to enact the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. The court considered arguments that Sri Lanka's constitution had a "basic structure" which could not be changed by way of amendment. By its majority decision, the court rejected this argument in light of the clear constitutional provisions, and concluded, "Accordingly, we do not agree with the contention that some provisions of the Constitution are unamendable." This position was affirmed in the SC's determination on the bill to enact the 20th Amendment to the Constitution (2020).

On the face of Article 75, and in light of the SC's jurisprudence, any provision or provisions of the constitution can be amended by parliament. Thus, the executive presidential system can be abolished by way of constitutional amendment, provided that any articles linked to such system are suitably amended.

Claim 2 goes to the practicality of drafting an amendment that abolishes this system. The draft bill presented by the Samagi Jana Balavegaya seems to have overcome the practical hurdle claimed by the MP by amending all relevant constitutional provisions relating to the appointment, powers, and decisions of the president, which exist throughout the constitution. The SC determination on this bill records that it was common ground among all counsel appearing in the case that the principal purpose of the bill is to abolish the executive presidential system. This case in point shows that the onerousness of the task does not prevent it from being practically achievable.

Foreign Minister G.L. Peiris was received en route to Kigali, Rwanda to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)



Foreign Minister G.L. Peiris was received en route to Kigali, Rwanda to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) at Entebbe International Airport, Uganda by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Uganda, Henry Okello Oryem. Minister Peiris will represent the President of Sri Lanka at the CHOGM, which will be attended by fifty-four member states of the Commonwealth. High Commissioner Kananathan was also present at the airport.

MORE THAN 30 OF SRI LANKA'S BONDHOLDERS LAUNCH FORMAL GROUP FOR DEBT TALKS

Amundi Asset Management, BlackRock, HKB Capital Management, Morgan Stanley Investment Management and T. Rowe Price Associates Inc are among members of the group's steering committee, which has Rothschild & Co as a financial adviser.

"The Group is broadly representative of Sri Lanka's bondholder base, both by type of institution and by geography, and holds Bonds across each outstanding series," the statement added, though it did not specify the percentage of bonds it holds on the outstanding \$12.6 billion overseas sovereign debt.

Sri Lanka has hired heavyweight financial and legal advisers Lazard and Clifford Chance as it prepares for the difficult task of renegotiating its complex web of creditors, including bilateral lending from Japan, India and China.

The creditor group said it was ready to engage in talks with both Sri Lanka's authorities and other creditors, adding that the country should "implement a

package of meaningful reforms and fiscal adjustments."

Economic mismanagement and the COVID-19 pandemic hit have left the country of 22 million people battling its worst financial problems since its independence in 1948, and a lack of foreign exchange reserves has stalled imports of essentials including fuel, food and medicines.

Late Tuesday, a privately held bondholder sued Sri Lanka in the U.S. District Court in Manhattan over the country's alleged default on a \$1 billion sovereign bond maturing next month.

Hamilton Reserve Bank Ltd demanded immediate payment of \$257.5 million of principal plus interest, saying Sri Lanka had stopped servicing its sovereign debt and missed payments on two other bonds, causing a cross-default.

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff mission arrived in Sri Lanka early this week to continue talks on a bailout programme. (Reuters)

PRICES OF FUEL WILL HAVE TO BE INCREASED - PM

● Request people to economize when using fuel

"Global prices of fuel have increased due to the conflict situation in Europe. Russia has stopped supplying fuel and gas to Europe because of the conflict in Ukraine. Therefore there will be a fuel price hike in Sri Lanka as well," the Prime Minister said.

"Currently Sri Lanka is in need of US \$ 550 million to meet the monthly fuel needs. However in the face of

the current economic crisis, we are experiencing difficulties in securing the necessary funds for this purpose. As a result of this we will take steps to import the maximum fuel stocks possible based on the dollar revenue. Resolving the fuel shortages will take more time. Therefore I request people to economize when using fuel," he added.

JOHNSTON RELEASED ON BAIL

While ordering the suspect to be released on bail, Magistrate Thilina Gamage observed that there are no materials before court to reject bail for the suspect in terms of the section 14 (1) of the Bail Act. The Attorney General also did not raise objections to release the suspect on bail.

Accordingly, the Magistrate ordered to release Johnston Fernando on two sureties of ten million rupees. The Fort Magistrate made this order in compliance with an order issued by Court of Appeal pursuant to a writ petition filed by Johnston Fernando.

an order directing Fernando to appear before CID on Friday (24) for the purpose of recording a statement from him regarding the ongoing investigations into the incident.

On June 08, the Colombo Fort Magistrate's Court issued a warrant for the arrest of former Minister Johnston Fernando in connection with the Galle Face attack case.

However, the Court of Appeal issued an order directing Johnston Fernando to appear before Colombo Fort Magistrate's Court before 8pm on June 9. Subsequently, he was released on bail by the Magistrate.

CID ACTED IN BIASED MANNER

Additional Solicitor General Ayesha Jinasena appearing for the CID informed Court that DIG Champika Siriwardhana has given a statement to the CID that Deshabandu Tennakoon at a zoom meeting held on May 7 targeting higher ranking police officers had given instructions not to disperse the persons entering MainaGoGama and GotaGoHome until he gives clear instructions.

Meanwhile President's Counsel Rienzie Arsecularatne, Upul Jayasuriya PC moved Court to name Deshabandu Tennakoon as a suspect for abetting and for his negligence of duty to prevent the mob attack, being the most senior police officer at the crime scene. President's Counsel Maithri Gunaratne submitted to Court that the Magistrate can make

an appropriate order against Deshabandu Tennakoon in terms of section 7 of Code of Criminal Procedure Act and section 59 of Judicature Act.

Counsel Hafeel Fariz appearing for Deshabandu Tennakoon raised objections against the request made by the lawyers of the aggrieved parties to name Tennakoon as a suspect in the case. He argued that there are no provisions in the Code of Criminal Procedure Act empowering a Magistrate to name an individual as a suspect. Fariz further said the role of the Attorney General, the role of the investigator and the role of the Magistrate have been separately mentioned in the Code of Criminal Procedure Act, while empowering the investigator to name an

individual as suspect.

The Magistrate questioned as to why police failed to take action against Senior DIG Tennakoon despite several evidence that he neglected to prevent a possible mob attack.

The Magistrate further alleged that police were treating people in biased manner tarnishing the reputation of the CID. "A person who was holding a water bottle in his hand was also arrested as a suspect in connection with the attack. But the police do not take action against key individuals who are responsible for the incident," the Magistrate added.

On May 23, the Attorney General had instructed the IGP to transfer Western Province Senior DIG Deshabandu Tennakoon with immediate effect to prevent unnecessary intervention into the investigations relating to the attacks on peaceful protesters.

Cabinet proposal permitting import of electric vehicles: Manusha

As vehicle importation is banned at present, the license to import these electric vehicles will be issued only to migrant workers who send money legally through the

banking system. He said while participating in a programme to provide employment opportunities implemented by the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

(SLBFE), a new charging system will be introduced for those electric vehicles to re-charge them with solar energy outside the main power system.

SL intends to enter into an official agreement with the IMF: PM

"Here the most important is our debt restructuring plan. We will together with the teams from Lazard and Clifford Chance do our utmost to complete the framework for this plan before the end of July. Meanwhile, next Monday, a team of representatives from the U.S. Department of the Treasury will also arrive in Sri Lanka. We ensured that we created the background necessary for the immediate arrival of these three teams in Sri Lanka. We will conduct discussions with them. Their presence in the country will now allow us to hold meetings together with all three teams. It will only further assist us in expediting our

programme" the Prime Minister said. "The only safe option before us now is to hold discussions with the International Monetary Fund. In fact, this is our only option. We must take this path. Our aim is to hold discussions with the IMF and arrive at an agreement to obtain an additional credit facility. As the next step, we hope to form a foundation to stabilize the economy and implement an immediate programme to increase our export revenue," he stressed. "Parallel to this, we will organise a credit aid conference which will be led by India, Japan and China, our main lending countries. However, there have been some

conflicts and disagreements between us in the recent past. We are working towards resolving these and fostering friendly relations once again. Each country has different processes for granting loans. Through the credit aid conference, we hope to arrive at a general consensus on the lending processes," the Prime Minister said.

The Ceylon Petroleum Corporation is USD 700 million in debt. As a result, no country or organization in the world is willing to provide fuel to us. They are even reluctant to provide fuel for cash. We have taken loans amounting to USD 4 billion under the Indian credit line.

Cabraal and officials responsible for today's crisis in hospitals: Jayasumana

The action of Former Governor of the Central Bank Ajith Nivard Cabraal and officials of the Finance Ministry to block funds to secure stocks of medicine, equipment needed for surgery is the cause of the crisis situation in hospitals today, Former Minister Channa Jayasumana told Parliament yesterday. "We had discussions with former Secretary

to Minister of Finance to secure 12 kinds of medicines and medical equipment. This was notified by the then Chairperson of the State Pharmaceutical Corporation to the Treasury Secretary S R Attygalle. Then we went and met the former Governor and Finance Ministry officials. They asked us how much of dollars we need. We told them that \$ 130 million was needed. Then Mr. Cabraal said it will be possible even to

release \$ 260 million for the two quarters this year. However nothing was released. We needed funds to secure medicine used for anaesthesia," he said.

"I then had to be firm with the officials of the Finance Ministry. They said they can release funds for only one kind of medicine. The action by the officials contributed 80 percent for the crisis in the health sector today," the MP added.

Herd of cattle struck by lightning

BY WASANTHA CHANDRAPALA

A herd of 31 cattle in Piyangala in Bakkliella had died of electrocution caused by lightning on Tuesday evening (21).

The cattle grazing on the bank of the Divilana tank had been struck by lightning during heavy rain experienced in the area. Police said there were 24 cows and four calves in the ill fated herd.

On information from the police



a veterinary surgeon from Uhana Veterinary Office had visited the scene and examined the carcasses.

Police said they had informed the owner in Batticaloa regarding the incident.

CID to obtain Interpol assistance to trace ruggerite Sajith Saranga

Additional Solicitor General Ayesha Jinasena appearing for the CID informed Colombo Fort Magistrate Thilina Gamage that the investigations have revealed suspect Sajith Saranga had left Colombo for Dubai on 7th of June at 3:15pm.

On June 16, the Court had issued an order imposing travel restrictions on the rugby player for the purpose of arresting him at the airport if he returned to the country.

The CID named ruggerite Sajith Saranga as the 29th suspect in the Galle Face attack case currently being heard at Colombo Fort Magistrate's Court.

OBITUARIES

Corea - Dr. Sextus. Beloved husband of the late Dr. Lynette Corea, loving father of Ravi and Harin, father in law of Renuka and Namali, beloved grandfather of Suren and Gayan, was called to rest on 21 June 2022. **Funeral service at 11AM, 23 June, at his residence 64/B/2 National Housing Scheme, Hantana, Kandy. Followed by cremation at Ampitiya Crematorium at 1PM.**

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Mexican Jesuits Father Javier Campos Morales and Father Joaquín César Mora Salazar were murdered in their rural parish (Courtesy UCANews)

Mexican priests killed while defending sanctuary seeker

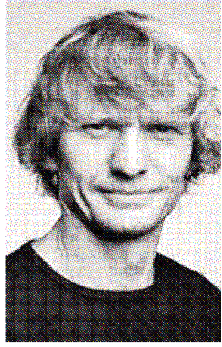
MEXICO CITY AFP JUNE 22, 2022 - Gunmen shot dead two Jesuit priests and a man seeking sanctuary at their church in northern Mexico, the government and the religious order said on Tuesday.

The priests, Javier Campos Morales and Joaquín César Mora Salazar, were killed Monday in the Cerocahui community in Chihuahua state "while trying to defend a man who was seeking refuge," according to the Society of Jesuits.

The man, who worked as a tour guide, was also killed. The three bodies were then placed in the back of a pickup truck by armed men, covered with plastic and taken away, according to Father Luis Gerardo Moro Madrid, head of the order in Mexico. Chihuahua is an important transit route for illegal drugs bound for the United States, and is therefore violently contested between rival trafficking gangs.

Ukraine photojournalist killed 'in cold blood by Russian forces': Report

UKRAINE JUNE 22 AFP - Russian soldiers killed Ukrainian photojournalist Maks Levin in March, possibly after having tortured him, media rights group Reporters Without Borders (RSF) said in an investigation published Wednesday.



Ukrainian journalist Maks Levin (Courtesy: The Kyiv Independent)

"The evidence gathered by RSF indicates that the Ukrainian photojournalist Maks Levin and the friend who was with him were executed in cold blood by Russian forces, probably after being interrogated and tortured, on the day they went missing," the report stated.

Levin's body was found with that of his soldier friend, on April 1 in a forest on the edge of Moschchun, a village about 20 kilometres outside Kyiv. They had been missing since March 13 after Levin embedded with Ukrainian soldiers in an area experiencing heavy fighting.

A complaint specifically related to Levin's killing will be filed at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, RSF said - its sixth such complaint related to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

DEADLY AFGHANISTAN EARTHQUAKE KILLS AT LEAST 1000

Death tolls expected to grow

AFGHANISTAN The death toll from an earthquake in Afghanistan on Wednesday hit 1,000, the country's disaster management officials said, with more than 600 injured and the toll expected to grow as information trickles in from remote mountain villages.

An unknown number of people are reportedly still remained stuck under houses reduced to rubble and in outlying areas Afghan media reports read. Bodies swathed in blankets were seen laid on the ground amid rescue operations local media photos showed. The 6.1 magnitude earthquake had struck the nation about 44 km from the southeastern city of Khost, near the border with Pakistan, the US Geological Survey (USGS) reported.

The disaster comes amid Afghanistan facing a dire humanitarian crisis that has been compounded by Western sanctions imposed following the Taliban's takeover of the country last August.

Health and aid workers said rescue operations were complicated by difficult conditions including rains, landslides and many villages being nestled in inaccessible hillside areas. Mounting the

operation will prove a major test for Taliban authorities who have been cut off from much international assistance because of the sanctions. However, humanitarian aid had arrived from international agencies such as the United Nations.

A spokesman for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) said it was sending teams in addition to ambulances and helicopters sent by the Taliban-led ministry of defence, which was leading rescue efforts.

Wednesday's quake is recorded as the deadliest in Afghanistan since 2002.



People evacuate the wounded from the earthquake in the province of Paktika, Afghanistan June 22 (Courtesy: Bakhtar News Agency)

US Passenger jet catches fire while landing

US JUNE 22 HINDUSTAN TIMES - Investigators were headed to Miami, US Wednesday after a passenger jet's landing gear collapsed and caught fire as it touched down at the city's international airport, forcing more than 100 people to flee the burning and mangled aircraft.



Firefighting units are seen next to a Red Air plane that caught fire after the front landing gear collapsed Tuesday, June 21, 2022 (Courtesy: CBS news)

Three people were hospitalized after the crash of Red Air Flight 203 late Tuesday where 130 passengers and 10 crew were on board the plane, a Miami airport spokesman said. No deaths or serious injuries have been reported.

Dramatic video footage showed people being evacuated from the aircraft, lying askew on the runway with its nose crumpled as thick

black smoke billowed from its body. "Red Air #203 from Santo Domingo had its landing gear in the nose of the plane collapse, which seems to have caused a fire," the airport said in a statement through Twitter. The reason for the discrepancy is yet to be investigated.

France opens investigation into rape allegations against female minister

FRANCE PARIS, JUNE 22 REUTERS - The Paris public prosecutor's office said on Wednesday it had opened an investigation into allegations of rape against French Secretary of State for Development and the Francophonie, Chrysoula Zacharopoulou, after two complaints had been received.

Zacharopoulou, a trained physician, previously worked as a gynaecologist before moving to politics. French media earlier reported the complaints were



French State Secretary for Development, Francophonie and International Partnerships Chrysoula Zacharopoulou June 21 Reuters

linked to her professional activity. A first complaint for rape was submitted on May 25, which led to the opening of the investigation on May 27. A second complaint was filed on June 16, the prosecutor's office said.

Turkey's Erdogan meets Saudi CP in first visit since Khashoggi murder

TURKEY ANKARA, JUNE 22 REUTERS - Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman arrived in Turkey for the first time in years, Wednesday for talks with President Tayyip Erdogan aimed at fully normalizing ties that were ruptured after the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

The visit marks a step in Prince Mohammed's effort to rehabilitate his image beyond the Gulf, and comes as Erdogan seeks financial support that could help relieve Turkey's beleaguered economy ahead of elections for the president.

The visit is expected to bring "a full normalization and a



Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman review a guard of honor during a welcome ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Ankara, Turkey, June 22 REUTERS

restoration of the pre-crisis period," a senior Turkish official said adding that the two countries had lifted restrictions on trade, flights and the screening of TV series, with mutual negative media coverage also halted.

European nation buys tons of Russian gold - Bloomberg

SWEDEN SWEDEN, (RT.COM) 21 JUN, 2022 - Switzerland imported gold from Russia in May for the first time since February, Bloomberg reported on Tuesday. According to the article, the move suggests that the industry's stance toward Russian precious metals may be softening.

Switzerland shipped more than 3 tons of gold from Russia last month, Bloomberg cited data from the Swiss Federal Customs Administration. The purchase represents about 2% of Swiss bullion imports in May. The country is a key refining hub that handles two-thirds of the world's gold.



South China ravaged by floods while the North bakes under heatwave



Image courtesy: Reuters

CHINA JUNE 22 AFP - Heavy rains continued to flood cities across southern and eastern China on Wednesday, destroying crops and infrastructure, trapping residents, and triggering landslides, even as heatwaves drove up the power demand to record levels in north and central China, media reports said.

Thousands of people have been evacuated from the inundated southern provinces by the military and emergency workers as weather authorities warned of more rain in the coming days.

Torrential rainfall for days has swept away houses, cars, and even heavy vehicles in affected cities, while many roads have collapsed or been swept away.

Chinese authorities have not lifted

"red alerts", the most severe warning, that were issued in the past week in many places, warning residents to be vigilant for possible landslides and mountain torrents.

Meanwhile, demand for electricity in many Chinese localities has set new records amid a heatwave in central and northern provinces, state media reported.

Power demand has risen as temperatures climb, with homes and businesses cranking up air conditioning, said People's Daily, the Communist Party of China mouthpiece.

China's national observatory has renewed an alert for high temperatures for 12 provinces and regions, with some regions such as Hebei province in the north and Shandong province in the east expected to see temperatures cross 40 degrees Celsius.

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EDITORIAL

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."
HENRY FORD

OUR THOUGHT

GOVT. GOING ROUND IN CIRCLES AS CRISES WORSEN

"How often the great interests of society are sacrificed to the vanity, to the conceit and to the obstinacy of individuals" Alexander Hamilton

It is a publicly acknowledged fact that President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the Prime Minister and the Ministers in particular and the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) government in general should be held responsible for having failed and that too, miserably to adopt timely counter-measures to preempt the current political and economic crises engulfing Sri Lanka resulting in farmers being left without fertilizer; tens of thousands of consumers compelled to languish in kilometre-long queues to obtain their quota of petrol, diesel, kerosene and domestic gas while essential commodities such as milk powder, medicinal drugs and medical equipment are in short supply and power cuts are a daily feature. It is also a publicly acknowledged fact that the government has lost its way and is drifting along going here, there and everywhere unable to provide solutions to the burning issues faced by the country and the people at large.

The bottom line in Sri Lanka's worst ever political and economic crises and their unprecedented consequences, is the shortage of US dollars and foreign currency reserves making it impossible to import essential commodities that this country urgently needs to sustain the lives and livelihoods of its people.

We are in this terrible plight today essentially because of the wasteful and hugely loss-making projects launched by the Rajapaksa's using borrowed money or foreign loans to boost their ego and their vanity resulting in the country being plunged into rack and ruin. The Rajapaksa's have always, especially after the end of the war -- the much-hyped humanitarian operation with 'zero' casualties -- imagined they were what the doctor had ordered or the panacea for Sri Lanka's ills.

The following are some of the egotistic projects described in some quarters as monuments to folly, which carry the Rajapaksa name, now detested by the people, who have been forced to pay the price for Rajapaksa narcissism and extravagance:

The Nelum Pokuna Mahinda Rajapaksa Theatre in the heart of Colombo; the Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport (MRIA) in Hambantota; the Lotus Tower or the 'Nelum Kuluna' (incidentally the lotus is the symbol of the SLPP founded by Basil Rajapaksa); the Diyagama Mahinda Rajapaksa Stadium in Homagama; the Mahinda Rajapaksa International Cricket Stadium at Sooriyawewa in Hambantota; the Magampura Mahinda Rajapaksa Port and the Magampura Mahinda Rajapaksa International Convention Centre.

The foregoing gives an indication as to where our dollars have gone making Sri Lanka and its people poor and hard-pressed to keep hunger at bay with even a single meal a day despite Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's empty boast, on assuming office, to ensure that every family would have three meals a day and under his watch, the era of queues and shortages would be a thing of the past. Under the current circumstances these empty boasts could only be described as wishful thinking or building castles in the air.

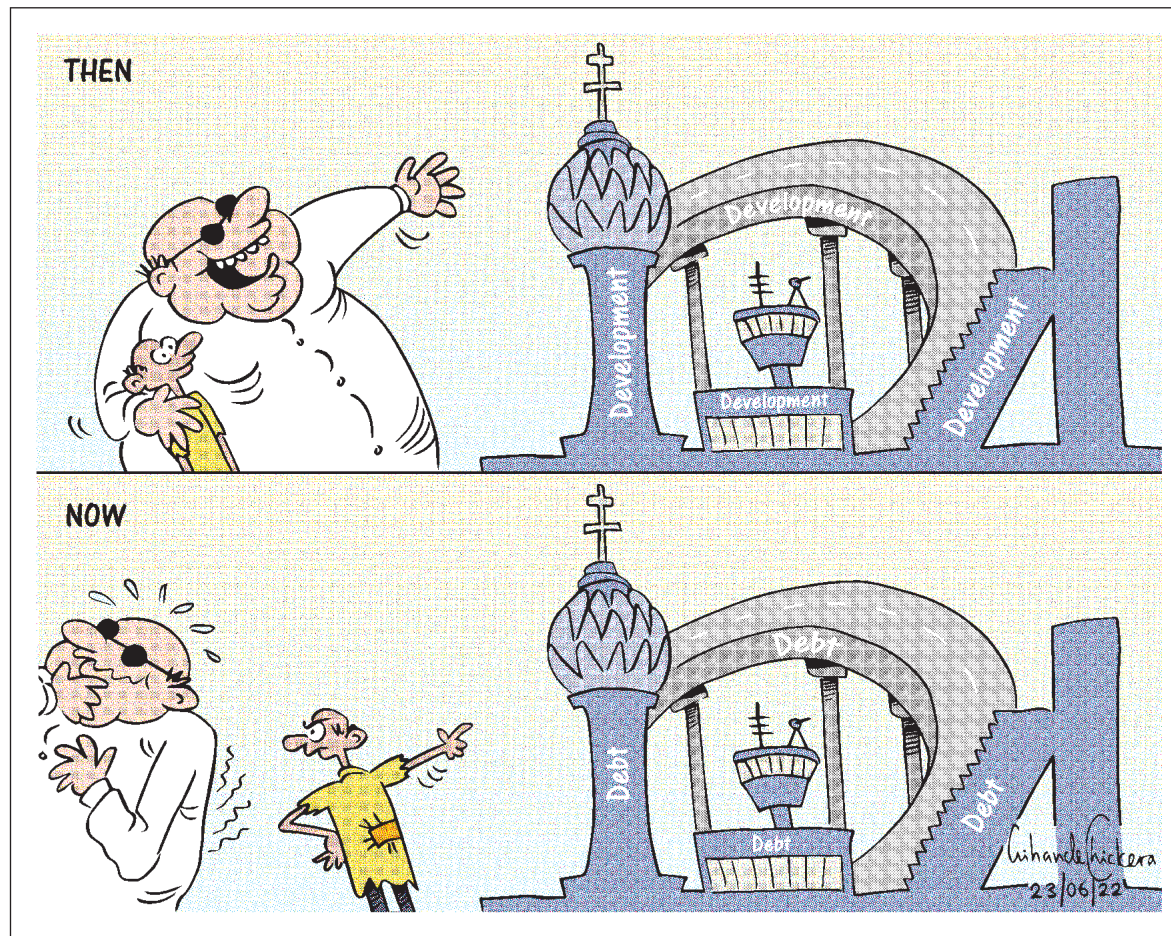
It is in such a backdrop that the UN Resident Coordinator in Sri Lanka, Hanaa Singer-Hamdy said nearly 22% of Sri Lanka's population or 4.9 million people live in need of food assistance.

"We have also seen that low-income households are the hardest hit and are adopting negative coping strategies," she said in an interview with the Daily Mirror. "A reduction of a 40% to 50% reduction was recorded in the Maha season paddy harvest because of the lack of chemical fertilizer"

Sri Lanka, formerly known to be an upper-middle income country, is currently facing its worst economic crisis since independence. In May, food inflation stood at 57.4%, while shortages of key food items, remain widespread, with ongoing daily power outages.

Meanwhile, an 'Economy Next' report says activities at several key economic sectors requiring transport are grinding to a halt because foreign exchange shortages is making it difficult to finance oil imports, severely affecting the industrial, fisheries and agriculture sectors, passenger and goods transport in addition to the never-ending queues for fuel and domestic gas.

The government's abject failure to solve the ongoing political and economic crises has resulted in public servants being asked to stay home on Fridays, schools to be closed for at least a week and the transport sector forced to restrict its services. Without doubt the Gotabaya Rajapaksa-led government has badly let down the people and the sooner it realizes that it has overstayed its visa, the better it would be for Sri Lanka and for the people.



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

By **Malinda Seneviratne**

Gotabaya Rajapaksa is the worst President we've had. He is the worst leader, counting all presidents, prime ministers, ministers, chairpersons of local government authorities and maranaadhara samithi. He is the worst Sri Lankan ever. Let's assume. Let's assume that as the all-powerful Executive President, all ills are attributable to him. Let's assume that although this implies that he can lay claim to all positives, he had nothing to do with effectively handling the Covid-19 situation, the vaccination drive and enforcement of safety protocols which (by the way) eventually enabled and empowered those who hate him the most (and whose hatred is rooted in political preferences and other things that predates the current economic crises) to rub shoulders with fellow political travelers in demonstrations, protest marches, arson, theft and thuggery. Let's assume that he did nothing at all.

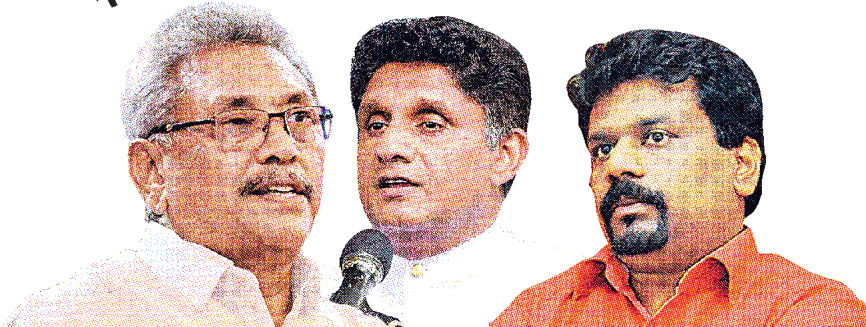
No, let's go further. Let's assume that Covid-19 was an insidious creation of Gotabaya Rajapaksa himself, a virus which he unleashed on the world with the express intent of wrecking the tourism sector, effecting a serious dent in remittances by expatriate workers, restricting movement etc., etc. Let's assume that all this in aggregate made himself eminently eligible to the tag 'party-pooper.'

Today, we are in the midst of an unprecedented economic crisis. Today, more than ever before, we have been forced to think about things like energy security, food security, food and nutritional sovereignty, the need for development banks and the folly of embracing uncritically and indeed nurturing to near perfection an import mafia. Let's assume, though, that Gotabaya Rajapaksa's rhetoric and action with regard to at least two of the above, namely renewable energy and environment-friendly agriculture, had nothing to do with such 'needs.'

Let us not assume but acknowledge that regardless of intent, overall understanding and objectives pertaining to sovereignty that Gotabaya was largely unsuccessful. Let's assume that this had nothing to do with the resilience of entrenched interests of corporate thugs and public racketeers, but let's not assume but rather acknowledge that party and family played a massive role in scuttling good intention, not just about energy and agriculture but basic management of the economy, upholding procedures established to ensure fiscal discipline, robust and meaningful tax regimes etc. Let's not assume but acknowledge that Gotabaya Rajapaksa's greatest failure was that he could not (or would not) unfetter himself from party and family.

Forget all that. Let's return to the first assumption. Let us repeat. Gotabaya is the worst President we've had. He is the worst leader, counting all presidents, prime ministers, ministers, chairpersons of local government authorities and maranaadhara samithi. He is the worst Sri Lankan ever. Let's assume...

We should mention, at least parenthetically, that he is but (and at worst) a symptom of systemic flaw. At least that's



'Intl. community,' Opposition and 'The People'

what those who can see beyond personality and party could (but probably for reasons of political convenience do not) conclude. Never mind. Let's assume 'Gota is the System' and kid ourselves that getting rid of him gives us system-change. Well, let's say it paves the way for system-change. Yes, let's not talk about utter naïveté in these matters. Let's assume, let's conclude. Now, treating all assumptions as established fact, let us wave the flag of the logical response: 'Gota should go!' How do we move from there, i.e., beyond a slogan whose utterers aren't political innocents and among whom are those who have benefited for decades (as a class and as individuals) or else are ill-educated about constitutions, constitutional reform and the whole brouhaha over amendments (the draft 21st was shot down by the Supreme Court, whose observations amount to law-makers being given a resounding F on the subject of 'Constitutionality')?

Of course, Gotabaya can resign. Can happen, but hasn't. He can be removed, constitutionally. Can happen, but hasn't. And so, we have pundits saying 'the people, the international community and the Opposition' have to come together to remove him. In essence, to secure the numbers necessary to remove him constitutionally. He can be ousted in other ways, but no one is seriously talking about 'revolution here'. Revolution would include system-change and 'system' would include the economic theories (sic) that went a long way to bring us to where we are, dealings with the IMF and other Bretton Woods Institutions etc., but no one is seriously considering such options right now. It's just 'Gota must go,' or 'The international community, the Opposition and the people must get together and send Gota away.' Thereafter, parliament (or rather 'The Opposition') can figure out who should be the next president. Lovely.

Let's get back to the movers and shakers. The international Community, one. Do they mean, the US, UK, EU and other members of The Quad? Now if those are the addresses to which grievance are addressed and succour sought, good luck!

The Opposition, two, those who want Gota sent away utter not a word about capabilities of the current Opposition (never mind legitimacy which is ultimately measurable only through the ballot). The Opposition, if we just take the SJB and the JVP, essentially back-stabbed the 'Aragalaya' and 'Aragalists,' not to mention the fact that they deliberately planned to pursue their party interests by preying on general anxiety, fear and anger. Sajith

Premadasa and Anura Kumara Dissanayake hilariously claimed that they would take up the prime minister's post if Gotabaya Rajapaksa resigned. Each ought to have been more honest and said 'I become PM if Gota resigns, and then I have the inside track to the Presidency.' Anyone who places bets on such dishonest people and parties (whose track records are as bad or worse than those of the SLPP) are ridiculously naive or at least politically suspect. The SLFP, then? Really?

'The people,' three. Now that's a different category altogether. We cannot and should not say 'yeah, right!' or be dismissive in some other way. Democracy is about the people. How do we measure the weight of the people factor, though? The numbers at protests, the decibel levels of the rhetoric? Yes, in a way, never mind that among these 'people' are agents provocateurs and others whose political history doesn't make one really cheer, especially given long and profound silence about what 'the system' has done and to whom for decades.

In a way, yes, 'The people' count. They need to be counted. Literally. My friend My friend Sugath Kulatunga, commenting on dubious individuals including 'intellectuals,' professionals, the clergy and artists marking 'presence' at Galle Face, made a pertinent observation. "I believe [they] have had no lessons in Civics at school and are not aware that Sri Lanka is a democracy with a written constitution where tenets of majority rule and rule of law are enshrined."

If you want to step out of all that, by all means. Just don't dabble in constitutions and parliamentary affairs. A precedent set where a bunch of people even with legitimate reasons to protest (and the legitimacy of the protests are indisputable, let us not forget) browbeat the elected and obtain eviction without measuring the true nature of a) popular discontent, and b) agreement about the would-be successor's ability to turn things around does not bode well for participatory democracy.

The silliness of all this talk about the Gota-Ranil combine being a failure is easily measured by a simple question: name another combine that can deliver. The truth is, politicians and parties as they stand today, given histories and fixations about economics, cannot deliver us from the evils they have showered us with. We might have to look elsewhere, but certainly not at the international community, the Opposition or 'people' who are deliberately left undefined.

Anarchy, then, by all means, but then call it that. Just don't sugar-coat it with democracy-speak.

malindadocs@gmail.com

DM Poll

What do you think is the main cause for the energy crisis that Sri Lanka is facing now?

1. Government's failure to manage the economy
2. Rising prices of fuel in the global market
3. Successive governments' failure to make use of renewable energy sources in the country.
4. All of the above



LAST POLL

Who should be most responsible for the current economic crisis where there is a severe shortage of food, fuel and medicine?

Mahinda Rajapaksa Government from 2005 to 2015 - **5%**
2015 Yahapalanaya Government led by Maithripala Sirisena and Ranil Wickremesinghe - **1.3%**

All of the above - **23.3%**
2019 Government under Gotabaya Rajapaksa - **70.4%**

See web poll at www.DailyMirror.lk

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

SUFFERING CONTINUES UNABATED!

It is unlikely that even our ancestors under the colonial rule of the Portuguese, Dutch or the British did undergo the kind of severe hardships and prolonged agony that we, the descendants are undergoing at present!

The astronomical price increases and acute shortages of basic essentials to remain alive, such as rice, flour, milk food, medicine, gas, kerosene, fuel etc. have all become super luxuries which a few can either afford or mostly unavailable, thus making one's life and livelihood a challenging and arduous task, to say the least. Moreover, the continual power cuts have only added to our worries and woes, most of which instead of reducing seem to be increasing by the day.

That said, for all patriotic citizens in this blessed land, it is no doubt a sad, sorrowful and shocking experience to go through this most unprecedented and perilous stage of our ailing economy and now be called a bankrupt country! Once a wonderful paradise island, has now turned into an island full of suffering masses, with no visible light at the end of the tunnel. In fact, the tunnel seems to be getting longer and darker, as it is!! Well, the whole irony of it is that the majority of the same heartless and heedless perpetrators; the corrupt political leaders from both side of the divide with no mission or vision for the country, along with many ministers in similar wave length, and worse some with buffalo brains and attitudes are now being entrusted with the task of pulling Sri Lanka and its people out of the on-going deep economic, social and political abyss!! It is public knowledge that most of them are the root cause for this debacle.

Their misrule and misdeeds to earn filthy lucre via monumental projects, the likes of Hambantota port, Mattala airport, Lotus tower, international cricket ground, conference hall in Hambantota and other glaring blunders made in the fiscal and agricultural sectors have all contributed to our present agonizing economic downfall.

Be that as it may, the stand of the purported new government is much to be desired as they are keener in solving rifts among themselves to hold on to power rather than finding ways and means, at least to mitigate the burning issues of the citizenry. Political deceit and hypocrisy still run high among the rulers. It appears that unity in diversity is completely alien to Sri Lankan politicians come what may!

Whatever said and done, the priority of the new govt. - for that matter any govt. - should be to alleviate the untold misery of its citizens. Action speaks louder than words.

M.R.Pathirage

SL wins first ODI series over Aussies since 2010

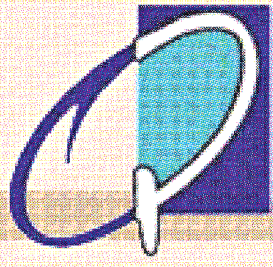
WEB COMMENTS

- JUDE - Magnificent victory by Lankans thus winning the series!
- Definitely not.
- HUBERT CONGREVE - Congratulations to the Lions beating the world's No. 1 team.
- SHIM - Could this have happened if Namal still the sports minister?

See more web comments at www.DailyMirror.lk

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NATIONAL CONVENTION ON QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY (NCQP) 2021

ORGANISED BY SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY (SLAAQP)

An advertising special edition

Advantis 3PL Plus recognised at the National Convention on Quality and Productivity 2021

Advantis 3PL Plus, a member of the Hayleys Advantis Group, set a record win at the recently concluded National Convention on Quality and Productivity (NCQP) 2021 by winning nine coveted awards for its achievements in quality and productivity. The awards included seven Gold, one Silver and one Bronze Award. The NCQP organised by the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Quality and Productivity (SLAAQP) has allowed companies to showcase their abilities to innovate, add value and reduce waste. As a leading 3PL solutions provider in the country, Advantis 3PL Plus has strived to continually improve the quality of services provided and enhance process efficiencies in order to be competitive in the 3PL sphere.

Being a part of the SLAAQP and competing in the NCQP since 2018 has assisted Advantis 3PL plus to capture and standardise operations thereby increasing overall value to the company whilst getting the opportunity to share their expertise at national and international platforms. The first-ever Platinum award won by Sri Lanka at the International Convention on Quality Control Circles (ICQCC) 2020 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, was by Advantis 3PL Plus. Furthermore, the latest edition of ICQCC, held in 2021, saw Advantis 3PL Plus winning three Par Excellence Awards at the awards ceremony held in Hyderabad, India.

A robust programme, Operational Excellence (OE) established through integrated logistics cluster drives quality



and lean management practices by allocating resource persons in all business units and setting targets and procedures to capture new initiatives. Expert training sessions are carried out periodically to share knowledge from the learnings of completed projects and to identify areas of improvement and also waste reduction methods. Each operation/account is encouraged to work with minimum resources/investments to achieve objectives in terms of productivity.

Advantis 3PL Plus has won numerous awards throughout the years for its exemplary performance. These awards were won for projects carried under DMAIC-Lean Six-

Sigma (Define, Measure, Analyse, Improve, Control), VSM (Value Stream Mapping), Fishbone Analysis, 5 Why (Cause-Effect & Problem Solving) & PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) and Kaizen projects. In the process of driving these projects, employees and the business units within the company have been able to share and exchange knowledge whilst introducing various growth opportunities in terms of skill enhancement and career progression.

A team of lean champions and enthusiasts running multiple continuous improvement projects in the form of 5S, Kaizen, PDCA, 6 Sigma projects, and investing in in-house

resource development initiatives have driven productivity Improvement and cost reduction initiatives which proved to be effective, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though all operations were carried out with limited resources, the team at Advantis 3PL Plus ensured that they met all customer expectations without fail.

Hayleys Advantis, which counts for nearly twenty years in warehousing and distribution in Sri Lanka, expanded its footprint by setting up Advantis 3PL Plus in 2003, with a state-of-the-art Distribution Centre at Kelaniya, strategically located in close proximity to the Port of Colombo. In 2018, Advantis 3PL Plus



expanded its operations to the outer skirts of Colombo by introducing Advantis Logistics City in Kotugoda – the largest distribution centre in Sri Lanka. Advantis 3PL Plus is a total logistics and supply chain planning and execution company, leveraging on the strength of the Hayleys Advantis network to provide a range of customised solutions in both inbound and outbound logistics.

Advantis 3PL Plus' strength lies in its people, processes and technology with a team of 1,800 people. The superior technology ranging from the Warehouse Management System to Material Handling Equipment (MHE), cargo specific storage solutions coupled with the processes in place, play an important role in adding value to the customers' supply chain. The people at Advantis 3PL Plus are its greatest asset, along with the knowledge and experience they bring to client operations which have helped secure numerous multi-national and local businesses/clientele. Advantis 3PL Plus has a reach beyond the shores of Sri Lanka with its logistics operations in India, Indonesia, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

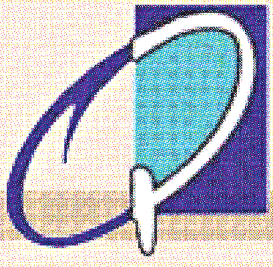
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National Convention on Quality and Productivity (NCQP) 2021 Combating Covid-19 Impacts through Continuous Improvements



Chief Guest H.E. Mizukoshi Hideaki - Ambassador of Japan



Chief Guest Gen. Daya Ratnayake



Guest of Honour - Dr. Sunil Jayantha Nawarathne, Director General, National Institute of Education



Keynote Speaker - Prof. Ajantha Dharmasiri, Former Director and the Chairman of the Board of Management, PIM

National Convention on Quality and Productivity (NCQP) 2021 was organised by the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Quality and Productivity (SLAAQP) - 4th April, 2022, Monarch Imperial Hotel, Sri Jayewardenepura, Kotte.

Productivity can be defined as the ratio of total output to total input (raw materials, man-hours, capital cost, etc.). Quality is a measure of excellence and can be defined as the overall performance (reliability, durability, serviceability, etc.) as compared to customer expectations. For any nation, "Productivity & Quality" are decisive factors for its development. With that in mind, Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Quality and Productivity (SLAAQP), founded in 1996 actively contributes to the enhancement of the quality and productivity of our nation. The Vision of the Association is to be the premier organization nurturing World Class Excellence in Quality and Productivity in Sri Lanka. It's mission is to build competencies and promote practice of quality and productivity concepts and techniques through inculcating quality and productivity mindset in the society; providing national and international platforms for employees at all levels of the organizations to showcase their quality and productivity achievements and strike partnerships with international organizations in advancement of quality and productivity. SLAAQP is a nonprofit making organization, comprised of professionals voluntarily committed to give their time and effort to uplift the standard of living of the people of Sri Lanka.

The Association is engaged in providing training to industry on concepts of quality and productivity including Quality Circles



Keynote Speaker - Mr. Sunil G Wijesinha, Founder President and Advisor SLAAQP



President SLAAQP - Mr. Wipul Kularathne



Event Chairperson - Mrs. Ruwani Senevirathna

and Continuous Improvement, Total Quality Management, 5S, Lean and Six Sigma, Green Productivity among many others areas. It also provides platforms for national competitions including National Convention on Quality and Productivity (NCQP), Total Quality Management and AYANO TQM Excellence Awards and 5S with a view to provide opportunities for companies to showcase their excellence in the arena of quality and productivity.

The key event in the calendar of activities of SLAAQP, is the National Convention on Quality and Productivity (NCQP). This annual event is the only national platform provided for floor level associates of organisations to showcase their achievements in quality related problem-solving projects at their workplaces.

This year we have added few more

strategic timely events to our annual calendar, namely Green Productivity award and Ayano TQM award to further enhance the productivity in our mother land.

The Association conducts public seminars, tailor-made courses and in-house training programmes as a service to the industry. It is apparent that these programmes have created public awareness and supported the establishment of a productive work culture. By enhancing quality and productivity it is expected to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce and thereby improve the quality of life that will propel a sustainable growth in economic activity in Sri Lanka.

This year, the National Convention on Quality and Productivity (NCQP) was held in the virtual mode for the second consecutive year, in order to adhere with the Covid-19 guidelines. 230 teams representing 40 companies participated in

the competition winning 162 Gold Awards, 49 Silver Awards and 19 Bronze Awards. Further there were Ten awards to recognize the best individual Kaizen projects out of 89. The award ceremony was held at the Monarch Imperial Hotel in Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte on 4th of April 2022.

The event was graced by H.E. Mizukoshi Hideaki, Ambassador of Japan as the Chief Guest and Mr. Sunil Wijesinghe, Founder President of SLAAQP, as the Keynote Speaker in the first Session while the Chief Guest of the second Session was - Gen. Daya Ratnayake and the Key note Speaker was Prof. Ajantha Dharmasiri, the former Director of the Post Graduate Institute of Management of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The Guest of Honour was Dr. Sunil Jayantha Nawarathne, Director General, National

Institute of Education. Gold winners of this event will get an opportunity to take part in the International Convention on Quality Control Circles (ICQCC) which will be held in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2022. In 2023 the ICQCC will be held in Beijing China.

As a member of the Asian-Country Forum of 14 members, SLAAQP will proudly host the International Convention on Quality Control Circles (ICQCC) in 2024. SLAAQP expect about 3,000 foreign delegates from 13 countries in Colombo in 2024.

The member countries of ICQCC are:

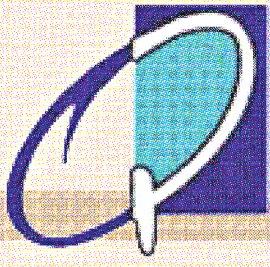
Group A (North):
China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and the Philippines

Group B (South):
Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand



Council of the NCQP 2021





NATIONAL CONVENTION ON QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY (NCQP) 2021

ORGANISED BY SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY (SLAAQP)

An advertising special edition

"Quality comes first" says award winning Convenience Foods (Lanka) PLC

By Chrishalle Shalini

Convenience Foods (Lanka) PLC is perhaps best known for pioneering soy based products with Lankasoy, however, today the company's operations span well beyond soy products and produces spices, breakfast cereals, instant soup mixes, extruded snacks and instant kottu, whilst marketing and distributing coconut milk and salt. Under Convenience Foods, Lankasoy, Sera, Nutriline and Tetos deliver products of the highest quality to fulfil the food needs of the Sri Lankan household through convenient, nutritious, affordable and accessible products. The company exports its products to over 20 countries including USA, New Zealand, Switzerland, Australia, Lebanon, Dubai, Italy, South Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Kuwait, Canada, Zambia, Qatar, Oman and Sweden.

The company is a subsidiary of the CBL Group, one of Sri Lanka's largest diversified food conglomerates and shares CBL's commitment to delivering the highest quality of products with the Group's core values of Caring, Quality, Innovation and Integrity at heart.

The company follows rigorous quality assurance processes to ensure the highest food safety and quality from farm to table. CBL's vertically integrated agriculture operations and long standing supplier partnerships support the company to source the best quality of raw materials which are used to manufacture our products at its sophisticated facilities.

"Our goal is to add value to the lives of our consumer through nutritious, safe

and delicious products. We continuously improve our capabilities and efficiencies and we look at our value chain as a whole to address quality from farm to table. With the challenges of the future it will be more and more important for consumers to have sustainable access to food and nutrition and our teams continuously improve processes and efficiencies to rise to this challenge." Said Thilanka de Zoysa, CEO of Convenience Foods Lanka PLC.

At Convenience Foods, the engagement of people in quality is key to ensure that its quality philosophy is shared by everyone.

Iranga Mahanama is the Manager of Quality Assurance at Convenience Foods and she and her team play an important role in maintaining and improving quality standards and process efficiencies. She says quality circles and continuous improvement projects are carried out by cross functional teams routinely and the company listens closely to consumer feedback to keep developing its systems. Her team also engages employees from across the company and CBL Group in this process to share knowledge, build competencies and collaborate in quality improvement.

In 2021, Convenience Foods (Lanka) won its second Gold Award (Cross functional Teams) at the National Convention on Quality and Productivity organized by SLAAQP. As a ISO 9001, ISO 22000, ISO 14000 and GMP certified company, Convenience Foods has consistently raised the bar for the industry by innovating in its product portfolio through state of the art processes.



Team "Nero" of Convenience Foods (Lanka) PLC accepting the Gold Award at National Convention on Quality and Productivity 2021



Team Nero of Convenience Foods (Lanka) PLC (From L-R) Ms. Ishini De Silva, Ms. Asanka Kodithuwakku, Ms. Madusha Gamage, Mr. Miyulu Bandara, Mr. Sandalu Maduranga and Mr. Tharindu Dabare



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SPORTS



Jimmy Peirson top scored for Australia 'A' with an unbeaten 67 (Picture Credit - SLC)

Sri Lanka 'A' - Australia 'A' 2nd unofficial Test

Peirson cracks half ton to rescue Australia 'A'

Jimmy Peirson came to the rescue of Australia 'A' with an unbeaten knock of 67 on day two against Sri Lanka 'A' in the second four-day Test match played at the Sooriyawewa Stadium yesterday.

Peirson's knock helped Australia 'A' who were struggling on 131 for 5 at one stage to end with a score of 254 after Sri Lanka 'A' declared their innings on their overnight score of 330 for 9.

Right arm spinner Lakshitha Manasinghe along with left arm pacie Dilshan Madusanka and spinner Suminda Lakshan did the early damage after openers Marcus Harris and Matt Renshaw gave the visitors a sound start. The trio combined and share five scalps to have them in a spot of bother the score 131 for 5.

Later Peirson associated in brief but valuable partnerships with the best for 40 runs for the sixth wicket with Aaron Hardie who chipped in with 24 before home sides' bowling trio cleaned off the tail to bowl them out for 254 runs. Manasinghe ended with a five wicket haul while Madusanka and Lakshan shared five wickets between them.

Sri Lanka 'A' batting the second time ended the day on 27 for 2 to end day two with an overall lead of 103 runs. The match will be continued today.

(MSA)

Sri Lanka 'A'

1ST INNINGS	
330 for 9 dec. (Nipun Dhananjaya 92, Lahiru Udara 63, Sahan Arachchige 61, Nuwanidu Fernando 32, Sadeera Samarawickrama 29, Scott Boland 4 for 38, Mark Steketee 4 for 69)	
2ND INNINGS	
M. Bhanuka c Renshaw b Holland 08	
L. Udara c Peirson b Steketee 04	
K. Mendis not out 14	
M. Shiraz not out 01	
EXTRAS: 00	
TOTAL: (2 wickets, 110 overs) 27	
FALL OF WICKETS: 6-1, 26-2	
BOWLING: Boland 4-1-12-0, Steketee 4-2-7-1, Holland 2-0-4-1, Hardie 1-0-4-0	

Australia 'A'

1ST INNINGS	
M. Renshaw c Bhanuka b Madushanka 35	
M. Harris b Manasinghe 39	
H. Hunt c Dananjaya b Manasinghe 28	
N. Maddinson b Lakshan 00	
J. Philippe lbw b Manasinghe 16	
J. Peirson not out 67	
A. Hardie c Mendis b Manasinghe 24	
M. Steketee b Madushanka 19	
S. Boland lbw b Madushanka 05	
T. Sangha c Bhanuka b Manasinghe 07	
J. Holland c Mendis b Lakshan 04	
EXTRAS: (b2, lb2, nb6) 10	
TOTAL: (all out, 74.3 overs) 254	
FALL OF WICKETS: 68-1, 82-2, 86-3, 105-4, 131-5, 171-6, 207-7, 236-8, 247-9, 254-10	
BOWLING: Madushanka 16-1-43-3, Shiraz 10-1-33-0, Arachchige 6-0-25-0, Manasinghe 25-1-82-5, Lakshan 18.3-0-67-2	

Major Club Limited Over gets underway on June 27

Sri Lanka Cricket will conduct the Major Club Limited Over inter-club cricket tournament from June 27 in venues around the metropolises.

The tournament will see 26 teams divided into two groups battling for honours. The league matches are scheduled to end on July 23 which will be followed by the two semi-final encounters on July 25 and ending with the final slotted to be played on July 28.

However due to the tight international schedule involving some national level cricketers against Australia and later against Pakistan, it will give an opportunity for budding youngsters to showcase their talent.

The tournament will start with 12 matches down for decision which are Sebastianites C&AC vs Badureliya CC, Saracens SC vs SSC, Bloomfield C&AC vs Kalutara TC, NCC vs Colts CC, Moors SC vs Lankan CC, Tamil Union vs Police SC, BRC vs Navy SC, Nugegoda S&WC vs Panadura SC, Kandy Customs CC vs Galle CC, Army SC vs Kurunegala YCC, Chilaw Marians CC vs Negombo CC and Ragama CC vs CCC.

The teams in the fray - Group 'A' - Tamil Union, NCC, Moors SC, Police SC, Lankan CC, Colts CC, Sebastianites C&AC, SSC, Bloomfield C&AC, Ace Capital CC, Saracens SC, Badureliya CC, Kalutara, Group 'B' - Ragama CC, Army SC, Chilaw Marians CC, CCC, Negombo CC, Kurunegala YCC, BRC, Panadura SC, Kandy Customs CC, Air Force SC, Nugegoda S&WC, Navy SC, Galle CC.

(MSA)

'EXTREME SPIN' OF SRI LANKA ODI PITCHES GREAT PREPARATION FOR TESTS - WARNER

Australia opener David Warner said the "extreme" spinning pitches in Sri Lanka during their one-day international series defeat provided them with the ideal preparation for their upcoming Test matches.

The hosts beat Australia by four runs in the fourth ODI in Colombo on Tuesday to take an unassailable 3-1 lead in the five-match series.

Sri Lanka went into the match with four front-line spinners and no specialist seam bowler on a wicket that had been used during Sunday's third match.

Warner, who fell on 99 during Australia's chase, said the spin was "bit more extreme" but nothing that the touring side had not expected or not prepared for.

"These wickets are challenging," he told reporters. "We were always expecting turning wickets and it's fantastic preparation for us. We absolutely love the fact that they're playing on the wickets back-to-back, that's what we want, we can't get that practice

in the nets the nets are green.

"For us it's great practice out in the middle there with these dust bowls. It's going to be exciting come the test matches in Galle because we know what we're going to get there." The final 50-overs match will be played on Friday before the two sides kick off a two-Test series from next week.

Spin-friendly pitches in the subcontinent pose a big test for batters of touring sides who have grown up playing on hard, bouncier surfaces.

"This is extreme spin, you don't usually see these types of wickets, you only see them here," said the 35-year-old Warner, who regularly features during the Indian Premier League.

"India is completely different, they're actually good wickets and they turn day three and four. It's about being busy I remember playing in Dhaka, that was one of the worst wickets I've ever played on, and I made a hundred."

(REUTERS)

David Warner walks back to the pavilion after his dismissal after 99 runs



- INTERNATIONAL
- Cricket: INDIA WOMEN IN SRI LANKA T20I SERIES 1st T20I - (Dambulla)
- ICC WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP 3rd Test - Day 1 - England vs New Zealand - (Leeds)
- Tennis: WIMBLEDON, QUALIFICATION WTA (Bank of England Sports Grounds)
- Golf: WOMEN'S PGA CHAMPIONSHIP (Congressional Country Club)

Court issues order in favour of FSL

BY LAKMAL SOORIYAGODA

The Colombo District Court on Tuesday (21) issued an order in favour of Football Sri Lanka (FSL), refusing to issue interim injunctions against the football administration body.

These two cases had been filed against FSL by MHM Afia, President of the Government Services Sports Association and Senaweera Arachchilage Sunil Senaweera, President of the Gampola Football League.

The Plaintiffs filed two cases, naming FSL President Jaswar Umar and FSL Secretary Upali Hewage as defendants and sought interim reliefs preventing the holding of an EGM to adopt the proposed new Constitution of the FSL.

Following the granting of the Enjoining Order, FSL strongly opposed the Interim Injunction and the Order was delivered by the Colombo District Court.

FSL took up the position that the proposed Constitution aims to bring the present Constitution of FSL in line with FIFA International Standards and best practices and further maintained that the process has been followed in respect of the holding of the EGM.

Senior Counsel Eraj de Silva appeared with Counsel Daminda Wijayarathne and Zul Luthufi instructed by Dimuthu Kuruppuarachchi appeared for FSL. The President of the Government Services Sports Association was represented by Senior Counsel Kaushalya Nawaratne while Counsel Saman Liyanage appeared for the President of the Gampola Football League.

With eye on CWG, Sri Lanka Women take on India Women today

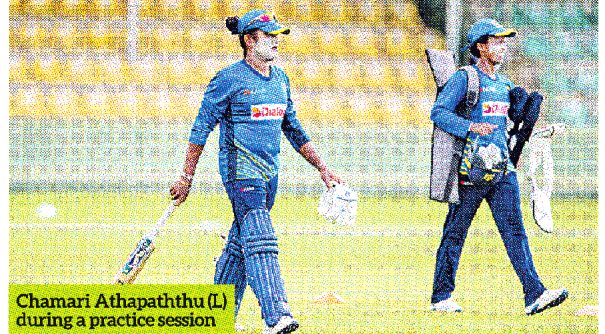
With the Commonwealth Games fast approaching, Sri Lanka Women's cricket captain Chamari Athapaththu believes the home limited series against India, beginning with the first T20I at the Rangiri Dambulla Stadium today, will be of vital importance for her team's preparation.

"We have to play the Commonwealth Games in July, we're leaving on the 25th so this series against India is very important for us, as we haven't played many games in the last two years," Athapaththu said.

Sri Lanka played their first bilateral series in more than two years when they toured Pakistan in May.

They were swept in the T20I series, losing all three matches, but were able to salvage a game in the 50-over series, winning the third and final ODI.

India will be a stiffer challenge, but Athapaththu



Chamari Athapaththu (L) during a practice session

was confident her team could take a game or two if the batting in particular clicked.

"India has about six or seven cricketers who have played around the world in leagues, so they have a lot more ability compared to our cricketers. The last time India toured Sri Lanka, we managed to beat them in an ODI. The most important area for us will be our batting. In the ODIs if we can get 250-260, and around 150-160 in T20Is, then we can challenge them," she said.

"In terms of bowling, I think both teams are on equal ground, but it's in the batting where there is a big discrepancy. They have batters who can score quickly, and they are more experienced - two things which the batters in my team lack. But if our batters play to the best of their ability they can beat any team in the world on their day," Athapaththu added.

Sri Lanka will play three T20Is in Dambulla, before shifting to Pallekele for three ODIs.

St. Joseph's, Kingswood to kick-off schools' rugby season

BY SHAMIL AMITH

After a two-year lapse, the Dialog Under 19 inter-school rugby league tournament will return today, with St. Joseph's College taking on Kingswood College at 4:15 pm at Havelock Park.

The schools' rugby tournament came to a standstill due to the Covid-19 pandemic in the early part of 2020, before being cancelled in 2021, and its resumption will surely bring in supporters of the respective schools, hungry to witness their team in action.

The Josephians will take the field under the leadership of Teran Karunanayake while Kingswood are led by Gihan Ranaweera, with both manning the Centre position.

The opening day of the tournament, conducted by the Sri Lanka Schools' Rugby Football Association will be followed by two matches on Friday, with Royal College locking horns against St. Anthony's College at Royal Complex ground in Reid Avenue and Isipathana College taking on Science College at Havelock Park.

Three matches are slotted to be played on Saturday (25) - two in Colombo and the other at Pallekele, Kandy - with St. Peter's College meeting Dharmaraja College at Bambalaptiya, Wesley College facing Vidyarthi College at Havelock Park



Teran Karunanayake captains St. Joseph's College



Gihan Ranaweera will lead Kingswood College

and Trinity College in action against S. Thomas' College at Trinity ground in Pallekele.

The 12 teams in action for the season, divided into two groups, comprise of Royal College, St. Joseph's College, S. Thomas' College, Trinity College, Kingswood College and St. Anthony's College Katugastota in Group 'A' while St. Peter's College, Wesley College, Isipathana College, Science College Mt Lavinia, Vidyarthi College and Dharmaraja College are in Group 'B'.

Meanwhile the SLSRFA will also conduct the Division 1 Segment 'B' tournament concurrently with 12 teams divided into two groups will be in action.

The Segment 'B' teams divided into two groups comprise of Zahira College Colombo, Maliyadeva Kurunegala, Lumbini MV Colombo, Prince of Wales, St. Aloysius College Galle and Mahanama College Colombo in Group '2A' while the Group '2B' includes DS Senanayake College, Sri Sumangala, Thurstan College, Ananda College, St. Sylvester's College and St. Benedict's College.

Junior TT Tournament to mark St. John's College Anniversary

The annual Western Province (WP) Junior Ranking Table Tennis Tournament will be held on July 2 and 3 at S. Thomas' College Indoor Stadium in Mount Lavinia.

The event will be conducted by the '82 Batch of the OBA of St. John's College, Nugegoda in collaboration with the WP Table Tennis Association to celebrate the 107th Anniversary of St. John's College, Nugegoda.

Leading isotonic sports drinks manufacturer Yeti has come forward as the official drinks partner for this tournament.

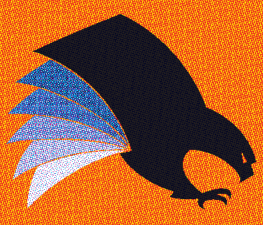


Major Sanath Abeywickrama (left), President, 82 Batch of St. John's College OBA receiving a pack of Yeti products from Director Yeti Dr Dilshan Balasuriya (third from left). Also in the picture are Dhanaraj Ramaratnam (President OBA) and Chandana Perera (former President OBA and Chairman, Organising Committee)

Meanwhile, Chairman, Organising Committee Chandana Perera said that over 300 junior table tennis players are expected to participate in this tournament

(SP)





Mirror Business

www.dailymirror.lk/business

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P13 Central Bank launches International Transactions Reporting...

P14 Trillium Property Management breaks ground for...



Rice millers divided over government-imposed controlled prices

The top rice millers in the country remain divided over the controlled prices imposed by the government on rice, with at least one of the largest rice millers asking the government to increase the maximum retail price (MRP) on Nadu by Rs.25, in order to avoid shortages in the market.

Rice Millers Association President Dudley Sirisena of Araliya fame and New Rathna Rice (Pvt.) Ltd owner L.J. Mithrapala during a media briefing held in Colombo yesterday engaged in a heated verbal spat and Sirisena nearly walked out of the media briefing at one point.

The heated discussion occurred following Mithrapala's request on Rs.25 increase of the MRP on the Nadu rice, which he emphasised as necessary to cover the costs while allowing the traders to earn a fair profit.

However, Sirisena continued to insist that the rice millers must release their rice stocks to the market in complying with the MRP imposed by the Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA), while also claiming that the vast majority of rice millers are ready to supply rice to the market at the controlled prices.

Justifying the need for increase in the Nadu prices, Mithrapala claimed that the

prices of Nadu paddy have risen when compared with the Keeri Samba paddy, due to the high demand as of late. Further, he pointed out that the other input costs have also increased by multifold from fertilisers to fuel.

However, Sirisena insisted that the millers and traders should be able to make a sacrifice for the people who are battered by the economic crisis by giving up their profit motives in this period.

Mithrapala warned that uneconomical price controls could lead to shortages and queues in the coming days, with a rice shortage is already looming in certain areas.

MORE ON P13



Animated Rice Millers Association President Dudley Sirisena and other representatives of rice milling industry at press conference. PIC BY NIMALSIRI EDIRISINGHE



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Sri Lanka identifies 5,000 acres in North and East for sea cucumber cultivation

Eying a US \$ 1 billion export income, the government has identified 5,000 acres of lands for investors to set up sea cucumber production and export villages in the Jaffna, Mannar, Kilinochchi and Batticaloa districts.

Fisheries Minister Douglas Devananda this week sought the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers to expand the on-going sea cucumber cultivation project in these districts by establishing 100-acre sea cucumber production and exporting villages.

Accordingly, one-acre sea leech cultivation farms to be established for every 100 acres.

The National Aquaculture Development Authority of Sri Lanka has already initiated a commercial sea cucumber cultivation project.

MORE ON P13

Soaring interest rates seen forcing banks to delay or cancel bond issuances

- 700bps rate hike on April 8 has sent interest rates in economy through roof
- 14 listed firms, mostly banks and finance companies, raised Rs.84bn via bond issuances in 2021
- Debentures have been a popular instrument among banks to raise capital to meet BASEL III capital requirements
- Delay in raising capital via corporate debentures could interrupt banks' capital enhancement journey

The soaring interest rates triggered by the jumbo key rate hike on April 8 have prompted the banks to either delay or cancel their corporate bond issuances as part of their Tier II capital enhancement journey, according to the banking industry sources.

It appears that the sharp increase in interest rates is roiling both the equities and corporate debt capital markets, as investors are finding comfort in government securities, of which the yields have risen to record high levels,

albeit some softening was there last month.

Sri Lanka was coming off a record-high level of listed corporate bond issuances in 2021, with 14 companies raising Rs.84 billion in capital via debentures, nearly all of which were by banks and licensed finance companies to bolster their Tier II capital levels.

It was only last week the rating agency ICRA Lanka Limited disclosed that the short-term debt capital market is stung by the soaring interest rates, as investors have lost

appeal in the commercial papers.

Corporate debentures have been a popular instrument among the banks to raise capital to meet BASEL III capital requirements. They ramped up these bond issuances in the last four to five years to stay in line with the enhanced capital adequacy ratios under the new BASEL rules.

Hence, this delay in raising capital via corporate debentures could interrupt banks' capital enhancement journey.

MORE ON P13

Sri Lanka plans donor conference with China, India and Japan

Sri Lanka will hold a donor conference with China, India and Japan, as the island nation seeks overseas assistance to overcome the worst economic crisis since its independence, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe told Parliament yesterday.

"We need the support of India, Japan and China, who have been historic allies," he said.

A high-level delegation from India is expected to arrive today for talks on additional support from New Delhi, while a special team from the U.S. Treasury would visit next week, Wickremesinghe said.

Dhammika enters Parliament

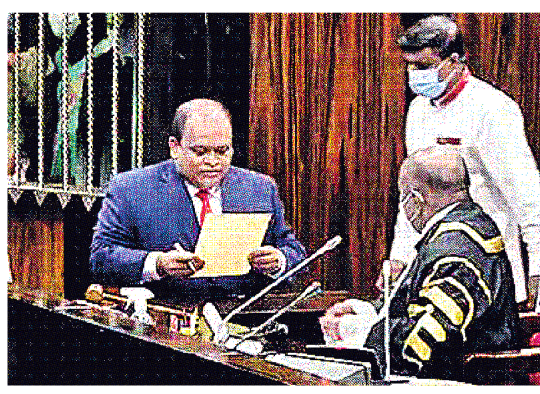
Business magnate Dhammika Perera was sworn in as a Member of Parliament yesterday, after the Supreme Court rejected the Fundamental Rights applications filed challenging his appointment to Parliament earlier this week.

Perera, who is considered among the top three richest persons in the country, is

tipped to be appointed as the Technology and Investment Promotion Minister, which was gazetted by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, recently.

The Technology and Investment Promotion Ministry includes the Registration of Persons Department, Immigration and Emigration Department,

MORE ON P13



Sri Lanka loses Rs.94bn from concessionary vehicle permits per annum

■ This offsets almost entirety of taxes from vehicle imports in a year

Sri Lanka is losing around Rs.94 billion annually from the concessionary vehicle permits, which is nearly equivalent to the amount the government collects from taxing vehicle imports, making a mockery of the government's vehicle taxation policy.

According to the data presented by Moratuwa University Senior Professor for Transport and Logistics Amal Kumarage, Sri Lanka has made its taxation and transport policy completely lopsided over the decades by not taxing luxury vehicles and vehicles with higher engine capacity through the concessionary vehicle permit system.

He said Sri Lanka annually offers up to 10,000 concessionary vehicle

permits, most of which are used to import vehicles, which are either luxury or with higher engine capacity, losing the government a thumping Rs.94 billion per annum.

This is almost equivalent to the Rs.97 billion the Treasury earns from the private vehicle imports in a year.

"Stop concessionary vehicle permits, which is a loss to the country," Prof. Kumarage insisted.

MORE ON P13

US bondholder sues Sri Lanka following debt default

■ Hamilton Reserve Bank holds more than US \$ 250mn of SL's 5.875% and ISBs due July 25

■ Hamilton's lawyers say default being "orchestrated by officials at highest levels of government", including Rajapaksa family

■ Accuses SL of excluding bonds held by domestic banks and other interested parties from an announced debt restructuring

Sri Lanka has been sued in the US by a bondholder after the island nation defaulted on its debt for the first time in history amid an unprecedented economic crisis caused by the pandemic and gross economic mismanagement.

Hamilton Reserve Bank Ltd, which holds more than US \$ 250 million of Sri Lanka's 5.875 percent International Sovereign Bonds due July 25, filed the suit on Tuesday in a New York federal court, seeking full payment of principal and interest, Bloomberg reported.

Hamilton Reserve, based in St. Kitts and Nevis, said in the lawsuit that the default is being "orchestrated by officials at the highest levels of government", including the ruling Rajapaksa family and accused Sri Lanka of excluding bonds held by domestic banks and other interested parties from an announced debt restructuring.

"As a result, these favoured Sri Lankan parties stand to be paid principal and interest in

full, while the bonds -- which are also broadly held by the US retirement systems, including Fidelity Investments, BlackRock, T. Rowe Price, Lord Abbett, JPMorgan, PIMCO, Neuberger Berman and other US investors -- remain indefinitely in default and unpaid, causing American retirees tremendous suffering from potentially massive losses of up to 80 percent of their original investment value," lawyers for Hamilton Reserve were quoted as saying by Bloomberg.

Sri Lanka hired Lazard Ltd and Clifford Chance LLP in May to serve as financial and legal advisors on debt restructuring, as the country seeks a bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The government on Monday began talks with the IMF, working toward an agreement that could offer creditors enough comfort to lend fresh funds to the bankrupt nation that's seeking US \$ 6 billion in coming months.

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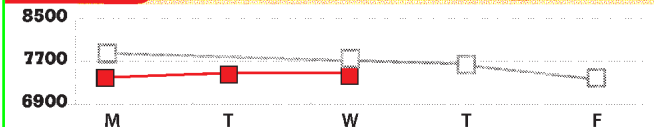


NDB bank
The future is banking on us

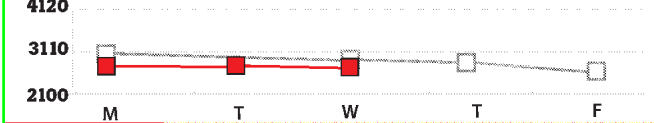


FINANCIAL MARKETS June 22, 2022

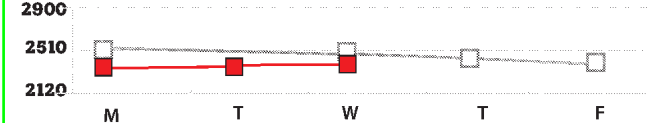
ALL SHARE 7,512.15 9.87 0.13%



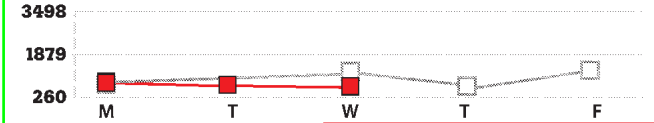
TOP 10 2,779.69 4.45 0.16%



S & P SL 20 2,409.81 9.24 0.38%



TURNOVER 690.48 Mn (70.07) -9.21%



TOP 10 PRICE MOVEMENTS T BILL RATES

Table with columns for stock name, price change, and bill rates for various currencies and terms.

Unit Trust Prices as on 21.06.2022

Table listing various unit trusts and their unit selling and buying prices.

Exchange Rates 22.06.2022

Table showing exchange rates for various currencies like USD, EUR, GBP, etc.

Market Indicators 22.06.2022

Table showing various market indicators including price indices, equities, and interbank interest rates.

CSE Price List

Large table listing CSE price list with columns for security, volume, VWA, open, high, low, and change.

Indices continue to close in green

The ASPI closed in green as a result of price gains in counters such as John Keells Holdings, Expolanka Holdings and Central Finance Company with the turnover crossing Rs 690 Mn.



was noted in Browns Investments, SMB Leasing and LOLC Finance. Foreign participation in the market activity remained at subdued levels with foreigners closing as net buyers.

Transportation sector was the top contributor to the market turnover (due to Expolanka Holdings) whilst the sector index gained 2.37%.

share price of Royal Ceramics moved up by Rs 0.80 (3.05%) to close at Rs 27.00. The share price of Vallibel One recorded a gain of Rs 1.20 (3.53%) to close at Rs 35.20.

Central Bank launches International Transactions Reporting System

Recognising the need to implement a comprehensive cross border transactions and domestic foreign currency transactions monitoring system as a key national priority, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) has implemented a new data collecting system known as the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS) with the participation of Licensed Commercial Banks (LCBs) and Licensed Specialised Banks (LSBs).

The ITRS is a comprehensive data gathering system on cross border transactions and domestic foreign currency transactions and is aimed at filling multitude of existing data gaps. It will help policy formulation in many aspects by providing valuable inputs for both statistical and regulatory purposes.

The ITRS system will serve a number of purposes, including the enhancement of Balance of Payments Statistics, including export proceeds, imports, services account transactions such as IT/BPO transactions, workers' remittances, financial account transactions, and many other statistical data inputs.

The ITRS will also serve the purpose of data reporting by banks for regulatory requirements. Data from the ITRS system is also used as supporting information for future policy decisions, such as origins of foreign currency outflows from the country for education, medical, tourism and other purposes.

The ITRS will also centralise information gathering by the Central Bank enabling a more convenient data reporting by banks. The Phase 1 of the ITRS went live from June 21.

The system is also expected to facilitate further centralised data reporting of the Central Bank in the next phases of the project.

All banks are required to report information related to transactions in the Phase 1 of the project as detailed in ITRS Interphase Requirements through the ITRS 'Web Application' developed by the Central Bank.

The ITRS Monitoring Unit, established at the Central Bank, will closely work with banks on a daily basis to ensure the accuracy, timeliness and the coverage of the data provided.

These reporting requirements are exercised based on the powers conferred by the Monetary Law Act, No. 58 of 1949, Banking Act No. 30 of 1988 and Foreign Exchange Act No. 12 of 2017.

Verité Research launches 'Infrastructure Watch' to track transparency of large-scale infrastructure projects

Verité Research has launched a new dashboard inside its PublicFinance.lk platform. The dashboard is called 'Infrastructure Watch'.

It is an online trilingual dashboard that assesses the proactive disclosure of information online by the ministries and agencies responsible for the implementation of 60 ongoing large-scale infrastructure projects worth over Rs. 1 trillion.

The Right to Information Act No. 12 of 2016 mandates the responsible minister to proactively disclose all information related to projects that exceeds US\$ 100,000 and Rs. 500,000 for foreign and locally funded projects, at least three months prior to commencement.

The requirement is that the information should be disclosed in digital format on the ministry website in Sinhala and Tamil, and if feasible in English as well.

'Infrastructure Watch' assesses the online availability of 40 different types of information within five

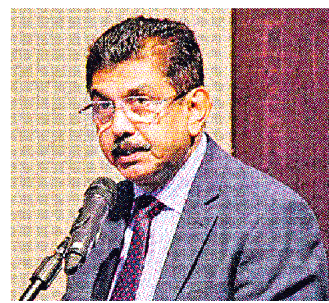
broad categories. In addition to the proactive disclosure assessment, the dashboard also provides access to an online repository of procurement contracts and loan agreements of various foreign-funded infrastructure projects received by Verité Research.

University students and researchers will be able to access the research methodology and download the database of information and analysis in the form of an excel sheet from this dashboard.

The present economic crisis is partly due to opaque decision making and corrupt implementation of projects through increased debt.

The 'Infrastructure Watch' dashboard will increase awareness among the public and government agencies on the importance of proactively sharing information on large infrastructure projects. It will enhance the space for public engagement and help to reduce corruption in decision making and implementation around infrastructure projects.

Ceylon Chamber and Environment Ministry propose 'Collect-Back' plastic waste mgt. model for private sector



Dr. Anil Jasinghe – Secretary, Ministry of Environment



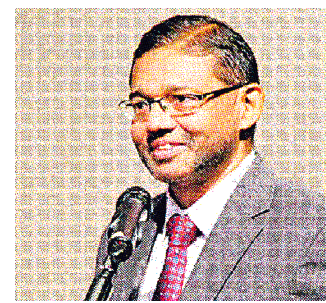
Micah Globerson – Acting Economic Growth Office Director, USAID Mission, Sri Lanka and The Maldives



Manjula de Silva – Secretary General and CEO, Ceylon Chamber of Commerce



Chandrarathna Vithanage – Senior Assistant Secretary General, Ceylon Chamber of Commerce



Denver de Zylva – Senior Vice President, Facilities and Sustainability, Virtusa Pvt. Ltd.

To tackle the escalating issue of Sri Lanka's plastic waste management, the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce has initiated the implementation of an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) model, which requires all stakeholders generating plastic waste to take responsibility for recycling and minimizing the use of plastic packaging.

"The Ministry of Environment will support and welcome all initiatives started by the private sector including the implementation of the Collect-Back Target model proposed by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

The Central Environmental Authority will closely monitor the progress of proposed mechanisms and complete the legal provisions required for meeting efficient outcomes from each method. The Ministry of Environment and the Central Environmental Authority reiterate the necessity of playing an active role by the private sector to adhere to the EPR model with Best Available Technologies," Secretary to

the Ministry of Environment, Dr. Anil Jasinghe said.

The Ceylon Chamber and Biodiversity Sri Lanka (BSL) with financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) developed the EPR Roadmap in 2021, to provide a strategic plan for plastic waste management in Sri Lanka.

The implementation of the Mandatory Reporting and Collect-Back (MRCB) model was recommended under this EPR Roadmap. This EPR scheme based on MRCB model was developed under the guidance of a Project Steering Committee comprising of key Government Agencies including; Ministry of Environment, Central Environmental Authority (CEA), Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA), Coast Conservation & Coastal Resource Management Department (CC & CRMD), Western Province Waste Management Authority (WPWMA), State Ministry of Provincial Councils

& Local Government Affairs, Colombo Municipal Council (CMC) and private sector representatives from beverage, water bottling and dairy sector.

The MRCB model, requires plastic users to declare their annual usage and pledge to collect back an agreed-upon percentage, targeted to reach close to 100 percent over a five-year period. The initiative aims to increase plastic waste collection and recycling in order to minimize plastic pollution. The proposed Collect-Back Target model has been endorsed by the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and the Central Environmental Authority (CEA), and welcomed by the private sector.

"There is an urgent need for an integrated and collaborative approach within the plastic value chain in order to implement a sustainable framework, ensuring effective and effective plastic waste management. The Collect-Back Target model will help to promote greater accountability among corporates and ensure an efficient system of monitoring and evaluation", said CEO and Secretary General of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, Manjula de Silva.

The private sector will commence reporting of waste collection and recycling through the online reporting system. The initial phase will focus on two types of plastics, namely, Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) and High Impact Polystyrene (HIPS) packaging. The outcome of voluntary EPR implementation will be documented to draw lessons that can be applied to a mandatory collection and reporting system in the future.

The project is guided by a high-level multi-stakeholder Project Steering Committee, co-chaired by the MoE Secretary to the MoE and the Secretary General of the CCC.

The Ceylon Chamber and the Ministry of Environment, urge all private sector companies using plastic packaging to intensify their voluntary plastic collection and recycling initiatives, and from 2022 onwards to maintain the necessary records in order to demonstrate their commitment to EPR.

New IPS publication calls for legally binding master plan for public transportation

A new publication from the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS) calls for a legally binding master plan for public transportation in Sri Lanka, whereby urban transport will become a fully integrated system instead of a collection of projects.

The study notes that despite a broad planning context, the progress made in public transportation in Sri Lanka is limited. Therefore, it recommends creating a master plan with sufficient legal teeth to ensure continuity regardless of the administration in power, and policy consistency from formulation to implementation.

This latest IPS publication 'Towards a Developed Urban Transportation System: Lessons for Sri Lanka', is authored by Dr. Bilesha Weeraratne and Chathuriga Karunanayake.

Using a case study approach, the authors examine transport initiatives adopted in Metro Manila in the Philippines, Bangkok in Thailand, and Hong Kong to glean lessons to improve public transportation in urban Sri Lanka.

Metro Manila and Bangkok are examined due to their similarity to Colombo and the Western Province in Sri Lanka, with high levels of traffic congestion for decades. The Philippines and Bangkok are known for their successful efforts in addressing these congestion issues such as establishing a Light Rail Transit system, providing vital insights into overcoming problems prevalent in Sri Lanka's urban transport system.

Moreover, Hong Kong is an ideal case to offer lessons from its best practices to any city struggling to develop its transportation system. As such, these three cases were chosen purposefully. The following measures

are recommended in view of the case studies examined:

- Garner the support of the government, opposition and public, and create a legally binding master plan for public transportation in Sri Lanka.
- Take advantage of the private sector and work on an optimal public-private partnership (PPP) to invest in transportation projects. Instead of piecemeal projects, the government should retain the coordination and implementation role to ensure systematic public transport development.
- Avoid vested interest and rent-seeking behaviour undermining the overall purpose and the plan of public transport initiatives.
- Estimate realistic projections about ridership in public transport modes/projects. Update and revise the same periodically with the latest information and address common factors contributing to lower ridership.
- Design individual projects to integrate with other projects and modes of transportation and successfully divert preference from private vehicles to public transportation.
- Ensure policy coherence at the national level by vetting all policies for indirect implications, including mitigating traffic congestion.

To purchase a copy of the IPS publication 'Towards a Developed Urban Transportation System: Lessons for Sri Lanka', contact: Amesh Thennakoon, Publications Officer, IPS on 0773 737717 or amesh@ips.lk.

Contd. from Page 11

Soaring interest...

However, on the other hand, the banks may also witness less need for urgent capital after their aggressive lending drive came to a halt this year.

Nevertheless, it remains uncertain to what extent the banks may be able to absorb the losses coming from the sovereign debt default and heightened credit quality concerns, as the borrowers lost their debt serviceability with the collapse of the economy amid the sharp increase in lending rates.

According to the data available through the end of 2021, the licensed commercial banks had a Tier I capital adequacy ratio and a Tier II or total capital adequacy ratio of 13.2 percent and 16.7 percent, respectively, whereas the regulatory minimums were 8.0 percent and 12.0 percent, respectively.

However, both ratios came under pressure in the three months ended on March 31, 2022, due to the massive provisions made by the banks against both their financial investments held in foreign currency-denominated government securities and loans, to absorb the shock of the collapse of the Sri Lankan economy, which is sending shock waves across financial and lending markets.

Rice millers...

Araliya and Rathna focus on two market segments, with Araliya being a top

producer of Keeri Samba while Rathna being a key producer of Nadu.

A representative speaking on behalf of the SME rice millers stressed that the government should have imposed the price controls on rice six months way before the harvesting period, instead of waiting until the last moment.

Sri Lanka identifies...

Agriculture and of Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation Minister Mahinda Amaraweera highlighted that there's a growing demand for sea cucumbers in Japan, China and South Korea.

As the market price per one kilo of sea cucumber remains at around Rs.40,000, the minister noted that the country could earn US \$ 1 billion in export revenue, if the project is effectively implemented.

Dhammika enters...

Sri Lanka Telecom and its subsidiaries as well as 15 institutions, including the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka Standards Institute.

The role of the new ministry will also be to promote foreign direct

investment and private sector investment while promoting economic potential in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka loses...

"The taxation process is pointless because the amount earned from imports is nearly equal to the loss from concessionary imports," he told a webinar on how Sri Lanka could make its transport a sustainable affair.

Speaking further, he asked how Sri Lanka could ever shift people from private transport to more sustainable and decent quality public transport when the government openly and actively promotes private vehicle imports without even charging the relevant duties.

Making it further anomalous, Prof. Kumarage said Sri Lanka does not spend close to what the government earns from taxing vehicle imports on public transport.

Therefore, he urged the authorities to close this anomaly forthwith and spend on public transport systems from what they collect from vehicle imports even when the vehicle imports are restored.

Sri Lanka opened the floodgates for vehicle imports, both after the end of the war in 2009, claiming to offer peace dividends and again in 2015, making the country's urban roads largely immovable.

Trillium Property Management breaks ground for US\$ 10mn duplex apartment project

Trillium Property Management, a luxury apartment owner, developer and operator, on June 21 held the ground breaking ceremony of its latest 60 upscale duplex (two storey) apartment project with exclusively designed 2 villas at No: 33, Lionel Edirisinghe Mawatha, Colombo 05.

Chairman of Trillium Property Management Janaka Ratnayake graced the event, amidst a gathering of guests, including customers, partners and government officials. The ceremony, which was held at the auspicious time of 8.00 a.m. was preceded by a religious ceremony.

Scheduled to be ready for occupation within 2 years, the project of US\$ 10 million,

is expected to be the most conveniently located, high profile luxury real estate project in the city in an elite neighborhood, with proximity to all the facilities and other conveniences in addition to the relaxed and calm environment.

Build on 55 perches in contour terrace, the project will feature 60 luxuries duplex apartments include 2, 3 & 4 bedrooms and 02 exclusive villas.

The two exclusive villas spread over 05 floors with five bedrooms and bath, private lift, private plunge pool, billiard room, alfresco area to bring homely feeling to entice home owners. The complex offers all modern amenities including ample parking facilities, roof top pool, club house, well equipped gym and outdoor living area.



From left: Trillium Director - Property Management and Services Renuka Rathnayake, Trillium Executive Director - Property Management and Services Rachitha Rathnayake, Trillium Chairman - Property Management and Services Janaka Rathnayake, Trillium Executive Director - Property Management and Services Lekhya Rathnayake and Kruthya Rathnayake were present at the ground breaking ceremony

Hytera's range of PoC solutions offer efficient communications for construction sites

The construction industry is complex. If you simply consider a construction site, so many things have to be coordinated and occur at the correct time in order for it to be able to function properly.

To do this, communication is key, and often a huge bottleneck for the industry. Very often, various aspects have to be coordinated across multiple locations, and some sites can be so large that, without effective communication, efficiency is lost and safety compromised.

Traditionally, push-to-talk (PTT) 2-way radios have been used to facilitate communications on large construction sites, but these pose significant challenges, especially with regard to requiring high initial investment in infrastructure, and may be hampered by various government restrictions. That means that this technology is often restricted to only the largest and most well-funded construction sites.

Thus, to meet this important requirement of communications, many sites rely on mobile phones, but these devices are not built for the purpose and are cumbersome, with facility managers and others often having to call up multiple people, making it very difficult to coordinate complex activities. Also, many areas on a construction site are not suitable for mobile phones. Plus, almost all phones are fragile and easily damaged amidst the harsh conditions of a site.

These factors inspired the development of Hytera's range of Push-to-talk over Cellular (PoC) solutions, which are ideally suited for efficient communications on a construction site. As PoC works using regular 2G, 3G and LTE cellular networks, this means that there is no need to invest in infrastructure. Plus, the cell service can be obtained at a very minimal cost.

Furthermore, unlike a phone, Hytera's PoC devices are built for instant, clear communications to all parties, and are



built ruggedly to withstand the harsh environments and rough use usually experienced on construction sites. In addition to this, all devices are equipped with high quality speakers for loud and clear audibility, even in noisy environments.

Attesting to their durability, reliability and ease of use, Hytera's PoC solutions are used around the world by many global companies and organisations including Abu Dhabi Police, JSC AK AlTynalmas, South African Airways (Pty) Ltd, Vodafone, Expo 2020 Dubai and more.

Kevin Sun, General Manager of Hytera Sri Lanka, has also pointed out that, for centralized coordination and tracking, Hytera's PoC radios also include GPS tracking, long lasting batteries and the capability of using WLANs, for areas where cellular signal is low. In Hytera's line-up, three devices are of particular interest for the construction industry.

These are the PNC 370, 380 and 550. All of these devices are ruggedly built and designed for the rough and tumble of the construction site.

Furthermore, all of them feature huge batteries to provide for long life. Each can also be used to talk to groups or individuals instantly, at the push of a button. All feature Bluetooth technology as well for hands-free usage.

Dialog Enterprise introduces Dialog SmartLife App for Three Sinha roller doors

Three Sinha Group has teamed up with Dialog Enterprise, the corporate ICT solutions arm of Dialog Axiata PLC, to launch a smart roller door controlled via the Dialog SmartLife App.

This app enables users to control and access roller door services conveniently from their smartphones. Customers who use Three Sinha roller doors simply need to download the Dialog SmartLife App on Apple App Store and Google Play Store on their smartphone to operate the roller doors from anywhere.

"Our company is constantly seeking innovations that

ensure customer convenience. This is another important step in that process, and we are pleased to partner Dialog Enterprise to provide customers with a future-fit solution. I invite our customers to become a part of this experience", said Manjula Ariyakumara, the Managing Director of Three Sinha Group of Companies.

"As expounded by our brand ethos 'The Future. Today', Dialog is continuously seeking avenues of incorporating communication technology into many service areas and product offerings. In line with this vision, we are delighted to

partner Three Sinha, a leading Roller Door company in Sri Lanka", said Navin Pieris, Group Chief Officer - Dialog Enterprise of Dialog Axiata PLC.

Products of the Three Sinha Group include roller doors, roller shutters, sectional overhead doors, window shutters, fire-resistant doors, aluminium fabrications, sensor doors, stainless steel, steel railings and stairways, polycarbonate canopies, stainless steel pantry cupboards, automatic barriers, automated sliding and swing gates and prefabricated steel buildings.



Manjula Ariyakumara, Managing Director of Three Sinha Group of Companies and Navin Pieris, Group Chief Officer - Dialog Enterprise of Dialog Axiata PLC

'Responsible Luxury' at the heart of ITC One Colombo development

As the world marks World Environment Day 2022, the US\$ 400 million plus ITC One Colombo development will stand tall in Sri Lanka as a groundbreaking project for adoption of sustainable practices.

Indian conglomerate ITC Ltd. applies a sustainability-centric approach in all its business operations, with particular emphasis on carbon reduction. As a global leader in sustainability, ITC is the only enterprise in the world of comparable dimensions to be carbon-positive, water-positive and solid-waste-recycling-positive for over a decade.

The hospitality business of ITC Limited, ITC Hotels with more than 100 properties across 70 destinations is not just one of India's leading luxury hotel chains but also India's largest hotel chain that is committed to sustainability, safety and hygiene in ways that have laid benchmarks for the industry. Today, ITC Hotels is the largest hotel chain in the world with the maximum number of LEED Platinum Certified Properties and a global exemplar in sustainability with its guiding premise - 'Responsible Luxury', already a Harvard case study.

Starting at the design stage, every ITC hotel adheres to the highest global and national green building standards to ensure that energy, water, and solid waste efficiencies are maximized.

All ITC Hotels super-premium luxury properties in India are LEED Platinum rated, thereby making it the greenest luxury hotel chain in the world. More than 50 percent of its total electrical energy demand is met through renewable energy sources, while 100 percent of waste water is either treated or re-cycled, thereby achieving over 50 percent reduction in water consumption over the past few years.

Other significant achievements for ITC Hotels include few of its luxury properties achieving LEED Zero Carbon Certification by USGBC and DNV Platinum certification (under its My Care Infection risk

management programme) for WeAssure - its health, safety and infection control programme.

It is unsurprising therefore that Responsible Luxury is the core DNA of the landmark ITC One Colombo development located at Colombo's prime Galle Face oceanfront.

This project is the first development in Sri Lanka by WelcomHotels Lanka (Private) Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of ITC Limited and comprises of the majestic 50 storey Sapphire Residences tower and the adjacent 30 storey high ITC hotel connected by the spectacular Ahasa One Sky Bridge at the 19th to 21st level.

The quest for adopting sustainable practices started with adoption of the first of its kind in Sri Lanka diaphragm wall construction which ensures minimum disturbance to the existing ground water, while also providing a higher level of water tightness for its four basements which can house approx. 1000 cars.

Other energy efficient and superior design features in the state-of-the-art development include dedicated sewage treatment and water treatment plants, 100 percent recycling of water, energy efficient chiller system, state of the art energy efficient hydro-pneumatic pumping system, energy efficient independent Variable Refrigerant Volume (VRV) system, energy recovery ventilation system etc.

The Sapphire Residences has already achieved the prestigious LEED BD+C pre-certification (Core & Shell Development) at the highest platinum level, ensuring the lowest environmental impact of any building of this scale. Like the residences, the adjacent ITC hotel is also designed to maximize energy, water and waste treatment efficiencies.

Subi George, Managing Director, WelcomHotels Lanka(P) Ltd, comments, "The ITC One Colombo project represents a pioneering environmentally efficient development that is committed to delivering the best of luxury in a responsible manner."

Lanka SSL clinches four gold awards at National Convention on Quality and Productivity

Lanka Special Steel Limited (Lanka SSL), a fully owned subsidiary of E.B. Creasy & Company PLC, continued its winning streak with its teams Awanetha, Target, Shakthi, and Verge taking home four coveted gold awards at the recent National Convention on Quality and Productivity (NCQP)2021.

Organized annually by the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Quality and Productivity (SLAAQP), the event was held under the patronage of Ambassador of Japan to Sri Lanka Mizukoshi Hideaki. Other dignitaries include Dr. Sunil Jayantha Nawaratna, Sunil G. Wijesinha, and the President of SLAAQP Vipul Kularatna.

The event saw the participation of over 250 teams from across the country competing with their presentations, showcasing the various activities done to improve efficiency and productivity. The four teams at Lanka SSL proved their exceptional strengths and values in these areas, and their confidence,

hard work, and dedication was awarded with the highest recognition.

The members who participated and represented Lanka SSL include Madusanka, Chamara, Kosala and Dinesh (Team Awanetha), Nifran, Susantha and Oshan (Team Target), Amith, Premarathna, and G. T. Madusanka (Team Shakthi), and Sagara, Supun, Gihani, Asanka, Kasuni and Sachini (Team Verge).

Lanka Special Steels has a good track record of participating in conventions both locally and internationally over the last 10 years. "We are extremely proud to see the enthusiasm and the commitment of our valuable employees, especially at the shop floor level, and their initiatives to willingly contribute towards continuous improvement leading to productivity by working together with their supervisors.

The outcome of winning four awards at this convention is something commendable and it is something we should be proud of.



Teams at Lanka SSL with their awards

The achievement comes bigger this year around, having won just one gold award at the last year's edition of the National Convention on Quality and Productivity," said Director / CEO Pravin De Silva.

Lanka SSL, the only manufacturer for SLS certified hot-dipped galvanized (GI) wire and barbed wire in Sri Lanka, is consecutively recognized for its efforts in quality, innovation,

and excellence. Earlier this year, the company was awarded the first runner-up in the Large Category at the National Business Excellence Awards 2021 and was named Winner in the Manufacturing - Other Sector.

Last year, it won the National Gold Award- Extra Large Category (Manufacturing Sector) and the Top Ten Award at the CNCI Achiever Awards 2020 for Industrial Excellence.

SLT-Mobitel elevates Liberty Plaza tenants' experience with cutting-edge connectivity

SLT-Mobitel has partnered Colombo Land and Development Company PLC, owners of the Liberty Plaza complex, to elevate occupant experiences with ultra-fast fibre connectivity and leading-edge ICT solutions.

The agreement was signed between Imantha Wijekoon, Chief Regional Sales Officer, SLT and Paddy Weerasekera, Council Member, Liberty Plaza recently with senior representatives from both organisations present at the event.

Liberty Plaza is recognised among one of Sri Lanka's iconic mix development complexes offering tenants a location that integrates work, home and shopping nestled within the heart of the city. Today the complex comprises 160,000 square feet and home to over 300 retail outlets, offices, and residential apartments with more than 250 car park slots available for tenants and visitors.

Imantha Wijekoon, Chief Regional Sales Officer, SLT added, "Liberty Plaza is a synonymous landmark



Imantha Wijekoon, Chief Regional Business Officer, SLT and Paddy Weerasekera, Member Liberty Plaza Management Council exchanging the signed agreement

for shopping, office space and as a residence. Collaborating with the Liberty Plaza Management Council we have become their key partner for the deployment of next generation fibre networks. SLT-Mobitel's state-of-the-art ICT infrastructure will

provide integrated solutions and deliver plug-and-play connectivity, high usable density, and long-term value supporting all tenants' current and future requirements."

With SLT-Mobitel's advanced ICT infrastructure, the benefits for

tenants are limitless. Offices have access to modern technology, high speed internet connectivity and voice solutions delivering services with endless possibilities that can adapt to their future needs.

Residents at Liberty Plaza will be able to enjoy digital lifestyles via the latest technology with superior connection speeds that enables streaming video from multiple devices, online gaming, and more time to enjoying world-class PEO TV entertainment.

Commenting on the new development, Paddy Weerasekera, Member of Liberty Plaza Management Council said, "We are delighted to partner with SLT-Mobitel to provide our residents and tenants with high-speed Fibre connectivity along with other voice solutions.

Once completed this project will bring in host of benefits to all owners and tenants. Being a pioneering mixed development project in Sri Lanka we are happy to partner with a pioneering telecommunication service provider."

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'UMBRELLA ACADEMY' SIBLINGS RETURN TO FACE NEW DOOMSDAY THREAT

The squabbling siblings of "The Umbrella Academy" return for more superhero antics this week, contending with a fresh universal threat and some new family rivals. Season three of the hit Netflix show sees the introduction of the slicker Sparrow Academy as well as the transition of character Vanya Hargreeves to Viktor Hargreeves, mirroring the personal life of actor Elliot Page. **REUTERS**

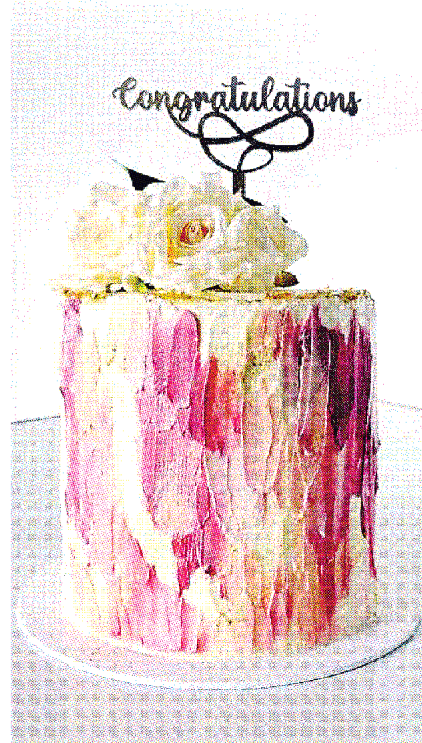
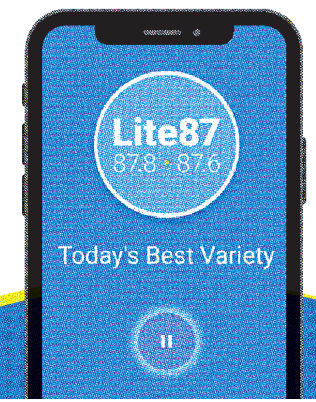
OBAMAS FIND NEW PODCAST HOME AT AUDIBLE AFTER SPOTIFY EXIT

The Obamas' media company Higher Ground has signed a multi-year deal with Amazon Inc-owned Audible to make original audio content, after ending its three-year run with Spotify (SPOT.N). The terms of the agreement announced on Tuesday were not disclosed. The deal gives Audible the right to have a first look at the new material before others in the industry get access to it. **REUTERS**



Download the all-new Lite87 app!

Google Play App Store



The Bake Lounge

text Panchali Illankoon

In this series, we talk to people who turned their passion for food and baking into a business idea amidst lockdown and COVID-19 fears. Some have been in the market for years and others saw the new opportunity and took it! With new challenges presenting themselves in light of the current economic crisis in the country, we talk to home bakers who are navigating through these difficult times and bringing the sweet and savoury to your very own doorstep!

Quarantine Home Bakers

Baking her favourite goodies for family and loved ones for years, **Rimaza Niyas** hardly gave any thought of making a business out of her skills. But with endless requests and constant motivation from her family and friends who loved her baked goods and wanted it out in the market, Rimaza launched her home based baking venture 'The Bake Lounge' in June 2020.

What do you offer?

We offer a wide range of cake flavours to be chosen from vanilla, chocolate and coffee to red velvet cakes with different options of frostings to go along with it. Our Fudge Brownies can be customised with various toppings ranging from chocolate ganache, Nutella, biscoff with addition of nuts, chocolate chips or fruits. Amongst our cakes, the best seller would be our coffee buttercream cake which tends to be my personal favourite too. We also customise cakes according to our customer's given preferences, sometimes with different flavours incorporated together with various decorative elements to bring out the final structure.

What is it like running your operations in times like these?

During the initial days of the pandemic, when we started out, the greatest struggle was during lockdown when we had to deliver our products on time when there were limited modes of delivery. Every batch of brownies or cakes are baked fresh to order and we generally don't stock up more than the needed quantity of ingredients for a long period of time since certain ingredients gives better result when it isn't stored for long. Sometimes, we even had to go for alternative cake structures when decorative elements like fresh florals and fresh fruits were unavailable to be purchased on time!

How are you ensuring the proper hygiene measures are taken in preparation and delivery?

We make sure we use premium quality ingredients and store them the right way. Hygiene is something we give utmost importance to. From making sure well cleaned utensils are being used in the procedure to making sure that the space is thoroughly cleaned and that no third party interactions are allowed in the workspace - we do our best to ensure that our products are hygienically prepared. Additionally, we pack our products right making sure it is well secured for delivery and it is delivered safely to our customers.

What do you enjoy about baking and operating your own home baking business?

Baking is very therapeutic when it's done with drive and determination. Although I bake occasionally, I make sure every cake meets a very high standard.



The most important thing I can give my customers is not just a good appearance as per their preference, although that is paramount when you're a cake artist, but I like to ensure good quality of the cakes that we deliver. I like to keep it simple in structure most of the times and experiment new flavours and fillings giving priority to the taste, texture and right amount of sweetness. Moreover, it is the customer's satisfaction and joy that matters most at the end of the day. The positive feedback received from my clients, making someone's celebration memorable gives me utmost happiness and motivates me to go further. It's been a good journey so far. Although there's far more to reach, I'm glad about the progress since its launch.

How do you see home bakers going forward during these difficult times?

Operating during an economic crisis is really challenging. With price hikes almost every week, unavailability of certain ingredients for longer periods of time, it makes it difficult for anyone in this industry. Yet, us bakers are always creating and using alternatives to make sure we meet the expectations of our customers while maintaining the quality of our products as always.

Any advice to anyone who wants to start their own business?

If you're someone looking to start your own business, be confident and take the first step - that's always the hardest part! Don't wait until you become a pro because you'll learn along the journey. Don't fear failure - for it can be your biggest guide. Give life to your ideas, be brave enough to experiment and create your own pathway. Just believe in yourself and you are halfway there!

The Bake Lounge take orders via Instagram (@thebake lounge). Bank Transfers and Cash on Delivery are accepted and delivery can be arranged via PickMe Flash.



Ashok Ferry Wins The Gratiaen Prize 2021!

The winner of the Gratiaen Prize 2021 is Ashok Ferrey for his novel *The Unmarriageable Man*, published by Penguin, India. The winner was announced at a hybrid event with a limited in-person audience at the Barefoot Gallery in Colombo on 22nd June at 6.30 pm. The event was simultaneously live-streamed on the Facebook page of the Gratiaen Trust.

The Gratiaen Prize shortlist for 2021 was announced on 23rd May according to which the short-listed works were A Place called Home by Uvini Atukorala, an

unpublished collection of short stories; The Unmarriageable Man by Ashok Ferrey, a published novel; The Lanka Box by Ciara Mandulee Mendis, an unpublished

collection of short stories; and Talking to the Sky by Rizvina Morseth de Alwis, an unpublished novel in manuscript form.

This year the judging panel was chaired by award winning Sri Lankan-Canadian writer Shyam Selvadurai whose work has been translated and published worldwide. The other members of the jury were Dr. Maduranga Kalugampitiya, Head of the Department of English at University of Peradeniya whose research is on contemporary socio-political issues and humanities education, and Keshini Jayawardena, who is an avid reader, an experienced banker and a consultant on leadership, diversity and inclusion. The panel featured, as usual, three perspectives - that of the creative writer, academic and informed reader.

The Gratiaen Prize is awarded by the Gratiaen Trust, founded by Michael Ondaatje in 1992. Its principal sponsor is John Keells Foundation (JKF), the CSR entity of the John Keells Group. JKF's partnership of the Trust falls within JKF's focus area of Arts & Culture aimed at nurturing the livelihoods of artists towards safeguarding and promoting Sri Lankan arts and culture under its overall vision of "Empowering the Nation for Tomorrow". The Trust expresses its deep appreciation to John Keells Foundation for its continued support at a time when the arts often becomes the first victims of an economic downturn. At the same time the Trust is very grateful to the many institutions and individuals who have made its work possible despite the challenging circumstances in the country.

This is the first year since the pandemic that the Gratiaen Prize event was held in-person. Due to the significant challenges facing Sri Lankans today, the Trust decided to scale back the event. Its hybrid format was also to reach readers of literature and supporters of the arts who could not attend the event in-person.

PIC BY Manoj Ratnayake

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE A SRI LANKA ET AUX MALDIVES

af Alliance Française Sri Lanka & Maldives

French Spring Festival

June July 2022

RECOUNTING HISTORIES

Full program:

FrenchSpringFest

SUEZ VEOLIA sade egis Orange Marine Compagnie Classictour Club Med Siderati

SASKIA FERNANDO GALLERY music matters INSTITUT FRANCAIS BARFOOT GALLERY COLOMBO DailyMirror SUNDAY TIMES ARTA ATYPIC VOYAGES

L'ECRIVAINTE RAYONABLE GOEME INSTITUTE ATELIER AOD SHANTI ONE GALLE FACE CAYLON THEATRES DAILY ARTRA

Instagram

@scrumptious_diaries_by_t



This is something you can do with your leftover rice. Super soft and delicious Hoppers.

@scrumptious_diaries_by_t



Garlic rice with devilled prawns

@home.chef_by_piumiranasinghe



Breakfast with my spicy egg curry, vegetable noodles and green lettuce

@home.chef_by_piumiranasinghe



Itadakimasu. A warm bowl of Ramen is all we need

@the_mum_my_kids_need



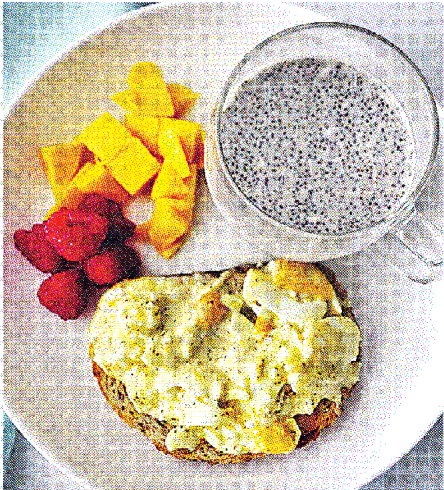
Pampushky (Ukrainian garlic bread)

@the_mum_my_kids_need



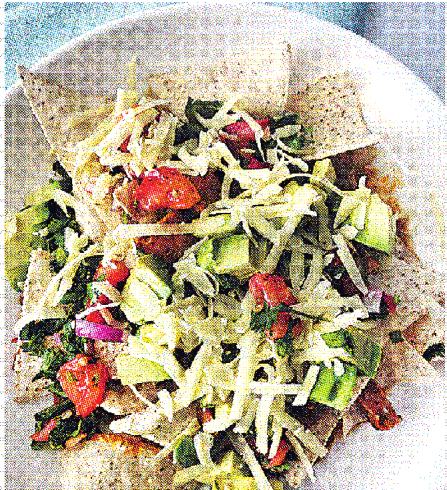
Sausage roll wreath reminding us of Christmas season

@chemist_cookbook



Sunday Brunch. Egg toast, chia pudding made with coconut milk and kithul treacle, and mango and raspberries.

@chemist_cookbook



Breakfast nachos, anyone?

What's your first memory of cooking?

I made red fish curry, dhal curry, and rice for lunch when my parents were not at home at the age of 20. When they arrived home, they were surprised to see my dishes on the table because I haven't cooked for 20 years of my life! Haha. Anyways, I was so happy because they enjoyed it and appreciated my effort.



What started Ru's Cookbook?

During the first outbreak of COVID, I had plenty of free time to explore varieties of cuisine from different parts of the world. Then slowly I started to try those recipes out at home. I realised that I have a hidden talent for cooking. I started taking photos of what I cook. Then I thought of sharing those pictures with my friends on Instagram. So that is how I started this page.

DISH It OUT

Your proudest recipe so far?

Fish Pastry! After making so many attempts, I have finally learned to make the puff pastry sheet correctly.



What was your favourite childhood meal?

My mother is a fantastic cook. Therefore, it is hard to name one. But out of all, I would say, Prawn Curry, Creamy Cashew Curry, and Beef Stew are some of the best I came across and nobody will ever be able to cook like her!



Dead or alive, who would be your dream dinner-party guests to cook for and what would you make?
Definitely, it's for my family. I will prepare different varieties of Indian cuisine for the dinner table, especially Naan, Parotta, Chicken Korma, Chicken Tikka Kebab, and Prawn Masala Curry.

What's something you love to eat but wouldn't bother to make?

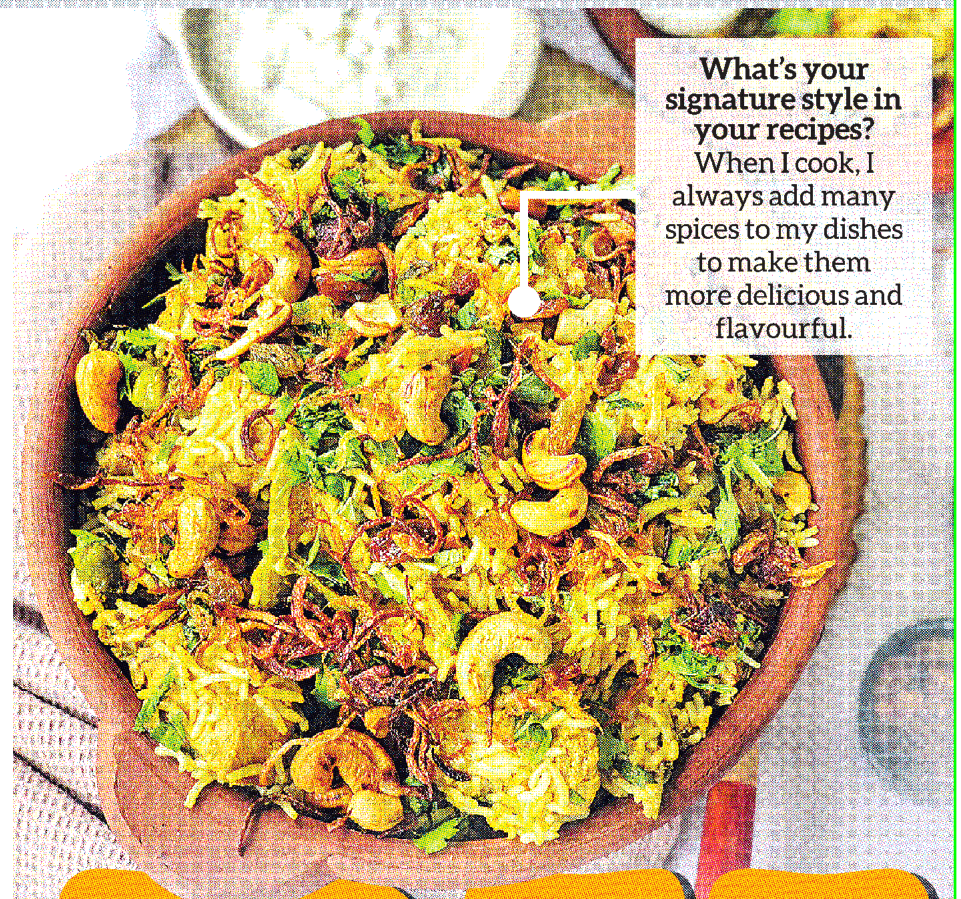
Welithalapa - made with coconut and sweet jaggery.

What's a dish that sounds hard to make but actually isn't?

No-knead Rosemary Garlic Focaccia Bread.

What's your fail-proof dish that you've perfected and would recommend to anyone?

Éclairs.



What's your signature style in your recipes?
When I cook, I always add many spices to my dishes to make them more delicious and flavourful.

RU Athukorala

text Panchali Illankoon

How do our food experts cook and eat? This week, food blogger of @ruscookbook, Ru, takes our Q&A!



What's a dish you'd love to relive for the first time?

Tiramisu, with just the right bitterness from the coffee and cocoa powder.

What's the biggest kitchen mistake Sri Lankans need to stop doing?

The biggest kitchen mistake of Sri Lankans, most of them don't keep everything ready before cooking and they run around here and there while cooking. Keep a well-stocked, well-organised pantry. Have a solid stash of dried herbs and spices.

Do the cooking or have someone cook for you?

When I am at home I would always love to cook and try out new recipes.

It's your last day on earth, where are you?

I would still choose my sweet home... and then I would invite all my family for lunch. And probably prepare a gala buffet with a mix of Sri Lankan and Western cuisine... Tiramisu with a little extra Masala or Disaronno for dessert to celebrate the end!

What's the best meal you'd whip up to impress someone?

I would be happy to make Yellow Rice, Spicy Prawn Curry, Creamy Cashew Curry, Brinjal Moju and Papadam. How does that sound for a treat?



Are you a follow-the-recipe or a just-wing-it type of person?

I always wing it on when it comes to cooking by substituting different ingredients and spices. But I am so particular when it comes to baking. I follow the recipe because otherwise, you won't get the desired final result.



Your favourite recipe that has been passed down to you from family?

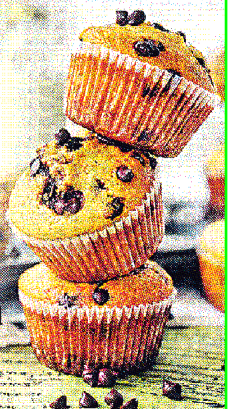
My mother's Spicy Crab Curry.

What's the secret to getting a great food picture?

When you take pictures, you need to focus on the little details plus, you should take your time to find out how the light gets in the space. Having a few backdrops, props, and utensils will help you to tell a story.

Your favourite food shot?

This shot of my Chocolate chip muffins. It's my favourite because I tried out an interesting photo hack recently on how to stack them on top of one another... and the shot came out really well!



WHAT DID YOU EAT THIS WEEK?

Here are a few photos sent by our readers.

