



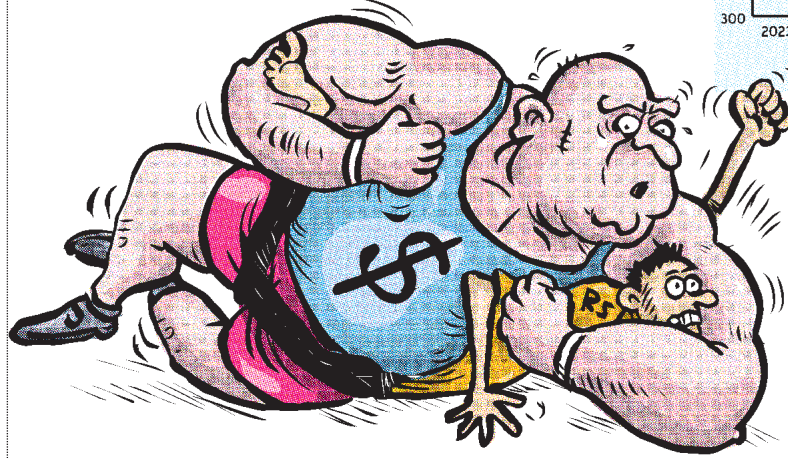
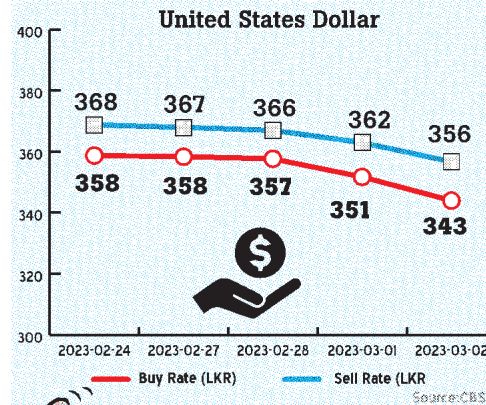
# Daily Mirror



YOUR PAPER TODAY 12 PAGES

## RUPEEE CONTINUES TO GAIN AGAINST US DOLLAR

Two specific actions by the Central Bank have also contributed positively for the rupee's appreciation. They are, the relaxing of surrender rules on export proceeds to 15 percent from 25 percent and the increasing of the daily forex trading band



The Sri Lankan rupee continued to gain yesterday against the US dollar, a trend that started a few days ago amid the lower demand in the domestic forex market though banks remain flushed with dollars. According to the Central Bank data, the buying rate of US dollar yesterday was Rs.343.97, down from Rs.351.72 on Wednesday while the selling rate was Rs.356.73, down from Rs.362.95.

## LG Polls SJB alleges JJB in agreement with govt. to postpone by a year: SJB

It is only SJB that has done its utmost to avoid postponement of the local poll

BY YOHAN PERERA

Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) yesterday alleged that Jathika Jana Balawegaya (JJB) had got into an agreement with the government to postpone the local government elections by a year.

The allegation was made by SJB MP Nalin Bandara Jayamaha during a media briefing.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

## Stealing T-56 firearm from Sigiriya SLAF base Two including airman caught

The firearms had gone missing when he was resting while on duty at night in a security booth at Sigiriya Air Force base

BY DARSHANA SANJEEWA BALASURIYA

Two suspects including an airman of the Sigiriya Air Force Base have been arrested by the Homicide and Organized Crime Investigation Division for stealing a T-56 firearm and two magazines containing 60 rounds of ammunition from the camp.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

## Country needs a ceasefire: Karu Jayasuriya

It should also be emphasized that we have so far failed to find answers to a number of issues that need to be resolved

Claiming that the country needs a short period or a ceasefire, the National Movement for Social Justice (NMSJ) said today that it is the absolute responsibility of all not to contribute to activities that may have any effect on anarchy in the country. Its Chairman Karu Jayasuriya said the National Movement for Social Justice (NMSJ) said they are very concerned that

Parliament has failed to make some basic decisions that need to be taken in relation to the Provincial Council elections and the Local Government elections despite a parliamentary select committee being appointed for that purpose in 2022.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

## Counsel lock horns during Diana Gamage passport case

Arsecularatne objected to the submissions of the CID by asserting that the CID was maintaining double standards

BY T. FAROOK THAJUDEEN

Colombo Chief Magistrate Prasanna Alwis yesterday critically commented over the behaviour of lawyers in the courtroom during the inquiry into a forged Birth Certificate case of State Minister Diana Gamage and remarked that whatever category a lawyer may be, he should behave decently before the Court.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

## IMF DEFENDS TAX HIKE IN SRI LANKA

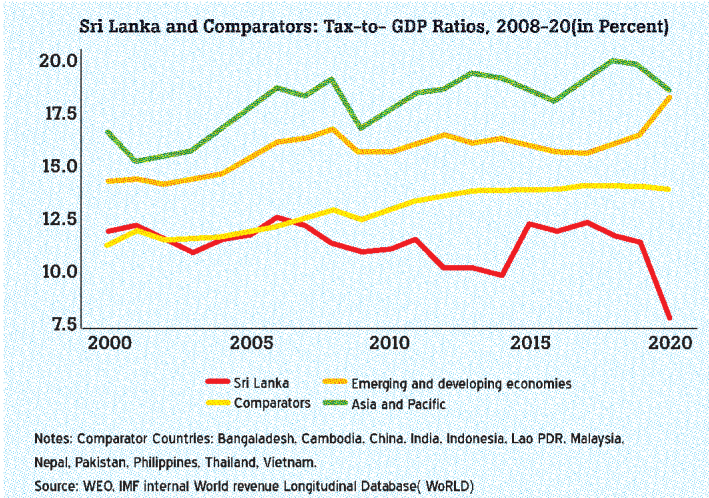
The current economic crisis has a number of origins, including the government's inability to meet government spending needs through its revenue collections

BY EASWARAN RUTNAM

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has defended the tax reforms which has drawn strong public opposition in Sri Lanka.

The IMF said the current economic crisis has a number of origins, including the government's inability to meet government spending needs through its revenue collections.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>



Notes: Comparator Countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam. Source: WEO, IMF internal World revenue Longitudinal Database (WoRLD)

## Student alleges Principal assaulted him for not taking gas cylinders to Principal's house

Parents said several individuals were interfering with investigations

BY KANCHANA KUMARA

A student of Naula Monty Gopallawa Maha Vidyalaya, who sustained injuries in an assault, allegedly by the Principal of the school for not taking two gas cylinders in the school building to the Principal's residence, was admitted to Ambana Divisional Hospital, the Police said.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

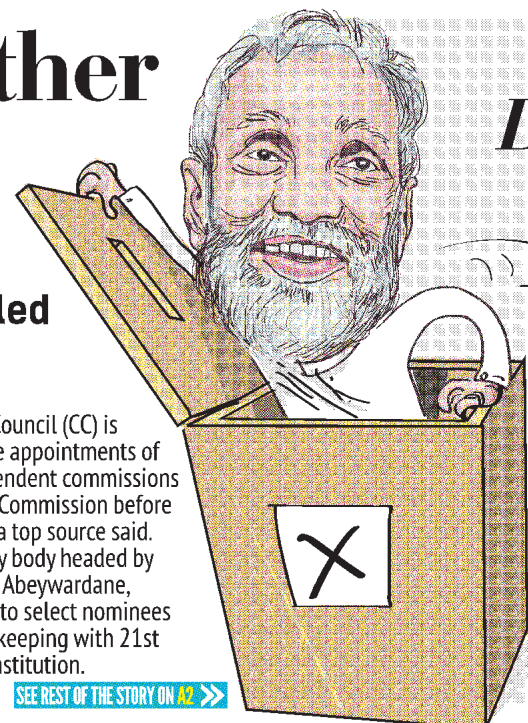


## Election Commission, Other Commissions to get new members this month?

The CC, a parliamentary body headed by the Speaker called for applications to select nominees to the commissions

BY KELUM BANDARA

The Constitutional Council (CC) is planning to finalize the appointments of members to the independent commissions including the Election Commission before the end of this month, a top source said. The CC, a parliamentary body headed by Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardane, called for applications to select nominees to the commissions in keeping with 21st Amendment to the Constitution.



## Mahinda Deshapriya seeks to rejoin EC

He said his priority is to serve as the Chairman of the Delimitation Commission

BY KELUM BANDARA

Chairman of the National Delimitation Commission Mahinda Deshapriya has sought to rejoin the Election Commission.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

**NANKANG**

TO CONQUER

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# Daily Mirror

www.dailymirror.lk

## SJB alleges JJB in agreement with govt. to postpone by a year: SJB

"We heard the JJB Leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake saying that his party would give a period of one year for the government to hold the local government election. One wonders whether this would mean that JJB has got into an agreement with the government for postponement of the local polls," Jayamaha said.

"It is only SJB that has done its utmost to avoid postponement of the local poll. JJB held only one protest against the postponement of the election," he added.

The SJB expressed fears that the Election Commission would refrain from announcing the new date of the local poll today. "It was assured by the polls chief that he will announce the new date for the local poll today (March 3), but we fear that it would not be done," Jayamaha said.

## Two including airman caught

The Sigiriya Police had received a complaint that a F-56 duty firearm, two magazines and magazine holder which were in the possession of an airman have gone missing when he was resting while on duty at night in a security booth at Sigiriya Air Force base, on November 4 last year. Later, the investigations were handed over to the Homicide and Organized Crime Investigation Division for further progress. Accordingly, the magazine holder was found near the air force base and it was discovered that the firearm was stolen by an airman in the same base.

Based on that information, the suspect airman was arrested at the Sigiriya Air Force Base and another person who assisted him was also arrested in Ridigama.

The arrested suspects, aged 32 and 37, are residents of Kurunegala and Ridigama.

## Student alleges Principal assaulted him for not taking gas cylinders to Principal's house

The student was later transferred to Dambulla base hospital. The victim, S.M. Nileka Sithum (15) was a Grade 10 student of the school. His parents complained in this regard. The student stated that the Principal told him to carry two gas cylinders from the school building to the Principal's private house. He said he told the Principal that he was engaging in sports practices and that he would attend to it after practices. However, he said the Principal had assaulted him with a club. Principal S.M. Nimal Bandara said he lost his temper when the student concerned refused to carry out his request and that the students should obey the teachers. However, he said he did not assault the student through hatred but he realized its seriousness.

Meanwhile, the parents said several individuals were interfering with investigations and attempting to brush under the carpet their complaint through senior Police officers.

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## RUPEE CONTINUES TO GAIN AGAINST US DOLLAR

● A dovish tilt in the monetary policy is expected to support the economic revival and for the demand to return

The middle spot rate was Rs.354.65 against the US dollar, down from Rs.358.46 on Wednesday.

Two specific actions by the Central Bank have also contributed positively for the rupee's appreciation. They are, the relaxing of surrender rules on export proceeds to 15 percent from 25 percent and the increasing of the daily forex trading band.

Yesterday, the Central Bank increased the trading band to Rs.750 from Wednesday's middle spot rate of Rs.353.65. This initially was Rs.2.60, and on February 27 the Central bank raised the trading band to Rs.5.00.

In addition to these, expectation of an earlier deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), higher inflows by way of workers' remittances, tourism and increased foreign investor interest in government securities and stocks trading on the Colombo Stock Exchange have positively contributed to the recent upward movement of the rupee.

But most of all, the demand in the domestic forex market has plunged owing to the contracting economy. After defaulting, the authorities and the Central Bank destroyed the aggregate demand in the economy by raising policy rates and tightening the monetary policy to rein in on inflation, which was getting out of hand.

A dovish tilt in the monetary policy is expected to support the economic revival and for the demand to return. Sri Lanka unlocking the IMF bailout package as early as possible remains key for this.

## IMF Defends tax hike in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is among the countries to collect the least amount of fiscal revenue in the world, with tax revenue to GDP ratio at only 7.3 percent in 2021.

According to the IMF, external creditors are not willing to provide financing to fill this gap.

Peter Breuer, Senior Mission Chief for Sri Lanka, and Masahiro Nozaki, Mission Chief for Sri Lanka, IMF said that tax reforms are needed to correct the imbalance.

"Only with appropriate tax receipts will the Government be able to fund essential expenditures, and avoid further slashing of critically important outlays. These reforms will also help regain confidence of creditors," the IMF said.

The two officials said that efforts to increase tax revenues should be pursued in a growth-friendly manner while protecting the poor and most vulnerable.

"It is however also important that those who can most afford it, make commensurate contributions to the financing of the necessary government expenditures," the IMF said.

The IMF said that the tax package the authorities have introduced, including the new tax rate schedule for the personal income tax, helps to meet these objectives.

"The tax rates proposed under the authorities' programme are also in line with international comparison," the IMF added.

The IMF also said that it understands the hardship people of Sri Lanka are experiencing at this time.

"Increases in the cost of living, loss of employment and livelihood, and falling real incomes have hit large parts of the population, and particularly the poor and vulnerable who have no buffers to withstand these hardships," the IMF said.

## PEOPLE DON'T VISIT DAMBANA DUE TO FUEL PRICE HIKE

"Now people are unable to refuel their vehicles, and the prices of vehicles have also gone up exorbitantly high. Earlier, my expenses to visit Colombo was Rs. 20,000, but now I have to pocket out at least Rs. 60,000," he said.

"Some people used to visit on holidays," he said.

The Vedha chief requested the people's help to protect the forest after visiting Dambana.

"People were punished by the nature. People who visit every nook and corner of the country, including forests, should bear in mind that they shouldn't harm nature," he said.

## NPP not giving opportunity to youth – NDF

A newly formed political party National Democratic Front (NDF) has accused the National People's Power (NPP) for not giving any opportunity to youth, but its leaders are spreading hatred among the youth.

General Secretary of the NDF Gomitha Yasas emphasized that the responsibility of building the country and protecting the motherland should be given to the youth and his party is committed to that.

Addressing a press conference at the party office headquarters at Pore, Athurugiriya, Mr. Yasas also said that at the forthcoming local government election a large number of NDF's members are contesting in 10 districts. "We are the members of the party who are contesting under the car symbol." After being appointed as members, we are obliged to serve without receiving any stipend or monetary benefits," he said.

He also urged the government to hold local government elections immediately.

## Police launch month-long special programme

During the programme, certain offences will be given priority and awareness activities will also be carried out.

Police said the programme had been launched under the instructions and guidance of the DIG in charge of the Western Province Traffic Division.

Accordingly, driving without a driving license, driving under the age of 18, driving without revenue licenses, or insurance certificates, violation of traffic rules, faults related to roundabouts and at pedestrian crossings, driving in lanes, violation of traffic signals, faults made at bus stops, parking of vehicles in prohibited areas and riding motorcycles without safety helmets will be strictly monitored during the programme.

## Key witness admits he made a false statement to Magistrate

Athula Sanjeeva Madanayake, the second prosecution witness in the case, informed Colombo High Court that he was influenced by CID officers to implicate former Minister Rajitha Senarathne.

In this case, the indictments had been filed against former Minister Rajitha Senarathne and former SPC Chairman Rumi Mohammed under fourteen counts including giving false statements about the personal character of SLPP Presidential Candidate Gotabaya Rajapaksa during the 2019-Presidential Election. When the matter was taken up for trial before High Court Judge Damith Thotawatte, witness Madanayake said what he said at the white van press conference was a true incident that he had to experience in his life.

However, he said he was compelled to make a false statement to Colombo Chief Magistrate owing to the influence made by the then CID Director. He further said he was forced to make this false statement after thinking about the importance of family well-being.

Meanwhile, Colombo High Court issued an arrest warrant for the arrest of first prosecution witness Sarath Kumara for his failure to appear before court to give evidence.

The Attorney General had filed indictments consisting of fourteen counts against two accused in connection with organising the white van press conference on November 10, 2019, ahead of the Presidential election. Sakalavalli Arachchige Sarath Kumara and Watareka Gamage Athula Sanjeeva Madanayake who were present at the controversial press conference had been named as the witnesses in the case.

Senior Deputy Solicitor General Dileepa Peris appeared for the Attorney General. President's Counsel Anil Silva with Maithri Gunaratne PC appeared for the defence.

## Counsel lock horns during Diana Gamage passport case

Colombo Chief Magistrate Prasanna Alwis made this remark when President's Counsel Shavindra Fernando interrupted as Counsel Rienze Arsecularatne PC was making submissions.

The incident took place when Arsecularatne objected to the submissions of the CID by asserting that the CID was maintaining double standards by making submissions in court without arresting Diana Gamage.

Arsecularatne said the CID had not arrested Diana Gamage while there was ample proof that she had committed a punishable offence. Arsecularatne further told the Magistrate that a 'B' report filed in court by the CID had clearly stated that Diana Gamage had obtained a passport by tendering a forged birth certificate to the Immigration and Emigration Department and now without arresting the suspect the CID was trying to let her go scot-free by saying that they are further investigating the matter and had sought the assistance of the Foreign Department of Great Britain to ascertain her British Citizenship.

At this point Shavindra Fernando PC and subsequently Senior Counsel Gunaratna Wanninayake intervened into the incident.

## Country needs a ceasefire: Karu Jayasuriya

"We are well aware that there are four elections of national importance that should have been held and should be held, especially during the period of 2022-2024. They are provincial councils (PC), local government (LG) elections and presidential elections and general elections.

It should also be emphasized that we have so far failed to find answers to a number of issues that need to be resolved as a country. In order to make some basic decisions that need to be taken in relation to the PC elections that have not yet been held as scheduled and the LG elections that are scheduled to be held, a parliamentary select committee has been established in the year 2022 according to a proposal made by us, but it has not yet been able to make the necessary decisions until now.

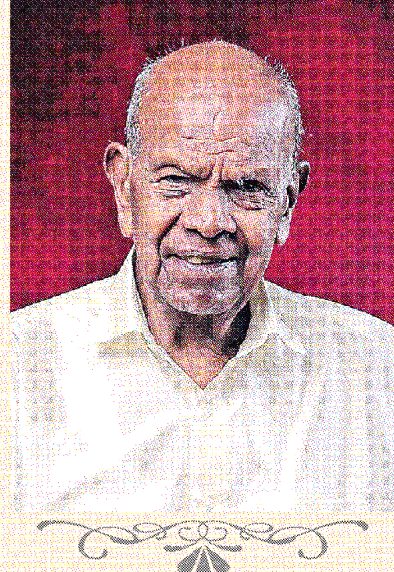
We are very worried about that. It must be said emphatically that many such responsibilities have been neglected by the Parliament. Even under such a situation, we believe that we should find solutions through the Parliament itself to overcome these challenges.

Accordingly, it is our sole belief that in the current situation, they will not be able to find any solution by boycotting the Parliament or by taking measures to disable the country. All challenges must be won democratically and peacefully. There, the primary responsibility is assigned to the public representatives representing the Parliament.

Also, it is the opinion of the majority of the society that the executive presidential system peculiar to our country, which has laid the foundation for the creation of many issues that we are facing today, must be abolished.

For that, the responsibility of preparing the environment has been assigned to the Parliament. Moreover, the responsibility of dealing with the existing corruption in the country and recovering the huge amount of wealth that has been looted from the country is assigned to the people's representatives.

### OBITUARY NOTICE



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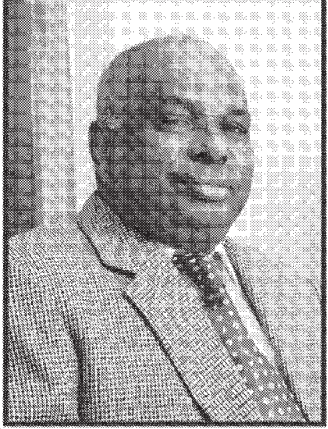
**MR. M. Mookiah**  
Sri Devi Pawn Brokers (Proprietor)

Beloved Husband of Parameswary Mookiah and father of Senthil Kumaran, Sridaran, Wijay Pradash (Singapore) and Dr. Kiruthiga Devi (Singapore).

Father-in-law of Praveena, Andrea, Shagari and Karthik. Beloved grandfather of Sanaya, Samayaa, Meth, Ashwanth, Avnish, Trinethra and Rishaan.

Passed away peacefully on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Funeral Services for viewing will be held on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 from 9.30 a.m. at VIP Respect Parlor, Jayaratne, Borella and cremation will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2023 from 10.30 a.m. at the Hindu Crematorium, Kanaththa.

### 4th DEATH ANNIVERSARY



**Birth** 27-12-1941

**Death** 03-03-2019

**Alfred S. Subasinghe**  
*May you attain the supreme bliss of nibbana!*

Remembered with love and gratitude and sadly missed by your wife, children and grandchildren

## REGISTER FOR WELFARE BENEFITS BEFORE MARCH 31: PMD

The Welfare Benefits Board cautions that failing to provide data before the deadline, could result in the loss of benefits. They urge all applicants to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of their data by promptly providing it to the field officers conducting the Information Survey for the Welfare Benefit Payment Programme.

The implementation of this programme will align with the amended Welfare Benefit Payment Orders No. 1 of 2022, as per the provisions of the Welfare Benefits Act No. 24 of 2002. The Cabinet of Ministers approved this amendment, which was published in the Special Gazette No. 2302/23 dated 20 October 2022, as per the Special Gazette No. 2310/30 dated 15 December 2022.

The application process to identify eligible candidates for welfare benefit payments has concluded, with a total of 3,728,139 applications received. However, as of Wednesday (01), only 102,143 applicants have provided accurate data.

## Election Commission, Other Commissions to get new members this month?

The source said the applications are sorted out for the selection of candidates at the moment.

"New commission members are to be appointed within the course of this month," the source said on condition of anonymity.

The commissions to be constituted are the Election Commission, the National Delimitation Commission, the Police Commission, the Public Service Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the Finance Commission, the National Audit Services Commission, the National Procurement Commission and the Bribery Commission.

### MAHINDA DESHAPRIYA SEEKS TO REJOIN EC

The Constitutional Council which makes appointments to the independent commissions has called for applications from prospective candidates.

Mr. Deshapriya told Daily Mirror that he applied to join the Election Commission upon requests by many including his subordinates.

However, he said his priority is to serve as the Chairman of the Delimitation Commission.

He served as the Chairman of the Election Commission earlier and supervised the conduct of many national elections including the presidential polls in 2015 and 2019.

CONT'D.  
FROM PAGE 1

# Vocational education for children who leave school half way: Minister

● He said that every child should obtain some professional skills

BY CHATURANGA PRADEEP SAMARAWICKRAMA

The Education Ministry is working in coordination with all related institutions to provide vocational education to children who stop in the middle of their school education, Minister Susil Premajayantha said.

Addressing the media, he stated that every child should

obtain some professional skills and that it is the responsibility of parents to direct their children to get professional qualifications in order to contribute to the country's labour requirements.

"The direction of education should be changed to develop the skills of the children. It is expected that the education transformation process to be

carried out in the future will produce designers who have balanced knowledge and mental development with skills," Minister Premajayantha said.

The minister also mentioned that our children are equipped with the necessary knowledge. There should be a change in the attitude of the adults, but not among the children.



## Europeans arrive at MRIA

The first European airline charter flight was received at the Mattala Mahinda Rajapaksa International Airport last morning with 175 Bulgarian passengers. The flight was received at MRIA from Sofia International Airport in Bulgaria via Sharjah International Airport after refueling. The flight will remain at the airport for 10 days and then leave with the passengers.

### Zahira College Past 1st XI Cricketers' Association

#### Notice of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting – 2023

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the above Association, will be held, In Sha Allah to elect The President and the Executive Committee Members of the Past 1st XI Cricketers' Association

**Date** : 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
**Time** : 07.00 p.m.  
**Venue** : Zahira College swimming pool Complex Auditorium  
**Presiding** : Mr. Nuzry Mansoor

#### Resolutions and or Amendments

Resolution and amendments to the constitutions may be submitted in writing duly Proposed and seconded by two other members and shall be addressed to the General Secretary to reach on or before 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**Ershad Rashmishab**  
**Hony General Secretary**  
 Past 1st XI Cricketers' Association  
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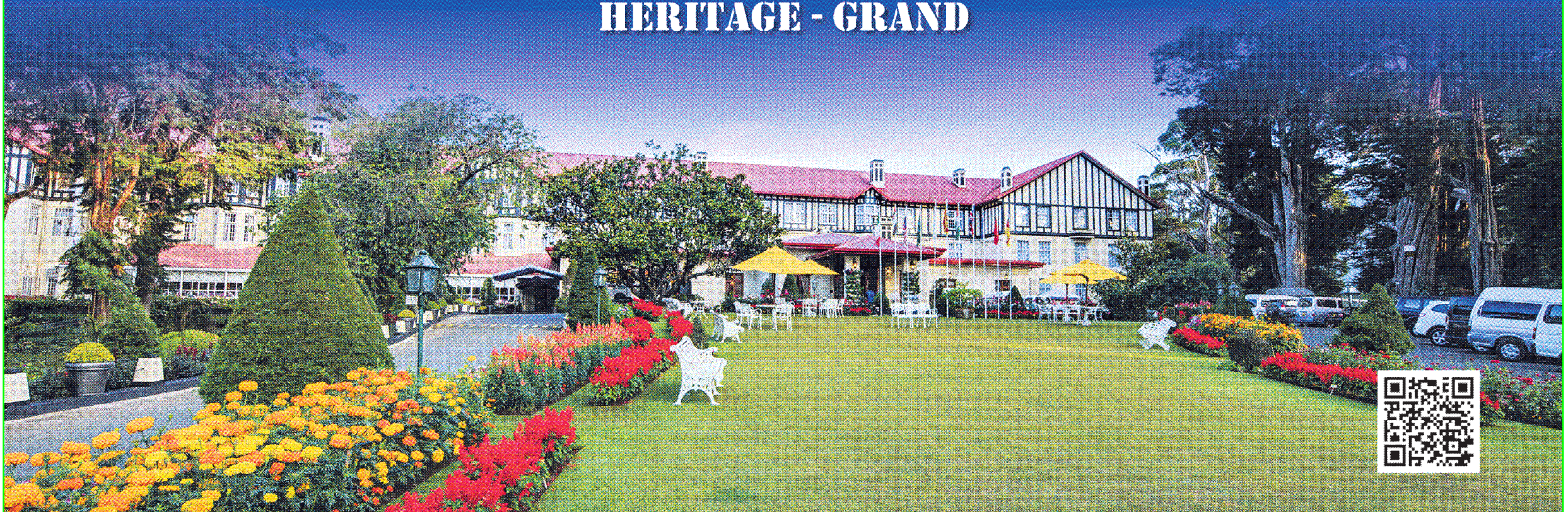
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# EDITORIAL

*"A great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices."  
- WILLIAM JAMES*

## OUR THOUGHT

# Why Govts. don't want locals to think like foreigners

The number of people applying for passports and those leaving the country are of great concern these days. A pastor attached to a popular Christian Life Centre situated in the Western Province was heard asking the question 'who is going to pull this country out of the woods when everyone wants to seek greener pastures overseas'.

This is the question people who decide to remain here for whatever reasons have to ask themselves in order to remind themselves that they are true patriots. A similar question was asked from parents during the days of the civil war. Most families were asked whether they gave at least one child to the security forces to strengthen the government's fight against terrorism.

Now is the time to do some worthwhile contribution to the country. Now is the time when people can remind themselves of the old saying 'Don't ask what the country has done for you, but instead ask the question what you have done for the country?'

Just the other day this writer saw a post on Facebook that made an impact on those wearing their thinking caps all the time. The post said 'Sri Lanka is a paradise for foreign tourists, but a hell for Sri Lankans'. Now let's start thinking.

Why do foreign tourists visit this beautiful island? They do because they can enjoy their stay in one of the best tropical islands in Asia or the entire world for a reasonable price. Imagine what a tourist who is arriving at the BIA must be feeling if he or she bumps into a local who is trying to fly out of the island! Just for the record the number of tourist arrivals, according to government sources, was 102,545 in January this year. Government sources have also revealed to us that the Department of Immigration and Emigration has put a ceiling on the number of passports issued for a single day and that figure stands at 2500. Apart from this the government also plans to set up 50 regional centres that will issue passports in future and towns like Kurunegala, Matara, Kandy and Vavuniya have been earmarked for this purpose.

Why do foreign tourists choose Sri Lanka? They do because they are given much respect, no one dares cheat on them and they get value for money when buying goods and services. Thanks to the internet they know beforehand the prices of goods and services and even the taxi fare from the hotel to any destination. Overall the visiting tourists are well informed and well prepared for their short stay in Sri Lanka. They cannot be taken for a ride!

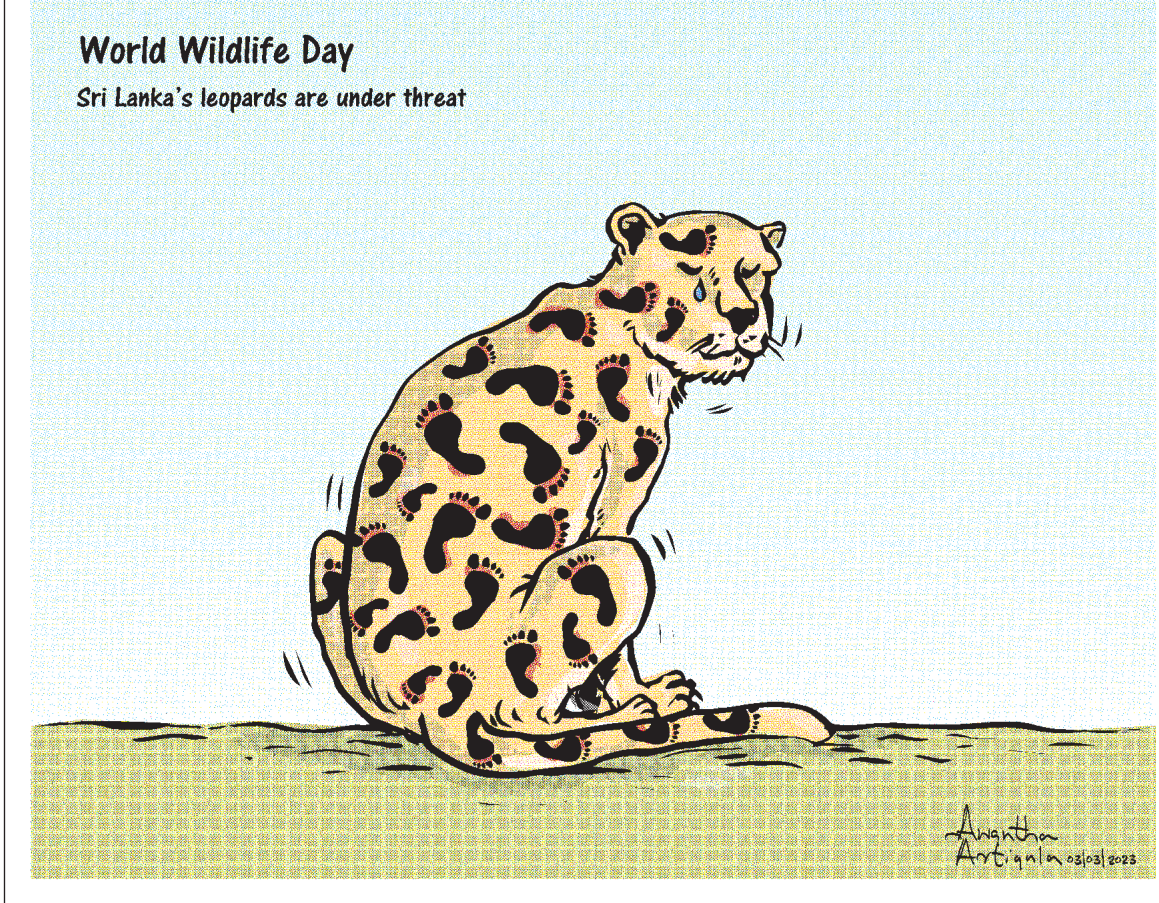
When the situation in the island isn't safe for foreign tourists to travel here they are given travel warnings by their governments. Contrary to that, in Sri Lanka, the islanders get no warning until the government does something silly or decides on a course of action that squeezes the life out of its citizens.

Many years ago the general 'pulse' of the majority of citizens in this country was that the Mahinda Rajapaksa Government should spend all the money it has on the finishing off the civil war and even if there was an economical difficulty created as a result the people said that they'd survive on one meal a day.

Fast forward the clock 13 years from that time and we are facing an economical difficulty once again and a good number of people are down to one meal; but that is not by choice!

People in this country are also demanding from the government to conduct the local government polls. The regime maintains that it has no finances to conduct the polls. On the other hand the regime likes the people to continue nurturing the islanders' thought pattern; which is to survive on very little and if that too is not available to survive on a jackfruit that can be plucked from the garden. All this happens while the lawmakers continue robbing off the people.

This is why the government representatives of this country cherish it when they meet or have to employ less affluent citizens who have nothing else to say other than proudly boast of having the capacity to endure any hardship and survive the mightiest of challenges.



FOR MORE CARTOONS LOG ON [www.dailymirror.lk/cartoon](http://www.dailymirror.lk/cartoon)

# HUWARA TERROR: PALESTINIANS FACE WORSE NIGHTMARES

By Ameen Izzadeen

No terrorism is more heinous than the act of condemning the Resistance as terrorism. No sooner the occupied West Bank village of Huwara was raided by marauding Israeli settlers than Israel's hardline politicians started tarring the Palestinians with the terrorist brush. It is as much an act of justifying the settlers' horrendous crime as it is an attempt to mitigate the global censure that followed Sunday night's horror.

The deadly attack in Huwara and other villages near Nablus saw armed Israeli settlers who occupy the Palestinian land firing their weapons at will and setting fire to houses, vehicles, trees, farm animals, shops and other facilities, while the Israeli security forces looked on.

One Palestinian was killed and hundreds were wounded in the raids reminiscent of the horror that happened in the months before Israel was set up on May 14, 1948. Palestinians call the massacre and ethnic cleansing that took place 75 years ago an-Nakba or the Catastrophe. Estimates vary as to the number of Palestinians who were evicted at gunpoint during Nakba but it is believed some 750,000 to 900,000 Palestinians were chased out from 530 villages by Zionist terror gangs such as Hagana, Irgun, and Stern Gang.

In the Palestinian village of Deir Yassin, the Zionist terrorists lined up the people and killed 110 of them - men, women and children - as a warning to Palestinians in the nearby villages. Throughout the Nakba period from 1947 to 1949, some 15,000 Palestinians were killed while the then world powers turned a blind eye as they do now.

The maximum the Western powers, which claim they champion a rules-based and liberal global order where justice, human rights, and democracy are protected and promoted, would do is to issue statements often expressing concerns and seldom condemning the crimes of the Zionist state and its settler terrorists.

In the aftermath of the Huwara attack, Western nations did issue statements. Beyond that, they did nothing. There is no follow-up action; no attempt to convene the United Nations Security Council to pass a resolution calling for punitive measures.

If any other country were to carry out a fraction of the atrocities Israel has been committing in occupied Palestine for the past 75 years, sanction after sanction would have been slapped on that nation.

Take, for instance, Russia, a superpower. What Russia is doing in Ukraine has some similarities to what Israel has been doing in occupied Palestine. Since the war started in February last year, 10,600 Russian citizens, 3,431 companies, and 492 institutions have been slapped with Western sanctions. Just as Russia has annexed swathes



An aerial view of the destruction caused by Israeli settlers in the Palestinian village of Huwara. AFP

of occupied Ukrainian territories, Israel, encouraged by the mollicoddling it receives from Western nations, has annexed and keeps grabbing Palestinian lands with each passing day. Yet, Israel is slapped with no sanction. The West, by its failure to punish Israel, encourages it to continue its crimes, which include land grabbing, the apartheid system, and the wanton killings of Palestinians, amid a culture of impunity.

Rarely are Israeli security forces personnel and settlers brought to justice. Even if they are, they are freed or given mild punishment. The killing of al-Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, an American citizen of Palestinian origin, is a case in point. Israel has said it would not punish any Israeli security forces personnel for killing her.

Even as condemnations over Sunday night's terror poured in, Israel's Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich had the gumption to say that Huwara should be "wiped out".

The inflammatory statements came after another extremist politico and Knesset member Zvika Fogel, justified the attacks, saying, "A terrorist came out of Huwara - and Huwara was closed and burned. This is what I want to see. That's the only way we'll achieve deterrence." She was referring to the killing of two Israeli settlers by a Palestinian on Sunday hours before the settlers torched Huwara. This attack came a week after 11 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank town of Jenin.

Israel's state terrorism and settler terrorism followed by retaliations by the Palestinian resistance will continue as long as the Western powers, especially the United States, take the side of aggressor Israel. Resistance is not terrorism. Anyone who calls resistance terrorism and a freedom fighter a terrorist is a bigger terrorist.

The plight of the Palestinians will only worsen under the present hardline Israeli government of Benjamin Netanyahu, as the West remains focused on the war in Ukraine and some Arab countries reward Israel by improving their ties with the Zionist entity.

Worse still, the Netanyahu government, which depends on the support of Jewish extremist parties, is also undermining the independence of Israel's judiciary.

Even if the entire Palestinian population is ethnically cleansed or subjected to genocide, the West will not take serious action except for issuing a 'tough' statement, carefully worded not to hurt Israel much.

Netanyahu's electoral pact with Jewish extremist parties includes a declarative commitment to annexing the entire West Bank to Israel. Netanyahu and his hardline cabinet intend to make Israel an exclusively Jewish state.

The deal also calls for the Israeli government to amend the enemy property law to implement it in the West Bank and take more of Palestinian land. In a recent assessment, Just Security, an initiative of the New York University's School of Law, has highlighted measures in place for Israel to annex the West Bank.

Slavoj Žižek, Professor of Philosophy at the European Graduate School, in an article he wrote to Project Syndicate says: "So, how will the annexation be managed? If the West Bank simply becomes part of Israel, shouldn't the nearly three million Palestinians who live there become Israeli citizens who can vote in Israeli elections?"

"Obviously, that outcome would be unacceptable to Netanyahu and his right-wing allies. Yet they have only two options for preventing it. They can either expel as many Palestinians as possible from the annexed territories, or they can impose what Just Security describes as 'an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over another, with the intention of maintaining this regime, otherwise known as apartheid'."

Whether the West's call for rules-based international order? Is it only aimed at Russia and China?

The more the West takes the high road to justify its military, political and moral support to Ukraine the more its duplicity is exposed. The West cannot hail Ukraine's war against Russia as heroic resistance and condemn the Palestinian resistance against the occupation of their country and the apartheid system as terrorism. If Ukrainians can carry arms and kill Russians, the Palestinians should also be encouraged to turn whatever weapons they have against the occupiers in Palestine.

## DM Poll

How motivated are you to vote in the coming Local Government election?

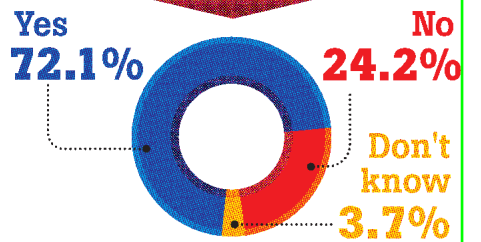
- Extremely motivated
- Somewhat motivated
- Not motivated
- Don't Know



Scan to Vote

## LAST POLL

Can the holding of local government elections be justified from a financial perspective during a period of bankruptcy?



See web poll at [www.DailyMirror.lk](http://www.DailyMirror.lk)

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### IMF-Panacea or trauma?

It is quite apparent that the adverse economic repercussions majority of us face nowadays are not only due to a cocktail of mismanagement and rampant corruption during the last four decades or so, but also due to many fiscal reforms now being implemented by the govt. in agreement with the IMF.

The so-called IMF bailout package of 2.9 billion spread over a period of four years, is the last straw that the president and the govt. are desperately clutching at to heave a sigh of relief more for themselves politically, although for us any such relief would only be a long-haul altogether.

In this background, no wonder we the helpless and hapless tax payers are being burdened with shocking price increases, times without number, to fill up the depleted govt. coffers and also to full fill IMF diktat such as cost recovery-based pricing for fuel, gas, electricity and water (coming soon!).

A classic case in point is the recent massive and merciless tariff hike on electricity - for the second time - pushing the majority of people out of the frying pan into fire.

The newly introduced and much controversial payee tax has been simmering beneath the surface since January this year. Practically, all professional bodies are vehemently and vociferously calling for a redress on same. An early reconciliation is very significant as failure to do so by the president, being the finance minister, will not only lead to severe inconveniences to the already battered and bruised citizens, but also play havoc with our ailing economy, if trade union action is to continue.

Moreover, if not resolved early will only speed up the already on-going and alarming brain drain.

That said, president's standard attitude and ploy to claim IMF conditions to rebuff into any reconcilable proposal brought to his attention by the professionals in this regard, is akin to adding insult to injury. One may also wonder, whether president is intentionally insulting the intelligence of these professionals who are no doubt our valuable and national assets unlike some of the rotten and inane political leaders and politicians who are both a liability and a bane to this island nation!

In the mean time, as we plod from bad to worse, wondering as to what new hell's depth can our blessed island descend further, the president and the govt. ministers are waxing eloquent on the IMF PANACEA for economic recovery. On the contrary, and most certainly IMF has now become a nagging TRAUMA for most citizens!!

M.R.PATHIRAGE KOLONAWA

## SL needs new economic development model: WB

### WEB COMMENTS

**REFORMIST** - There is one most important solution for SL. Political reforms and very harsh anti-corruption laws are needed. The Parliament should be reduced to a maximum of 100 MPs and the Cabinet must have a maximum of 20 individuals (including Deputy Ministers). All ethnicity and religion based political parties should be banned.

**SUNIL GAMAGE** - Without reconciliation we can't think of a truly developed country in the future. Find out who was actually behind the ethnic war that continued over 30 years and devastated our economy. Petty politics was used in Sri Lanka for individuals to remain in power at the expense of true development.

See more web comments at [www.DailyMirror.lk](http://www.DailyMirror.lk)

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# STF MARKS 40 YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

**W**ith the emergence of armed rebellion in the 70s to carve out a separate state in the North and East for ethnic Tamils, the Police in the course of their duties had to face armed attacks carried out by the armed groups. These attacks resulted in the killing of police personnel, damaging Police Stations, and assassinating of key individuals who ran the government functions in the North and the East. Moreover, the incidents that took place during the southern insurgency in 1971, where a number of police stations were destroyed or captured by the insurgents, were fresh in the minds of those who were administering the Ministry of Defence in Sri Lanka. Hence the necessity arose for the formation of a special military arm within the Police Service to counter emerging threats that undermined peace and order in the areas threatened by the rebels. Alarmed with the developments, the government appointed a committee headed by a former minister J. W. Subasinghe in 1978 to study and make recommendations in this regard.

## FORMATION OF THE FORCE



STF Founder Late Mr. Ravi Jayawardene attending a Passing Out Parade as the Chief Guest - 2002

In light of the above, administrative formalities commenced at the Ministry of Defence to form a Special Armed Police Unit within the Police to take on the rebels head-on as the country's armed forces were heavily preoccupied at that time with fighting the emerging separatism advocated by several armed groups. As a result, the Special Striking Force (SSF) precursor to the STF came into being on 01 March 1983 with 60 Police Personnel selected from the many applicants who volunteered to join the new unit.

Primarily, they were trained by the Sri Lanka Army training team led by then Major Ananda Weerasekera (later he rose to the rank of Maj. General and was ordained as Buddhangala Ananda Thera after retirement from the Army and passed away on 28 December 2021) at the Combat Training School (CTS) Ampara. After the training, they were deployed to Point Pedro, Velvetiturai and Kankasanturai Police Stations in Jaffna District to enable law and order functions in the district already stalled due to threats posed by the rebels. Ravi Jayawardene, is a man with extraordinary integrity and intelligence. He wanted some of these personnel absorbed into the security detail of the then President, his father His Excellency J. R. Jayawardene. The President saw the emerging threat as a serious obstacle to his development plans and wanted security forces and the police to curb this menace quickly and accordingly entrusted the responsibility of modernizing the security sector to his National Security Advisor Ravi Jayawardene. Ravi Jayawardene ensured that the armed forces and the police in Sri Lanka would get the best available training and weaponry in the world at the time and worked tirelessly towards that end. The SSF was renamed as Special Task Force (STF) and the ex – SAS (Special Air Service) Regiment personnel of the British Army were brought in, to provide specialized training with special emphasis on Counter Revolutionary Warfare (CRW) in 1984 and the force was equipped with modern weaponry such as M-16 rifles, Heckler & Koch support weapons, Night Visions, Secure Communication Equipment etc. With those changes, the STF began to shape into a fully-fledged professional Counter – Terrorist Outfit and predominantly deployed in the ethnically sensitive Eastern Province of the country.

The STF suffered its first casualties on 01 September 1984 when the LTTE detonated a landmine in Tikkam, Jaffna targeting a truck carrying STF personnel killing four of them and injuring the others. This attack was believed to be conducted as a retaliatory attack for the killing of one of the rebel leaders named 'Ranjan Lala' by the STF troops a few days before. Since then, the STF commemorates its war heroes on September 01 every year.

## FIRST EELAM WAR

During the first phase of the counter-insurgency campaign, the STF effectively took control of Batticaloa and Ampara Districts by defeating insurgents in many parts and driving them into jungles where they had to struggle for survival as they lost population centers which provided them the resources to run the campaign. New camps established in Kiran, Kallady, Kalawanchikudi, Thrukkivil, Karadiyanaru, Akkarapattu, Vavunativu, Morakottanchena, Ariyampattu, and Pillumalai and ensured that the writ of the government prevails in the affected areas. During this period,

the LTTE led by Velupillai Prabhakaran emerged as the dominant rebel group decimating other organizations. With the induction of IPKF into the Northern and Eastern Parts of the country in July 1987 as a result of the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord, the majority of the STF personnel were brought to the southern part of the country to deal with the insurgency erupted in that part of the country.

## SECOND EELAM WAR

After the departure of the IPKF, and the brief lull that prevailed thereafter during peace talks, the hostilities started again on 10 June 1990 with the attack on Security Forces and the taking hostage of a large number of police personnel in the East. The STF began its advance.

However, with great effort, the STF gradually took control of both the districts and re-established camps by the end of the year 1990 restoring the status quo. With the change of government in 1994, again peace talks started between the Government and the LTTE with the intention of bringing in a lasting solution to the conflict.

## THIRD EELAM WAR

The Peace Talks between the Government and the LTTE broke down again in April 1995 with a surprise LTTE attack on Naval Vessels docked in the Trincomalee harbor. The LTTE which was confined to the jungles, before peace talks came out and carried out attacks on STF Camps at Tikkodai, Porativu, and Ambalanturai with the intention of overrunning them. However, in the face of courage, determination, and bravery of the STF troops the rebels retreated with heavy casualties. The STF extended its deployment to Wannit theatre too, in 1997 providing security to the main supply routes from Vavuniya to Mannar. In the third phase, fighting went on until 2002 when another round of peace talks began.

## EASTERN & NORTHERN HUMANITARIAN OPERATION

The 4th and final phase of Eelam war began on 26th July 2006 from Trincomalee District. The STF put its total weight behind the Sri Lanka Army which spearheaded the operations to liberate the Eastern Province. The STF conducted a series of operations to disrupt the enemy supply lines and destroyed the remaining pockets of resistance. On 11th July 2007 the security forces liberated the entire Eastern Province with the capture of the last LTTE stronghold in the East, Thoppigala. The conflict came to an end on 19th May 2009 with the death of almost all the top-level leadership of the LTTE

including Prabhakaran and the surrender of thousands of remaining LTTE cadres to the Security Forces. With the dawn of peace, the STF also joined the wider government effort of reconstruction and rehabilitation work in the Eastern Province for a brief period in the aftermath of the end of the conflict before being redeployed to play more of a policing role across the Island. The new responsibilities of the STF comprise fighting illicit narcotic Trade and Organized Crimes, Public Order Management, engaging in high-risk arrests of violent criminals, Protection of Radio Active Materials deployed across the Island, Crisis Response, VVIP Security, Search & Bomb Disposal, Fire & Rescue in Expressways, and enforcement of the law with regard to the offenses related to the environment. In addition, the STF is going to undertake peacekeeping abroad under the United Nations in the near future by contributing fully equipped, trained, and self-sustained Former Police Units (FPU) to the UN for deployment in any part of the world.

Since its inception, the STF has been led by some of the finest policemen ever produced by the Sri Lanka Police. Late SDIG Bodhi Liyanage became the first Commandant of the STF and he was succeeded by late DIG Dharmasiri Weerakoon, followed by late SDIG Zerney Wijesuriya, late DIG Lionel Karunasena, late DIG Nimal Gunathilleke, SDIG Nimal Lewke, DIG K.M.L. Sarathchandra, DIG R.W.M.C. Ranawana, DIG J.K.R.A. Perera, SDIG M.R Latiff and DIG Lionel Gunathilleke.

The STF is currently headed by DIG Waruna Jayasundara who has worked in the STF alongside most of the leaders mentioned above. Since he assumed duties as Commandant / STF on 11 June 2020, he revamped the force so that it could successfully deal with the current and future law enforcement challenges posed especially by the techno-savvy criminals.

During the 40 years of service to the nation, the STF lost 464 of its men in the line of duty together with 06 civilian employees while 774 were wounded. They will always remain in the hearts of the people of this grateful nation as the saviours of the country. The Special Task Force always strives for professional excellence true to its motto "Victory Assured" and is committed to its obligations to the Nation at all times.

# COWARDLY ATTEMPTS TO PREVENT ELECTIONS MUST BE RESISTED-CMU

**Sri Lanka's one of the oldest Trade Unions Ceylon Mercantile, Industrial and General Workers' Union (CMU) complains that the cowardly attempts to prevent elections must be resisted. The full statement is as follows.**

Knowing well that there is growing public anger and resentment against his rule and that of his SLPP-led government, President Wickremesinghe has now sought to postpone Local Government Elections by devious means.

The Government Printer appears to have been coerced to refuse printing the Postal Voting documents without receiving funds in advance, while the Secretary to the Treasury has claimed there are no funds available for the elections even though 10 billion rupees have been allocated for elections. The Government Printer has said that despite many requests the Police Department has not deployed police personnel to provide security for the ballot printing process and cited this as the "main reason" for the delay in printing the ballot papers for postal voting. This has led to the Elections Commission informing the Supreme Court that it cannot hold the Local Government polls on the scheduled date.

As a result, it is almost certain that elections will not be held on March 09 as scheduled, or before March 19, 2023, as mandated by law. While noting the cowardice of the President and his government to face the people in an election,

our Union denounces their sordid attempts to undermine the constitution and subvert democracy.

It is objectionable that a President who was not elected by the people at an election is now trying to deny the people their fundamental right to elect their representatives. The only member of his Party to hold a seat in Parliament, through the bonus seat allocation, Ranil Wickremesinghe was appointed President by a majority of Members of Parliament, led by the SLPP – a political front that was bitterly opposed to him. Wickremesinghe had led the UNP to its worst defeat at the last election where his Party failed to gain a single elected seat. He himself had lost in his own constituency. The Union notes it is deplorable that our Constitution provides for such a distortion of the people's sovereignty and makes a mockery of democracy.

President Wickremesinghe has also leveraged the full powers of the Executive Presidency to suppress any form of opposition to his government and to deny the people of their fundamental right to engage in peaceful protests. Effectively, he has used his dictatorial powers to shut down virtually every avenue available to citizens to express their disapproval of the government and its actions. Our Union does not believe the Local Authority elections will have any significant impact on the lives of the ordinary people facing the brunt of the economic crisis, who have seen their living standards drop precipitously. None of the political parties competing in these elections have clearly spelt out their plans to bring us out of our misery.

In relation to the working people especially, none of them have specific proposals for a national minimum wage or for a Workers'

Charter that will strengthen the rights of workers to organise and engage in collective bargaining to improve their lives. Nevertheless, we firmly defend the constitutional right of our people to elect their representatives to local government bodies or to cast their votes to register their strong opposition to those in power, as we are certain many voters would. This fundamental right cannot be taken away on the whims of a President merely because he fears he and his government will be soundly defeated at the elections. If unchallenged, this will set a dangerous precedent for the President to put off any election by blatantly using public officials to withhold funds and the allocation of other resources to keep himself or any unpopular government in power as long as he pleases. This is why the actions of the Government Printer, the Secretary to the Treasury and the Inspector General of Police must be seriously called into question. We fully endorse the statement of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) who have pointed out in their statement on this matter that "Articles 104 B (2) and 104 GG (1) of the Constitution make it clear that all state authorities are duty bound to cooperate with the Elections Commission and that refusing or failing to do so is a criminal offence punishable with imprisonment".

We stand with the BASL on their position that "all attempts to interfere with the electoral process must not only be defeated but all those responsible for such interference must be dealt with in accordance with the law." The CMU will join hands with all like-minded organisations in this effort to defend and uphold the sovereignty of the people.

**HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC**  
Resolution adopted by the Board of Directors of Hatton National Bank PLC under section 4 of the Recovery of Loans by Banks (Special Provisions) Act No. 04 of 1990

Branch: KOCHCHIKADE  
**MANIKKUGE UPUL INDRAJITH KUMAR PREMASIRI**  
SOLE PROPRIETOR OF SIGIRI ENTERPRISES

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of Hatton National Bank PLC held on 24th November 2022 it was resolved specially and unanimously:

Whereas MANIKKUGE UPUL INDRAJITH KUMAR PREMASIRI SOLE PROPRIETOR OF SIGIRI ENTERPRISES as the Obligor mortgaged and hypothecated property morefully described in the Schedule hereto by virtue of Mortgage Bond No. 5786 dated 06.04.2017 attested by G M M Fernando, Notary Public of Negombo in favour of Hatton National Bank PLC as security for repayment of Term Loan facility of Rs. 20,300,000.00/- granted by Hatton National Bank PLC to MANIKKUGE UPUL INDRAJITH KUMAR PREMASIRI SOLE PROPRIETOR OF SIGIRI ENTERPRISES.

And whereas the said MANIKKUGE UPUL INDRAJITH KUMAR PREMASIRI SOLE PROPRIETOR OF SIGIRI ENTERPRISES has made default in payment of the sum due to Hatton National Bank PLC on the said Bond and due on the said Term Loan of Rs. 20,300,000.00/- extended to him among other facilities and there is now due and owing to Hatton National Bank PLC as at 26th September 2022 a sum of Rupees Twenty One Million Six Hundred and Eighty four Thousand Six Hundred and Seventy Nine and Cents Twenty Seven Only (Rs. 21,684,679.27) on the said Bond and the Board of Directors of Hatton National Bank PLC under the power vested by the Recovery of Loans by Banks (Special Provisions) Act No. 4 of 1990, do hereby resolve to sell mortgaged property as described in the schedule hereto and mortgaged to Hatton National Bank PLC by the said Bond No. 5786 be sold by Public Auction by P K E Senapathi Licensed Auctioneer of all island for recovery of the said sum of Rs. 21,684,679.27 together with further interest at the rate of 15% p.a. from 27th September 2022 on the capital outstanding of Rs. 20,053,650.00/- to date of sale together with costs of advertising and other charges incurred less payments (if any) received.

**THE SCHEDULE ABOVE REFERRED TO**

- All that divided and defined allotment of land marked Lot 1 depicted in Plan No. 12060 from and out of the land called Dedurusiri Estate together with the buildings and everything standing thereon situated at Sittamadama Village within the Arachchikattuwa Pradeshiya Sabha Limits in Anaivilundana Pattu of Pitigal Korale North in the Grama Niladhari's Division of Sittamadama and Divisional Secretariat of Arachchikattuwa in the District of Puttalam North Western Province (within the registration Division of Chilaw) and bounded on the North by Road Lands of Victor Vijendar & W.K.P de Mel on the East by Land of W.K.P de Mel & Old Road (RDA) on the South by Deduru Oya and on the West by Road (abandoned) and containing in extent Seventeen Acres Twenty Three Perches (A17-R0: P23).
- All that divided and defined allotment of land marked Lot 2 depicted in Plan No. 12060A from and out of the land called Dedurusiri Estate together with the buildings and everything standing thereon situated at Sittamadama Village within the Arachchikattuwa Pradeshiya Sabha Limits in Anaivilundana Pattu of Pitigal Korale North in the Grama Niladhari's Division of Sittamadama and Divisional Secretariat of Arachchikattuwa in the District of Puttalam North Western Province (within the registration Division of Chilaw) and bounded on the North by Reservation for means of access on the East by Land 3 in Plan No. 675 dated 08.07.1985 made by M Samarasekera on the South by Dedurusiri Kele of No Claimant and on the West by Old Road (RDA) and containing in extent Eleven Acres Three Roods and Twenty Two Perches (A11-R3: P22).

By order of the Board of Directors.  
K A L T RANAWERA  
DGM (LEGAL)/BOARD SECRETARY

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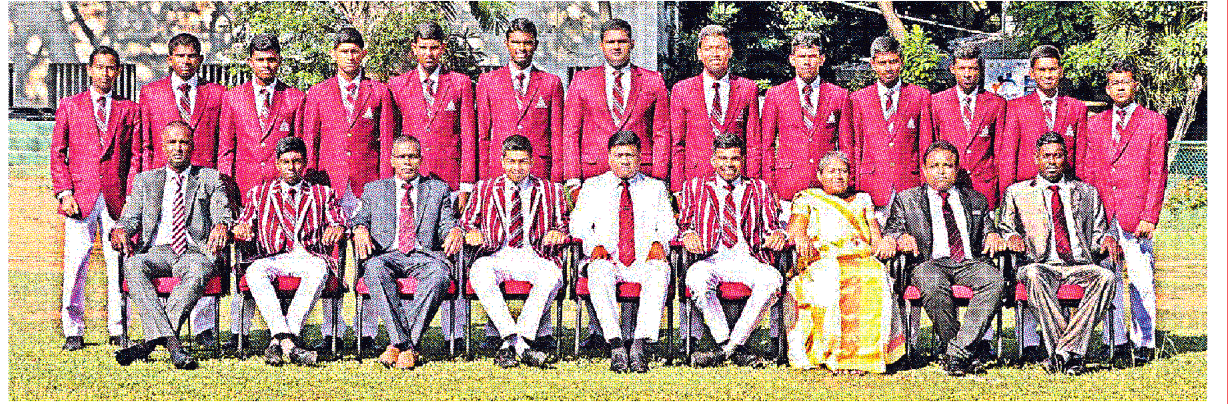
# NALANDA EYE REPEAT, ANANDA LOOK FOR FIRST WIN IN MORE THAN TWO DECADES



Ananda College Team



Nethma Samaraweera (Captain), Iruth Gilshan (Vice Capt), Isuru Weerasuriya, Pulindu Kiriella, Yehan Gunasinghe, Kaveesha Mendis, Vilash Karunaratne, Ruvishan Perera, Malessa Perera, Ayesh Shashimal, Viduna Wijebandara, Kanchana De Livera, Ashinsa Deshan, Kenul De Zoysa, Kithma Sithmal, Dinada Athalage, Ianudika Sriyapala (Coach), Sanjaya Dewapura (Asst. Coach)



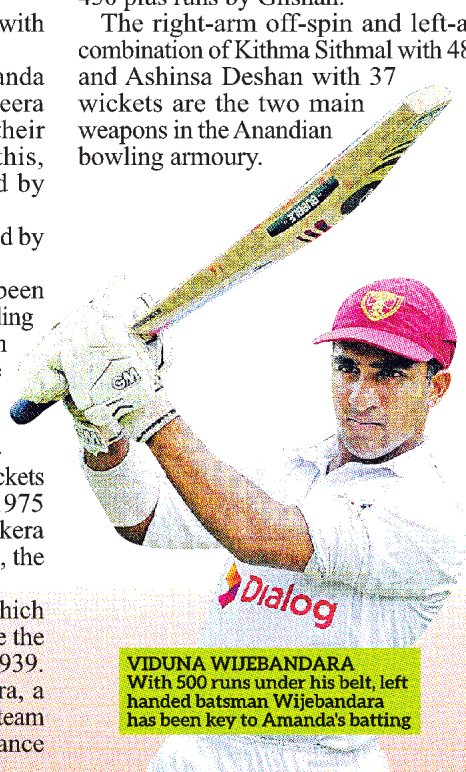
Nalanda College Team



Chanul Athukorala (Captain), Sajitha Vithanage (Vice Captain), Kushmitha Silva, Thisara Dewdunu, Sadev Samarasinghe, Akesh Manorathna, Thimath Herath, Janula Indusara, Rusiru Vilochana, Eranga Jayakody, Minod Caldera, Sadya Sathmina, Senesh Wijesinghe, Osanda Pamuditha, Yasiru Samarakoon, Malinga Surappulige (Coach)

**BY LAKSHMAN RANASINGHE**  
**T**he 93rd Battle of the Maroons cricket encounter for the Dr. N. M. Perera Memorial Trophy between Ananda College and Nalanda College will commence at 10.00 a.m. tomorrow at the SSC Grounds.  
 Ananda College leads the series tally with 12 wins to Nalanda College's seven.  
 Last year, at the 92nd encounter, Nalanda under the leadership of Dineth Samaraweera broke a 69-year hoodoo in defeating their arch rivals by nine wickets. Before this, Nalanda's last victory was in 1953 led by W. Wimalaratne Silva.  
 Ananda last achieved victory in 2002, led by Eshan Abeysinghe.  
 A total number of 30 centuries have been scored in this clash with the Nalandians leading that tally with 16 to Ananda's 14. Anandian Thilina Kandambi holds the record for the highest individual score with 144 scored in 1999.  
 In bowling, late Anura Ranasinghe with 14 wickets for 67 runs holds the best haul of wickets in a match. He performed this feat in 1975 as the captain. Nalandian Yohan Gunasekera claimed eight wickets for 32 runs in 1976, the best figures in a single innings.  
 Ananda scored 329 for four in 2006, which still stands as the highest team score while the lowest was the 48 scored by Nalanda in 1939.  
 Ananda is led by Nethma Samaraweera, a third-year player who will expect his young team to come up with an outstanding performance

to make way for the coveted trophy to the silverware cabinet at Maradana.  
 Left-handed batsman and third year player Viduna Wijebandara, along with Iruth Gilshan, head the Ananda batting with Wijebandara scoring over 500 runs, slightly more than the 450 plus runs by Gilshan.  
 The right-arm off-spin and left-arm spin combination of Kithma Sithmal with 48 wickets and Ashinsa Deshan with 37 wickets are the two main weapons in the Anandian bowling armoury.



**VIDUNA WIJEBANDARA**  
 With 500 runs under his belt, left handed batsman Wijebandara has been key to Ananda's batting



**KITHMA SITHMAL**  
 Right-arm off-spinner Sithmal has 48 wickets to his name and is the leading wicket-taker for Ananda College

PIX BY NISAL BADUGE

Nalanda is led by fourth-year coloursman Chanul Athukorala who missed the most part of the season due to illness and examinations. In the six matches he played Athukorala scored over 200 runs.  
 Third-year coloursman Rusiru Vilochana, who became the first schoolboy to reach the 1000-run mark this season heads the

Nalanda batting line-up. His 1192 runs includes two centuries and six half tons.  
 Third year player and off spinner Minod Caldera capturing 46 wickets including five fors along with left arm spinner, a fourth year coloursman Sajitha Vithanage with 39 wickets inclusive of three five wicket hauls is the main weapon behind Nalanda's successes this season.



**RUSIRU VILOCHANA**  
 Vilochana became the first schoolboy to reach the 1000 runs this season and has scored a total of 1192 runs for Nalanda

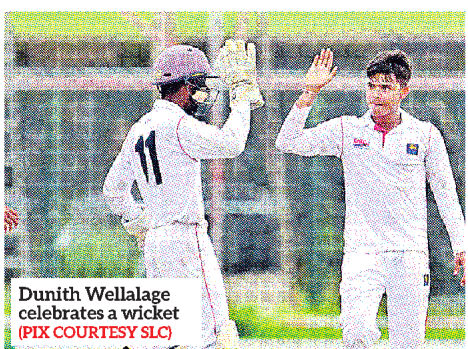


**MINOD CALDERA**  
 With 46 wickets, Caldera has been the main wicket taker for Nalanda

PIX BY NIMALSIRI EDIRISINGHE

## National Super League Final Spinners rule, 14 wickets fall on day one

**BY M. SHAMIL AMIT**  
 The first day's play of the four-day National Super League final encounter between Dambulla and Galle played at the Galle International Stadium turned out to be all about the bowlers as 14 wickets fell for 274 runs.  
 First it was left-arm spinner Dunith Wellalage who ruled the morning session of play after Dambulla were invited to take first lease of the wicket. He ended with a five-wicket haul to restrict the strong batting side to 248 runs. Right-arm spinners Wanindu Hasaranga and Ashan Priyanjan combined with effect to have the Galle side reeling on 26 for 4 from the ten overs they batted.  
 Dambulla's innings had an inauspicious start as they lost their first wicket with nine runs on the board before Abishek Liyanaarachchi who made a top score of 58 in 75 balls inclusive of seven boundaries and a six joined by Pavan Ratnayake associated in a 77-run stand for the second wicket before they lost two quick wickets for the addition of two runs and slid to 86 for 3.  
 Skipper Minod Bhanuka who made a half ton with eight boundaries came to the rescue of the side as he



**Dunith Wellalage**  
 celebrates a wicket

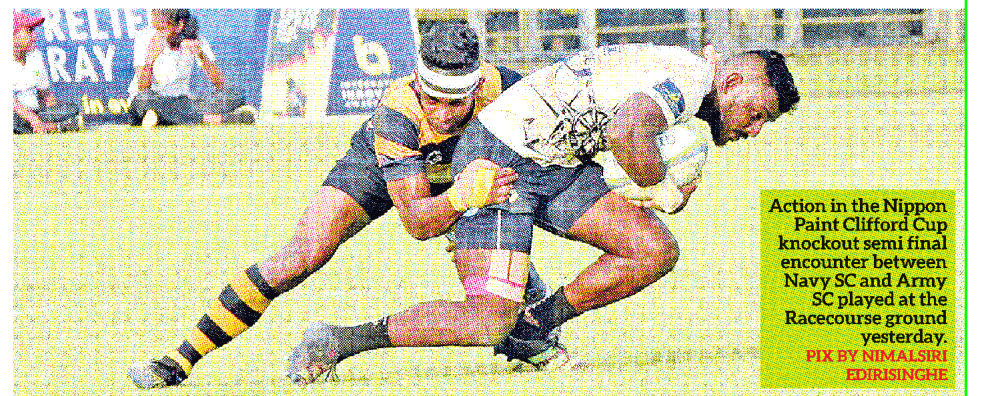
along with Sanoj Dharshika put on a valuable 78 runs for the fourth wicket.  
 But the late order batting failed to make any impression and in the process they lost wickets at regular intervals -- from 166 for 5 they lost their remaining five wickets for the addition of just 82 runs.

**SCORES**

**Dambulla: 248** (Abishek Liyanaarachchi 54, Minod Bhanuka 50, Sanoj Dharshika 37, Pavan Ratnayake 31; Dunith Wellalage 5 for 58, Kavisha Anjula 2 for 38)  
**Galle: 26 for 4** (Wanindu Hasaranga 2 for 13)

## Navy make it to final in thriller

**BY M. SHAMIL AMIT**  
 Navy SC came out victorious in the second semi final of the Nippon Paint Clifford Cup knockout tournament with a thrilling win over Army SC with the match being decided in extra time after it ended at 13 each at the Racecourse ground yesterday.  
 Full back Thilina Weerasinghe was the hero of Navy SC as he executed a 50-metre drop goal in the first minute of the extra time, ensuring the final slot for Navy SC.  
 Army SC came into the game with a load of confidence due to the fact with their comfortable 39-17 win against Havelock SC in the quarter-final while Navy SC was coming out for the first time in the knockout segment.  
 It almost repeated the first semi final encounter as Navy SC made a comeback in the last ten minutes with Army SC leading 13-6 at that stage.  
 The early proceedings saw Navy SC putting up the first score in the 14th minute from a penalty booting over by full back Thilina Weerasinghe and 14 minutes later Army SC took over the lead with a try scored by Chalika Sandaruwan and fly half Chamath Fernando making the conversion and 7-3 stood the score in favour of Army SC at lemons.  
 On resumption, Sailors reduced the deficit through a penalty booting over by fly half Samuel Maduwantha.  
 But Army increased the lead thanks to fly half Chamath Fernando booting over two penalties to lead 13-6.  
 A last minute try by scrum half Harsha Madusanka and with Isuru Kongahawatte making the conversion made it 13 each when the long whistle was blown which followed with the first minute drop goal by full back Thilina Weerasinghe to ensure the final slot for Navy SC's second Clifford Cup final appearance having emerged champions in the year 2014 defeating Havelock SC.



Action in the Nippon Paint Clifford Cup knockout semi final encounter between Navy SC and Army SC played at the Racecourse ground yesterday.





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02.03.2023

Table with columns: SECURITY, VOLUME, V.W.A. (VOLUME WEIGHTED AVERAGE), OPEN, HIGH, LOW, and CHANGE. It lists various stocks and their market performance.

Exchange Rates

02.03.2023

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

Table showing exchange rates for various currencies including Australian Dollar, Canadian Dollar, Chinese Yuan, Euro, Japanese Yen, Singapore Dollar, Sterling Pound, Swiss Franc, and US Dollar.

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

Table showing indicative rates for currencies from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and UAE.

Bullish run continues

Indices closed in green as a result of price gains in counters such as Hatton National Bank, Sampath Bank and Commercial Bank with the turnover crossing Rs. 1.4 bn.

High net worth and institutional investor participation was noted in Sampath Bank, National Development Bank and Commercial Bank.

Mixed interest was observed in Melstacorp, Central Finance Company and Expolanka Holdings whilst retail



interest was noted in SMB Leasing nonvoting, Browns Investments and Renuka Agri Foods. Foreign participation in the market activity remained at subdued levels

with foreigners closing as net buyers.

The Banking sector was the top contributor to the market turnover (due to Sampath Bank and Commercial Bank) whilst the sector index gained 4.48%. The share price of Sampath Bank increased by Rs. 1.90 (3.65%) to close at Rs. 53.90.

The share price of Commercial Bank gained Rs. 2.00 (3.08%) to close at Rs. 67.00. Food, Beverage & Tobacco sector was the second highest contributor to the market turnover (due

to Melstacorp) whilst the sector index increased by 0.31%.

The share price of Melstacorp moved down by Rs. 0.10 (0.17%) to close at Rs. 58.90. Central Finance Company and Expolanka Holdings were also included amongst the top turnover contributors. The share price of Central Finance Company recorded a gain of Rs. 2.00 (2.86%) to close at Rs. 72.00. The share price of Expolanka Holdings declined by Rs. 2.00 (1.13%) to close at Rs. 174.75.

Contd. from Page 7

Foreigners return...

The initial foreign interest in Treasury bills and bonds fizzled out few weeks after the announcement of the staff level agreement with the IMF back in September last year.

Renewed interest by foreigners may signal that Sri Lanka could be weeks away from jumping off the final hurdle in unlocking its deal with the IMF which will make available US\$ 2.9 billion worth of foreign assistance throughout four years.

Foreigners' increased risk appetite on Sri Lanka could also suggest that they are willing to buy into the tough reform path Sri Lanka has committed to as the last couple of days and weeks saw the officials pushing through a few of the remaining reforms such as the second round of power tariffs and the new Monetary Law Act which will establish Central Bank's independence.

Treasury bill...

The 3-month bill yields fell 113 basis points to 29.59 percent, and both 6 and 12-month bill yields fell 3 basis points each to 28.64 percent and 27.64 percent respectively, bringing the total decline in cumulative yields from the December peak to 3.05 percent, 3.56 percent and 1.63 percent for the three tenors.

The Central Bank is scheduled to determine the trajectory of the key policy rates at the monetary policy review scheduled to be announced this afternoon.

In a further notable development, the average prime lending rate also fell sharply by 114 basis points last week to 24.21 percent in a sign of further easing in market lending rates.

Sri Lanka's country...

UK headquartered Brand Finance, is a specialist brand strategy and valuation consultancy, which has been operating in Colombo, since 2004.

Chinese tourists...

In a statement to the media, the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotions Bureau said the resuming of Chinese tourists visiting Sri Lanka also gives an opportunity to enhance bilateral and cultural ties between the two countries, especially as China has been a longtime friend of Sri Lanka, assisting in Cultural, Economic and infrastructure development, and lending a helping hand at the most difficult times.

From March 1, Chinese travellers will enter Sri Lanka through China Eastern Airlines and SriLankan Airlines. SriLankan Airlines announced last month that from April 2023 it will operate a thrice weekly service, each to Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou.

In 2018, China was the highest tourist traffic generating market for Sri Lanka.

Private sector...

The campaign will be rolled out in three phases to capture the interest of the US\$ 10 billion market. Promotional activities in the first phase will focus on Bangalore, while the second and third phase will emphasise on Delhi, and Mumbai.

The new campaign positions Sri Lanka as an exciting destination that offers a wide array of experiences, many that are little known and off-the-beaten track.

According to Dentsu Grant Group Chairperson Neela Marikkar, India was the market of choice as going by the agency data, it is estimated that there are around 24 million potential target audience within South India alone. "This is significant. We wanted to have a new story to tell our younger audience about amazing aspects of Sri Lanka that they won't know about. And that's what our campaign will do," she said.

"The campaign will highlight Sri Lanka's hidden gems, which offer authentic and unique experiences that appeal to the target demographic. The Indian market has been a key support for Sri Lanka's tourism industry always and we believe this re-energised effort to attract more Indian Millennials and Gen Z's will be a win-win initiative for all parties and support Sri Lanka's economic recovery," said SLAITO President Nishad Wijetunga addressing the launch event held in Colombo this week.

Reflecting similar sentiments, THASL President M. Shanthikumar noted that

the industry is confident that the Indian market will be moved by the "exciting and heartwarming experience" created by Sri Lanka and its people, while helping the tourism industry boom once again. The partners to the campaign are Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), Cinnamon Hotels, Lois London, PR, Greenfolk, iFilm, Malinda Bandara, Gal Oya, Juice, and Water Garden, Aitken Spence Hotels & Aitken Spence Travels. The campaign launch event was graced by the High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka Gopal Baglay, Minister of Tourism and Lands Harin Fernando, along with other industry stakeholders, social media influencers and the local media.

Aitken Spence...

Furthermore, the agent gained confidence after the successful charter operation from Uzbekistan and other countries handled by the company. Further strengthening the partnership, this high-potential operator is looking forward to operating full capacity flights to Sri Lanka during the Winter season, this year.

Commenting on the same, the tour operator stated, "This is our inaugural flight to Sri Lanka, and we are looking forward to promoting Sri Lanka at a larger scale. We are confident that our guests will enjoy your beautiful country, and everything will be handled well."

The company has been successful in winning the trust of agents from new source markets

and will continue to make investments in agent education by offering familiarization tours to agents to get a better understanding of the destination and will be helping them with destination promotions. With more visibility for the destination, it is anticipated that potential clients will feel more confident travelling to Sri Lanka.

As an organisation leading the way in inbound tourism for 45 years, Aitken Spence Travels will continue to explore new source markets by making significant efforts to promote destination Sri Lanka.

FAO, USAID...

Speaking to the attendees, the USAID Mission Director for Sri Lanka and Maldives, Gabriel Grau, noted that collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture, the Private Sector, FAO, and USAID is more about increasing food security in Sri Lanka. The combined long-term objective is to transform Sri Lankan agriculture from subsidy-driven to market-based, private sector-driven, competitive agriculture.

"To achieve this, new technologies, more efficient systems, and the long term commitment of all stakeholders in the agriculture sector will be critical," she said.

The recommendations developed through the workshop will be presented to the Minister of Agriculture Mahinda Amaraweera within two weeks to be taken forward with the continued support of FAO and USAID.

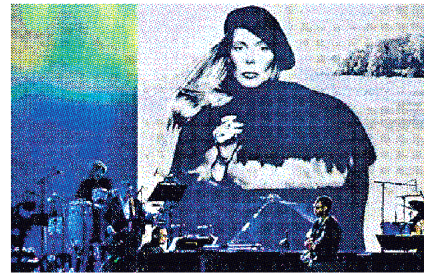




# DailyMirror

# Life

FRIDAY  
MARCH 03, 2023  
WWW.LIFE.LK  
P-10



## PRESTIGIOUS SONGWRITING PRIZE

Joni Mitchell, the pioneering singer-songwriter behind poignant hits including "A Case Of You," was set Wednesday to receive a national lifetime achievement award at a star-studded gala celebrating her vast contributions to popular song. The Canadian-born artist joins an elite coterie of composers including Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney and Carole King in receiving the US Library of Congress' Gershwin Prize, AFP

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# Kamil Makes a Bold Decision

**H**aving a great passion is of no point unless you decide to act on it, which is exactly what Kamil Hewavitharana did when he switched to fashion. Fashion had always been his passion though he did not pursue it until recently. He had been happy in his comfort zone working for an establishment related to retail clothing. After showcasing in many fashion shows locally and internationally at Expo Dubai, Dubai Fashion Week, GICW in Delhi, CFW x Luxor Show, Pune and Shades of Ceylon, London, Kamil decided to step out of his comfort zone and go out on his own and began designing for his clientele. He has ventured into creating bridal ensembles too.

The transition had not been easy at the start. Eventually having built a client base in Sri Lanka and overseas, Kamil is now happy that he took the bold step. Kamil has immense talent and I am happy that he is now working on what his true passion is. When I recently met Kamil I asked him a few questions to which he gave me short and swift answers.



#### Q WHY DID YOU GET INTO YOUR PREVIOUS FIELD?

I always had a passion for clothes and when I got the opportunity to work at Romafour as their Merchandiser and Sales Manager, I found that it was tailor-made for what I had in mind.

#### Q WAS IT A HARD DECISION FOR YOU TO CHOOSE TO PURSUE A NEW CAREER?

Not really, as this was my eventual plan.

#### Q WHAT SKILLS FROM YOUR PREVIOUS WORK DO YOU FEEL CONVERTS THE MOST TO THIS CAREER CHANGE?

I have travelled a lot to different countries for merchandising and through this I learnt a lot of what was happening in the fashion world



and where to find fabric etc. I also learned to understand the needs of customers and how to keep them satisfied.

#### Q HOW HAVE YOU PREPARED FOR THE CHALLENGES OF RESTARTING YOUR CAREER IN THIS CHOSEN FIELD?

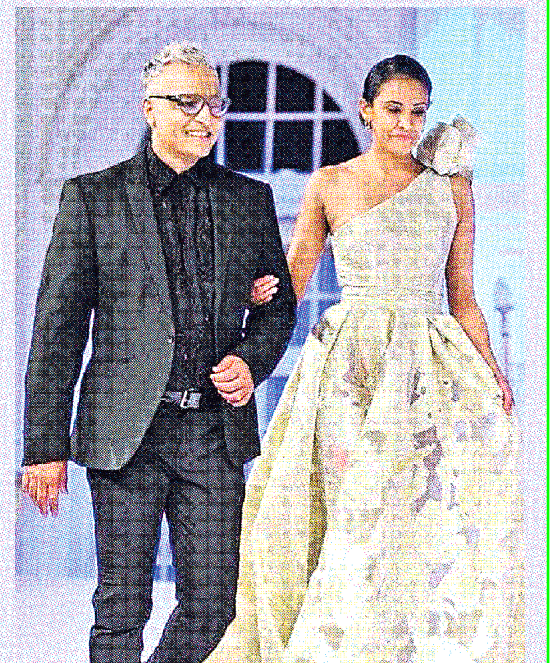
My mother was the biggest influence for my decision to move forward in this field. For as long as I can remember, although she was a teacher, she would be at the sewing machine creating beautiful dresses for my five sisters and the girls from the neighbourhood, when time permitted it.

#### Q DO YOU HAVE ANY NON-PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES THAT YOU FEEL CAN BE APPLIED TO YOUR NEW CAREER?

Observing lines of fashion daily in magazines, people roaming on the streets as well as when I travelled overseas admiring the silhouettes of people and nature around me inspires me to develop a kaleidoscope of colour and fashion lines.

#### Q WHAT DO YOU ANTICIPATE AS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES TRANSITIONING INTO THIS CHOSEN FIELD?

Right now, finding good fabric and accessories to produce all the beautiful creations we have in our minds. I wish Kamil all the success in his quest for fashion and that very soon his label, LIMAK, will be recognised internationally.



## Prof. Ediriweera Sarathchandra's "Sinhabahu"

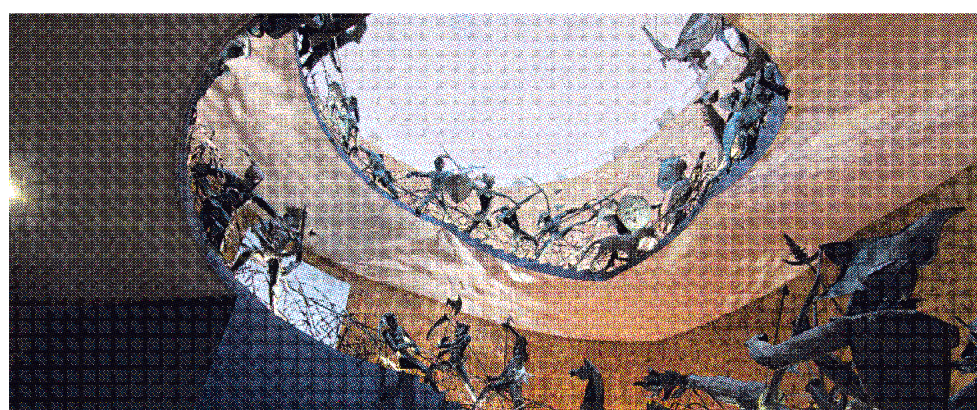
at Moratuwa & Colombo

"Sinhabahu" a great play of Prof. Ediriweera Sarathchandra's will stage it's two special shows on March 04th Saturday at 10.30 a.m & 2.30 p.m at Moratuwa Sarvodaya Vishawa Samadhi Theatre and March 07th Tuesday at 8.15 a.m & 11.00 a.m at Elphinstone Theatre. These special shows are organised by Jude Simal.



## "Charithe Horu Aran" March 5th at Dehiwita

"Charithe Horu Aran" a hilarious play which is directed by Ravindra Ariyaratne the director of "Ballothekka be" will stage it's special show on Sunday 5th March 2023 at 3.30 p.m & 6.30 p.m at (Air Conditioned) Dehiwita Provincial Council Auditorium. With Kumara Thirimadura, Gihan Fernando, Sarath Karunaratne, ChamilaPeiris, Ferny Roshani and Chinthaka Peiris in performance, music composition, set designing, makeup and stage management will be maneuvered by Anthony Surendra, Luvoline Wandervall, Wasantha Wittachchi and Sumeda Prasanna respectively. All seats are box planned. Tickets now available at Sarasavi Book Shop- Nugegoda & Elphinstone Theatre



## ARTRA

Launch of the Laki Senanayake Edition & Art Experiential Festival  
Sat 4 & Sun 5, Mar  
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Mar 4 & 5, Galle

# CELEBRATING LAKI SENANAYAKE AND HIS ARTISTRY

Laki Senanayake, an experimental artist, is considered one of Sri Lanka's legendary interdisciplinary artists. He grew up in Madampe, a village located in the North Western Province of Sri Lanka. During the 1950s, Laki gained recognition in the local art scene by collaborating with Geoffrey Bawa and Ulrik Plesner at the Edwards Reids and Begg firm. He received his artistic education from Stanley Abeysinghe, a renowned painter, and learned techniques and styles to depict the mysticism surrounding him. Laki's well-known sculptures include a large brass peacock for Bentota Beach Hotel, several brass palm and plaster reliefs for Neptune Hotel in Bentota, and two owl sculptures displayed at Barefoot Gallery and Cafe in Colombo. Highly praised for his sculptural stair presentation at the Jetwing Lighthouse Hotel in Galle, and his creation of Diyabubula, Laki's works are celebrated, dissected and

understood in ARTRA's latest edition and its launch at the Jetwing Hotel. 'The Works of Laki Senanayake' will not only be a biography of his works throughout his presence but also will stand as a testament to who the artist was. ARTRA Magazine's Edition of Laki's work will include a critique from the renowned Ismeth Raheem whose friendship with the celebrated artist was closely knit. Ismeth Raheem was first an artist and, with Laki Senanayake, a founder member of the Young Artists Group. He studied architecture at Katubedde and in Copenhagen and assisted Geoffrey Bawa between 1968 and 1976 and worked on a number of key projects such as the Serendib Hotel and the Agrarian Research and Training Institute. Alongside Raheem are two more celebrated artists whose voices have been penned for previous editions of the magazine for their beautiful and soulful writings of many artists from Barbara Sansoni to himself, C. Anjalendran. Renowned architect,



The Laki Senanayake Edition & Art Experiential Festival is set to take place on the 4th & 5th of March

writer and critic David Robson has penned many great accounts of esteemed artists including 'Bawa - The Complete Works (2002)', 'Anjalendran, Architect of Sri Lanka (2009)' and more. His extensive experience and knowledge led him to be Professor of Architecture at the University of Brighton and the National University of Singapore. Sri Lanka's living legend, Chelvadurai Anjalendran is a spirited modernist who draws from Sri Lanka's rich vernacular traditions in his authentic approach to architecture. Simple and sincere in his applied art, Anjalendran's refined eye and erudite understanding of the artistic mind distinguishes his buildings to be of cultural integrity, vicarious in character and respectful to the environment. Writer, editor and part-time lexicographer Michael Meyler and daughter of Laki Senanayake, Mintaka are also contributors to this wonderful edition of Laki's works. Each of these contributors have their own unique relationship with the celebrated artist and provide interesting accounts of his work. Michael got to know Laki only in the last few years, as editor of a planned book on his currency note designs, and subsequently wrote an obituary of Laki on the Groundviews website. Whilst Mintaka's childhood surrounded by Laki's eccentric and nature-inspired adventures create a holistic perspective on the life that the artist led. The launch of the Laki Senanayake



Edition and its Art Experiential Festival offers an opportunity for art aficionados to gather together, explore Laki Senanayake's artistic universe, and learn how art can enrich people's daily lives and environments while also honouring Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage in a one-of-a-kind event. "The vision behind the Art Experiential Festival is to garner larger reach and consumption for Sri Lankan Modern & Contemporary Art whilst also shedding light to the role it can play in sharing the story of Sri Lanka, from inimitable and inventive personal standpoints, which are certainly more invigorating and perceptive than those of the conventional. We are very excited to launch Art Tourism, together with Jetwing Hotels, Sri Lankan Airlines and Sri Lanka Travel and Promotions Bureau through this festival as we collectively work towards celebrating ingenious works of local artists to attract the attention of cultural tourists and the support of the Sri Lankan diaspora in building and strengthening Sri Lanka's art economy, that we believe can contribute to our country's cultural assets" shared Azara Jaleel, Founder and Editor-in-Chief of ARTRA. The festival will also organize exclusive luncheons and dinners of culinary delights over captivating art conversations in celebration of interdisciplinary artistic flairs, in addition to a magnificent selection of art talks, tours, and exhibits.



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