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29th March

Abraham & Thakore
Dimuthu Sahabandu

30th March

Tarun Tahilliani
Chamanka Hewage
Hirushi Jayathilake
Devapriya Halwala
Shehani Guruge
Rochelle Tissera
Navindri Ranatunga
Aysha Faizer
Gayanth Karunaratne
Jaishni Karunaratne
Akash Paranavitharana

31st March

Sonali Dharmawardena
Suneet Varma
Indi Yapa Abeywardena
Charini Suriyage
Nilusha Maddumage
Divya Jayawickrama
Dinushi Pamunuwa

1st April

Rizwan Beyg
Darshi Keerthisena
Fouzul Hameed
LOVI - Asanka De Mel
Amilani Perera
Kamil Hewaitharana
Dimuthu Sahabandu
Harinda Gunawardena

SUMMER 2023

29 Mar - 1 Apr

*in no particular order

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EMERGING MEDIA

SPORTS

RAID AMAZONES ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL STINT



The participants posing for a picture before the start of the day's events



Getting prepared for the 11 km trail running event



The cricket event



Trekking the jungle



Running to the starting point of the canoe event



The canoeing race starts



Tussle in the canoeing race

BY M. SHAMILAMIT

The Sri Lankan Airlines-sponsored Raid Amazonas destination adventure event, the only adventure race in the world exclusively for women, got underway in Sri Lanka for the second successive year on March 19 around the outskirts of the hill capital Kandy.

The adventure event, which originated in France, saw female athletes numbering over 250 competing in a range of sports activities such as running, archery, orienteering, canoeing, mountain biking, riding, and running, which of course requires a great amount of endurance.

Before the events kicked off, the participants underwent medical checkups to prove their fitness, which were conducted at the Earl's Regency Hotel in Kandy.

The Raid Amazonas kicked off with the first event, which is Trail Running where the participants have to complete just over 11 km of running starting from Hanthane, where they trekked jungles under humid conditions added to the hot climate, and ending at Galaha, which they completed with success. The second day of the event saw the participants begin the canoe race starting from Lake Victoria, and they had to complete nearly 15 km along with the waters of Lake Victoria, Pallekele, Digana, Bambaragala Purana, and Rajamaha Viharaya.

The third day is the toughest that the participants are due to face, which is the bike and run events starting from Rideegama, and will take the route of Lewala, Katugastota, Mawathagama, Delvitta, and back in the same route to the Earl's Regency Hotel, and in all, they have to complete just under 18 km.

Another event is the 15-25 km mountain bike event, which was scheduled to start at Pinnawala and will take them along Bathamuraya playground, the Kandy Lake round, and Colombo-Kandy road. The curtain will come down on the series of events with the 10km trail run starting from Pahala Kadugannawa via Colombo-Kandy road, Ganeththenna, and Mahantheegama road.

The participants will also be involved in the cricket and cooking activities after the completion of the field events in the morning session.

Alexandra Derbanne, President and Co-Founder of Raid Amazonas said, "I was convinced due to the excellent feedback we received from the participants last year, which was the 20th edition, which culminated in conducting back-to-back events in Sri Lanka, and also because we want to show the world how safe and authentic Sri Lanka is."

Apart from the events, the participants will no doubt experience Sri Lankan culture and return home with memories, which will be a boost to Sri Lanka.

Gateway wins Netball Championship

Gateway College emerged as the Under-18 Netball Champions in the Inter-International School tournament organised by the Colombo International School (CIS) that was played at the Sugadadasa Indoor Stadium.

Gateway College, led by calm and composed Rithika Srikanth, beat Lyceum Wattala 16-8 in the final after leading 9-6 at the breather. Gateway entered the final by beating their counterpart in Kandy, 12-6. At the group stages, Gateway beat ILMA 16-5, Lyceum Nugegoda 12-1, CIS Colombo 17-0, and the British School in Colombo 18-0.

Gateway's young star Shenoshi Abeygunawardena was crowned the Netball Queen, and Cloe Thillakarane was adjudged the Best Defensive player. Mawrya Liyanage did the vital turnarounds to keep Lyceum Wattala in check, and Goal Attack Onadhi Samarakoon was outstanding with her accurate shooting.



Shenoshi Abeygunawardena and Cloe Thillakarane



The Champion team with the officials

SL Golf Ranking Tournament for Asian Games Vijitha Bandara wins in Rajawella

BY SHAMSEER JALEEL

Vijitha Bandara won the final leg of the Sri Lanka Golf Ranking Golf Tournament, which was conducted as a yardstick for the trials for the Asian Games Golf at the Victoria Golf Resorts Course in Rajawella recently.

Bandara had a close one-stroke victory over Chanaka Perera, the 2021 Sri Lanka National Amateur Champion.

Perera, just one stroke adrift of the winner, Bandara, was 3 strokes clear of 3rd-placed M.H. Chalitha Pushpika of the Sri Lanka Navy. The Victoria Golf Resorts course played long as there was continuous rain and soft ground underfoot, making conditions quite difficult to



score. In the circumstances, Perera's 5 under par 68 in the second round was the outstanding performance of the tournament, which put him in the lead and helped Bandara (298), Perera (299), and Pushpika (302) ended in the top three.

South Africa defeat West Indies in record T20 run chase

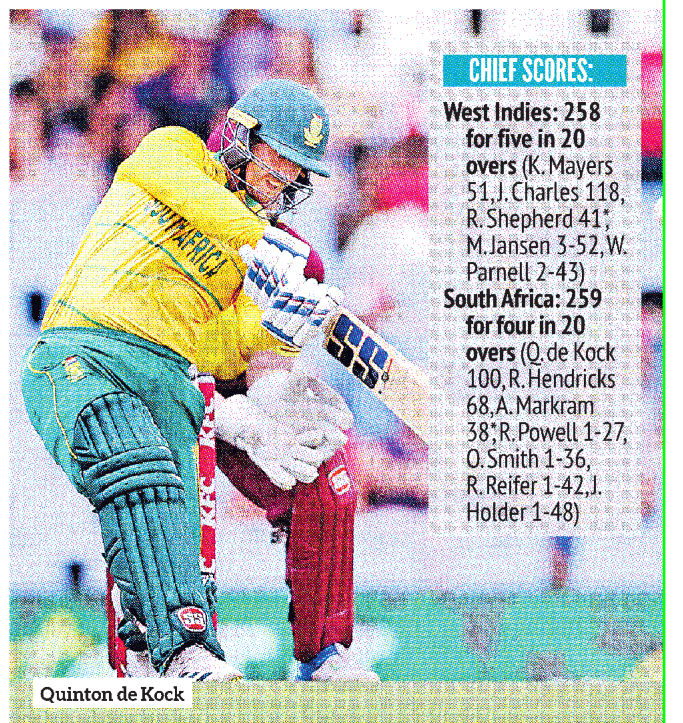
South Africa set a new record for chasing in international T20 cricket when they scored 259 for four to beat West Indies by six wickets at Centurion yesterday.

Johnson Charles smashed a 39-ball century for the visitors as they posted an imposing 258 for five, the joint sixth-highest total in T20 internationals.

However, Quinton de Kock responded with 100 from 44 balls, a maiden T20 century, while fellow opener Reeza Hendricks hit 68.

Captain Aiden Markram (38) saw his side home with seven balls to spare.

The previous highest run chase was Bulgaria's 246 to beat Serbia in 2022 while Australia made 245 to beat New Zealand in 2018.



Quinton de Kock

CHIEF SCORES:

West Indies: 258 for five in 20 overs (K. Mayers 51, J. Charles 118, R. Shepherd 41, M. Jansen 3-52, W. Parnell 2-43)
South Africa: 259 for four in 20 overs (Q. de Kock 100, R. Hendricks 68, A. Markram 38, R. Powell 1-27, O. Smith 1-36, R. Reifer 1-42, J. Holder 1-48)

Tamil Nadu U-23 volleyball team to tour Sri Lanka

BY SUSIL PREMALAL

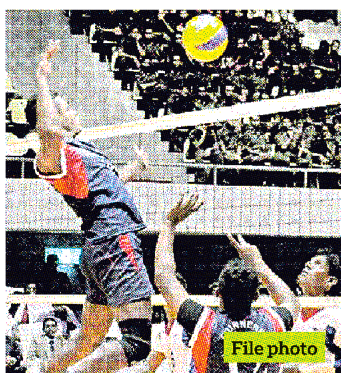
The Indian Tamil Nadu Province U-23 Men's Volleyball team will arrive in Sri Lanka on March 31 for a seven-day tour.

This is part of the volleyball exchange programme signed between the Sri Lanka Volleyball Federation (SLVB) and Tamil Nadu Province Volleyball Association, beginning with Tamil Nadu's visit, said SLVB Senior Vice President C. Rathnamudali.

The Tamil Nadu Province volleyball team, making their first trip to Sri Lanka after 41 years since 1982, will play five matches against the Sri Lanka junior volleyball team and other leading teams.

They emerged champions in the 2022 Tamil Nadu Province junior national Volleyball tournament.

Tour Schedule:
April 1 vs. Sri Lanka Junior



File photo

National Team at Radawana Ground, Gampaha, at 5:00 p.m.

April 2 vs. Ceylon Electricity Board SC at Horana Public Ground at 4 p.m.

April 4 vs. Jaffna Combined Team at Jaffna at 6 p.m.

April 5 vs. Sri Lanka Army SC at Vavuniya at 4 p.m.

April 6 vs. the North Western Combined Team at Kurunegala at 6 p.m.

Vishwa shines in drawn South's Battle of the Blues

Vishwa Supun shone with a ton inclusive of nine boundaries for St. Servatius' College Matara in the drawn 123rd Battle of the Blues big match against traditional rivals St. Thomas' College Matara concluded at the Uyanwatta Stadium in Matara yesterday.

The final days proceedings saw St. Servatius' in reply to St. Thomas' score of 241 resuming from their overnight score of 246 for 3 helped by Vishwa's ton and Viran Chamuditha's half ton going on to make a formidable score of 346 for 6 declared. -MSA

CHIEF SCORES:

St Thomas' Matara: 241 (Ochintha Chamika 79, Pesandu Sanjan 35, Loshitha Diksith 25 n.o.; Thisan Dewmitha 4 for 49, Chatham Kulasekera 2 for 29, Kushan Wijeratne 2 for 49) and 171 (Pesandu Sajan 75, Ochintha Chamika 34; Thisan Dewmitha 7 for 37, Viran Chamuditha 2 for 43)

St Servatius Matara: (246/3 overnight) 346 for 6 declared (Vishwa Supun 100, Chamarindu Netthasara 79, Viran Chamuditha 52, Dinuru Abeywickramasinghe 43, Tharush Damindu 22 n.o.) and 44 for 3 (Dinuru Abeywickramasinghe 20 n.o.)

Kegalle men and women emerge kabaddi national champions

BY SUSIL PREMALAL

Kegalle district men's and women's teams emerged champions at the 2023 National Kabaddi Championship.

Prizes starting at LKR 100,000 were awarded to the champions of this tournament.

Conducted successfully by the Sri Lanka Kabaddi Federation, the tournament

was held at the Hettipola Public Stadium, Panduwassuwarra, on March 24-25, with the participation of 17 men's teams and 13 women's teams.

In the men's final, the Kegalle district team defeated the Ampara district team 70-69 to win the championship, while in the women's final match, the Kegalle district team edged out the

Kilinochchi district team 40-39.

Both the men's and women's finals of this year's Kabaddi National Championship were fiercely contested, and both significantly ended with a difference of one point.

In the men's semi-finals, Kegalle defeated Batticaloa, and Ampara defeated Kilinochchi. In the women's semi-finals,

Kilinochchi defeated Kurunegala, and Kegalle defeated Batticaloa to reach the final. Kilinochchi won third place in the men's division, and Batticaloa won third place in the women's division.

Both finals were held under the patronage of former sports minister Dayasiri Jayasekara, with a large number of people coming to watch the matches.



Royal College winners of 46th Mustangs Trophy 2023 powered by Dialog

Royal College registered a convincing 7-wicket win over S. Thomas' College in their 46th annual limited-over Cricket encounter played for the Mustangs Trophy at SSC Grounds



The victorious Kegalle district men's team



The champion Kegalle district women's team



Condoms sold actively across the country

- High-end products selling in urban areas
- Clearance issues for vending machines

BY EASWARAN RUTNAM
 Contrary to the popular belief, condoms are being sold actively across Sri Lanka, the Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka said.
 FPA Executive Director Thushara Ranasinghe told Daily Mirror that one brand of condoms is also moving fast in remote areas. She said the Government also has a mechanism where midwives promote the use of condoms. Ranasinghe said that low-range condoms are moving in rural areas, while high-end products are seen moving to urban areas.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

Prices of goods to come down during Sinhala-Tamil New Year: Minister

- Other major essential items that are being imported transacting with dollars, will also come down soon

BY CHATURANGA PRADEEP SAMARAWICKRAMA
 Since the Sri Lankan rupee has appreciated against the US dollar, the prices of essential commodities and other imported goods will be reduced during the Sinhala and Tamil New Year season, Trade Minister Nalin Fernando said.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

SJB, NPP tried to block IMF assistance - Prasanna

- Heads of diplomatic missions had informed leaders of the SJB and NPP that they were not willing to interfere in local politics

BY YOHAN PERERA
 Both Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) and National Peoples Power (NPP) tried to prevent Sri Lanka from obtaining IMF assistance through foreign diplomatic offices in the island, a government minister alleged.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

PREZ STRESSES NEED TO KEEP INDIAN OCEAN FREE OF TAIWAN ISSUE



- Says it is important for SL's future
- SL supports ASEAN's vision of the Indo-Pacific region

President Ranil Wickremesinghe said that it is essential for Sri Lanka's future to ensure that the issues of the Asia Pacific, especially that of Taiwan, does not spill over into the Indian Ocean. He made such remarks during an interview organized by Harvard University on March 24, through Zoom technology. He said that Sri Lanka's access to the growing Indian and African markets should not be disrupted by any big power rivalry or conflict. The President also highlighted the rising competition between China and the Quad, which has been further aggravated by the newly formed 'Aukus' pact between Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

Govt. to extend extradition law to 56 countries

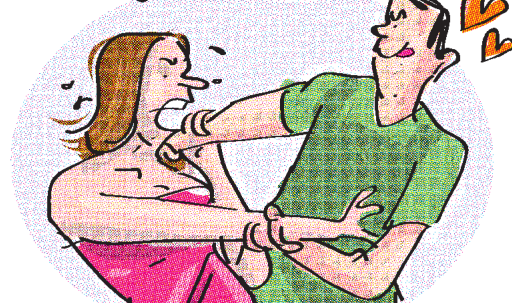
- To prevent under world kingpins, convicted criminals from seeking safe haven in foreign countries
- Law enforcement authorities experience protocol setbacks when trying to bring criminals back home

BY SANDUN A JAYASEKERA
 The Government is to extend the extradition law to exchange fugitives between Sri Lanka and 56 Commonwealth Countries and foreign states so that Sri Lanka and those countries can exchange fugitives. The purpose of the move is to put an end to the trend of accused, suspects, under world kingpins, and convicted criminals seeking safe haven in foreign countries.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

German tourist sexually harassed

BY D.G. SUGATHAPALA
 An employee of a massage clinic in a tourist hotel at Habaraduwa was arrested on suspicion of sexually harassing a German woman who called over at the hotel to have a massage. The 65 year old tourist complained to the Habaraduwa police that the suspect had molested her during the massage session. The 45 year old suspect hotel employee was a resident of Imaduwa area. He was to be produced before Galle magistrate last morning. A police team under SI Wimal is conducting further investigations on the instructions of OIC Habaraduwa police CI Asoka Karunaratne.



Businessman arrested for jeering minister Bandula

- He has been produced in court on suspicion of jeering the minister, disturbing a religious ceremony, and violating the right of worship

BY BUDDHIKA KUMARASIRI
 An individual was arrested after he hooted at Minister Bandula Gunawardana when the latter came to lay a foundation stone for the proposed replica of Aukana Buddha statue at Pitipana junction in Homagama.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

Karaikkal-KKS Ferry service to commence on April 29: Minister

- US\$50 will be charged per passenger for one way trip
- A ferry would carry 150 passengers at a time

BY AJITH SIRIWARDANA
 The ferry service between Karaikal Port in Pondicherry, India and Kankesanthurai (KKS), scheduled to commence from April 29, 2023, Ports, Shipping and Aviation Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva said. He said the first cruiser line of the new ferry service will call on April 29 at the Port of KKS from Karaikal Port in Pondicherry. The Minister said this during a discussion with the stakeholders of this new ferry service held recently at the Ministry.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

Moragoda seeks Indian investments in transport sector

Sri Lankan High Commissioner to India Milinda Moragoda who met Indian Minister of Road Transport and Highways of India Nitin Gadkari in New Delhi sought Indian investments in the development of Sri Lanka's transport sector, particularly electric mobility.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>



Mississippi tornado kills 26 and brings devastation to US state

Search and rescue efforts are continuing in Mississippi after a deadly tornado hit the US state. At least 25 people have died in the state, and one in Alabama, with dozens more left injured by Friday's tornado.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

No plans to dissolve Dept. of Civil Security: Sagala

The Government has no intention of dissolving the Department of Civil Security, Senior Adviser to the President on National Security and Chief of the Presidential Staff Sagala Ratnayake said. Ratnayake noted that the members of the Civil Security Department are allowed to request a service extension beyond the age of 55, enabling them to serve for up to 60 years.



SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

Probe over lawyer who gave contract to Kapuwa to assassinate Magistrate

BY NIMANTHI RANASINGHE
 Horana Police has initiated an investigation into an incident where a lawyer had given a contract to a Kapuwa to assassinate Horana Magistrate Chandana Kalansuriya at least by black magic. Police said the lawyer had given the contract to the Kapuwa who was acquainted with him when he was in the Kalutara prison over a financial fraud. Police said an investigation was launched after the Kapuwa made a complaint with the Horana Police over the incident.

New BASL President vows to function independently

Senior Attorney Kaushalya Navaratne who assumed duties as the 27th President of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL), assured that BASL will continue to function independently.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

Alleged decision to lease sea to Indian fishermen Mannar fishermen protest

BY ROMESH MADUSANKA
 Fishermen in Mannar yesterday staged a protest accusing the governments decision to lease the Sri Lankas northern sea belt for three days a week to Indian fishermen. The massive demonstration and protest had been organised by fisheries organisations, trader organisations and religious dignitaries including Catholic priests.

SEE FULL STORY ON A2 >>

Cannot develop country by selling state property or obtaining more loans

BY AJITH SIRIWARDANA
 Sri Lanka could not be developed by selling state property or obtaining loans anymore as the country had practised the same strategy for the last three to four decades without any success, NPP leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake said yesterday.

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CONT'D.
FROM PAGE 1

Cannot develop country by selling state property or obtaining more loans: AKD

Speaking at a rally in Panadura, he said if President Ranil Wickremesinghe was to develop the country by obtaining loans, he could have done that during 2015 and 2019 when he obtained USD 12.5 billion loans.

"He is getting only USD 2.9 billion from the IMF for four years this time. He obtained USD 12.5 billion within four and half years between 2015 and 2019. He also obtained USD 1 billion by selling the Hambantota Port. But he was not able to develop

the country. How can he recover the country from the economic crisis by obtaining only USD 2.9 billion for four years," he said.

He said Sri Lanka has sold off 88 government ventures during the past and added that selling state property would no longer be a solution to the economic crisis either.

He said fraud, corruption and misuse were rampant behind the selling of state resources and pointed out that such practices should be stopped to develop the country.

Prices of goods to come down during Sinhala-Tamil New Year: Minister

Prices of all essential goods had been reduced in the last few days due to the appreciation of the rupee and the benefit will go directly to the consumers, the Minister said.

He said a majority of the people

here consume goods which are imported to the country.

Consumer products such as potato, onion, sugar, dhal and chilies are directly imported to the country, the minister said.

SJB, NPP tried to block IMF assistance - Prasanna

"Leaders of NPP and SJB met heads of foreign diplomatic heads in this country and tried to convince them to prevent Sri Lanka from obtaining IMF assistance. However the diplomatic heads turned these

requests down," Minister of Urban Development and Chief Government Whip Prasanna Ranatunga says during the opening of a water project in Gampaha District during the weekend.

Moragoda seeks Indian investments in transport sector

A statement from the Sri Lankan mission said the High Commissioner requested the assistance of Minister Gadkari in sharing India's experience in public-private partnerships in the highways sector with Sri Lanka.

"He proposed to set up a platform through which this experience

could be shared with the relevant stakeholders in Sri Lanka. He also suggested that Indian investors should be encouraged to positively look at investment opportunities in Sri Lanka's infrastructure sector. Minister Gadkari expressed his support to these proposals.

PREZ STRESSES NEED TO KEEP INDIAN OCEAN FREE OF TAIWAN ISSUE

Our country is committed to the freedom of navigation and the security of undersea cables in the Indian Ocean

Additionally, he stated that Sri Lanka supports ASEAN's vision of the Indo-Pacific region and is committed to ensuring the freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean and the security of undersea cables, as it is essential for the future of the country.

"Sri Lanka's access to the growing Indian market as well as the opening of African markets cannot be disrupted and should not be disrupted by big power, rivalry or conflict. So this is a story of a country, a small country, but a country with a strong democratic tradition, with an open economy which has been nonaligned, of arising out of the ashes of its old economy, to build a new economy going hand-in-hand with the developments in the Asian region and India," he said.

Asserting that Sri Lanka maintained its political independence, India is regarded as the net security provider in the region and is Sri Lanka's closest neighbour with the longest ties.

Also, he said Sri Lanka is also a member

of the Belt and Road Initiative. However, the presence of the Chinese Sea Fleet ships and the formation of the Quad, the security dialogue between Australia, India, Japan and the US have complicated peace and security in the Indian Ocean. We have close ties with all the members of the Quad as well as China.

"The rising level of competition between China and the Quad has further been aggravated by the newly formed Aukus, the pact between Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom. Sri Lanka accepts the ASEAN outlook on the Indo-Pacific territories. We regard the Indo-Pacific as consisting of two distinct oceans. Our country is committed to the freedom of navigation and the security of undersea cables in the Indian Ocean," he said.

Responding to a question on the Chinese-built Hambantota port, he said the Chinese don't own the port.

"We own the port, but we have given all the operations of the port to China

Merchants. This is because we found that the Colombo Port Authority was unable to manage the port, and we were making big losses. There were no takers for the port, except China Merchant. Our other option was to close it.

But the security of the port is controlled by the Government of Sri Lanka, and the Southern Command of Sri Lanka's Navy will be in Hambantota. A number of US and Japanese warships have visited the port. The port has no basic military value. The Chinese will not use it for military purposes. They can't. We have had regular consultations with the US in regard to this port as well as dealings with the Chinese.

But looking at the arrangement at the ports that the Chinese are building in Africa and somewhere in the Bay of Bengal, this will be certainly a crucial port as far as commercial activities are concerned. I think this will be one of the ports where the goods are assembled and reshipped to other destinations. I can't see a military use for it and the Chinese haven't the ability to have a large number of warships in the Indian Ocean in any way, to counter India and the US," he said.

Karaikkal-KKS Ferry service to commence on April 29: Minister

According to the ferry service owners, US\$50 will be charged per passenger for one way trip and baggage of 100 kg will be allowed.

A ferry would carry 150 passengers at a time and will sail around 4 hours from Karaikal Port to KKS and only daytime operations will be conducted during the first phase of the operations.

Condoms sold actively across the country

"Condoms bring dual protection. Not only from pregnancy but from sexually transmitted diseases. Condoms is one of the most potent methods of keeping our young people safe. Contrary to the popular belief, condoms are being sold actively across the country," she said in an interview with Daily Mirror.

However, Ranasinghe said that some people are not comfortable to purchase condoms in pharmacies, owing mostly to cultural beliefs.

"We might take a while to get over this," she said

She also noted that condom vending machines were promoted in Sri Lanka, but there were issues including vandalism.

FPA had identified hot spots, including railway stations, hospitals and universities to install condom vending machines, but there was difficulty in obtaining clearance from the authorities.

According to Ranasinghe, Sri Lanka has an almost 68 per cent contraceptive prevalence rate and is among the highest in the region.

Govt. to extend extradition law to 56 countries

The government spokesman, Mass Media, Transport and Highways Minister Dr. Bandula Gunawardana told a news conference that the government would amend the Extradition Law no. 8 of 1977 for the purpose.

Accordingly, the newly enacted piece of legislation will empower the extradition of fugitive persons to and from 56 Commonwealth Countries and foreign states and regulate the treatment of persons accused or convicted of offences in Sri Lanka.

Businessman arrested for jeering minister Bandula

He was produced before Homagama Magistrate Nilupuli Lankapura and released on personal bail in Rs. 200,000.

The suspect Rajapakse Mudiyansele Udaagedara Chaminda Darshana (42) was a businessman of Pitipana North in Homagama.

Police told court that the suspect who noticed the minister attending

the ceremony protested against him by hooting and sped away by a lorry before the police gave chase and arrested him.

He had been produced in court on suspicion of jeering the minister, disturbing a religious ceremony, and violating the right of worship.

The case was postponed for August 24.

Mississippi tornado kills 26 and brings devastation to US state

The storms devastated several rural towns, with Rolling Fork in western Sharkey County almost completely wiped out.

Mississippi state governor Tate Reeves has declared a state of emergency to help respond to the damage.

US President Joe Biden also described the images coming out of

Mississippi as "heartbreaking," and said the federal government would "do everything we can to help."

"We will be there as long as it takes. We will work together to deliver the support you need to recover," he said in a statement.

More storms are predicted to hit parts of Alabama and Georgia early on Sunday and potentially bring large hail.

NEW BASL PRESIDENT VOWS TO FUNCTION INDEPENDENTLY

He succeeds former BASL President Attorney-at-Law Saliya Pieris PC whose tenure concluded on Saturday.

Attorney Kaushalya Navaratne was elected the BASL President on January 11.

Navaratne's induction took place

at the 49th Convocation of the BASL, held at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) yesterday afternoon.

Attorney General Sanjaya Rajaratnam was also present at the event.

Alleged decision to lease sea to Indian fishermen Mannar fishermen protest

The protestors marched along the Bazaar Street to the main bus stand where they staged protest. All business establishments in Mannar town had put up shutters to support the protest.

They said they had received reliable information on talks now being held between the government and Indian authorities on the proposed leasing of the Sri Lankan sea belt to the Indian fishermen for three days a week and demanded the immediate suspension of the decision and to take steps

to prevent Indian fishermen from poaching in Sri Lankan waters.

"Poaching in Sri Lankan waters has been going on unchecked, excluding the arrest of several of them by the Navy. This has seriously affected the fisheries industry in the North and the economy of the fisher folk. The government that ignored the issues affecting the Sri Lankan fishermen is planning to lease the sea belt to Indian fishermen and aggravate the already tense situation." They further said.

No plans to dissolve Dept. of Civil Security : Sagala

He emphasized that there have been no alterations to these policies and that there are no plans to modify them in the future.

He made these statements while participating in an appreciation ceremony held on Friday (24) afternoon at the headquarters of the Civil Security Department in Katubedda, Moratuwa, to acknowledge the efforts and contributions of the officers of the Civil Security Department.

During the ceremony chaired by the Minister of State for Defence Pramitha Bandara Tennakoon, the contributions of the Civil Security Department to the country were recognized and appreciated.

During his visit, Ratnayake also interacted with the members of the Civil Security Department, inquiring about their work and engaging in friendly conversation.

The Director General of the Civil Security Department, Major General Ranjith Kalkahewege (Retired), presented a commemorative gift to both Sagala Ratnayake and the Minister of State for Defence, Pramitha Bandara Tennakoon, to mark the occasion.

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OBITUARIES

DE ALWIS - CHANDRA of the Walawwa Station Lane, Nugegoda. At rest with Jesus. Dearly beloved daughter of late Mudaliyar Hector L. De Alwis Retr. CCS and late Daisy De Alwis, beloved sister of late Sam (Former senior Manager Bank of Ceylon), late Noreen and of Manel (Formerly at Metropolitan), sister-in-law of late Dr. Rita De Alwis (Retd. Pediatrician, Gampaha), expired. **Viewing at A.F. Raymond's Parlour, Borella from 9.00 a.m. onwards Monday 27th Cortège leaves parlour to Borella Cemetery after service at 2.00 p.m. for cremation at 3.00 p.m. Borella Cemetery.**



DE SILVA - CHITRANGANI. Passed away peacefully. Beloved wife of late Terence, loving mother of Shamali Ranil, late Dilshan and of Kishan, mother-in-law of Dinesh Sivagnanam, Kshanika, Varuni and Ruani, much loved sister of Chandra, Ranjith, late Sujatha and Sarath loving Aththamma of Danushka, Dmitri, Avishka, Kshanuk, Rehan, Tashya, Serena and Ashen. **Cortège leaves residence, No. 100/2, Dutugemuni Street, Kohuwela on 27th March at 4.45 p.m. for cremation at 5.30 p.m. at the new crematorium, General Cemetery, Borella.**

LEANAGE - RUTH JULIET PERERA. Beloved wife of late Basil, loving Mother pf Manel (USA) and Leslie, mother-in-law of Anton Perera (USA) and Dhanujee, grandmother of Nishanthe and Maneshka (USA) and Liam and Lihan, great grandmother of Cassandra and Luke (USA), sister of Asumtha and the late Leslie, Lilian, Monica, Eric, Polycarp and Kamala, expired. **Cortège leaves A.F. Raymond's Funeral Parlour at 3.00 p.m. on Monday 27th March 2023 for burial at General Cemetery, Kanatte. (R.C. Section).**

FERNANDO (nee ANDRADI) - Stephanie. At rest with our Glorious Lord Jesus. Beloved wife of late Shirley, precious mother of Shirlene, Shyan, Sandra, Sherika, Shioni and late Shirma, mother-in-law of Krishan, the late Ursula, Mondy, Sepalee and Tim, sister of Malcolm, Quintus, Joe Andradi, sister Laurinda Jayasuriya, Marie Benedict and Carmen Jayasinghe, sister-in-law of Dr. Marie, late Gerard, Louis and Jayantha, grandmother of Rebecca, Jessica, Evanka, Jehan, Natali, Shenney and Blake, great grandmother of Amaya, Micah, Aria and Skyla, passed away on Friday. **Remains will lie at Jayarathna Respect Home funeral parlor, Borella from 9.00 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. on Tuesday March 28. Cortège will leave parlour for burial at St. Sebastian's Church grounds, Moratuwa at 5.00 p.m. No flowers by request. Donations could be made to the Verbum Television channel's HNB Kandana, A/C. No. 119020068144.**



BRITISH COUNCIL
ESSAY COMPETITION

Junior mirror

The Junior Mirror, together with the British Council, will hold an essay competition for kids between the ages of 8 to 12 years. An essay topic will be given each month and there will be a winner each week. The word count for your essay should be 150-200 words. Winners will receive a free annual subscription "Kids Membership" to the British Council Library.

TOPIC FOR MARCH 2023: MY FAVOURITE TEACHER...

Only entries with the following details included will be accepted:

Your full name, date of birth, home address, phone number and the name of your school

- All entries must be certified by a teacher or parent/guardian as your own work.
- Please send your entries and details to jm.dailymirror@gmail.com

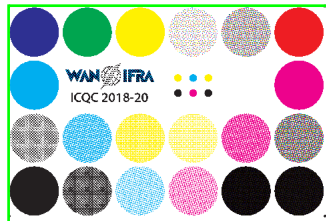
OR
JUNIOR MIRROR ESSAY COMPETITION
C/O DAILY MIRROR
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COLOMBO 2

PHOTO CORNER



The annual sports meet of Rotary International School was held at the National Youth Centre Maharagama. Major General Palitha Fernando, President of the Athletics Association of Sri Lanka, was the Chief Guest and the Guest of Honour, was Mr. Shehan Ambeypitiya (Triple Gold Medalist at the Commonwealth Youth Games). The Principal Dr. Renuka Rodrigo, the School Management, parents, past pupils and students were also present.





FEATURES

71 years later...

COMMEMORATING 'THE FATHER OF THE NATION'

By Kamanthi Wickramasinghe

Statesman and first Prime Minister of Ceylon, Don Stephen Senanayake is referred to as the 'man who architected the destiny of a nation'.



A Sangika Dhana (alms giving) to monks and a mid-day meal to children of Jinananda Children's Development Centre Wellawatte were given on March 22 (Wednesday) to mark the 71st death anniversary of the Late Prime Minister D.S. Senanayake.

WHY SRI LANKA REQUIRES AN ATTITUDINAL SHIFT

Speaking at a commemorative event held in view of Prime Minister Senanayake's 71st death anniversary, former speaker Karu Jayasuriya said that it is not enough to only pay tribute to Prime Minister D. S. Senanayake on February 4 and March 22.

leaders joined hands in unity to drive away colonial forces. Those leaders didn't fight for power. The Sinhalese, Muslims, Malays, Burgers and Tamils got together to achieve independence," said Jayasuriya.

Jayasuriya also spoke about Prime Minister Senanayake's contribution to the agriculture sector, "20% of paddy production takes place in Ampara district. But when I happened to visit there a few days ago and I realized that the second and third generation farmers are not aware of who D S Senanayake is," he said.

He further said that people need to adopt to new ways of life. "The COVID pandemic changed the world. Nobody thought Sri Lanka would face this plight. I thank President Wickremesinghe for giving the leadership during these times of crisis and getting the IMF agreement to provide us with a loan. There's new hope. We have seen a boost in the tourism sector. I heard that a few tourists couldn't visit Ella due to the unavailability of accommodation. People visit Ella as it is a destination with high levels of oxygen. We can promote these places and keep Sri Lanka in the world map. But just because

we have foreign remittances, IMF loans and tourist arrivals we can't become a developed country. An attitudinal shift is also required," said Jayasuriya.

PROTECTING THE SRI LANKAN IDENTITY

The event was held under the patronage of President Ranil Wickremesinghe. Speaking at the event, President Wickremesinghe said that late Prime Minister Senanayake's vision should be taken as an example.

President Wickremesinghe stressed on two elements Prime Minister D S. Senanayake introduced to develop this country, one being the Sri Lankan identity. "People of all religions obliged to the King at the time. When Sri Lanka achieved independence, even though the King was still the symbolic leader at the time, Prime Minister Senanayake requested all people to protect their Sri Lankan identity. He said that the rights of the majority Sinhalese and that of minority groups should be safeguarded and to allow them to exercise their freedom. But we



developed a nationalist agenda in 1956 and this was followed by an ethnic conflict. Therefore, if we are to move forward as a nation we need to do so while keeping the Sri Lankan identity in mind.

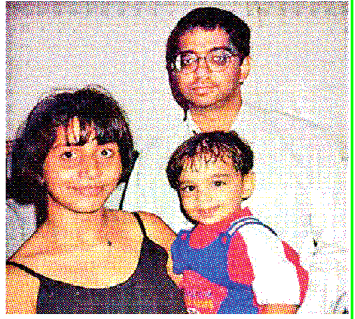
"This country failed due to extremist and religious ideologies," he continued. "Singapore didn't allow that to happen. Mr. Senanayake also proposed to establish a free market economy; to privatize manufacturing and business activities. But instead, the government imposed taxes to develop the country. This allowed us to have a free education and health system and there was a lot of money. But today, this money isn't sufficient to improve the education or health sectors. These institutions were then transformed into public and state-owned enterprises. But now we need to take one step ahead," said Wickremesinghe.

President Wickremesinghe further said the country moved away from Prime Minister Senanayake's vision. "But I aspire to adopt and follow his vision. We removed his political heritage and this was subsequently adopted by Lee Kwan Yew and Singapore. Now our people say that we want to become Singapore. Is this politics? 75 years ago if we adopted his vision, it wouldn't have led to the downfall of this country. We now have to move forward. I don't want to adopt outdated economic policies. The Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burgers have a lot of capabilities. Let the government perform their duties and while allowing the business community to carry out their tasks. This way we will be able to transform into a powerful economy in less than 100 year's time," he said in his concluding remarks while adding that an attitudinal shift is paramount at this crucial hour.

10th year remembrance of Kshirabdh Aruliah (nee Nagendra)

She braved pain to live her life!

Ten years ago a great spirit-only forty years-old left this world. In life she had both the best and worst of fortune. Kshirabdh Aruliah was born into an illustrious Sri Lankan family and she was the great-great-granddaughter of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam.



Kshirabdh and Jehkan with little Kaman

She was beautiful both physically and spiritually. She was surrounded by wealth and admirers. None of this made her arrogant, as it would have many others. She was blessed with a gentle soul; seeing no difference between the high and the low, valuing and respecting all equally. Her wide circle of friends in Sri Lanka encompassed all ethnicities, all religions, and all age groups. Muslims and Burghers, ancients and babies, all were thrilled to see her. The thirteen years we lived in England together brought her many more friends particularly from the junior school where our son attended and she taught at.

She was blessed with a gentle soul; seeing no difference between the high and the low, valuing and respecting all equally. Her wide circle of friends in Sri Lanka encompassed all ethnicities, all religions, and all age groups

But at an early age she was afflicted with arthritis. This condition over the years progressed beyond her joints to invade her lungs. She was blessed with great inner strength and courage that enabled her to hide this painful affliction from those around her. Like her mother she was a great athlete at school; though she had to take Panadol before competing. Even after winning she was in pain. When it became impossible to hide her illness, her inner strength enabled her to feign it was less disabling than it actually was. Even to me.

when we were still expecting to be released to go home, watching me inconsiderately tapping away at my laptop she said to me "You are a good man". Words I will treasure to my last day.

The greatest gift I gave her, and she gave me, is our son Kaman. Kaman was the good fortune she valued most in her life. He was more than enough to compensate for all the misfortunes she had to endure. For Kshirabdh 16 years of Kaman more than made up for 30 years of illness.

I first met Kshirabdh when she was 21 years of age. Over the years I saw in her many things I myself lack. My character is not as warm, not as considerate, not as patient and not as affectionate as hers. She patiently put up with me and came to understand me. From her hospital bed 10 years ago,

In this tenth year (June 1972 to March 2013) since she passed away, Kaman is marrying Ellie; his English fiancée. Kshirabdh will be full of joy, as am I, that our son has found a lovely girl who will take care of him just as well as Kshirabdh took care of me.

JEKHAN ARULIAH

The Community 'SKANDA' STIRS NOSTALGIC MEMORIES OF CRICKET AT BOOK LAUNCH

The following are excerpts of the speech by S. Skandakumar who was the guest of honour at the launching of the book 'The Community' which was penned by Mevan Pieris. The book launch was held at SLFI Auditorium on March 21, 2023.

"It was three years ago that an equally eminent Thomian Anura Tennekoon invited me to speak at the launch of his book. Today I am privileged again by one of similar standing and must thank Mevan for the opportunity," is how Skandakumar began his speech.

He said that it merely reinforced the values of our two great institutions, where the fierceness of competition on the playing fields have led to the strongest of bonds off it.

"Sandwiched between the learned Professor, and the revered Warden, I feel like a Dwarf. Thankfully Royal's sterling performance at the big match on Saturday has given me a few inches!"

"It is not my intention to comment on this amazing research and labour of love of Mevan's. It's an area I must leave to the Professor who is far more qualified than I to do it.

"I will instead touch briefly on the author who I have known for almost sixty years," the speaker said.

Skandakumar and Pieris had first met at the Royal Thomian of 1965.

"S.Thomas was registering comprehensive wins against every school, on their way to our big match. "We knew we were the underdogs and

that even the glorious uncertainties of the game were not going to be able to produce a Royal win. So we focused on an honourable draw," said the speaker.

According to Skandakumar there was a good reason for saying so.

In Mevan and Barney Reid the Thomians had the most destructive bowling combination that had skittled school after school during the season.

"They both bowled in swing at varying pace to the right handed with uncanny accuracy.

"For those of you in the audience- not familiar with this time consuming game- imagine yourself in pads standing in front of a set of stumps with a bat in hand.

"If there was the slightest gap between your bat and pad, they would get through you to shatter your stumps," he recalled.

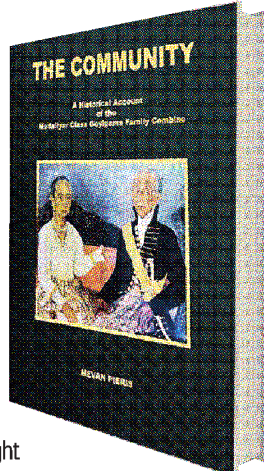
Facing a daunting first innings total of their rivals, close to three hundred, Royal was bundled out for small total and followed on.

He went on to state, "A great rear guard action in the post tea session on the second and final day for our last wicket between Nissanka Wadugodapitiya and Lakshman Thalayasingham saw us earn an honourable draw that prompted our winning captain of the 1969 encounter Eardley Lieversz to pen an article which he captioned -When a Draw can be as good as a Win."

The Royal team was truly honoured!

"Our paths next crossed at the Colombo University where we played three seasons of the Premier PSara tournament together.

"In the third season Mevan was made captain and it was a season of great



achievement made possible by his inspirational leadership.

"His attention to detail, meticulous planning, complimented by his own sterling performances with both bat and ball raised the bar for every member of our team. And it was no surprise when we became champions in our league; beating some very formidable sides. One had no less than seven national players!

"Sadly examinations clashed with the final round games and we were never at full strength thereafter.

"We then went our separate ways and Mevan achieved much in the field of education completing an MBA and qualifying as a Chartered Chemist and made a significant contribution to the Plastic and Rubber Industries of the Country.

"His meticulous application to detail, flair for research, and a passion for anything he undertook has now evolved a book probably unparalleled in content and in history.

"As the Warden mentioned, the contents will be debated for their negatives, but the positives he pointed out remind us of the contribution this elitist group of three colonial eras of the Portuguese, Dutch and British, made to the well-being of Society in general.

"While we take those positives let us today take a step back to reflect seriously and honestly at where we are as a nation.

"For a Country blessed with natural resources as we have and inherent talent as we see even today, the circumstances we are in, seventy five years into Independence have left me utterly humiliated as a Sri Lankan.

"Never did I even remotely dream in my time at the University, that in the twilight of

my life I would see our great country placed as it is today.

"There is a future we owe and must ensure for our succeeding generations and it is now time to press the reset button to facilitate that.

"What better way to initiate that process then, than to reflect on our own personal blessings. How often have we reflected on the magic of creation! By that I mean our human anatomy, and it's functions!

"Our brain, the ability to think, to hear, to see, to speak, our organs as our heart, lungs, liver, pancreas, kidneys, the movement of our limbs and their amazing coordination to preserve our well being.

"How often have we paused to appreciate it and to demonstrate our gratitude for it!

"Before I conclude therefore I thought I will read to you an extract from an Essay a great humanist, Paul Johnson who passed away on 12 th January at age 94, wrote in 2006, titled "The Human Race, Success or Failure".

"Somewhat we have to bring back into our private lives and public life the spiritual element, the sense of awe at the magnificence and possibilities of creation, the pride in goodness and altruism, the fear of wrong doing and materialistic arrogance, and above all the love for fellow human beings which is inseparable from the belief that all human life is created in the image of divinity"

"Those profound lines speak for themselves as do those uttered by Marcus Brutus to justify the assassination of Julius Caesar.

He said at the funeral Oration, "It's not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more"

"Yes let us restore that love for our nation as our highest priority as we trigger that reset button, and set an example for all to follow.

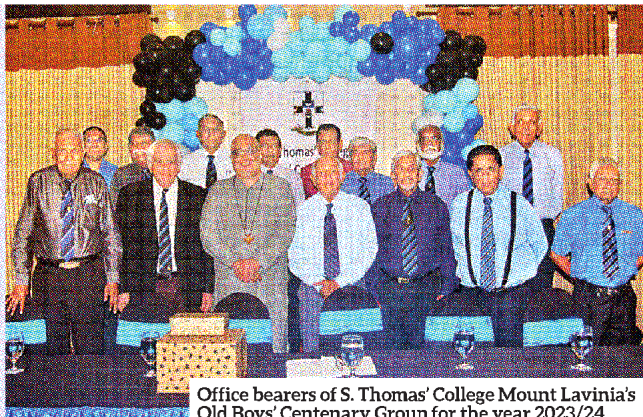
"Thank you again Mevan for this honour, May God Bless you All."

STC Old Boys' Centenary Group Office bearers elected

S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia's Old Boys' Centenary Group elected its office bearers for the year 2023/24 at an AGM held on March 4.

The Executive Committee is as follows: Patron: Warden Rev. Marc Billimoria President: Dr. Nihal de Silva Immediate Past President: Dharmin Perera Vice President 1: Eddie Appathurai Vice President 2: Lincoln Fernando

Secretary: Captain Gihan Fernando Asst. Secretary: Lokendra Seneviratna Treasurer: Hiran Fernando Asst. Treasurer: Wg. Cdr. (Rtd.) Ranjan Samarasinghe Committee Members: Winston Abeynaika, Ranjith Ranasinghe, Peter Saturnis, D. Laksiri Mendis, Mohan Abeynaika, Eksith Fernando, Sri Anthonys, Tusita De Alwis Hon. Auditor: H.A. Wehalla Associates



Office bearers of S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia's Old Boys' Centenary Group for the year 2023/24

Three Day Miracle Prayer To The Blessed Virgin Mary

(Repeat these prayers for three consecutive days)

Oh most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. O Star of the Sea, help me and show me here you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech Thee from the bottom of my heart to succor me in my necessity.

(Make your request)

There are none that can withstand your power. O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee. Amen (repeat three times) Holy Mary, I place this cause in Your hands. Amen (repeat three times)

Say this prayer for three consecutive days each time followed by 3 Our Fathers, 3 Hail Mary's, 3 Glory Be to the Father. Then you must publish it and it will be granted. It is never know you fail.

Thank you blessed virgin MARY for hearing MY prayers

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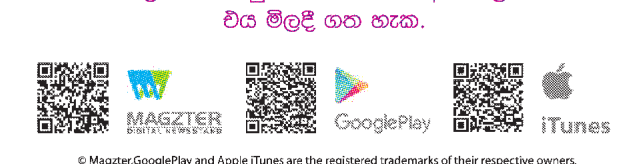
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EDITORIAL

"The only way of discovering the limits of the possible is to venture a little way past them into the impossible."
-ARTHUR C. CLARKE

OUR THOUGHT

IMF FACILITY, ETHNIC HARMONY AND SPORTS DIPLOMACY

During the past few months, the single most talked-about subject in our country has been - whether the country would receive the IMF bailout package or not. The president seemed confident the country would successfully achieve the target.

His political opponents played the role of 'devil's advocate', warning that the postponement of local government elections could dampen the chances of receiving the facility.

'Sajith Premadasa' - the Leader of the Opposition however, took another tack, claiming a future Sri Lankan government under the opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) is not obliged to support deals with the International Monetary Fund or any other international funding agency as the current government does not have mandate to sign such agreements. (January 30, 2023)

The country was left wondering as to whether Premadasa was trying to scuttle a possible IMF deal. The following day, another vociferous member of the SJB claimed that it was not what his leader meant etc. etc.

The Tamil political parties in the north and the leading upcountry political party had earlier expressed their support to the president as he had promised to bring to fruition a solution to the problems of minority communities.

By March 21, the good news was that the IMF had agreed to provide the debt re-structuring facility. While these tidings of success were being played out on the international stage, an event of equally great or even greater significance was being played out at the Ananda College cricket grounds.

Ananda College Colombo a leading Lankan Buddhist school was playing against the Jaffna Hindu College team - the peninsula's leading Tamil school. The cricket match goes way beyond a mere sporting event.

The event - a brain-child of a past Ananda cricket captain Sanjiva Senanayake, had its origins in 2011 - two years after the ethnic war was brought to an end. Senanayake's goal was to make cricket more than a mere contest in sports. The venue would alternate between Jaffna and Colombo.

Jaffna Hindu College was picked in honour of V. T. S. Sivagurunathan, a product of Jaffna Hindu College, who was a teacher and head master at Ananda for 25 years from 1916 to 1941. Sivagurunathan was an important contributor to the phenomenal growth that took place at Ananda during that period.

So important was Sivagurunathan that he was invited as Chief Guest at Ananda's prize-giving in 1958 - the only teacher who was not a school Principal, to be so honoured.

The aim of the project (Ananda-Jaffna Hindu College match) was to use cricket and sport as catalysts to promote bonds of friendship between Sinhalese and Tamils which were brutally torn apart since the pogrom of July 1983 and the near three-decade-long period of terrorism and counter terrorism which followed.

The event which originally started as a cricket match between two colleges in 2012 has now grown into a much larger sports cum cultural event. This year's event includes a first eleven cricket match between current cricketers, an Old Boy's T20 match for the Arjuna Ranatunga Shield. A basketball match, a chess competition, English debates between the two schools and quiz competition 'Blues vs Maroons'. Among the players at the T20 match was World Cup winning captain Ranatunga.

Despite the near daily call for strikes by various trade unions, the Opposition parties demand for the timely holding of local government elections and other distractions, a large gathering witnessed the match which has taken on the atmosphere of a carnival of goodwill between people of different cultures, communities and races.

Ananda College and Jaffna Hindu College have set an example of fostering harmony between our diverse communities. The two schools are to be congratulated for their groundbreaking effort - especially at a time when communal passions were running high.

Perhaps, other schools and even business corporates could follow their example and organize events which will lead to breaking the isolation of minority communities.

It is only when we bridge the racial, ethnic and religious divide and are able to think of ourselves as Sri Lankans, will our country be able to develop and create an equitable living space for all its citizens.



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

71st and 51st Death Anniversaries of Two Greats

RANIL-RAJAPAKSA OR RANIL-GUNAWARDENA?



By **KKS PERERA**

The Live telecast of adjournment debate on the President's statement on IMF, was different. It signified a paradigm shift in the stance taken by a few in the opposition. The approach by some SJB juniors, especially, the usual critical comments on Ranil's acquisition of presidency was either absent or left to the leaders to make; through somewhat confessional or praiseworthy speeches on President's achievements they implied their willingness to cooperate with the former leader. Two senior Pohottu dissidents too made clear expressions on their supportive stand.

All these happened while a grateful nation commemorated the two political colossuses, Don Stephen Senanayake and Don Phillip Rupasinghe Gunawardena on their seventy-first and fifty-first death anniversaries that fell on March 22 and 26.

'DS' as he was affectionately known, was the son of Don Spater Senanayake. His family roots date back to the Anuradhapura period in AD 253-266. As per folklore, the King sent a delegation from Mahiyangana with a Bo sapling to be planted at Attanagalle. On their way the delegation placed the sapling at a particular spot and retired for the night, to find that the sapling had taken root, hence the name "Bodhitale", a place where the Bo sapling took root, which evolved to "Bothale." Finally, Senanayake made Bothale, Hialagama, a village nearby Mirigama, Hapitigame Korale of the Gampaha District, their home.

Don Jakolis Rupasinghe Gunawardena, a wealthy landowner, served the British government in the late 18th century as the vidane arachchi [local police officer and headman]. The local folk admiringly called him "Boralugoda Ralahamy. His son, Don Phillip Rupasinghe Gunawardena, was an illustrious politician who towered the political passage in our country like a colossus for over four decades. A great statesman, a colourful personality and a man of destiny who influenced the progression of history in our country. Philip Gunawardena, the Father of socialism in Sri Lanka, was called the Lion of Boralugoda.

DS was involved in political and organizational matters from colonial days that included the initial stages of The Legislative Council of Ceylon and the first form of representative administration on the island established in 1833, on the recommendations of the Colebrooke-Cameron Commission. Sir Ivor Jennings wrote, "A colony can obtain Independence by force or persuasion. But effective non-cooperation leads necessarily to force, as Mahatma Gandhi discovered" We gained Independence without shedding a drop

of blood. He continued, "...there was the possibility that we might be deprived of the opportunity to carry out our terms of reference. That such a step was not taken was largely due to the strength and wisdom of DS, and ... if he had not lived, the history of Ceylon would have been very different."

In the early 1930s, the young staunch Marxist/Trotskyite activist and revolutionary, Phillip, a product of Wisconsin University in USA, who was fluent in Spanish and French and possessed Boralugoda ancestry's Panthera leo genes was courageous enough to cross the risky Pyrenees range of mountains the natural border between France and Spain that reached a height of 3,360 metres at peak, by foot when he volunteered to carry a bundle of secret documents to a revolutionary movement in France, risking his life and security checks.

DS was a practical man with a vision of high calibre—he was willing to share his thoughts and views with anyone who had something valuable to offer—his priorities are effective even today as they were in the 1930s and 1940s. He recognized the importance of nutrition in a food production policy

DS was a practical man with a vision of high calibre—he was willing to share his thoughts and views with anyone who had something valuable to offer—his priorities are effective even today as they were in the 1930s and 1940s. He recognized the importance of nutrition in a food production policy. His book contains chapters on, land policy colonization, irrigation, rural indebtedness and agricultural labour.

In early 1949 Commonwealth's economy was facing difficulties, and they tried to enforce authority over us by making a deliberate effort to abuse our Dollar Reserves by making us a party to the 'Sterling Assets Agreement'. DS Senanayake, in this situation, abundantly proved his patriotism. The conflict required a delegation to visit the UK. DS chose JR with his American adviser John Exter, [it was his wisdom that got Exter, an American because he never trusted the British], to attend the Finance Minister's Conference summoned by Briton. DS advised the delegation,

"We are a sovereign nation. Our dollar reserves are our own...., if we are not allowed to act autonomously then obviously we must quit the 'Sterling Area...., the UK cannot oppose this. Tell them you will leave unless you are allowed to keep your country's earnings" - JRJ speeches- Pres. Arch. File 195-a.

Phillip was elected to the legislature in 1936. He used pressure on the ruling class to obtain recognition and concessions for certain social and economic restructuring. Philip led the opposition benches of The State Council of Ceylon in the late 1930s and through the 1940s. The fire-brand revolutionist, Philip's inborn sympathy with the oppressed village peasantry remained impervious even during his terms as Cabinet minister in SWRD's and Dudley Senanayake's governments.

One of the main victories of Philip, Minister of Food Agriculture and Cooperatives was the Paddy Lands Act, [kumburu panatha] in 1958 that gave security of ownership to the tenant cultivator who toiled on the fields and was required to part with half the crop to the landowner. Philip, in the midst of powerful sections within the government opposing the bill, created a huge social change by implementing it.

The economic crises had affected the globe; the Bank of England elevated interest rates by a further quarter of a percentage point on Thursday and said it expects the flow in British inflation to cool faster than before.

Clashes are erupting across France creating infernos in many cities including Paris. King Charles III and Queen's state visit to France has been postponed as the country wakes up daily from nights of chaos. Rioting and arson are reported across France as police brutally assaulted protesters who opposed pension cuts. Over 3.5 million unruly people are on the streets. Riot police in Paris deployed attack dogs against protesters. The journalists covering the protests have been subjected to assaults, arbitrary arrests, and intimidation by the Forces. Reporters Without Borders (RSF) had to remind the security forces of their responsibility to protect journalists.

The three-day strike, which ended Thursday, involved 65,000 education workers in Los Angeles as they staged a three-day strike, the biggest in the US since 2019. The world is in turmoil. The Netherlands has been traumatized by a wave of strikes in both the public and private sectors.

Phillip sacrificed his ideological and Socialist policies for the sake of the country and joined hands with Dudley Senanayake in forming a national government in 1965. His son Dinesh, who made his late father very proud by carrying forward his legacy as Prime Minister is in partnership with Ranil, a relative of Dudley in sharing a portion of the burden, though it is hard to get over every difficult situation. However, they must not emulate JR-Premadasa or the Rajapaksa in undermining the independence of the judiciary by interfering with Courts verdicts.

Will generational wisdom come to the fore? Is there a, "light at the end of the tunnel" or is it just the "light of an oncoming train"?"

kksperera1@gmail.com

DM Poll

Which political party leader has the vision and the capability to put Sri Lanka on a recovery path and lead to sustainable development?

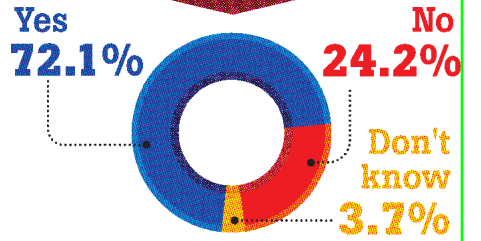
- Ranil Wickremesinghe
- Sajith Premadasa
- Anura Kumara Dissanayake
- None of them



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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

General Election and the people's mandate

In Sri Lanka the Presidential Election is due in November 2024. If our President was elected by the people he could call for elections earlier. But our President is duly elected by parliament, and therefore is not afforded the same possibility as per the Constitution. As such the Presidential Election should have been held not less than one month and not more than two months before GR's term ended.

The General Election is due in August 2025. Only a village type local Government Election is possible now. Keeping roads well swept, repairing of culverts and disposal of sewage etc are some of its functions.

Why spend so much of time, money and effort on it?

People's mandate can only be determined by a General Election in 2025!

VAJIRA MUNASINGHE KOTTE

Pathetic performance requires resignation of all

The pathetic performance by the Sri Lanka cricket team in New Zealand, is an indictment on the Board, Coach, Manager and all those involved in the selection and training of the Cricket team. All concerned need to take some positive measures to improve the standard and their performance which is indeed pathetic. A real study of their performance is inevitable, in view of our regular losses whilst other teams like Afghanistan are doing excellently. "Wake Up Cricket Board"!

NIHAL DE ALWIS

USD121 Mn from first tranche of IMF loan received to SL, paid to India

WEB COMMENTS

CITIZEN PERERA- Excellent, graphic illustration of (1) SL living beyond its means continuously, (2) if you borrow from Peter to pay Paul, you will still have to end up paying Peter eventually.

we have been. What short memories we have.

JAVANTHA- India supplied us essential fuel under a line of credit when we could not get it from anybody else. Yes, no one else. China backed off and played hard ball. It is because of that the economy slowly started to grind back. Yes it was under a line of credit not a grant. If we did not receive it where would

QUOLP- More than India, to Chinese government should be paid back tranche of millions as the Chinese government gave more than 10 billions of US dollars for Sri Lanka, that is JUSTICE.

CITIZEN- As far as loan taken to pay another loan is going to worsen the country economy. Unless the loan taken for profitable projects and pay back the loan from the income of the project. For which smart and intelligent politicians required. Which is lacking in Sri Lanka.

See more web comments at www.DailyMirror.lk

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SLAF organises Sri Lanka's first-ever ...

PO6

Rates slump most in a week on positive sentiments after IMF Board approval

- Prime lending rate falls by 204 basis points to settle at 21.74%
- It has fallen cumulative 550 basis points since the end of last year

The market lending rates followed the Treasury yields last week to fall sharply from their previous week levels as investors turned upbeat over the future direction of the Sri Lankan economy after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) unsealed the four-year stabilisation package for the country.

The prime lending rate fell the most or by 204 basis points last week to settle at 21.74 percent, marking the biggest weekly slump in benchmark lending rates for the shorter term facilities for prime and corporate clientele of

commercial banks. The prime lending rate, the bellwether for the rest of the borrowing cost for small business loans, home mortgages, auto loans and consumer loans, has been on a descent this year as the liquidity condition in the rupee market improved while the country was inching closer to the much anticipated IMF facility.

The benchmark rate has given up a cumulative 550 basis points since the end of last year.

Analysts expect the rate to fall to between

12 to 15 percent by the end of 2023, providing a much-needed fillip for the businesses and consumers to ramp up their spending.

Meanwhile, the government securities market also reacted to the IMF deal last week with yields falling across the board.

At the first bill auction held after the IMF Board approval last week, the bill yields fell sharply by 171 basis points, 122 basis points and 160 basis points for 3 months, 6 months and 12 months bills to settle at 26.23 percent, 26.12 percent and 24.32 percent respectively.

The three tenors have shed a cumulative 641 basis points, 608 basis points and 495 basis points each since the current streak of declines began in mid-December last year.

At the auction, the Central Bank raised Rs.125.0 billion and another Rs.31.25 billion at phase II of the auction held the following day.

After nearly a year of economic turmoil, Sri Lanka is now returning to its pre-crisis level economic strength with the inflation on course to its desired range of 4 to 6 percent by the year's end.

Govt. mulls Irish-style implementation unit for IMF programme

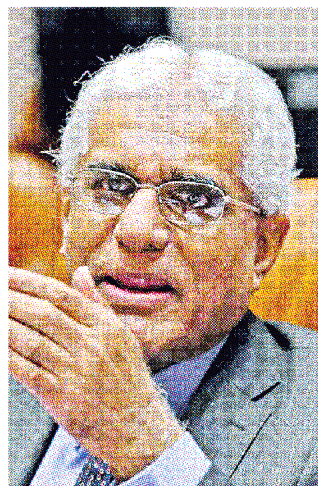
- CB Governor, Treasury Secretary and President's Chief of Staff briefed by IMF's Irish Alternative Executive Director
- Envisaged unit will have special powers to implement mutually agreed targets and structural benchmarks within stipulated time lines
- It will report directly to President and the Cabinet of Ministers
- Sri Lanka also needs similar set-up with laser like focus on implementation- Former CB Governor Coomaraswamy

By Nishel Fernando

With the aim of ensuring a smooth continuation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme by averting possible hiccups leading to suspension of the programme, the government is contemplating on setting up an Irish-style implementation unit with special powers to implement mutually agreed targets and structural benchmarks within stipulated time lines.

Recently, the IMF's Irish Alternative Executive Director briefed the Central Bank Governor, Secretary to the Treasury and President's Chief of Staff on the implementation unit that was set up in Ireland when the global financial crisis hit Ireland, which compelled the country to reach out for an IMF programme.

Former Central Bank Governor and senior



Dr. Indrajith Coomaraswamy

economist Dr. Indrajith Coomaraswamy revealed that the Sri Lankan government has shown interest in setting up a similar implementation unit to avert any slippages that could derail the economic recovery undermining the confidence on the country.

"Last thing we need is for us to suddenly find that we have gone out of the track in the programme and it's suspended, because that will basically constraint the flow of funds to the country. It will also affect the confidence that's now beginning to build on with the signing of EFF. So, all that will be undermined if the programme gets suspended, because we're not able to keep it on track. The President is very interested in this implementation unit," Dr. Coomaraswamy told an expert panel discussion organised by the Centre for Banking Studies of the Central Bank last Friday.

MORE ON P6

Foreigners flock back to rupee bonds amid renewed interest

Foreigners sharply increased their holdings in rupee bills and bonds in the few weeks up to the approval of the deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as they were seen growing confident over the turnaround story of the Sri Lankan economy in the medium term.

Foreigners who offloaded a record sum of rupee bonds since the good governance regime came to power in 2015 and deepened the rout during the pandemic, returned with a bang piling back over Rs.17.2 billion worth of Treasury bills and bonds in the last two weeks.

This marked a 33.4 percent jump from a fortnight ago and most in the recent history.

With the recent piling up of rupee bonds, foreigners held a cumulative Rs.68.82 billion rupee equivalent bills and bonds by the end of March 23.

Speaking at a virtual forum organised by the Centre for Banking Studies of the Central Bank last week in the aftermath of the IMF Board approval, former Central Bank Governor Dr. Indrajith Coomaraswamy said the IMF Board approval could spark renewed interest

among foreign investors in Sri Lankan treasuries and equities.

The IMF Board approval will open up multiple bilateral and multilateral funding lines for Sri Lanka to tap billions more in foreign currency loans which are integral in rebuilding the foreign reserves position of the country.

The debt deferment which could span up to 10 years offers Sri Lanka a golden opportunity to rebuild its external reserve buffer well beyond US\$ 10 billion by next year, a level which will provide Sri Lanka a bulwark against global shocks in the scale of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

The Sri Lankan economy fell into trouble last year due to two years of pandemic related restrictions, which cut off the much needed foreign inflows to the tune of approximately US\$ 20 billion.

Also, the steeper tax cuts that were introduced in 2019 contributed towards Sri Lanka's economic downfall. At the time they were introduced, rating agencies identified them as 'credit negative,' even though there were no signs of a pandemic at the time.

China says it 'firmly opposes' potential forced sale of TikTok

CNN: China said it would "firmly oppose" any forced sale of TikTok, in its first direct response to demands by the Biden administration that the app's Chinese owners sell their share of the company or face a ban in its most important market.

The comments came as TikTok CEO Shou Chew testified in front of US lawmakers amid mounting scrutiny over the app's ties to Beijing.

China's commerce ministry said Thursday that a forced sale of TikTok would "seriously damage" global investors' confidence in the United States.



"If the news [about a forced sale] is true, China will firmly oppose it," Shu Juejing, a spokeswoman for the ministry, told a Thursday news conference in Beijing, adding that any potential deal would need approval from the Chinese government.

MORE ON P6

Pay US\$ 84 a year for Twitter Blue or lose checkmark beginning April 1: Twitter

CNN: Twitter's free blue "verified" checkmarks for notable users may finally be coming to an end.

Ever since Elon Musk took control of the company in October, he's been threatening to remove the "legacy" checkmarks that confirmed the identities of users like government officials, corporations, journalists, celebrities and other high-profile tweeters.

Now Musk may follow through: "On April 1st, we will begin winding down our legacy verified programme



Elon Musk

and removing legacy verified checkmarks," the company wrote in a tweet Thursday.

MORE ON P6

New SEC chief calls on capital market stakeholders to embrace self-governance

- Stresses need to move away from short-termism
- While SEC has more teeth under new Act, says it is mindful in playing a balanced regulatory role
- Highlights the importance of developing in-house research capabilities for brokers

The newly appointed chief of capital market regulator, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) called on stakeholders to embrace "self-governance" so that the public interest is safeguarded and upheld.

SEC Chairman Faizal Salieh urged stakeholders of the capital market to move away from short-termism and move towards long-term sustainability collectively to improve investor trust and confidence.

"Our capital market must become a good alternative source for capital funds, like in other jurisdictions, and we are being watched by overseas and local investors on how the market behaves and is regulated," said Salieh when he met with representatives of the stock broking industry recently.

He noted that while the SEC has more



From left: SEC Director General Chinthaka Mendis and Chairman Faizal Salieh

teeth under the new Act, it is mindful in playing a balanced regulatory role with due consideration to both market development and market facilitation.

Therefore, he emphasised the need to safeguard investors while helping the market grow by "doing the right thing the right way".

"The stock brokers are the front liners in the market who engage with clients directly and therefore should act with due responsibility in advising clients and trading on the Exchange," said Salieh.

Further, the stockbrokers were also urged to develop in-house research capabilities, which is now a requirement under the new SEC Act, review risk mitigation policies and processes, ensure succession planning and strengthen the compliance function.

The SEC head suggested that a Compliance Officers Forum be created to enable an exchange of views, and best practices and improve compliance in the market.

MORE ON P6

Asia diesel glut grows after Russia ban

REUTERS: Asian gasoil stocks have risen sharply in recent weeks as regional refiners are stuck exporting to markets east of the Suez, with narrower opportunities to send barrels to Africa flooded with Russian cargoes, traders and analysts said.

Asia's stock build follows the European Union's imposition of sanctions on Russian oil products from Feb. 5, which has sent more Russian diesel cargoes to Africa and the eastern Mediterranean, displacing Asian supply.

The supply glut will weigh on spot prices and premiums for the transport and industrial fuel in Asia in the near term, with limited demand locally and from Europe where stock levels are also high, analysts said.

Premiums for gasoil have shrunk in the past two months

to 70-90 cents per barrel versus Singapore gasoil prices from a high of US\$ 1.60 per barrel in mid-February.

Singapore's weekly stockpiles hit a more-than-one-year high in the week ended March 15, a sign that regional cargoes are being directed to the Asian blending hub for temporary storage.

"Anticipation is that (the stock) build-up will last three to six months. However, it will depend on global demand growth led by the economic situation in the Western countries," said David Jorbenaze, a senior analyst at analytics and consulting firm ICIS. Russian exports to African markets including Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt have steadily risen since December, with March loadings likely above 1.15 million tonnes, shiptracking data from Refinitiv and

Vortexa showed, levels unseen in the past four years.

Russian diesel loading to the eastern Mediterranean region will stay above 1.3 million tonnes, similar or higher than February volumes, the data showed.

Sufficient supplies from the Middle East and India directed to South Asian markets such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka amid the closed arbitrage market to northwest Europe and Kuwait's second phase start-up at the Al Zour refinery have further limited destinations for Asian exporters.

North and Southeast Asian exports to northwest Europe slumped in January and February from record highs in the fourth quarter of 2022 to average 230,000-280,000 tonnes per month, Refinitiv and Vortexa data showed.

MORE ON P6

Visiting IOC Chairman donates 500 indoor solar cooking systems to Sri Lanka

During his recent visit to Sri Lanka, Chairman Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) Shrikant Madhav Vaidya donated 500 indoor solar cooking systems called 'Surya Nutan' to the Government of Sri Lanka through Lanka IOC.

One such cooking system was physically presented to and unveiled by President Ranil Wickremesinghe who was highly appreciative of the unique innovation and noble initiative.



Surya Nutan is an indigenous indoor solar cooking system designed, developed and patented by IOC's Research & Development Centre. Surya Nutan is a stationary, rechargeable and always kitchen connected indoor cooking solution capable of catering cooking needs of households.

It has the capability to

cook food through boiling, steaming, frying and baking and works on both solar and auxiliary energy sources simultaneously. The product gets charged and discharged simultaneously while performing its function of indoor cooking. This low maintenance, easy and safe to use cooking system is said to have a long life.

These solar cooking systems shall shortly be delivered to the Government of Sri Lanka by Lanka IOC.

The occasion was marked by presence of Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, India Pankaj Jain, High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka Gopal Baglay and other dignitaries of the energy delegation from India.

SLAF organises Sri Lanka's first-ever Agripreneur Conference

Sri Lanka Agripreneurs' Forum (SLAF) in collaboration with Hutton National Bank and MBA Alumni Association of the University of Colombo organises the first-ever conference for agripreneurship in Sri Lanka, Agripreneur Conference 2023, under the theme of 'empowering agripreneurs for a world of abundance'.

The objective of the conference is to address the present-day challenges in agribusiness and seize new opportunities in the sector. The conference will be divided into four sessions – access to finance and investments, access to technology/agri-tech, marketing/access to markets and policy facilitation. Each session will include a keynote address by a prominent expert in the respective field and will be followed by a panel discussion with more distinguished guests joining in. The conference will feature plenty

of opportunities to network with the professionals in the sector to drive the sharing of ideas and experience. Morning and evening snacks along with lunch will be provided to all participants. The SLAF, as the premier agribusiness association in the nation, invites all stakeholders of agribusiness into this common platform to foster innovation and drive progressive change. All interested participants are requested to email the SLAF at info@agripreneur.lk or call 076-532-938/076-760-3376.

Harsha Abeywickrama takes over as new CEO of Sadaharitha Plantations

Harsha Abeywickrama has recently taken over as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Sadaharitha Plantations Ltd, the flagship company of the Sadaharitha group, the leader in the Sri Lankan commercial forestry sector.



Harsha Abeywickrama

With over 30 years of professional experience in various fields, Abeywickrama worked as General Manager of Janashakthi Insurance Company before taking over as CEO of Sadaharitha Plantations. Abeywickrama holds an MBA degree, which was awarded by the Rajarata University and is also a member of the Life Underwriter Training Council (LUTC - USA). He is also a Chartered Financial Advisor (CMFA) of LIMRA (USA) and a Chartered Member of Insurance Agency Management (CIAM - USA). Abeywickrama, who also holds a Diploma in Marketing from the National University of Singapore, is an alumnus of Richmond College, Galle.

distribution management and development.

Abeywickrama, who started his professional career in 1989 at Nestlé Lanka, has been awarded the ELITE CLUB membership in 1990 while working at MERCK SHARPE, DOME Pharmaceuticals. He started his career at Ceylinco Life Insurance Company from 1993 as its Deputy General Manager and has been able to reflect his professional competence in many areas of strategic initiatives, performance, strategic management, sales and

Abeywickrama, who is a well-known trainer, has given his services as a Moderator at MII-LUTC AND LIMRA USA. He has also provided training to many private and public institutions such as Seylan Bank, Ceylinco, the Wayamba University and Ceylinco Stella. He represented Sri Lanka in 2001 and participated in Falia Conference held in Japan and in 2008 represented East Asia Insurance Congress EAIC& on behalf of Sri Lanka. He gained worldwide experience by attending many international conferences, including the 2015 Leadership Conference in the Philippines and

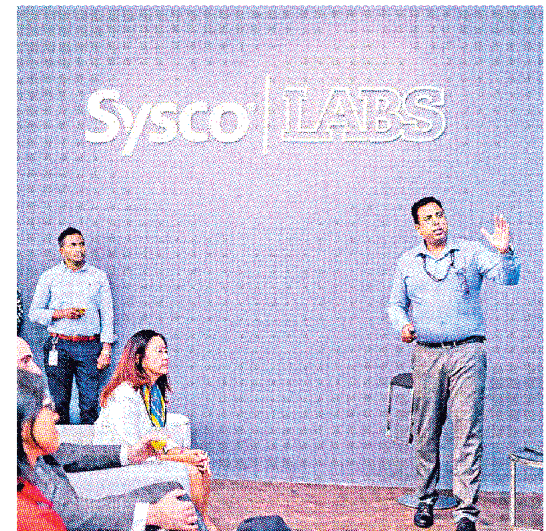
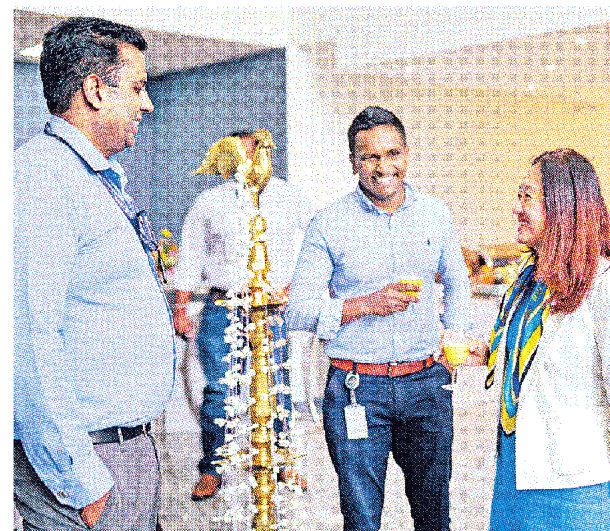
MDRT Experience Conference in Macau. Having received training in development at GREAT EASTERN INSURANCE in Malaysia and experience in AIA's Hong Kong, China, Malaysia, Thailand agency management development programme, Abeywickrama served as Deputy General Manager - Sales Head and National Head of Recruitment at AIA Insurance Lanka since 2013. Abeywickrama, who has also been appointed as a member of the Faculty of Business Studies and Finance at the Wayamba University, has also served on its Advisory Board on Curriculum Development. He was also a guest lecturer in the Faculty of Business Studies and Finance.

US Ambassador Julie Chung visits Sysco LABS Sri Lanka

US Ambassador to Sri Lanka Julie Chung met with the leadership of Sysco LABS Sri Lanka and toured its Colombo HQ. Sysco LABS is the captive

innovation centre for the Texas-based Fortune 500 company, Sysco – the world's largest foodservice provider. During her visit, Chung spoke about the relationship between Sri

Lanka and the US and discovered more about Sysco LABS' technology, innovation and efforts to foster the next generation of tech talent in Sri Lanka.



Women-led LPO services firm Velox Partners enters new office space in Colombo

Velox Partners, a tech-based legal process outsourcing (LPO) firm, expanded its presence into Colombo, to augment its existing law firm.

Velox commenced operations in January 2020, prior to the onset of the pandemic. Today, it has expanded its services across numerous verticals – commercial law, litigation, conveyancing and company secretarial services, with LPO services being the core. It is geared as a fully-fledged legal service provider, servicing clients across the United Kingdom, Australia, Singapore and Southeast Asia.

Velox is female led, with over 90 percent being women, comprising versatile and experienced lawyers. Their

expertise bridges multiple disciplines of law, with a local and global clientele. The two powerhouses leading the firm are its founding partners Lihini Fernando and Dakshika Perera, whose collective experience spans over three decades.

Velox Partners saw COVID-19 restrictions and remote working as an opportunity to position the firm as a tech-based entity and launched its LPO arm. Providing back office legal services to law firms across continents was seen as a viable business model that is both functional and lucrative. Furthermore, the partners of Velox realised the potential of positioning Sri Lanka as an LPO hub, where the LPO sector enables foreign

remittance to the island nation to rebuild its economy. This also provided an opportunity, particularly as LPO services can be offered remotely, without a physical office presence.

Velox has serviced clients in over 14 jurisdictions worldwide, providing solutions on the ethos, 'Beyond Legal'. Velox believes in combining business efficiency and tech-enabled processes to differentiate itself from the conventional law firms.

Lawyers at Velox are solution providers guided by industry expertise. The team comprises professionals based in Australia, the United States of America, Singapore and Sri Lanka, which enables them to draw cross country perspectives in providing services.



Velox Partners Founding Partner Dakshika Perera



Velox Partners Founding Partner Lihini Fernando

Contd. from Page 5

China says...

"The sale or divestiture of TikTok involves technology export, and administrative licensing procedures must be performed in accordance with Chinese laws and regulations," she said.

"The Chinese government will make a decision in accordance with the law."

Previously, Beijing didn't weigh in directly on a potential forced sale. However, starting in 2020, it had signalled it wanted to protect Chinese technology by adding recommendation algorithms, which could include TikTok's, to a list of technologies restricted for export.

On Thursday, Chew, in his first congressional hearing, sought to provide nuanced answers and tried to assuage lawmakers' worries about the company and its parent, Beijing-based ByteDance.

But he was frequently interrupted and called evasive by lawmakers. After more than five hours of testimony, the lawmakers expressed deep skepticism about his company's attempts to protect US user data and ease concerns about its ties to China.

That means there will likely be more calls by Washington to ban TikTok if the company does not spin itself off from its Chinese parent, analysts said.

The Chinese government may have veto power on the sale, according to Shu's latest response and Beijing's previous actions.

In December, Chinese officials proposed tightening the rules that govern the sale of content-based recommendation algorithms to foreign buyers. TikTok's algorithms, which keep

users glued to the app, are believed to be key to its success. The algorithms give recommendations based on users' behavior, thus pushing videos they actually like and want to watch.

Chinese regulators first added algorithms to the restricted list of technologies in August 2020, when the Trump administration threatened to ban TikTok unless it was sold.

Analysts and legal experts believe that Beijing may ultimately prefer for TikTok to leave the US market rather than surrender its algorithm.

New SEC...

The meeting also provided participants room to share ideas and suggestions to develop the capital market. Some of the areas that were discussed include: the listing of identified State Owned Enterprises (SOE), the attraction of captive funds such as pension and retirement funds to the market, and the listing of Green and Blue bonds, and Infrastructure Bonds.

Present at the meeting were also SEC Director General Chinthaka Mendis, Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) Chairman Dilshan Wirasekara, Chief Executive Officer Rajeeva Bandaranaike and other officials of both the SEC and CSE.

Pay US\$ 84...

A caveat, however: Twitter says this policy will go into effect starting on April Fool's Day. Musk in particular has been known for April 1 trolling, including in 2018 when

he falsely tweeted that his electric vehicle company Tesla (TSLA) had gone bankrupt.

"To keep your blue checkmark on Twitter, individuals can sign up for Twitter Blue," the company's tweet continued.

Twitter Blue is a subscription service that Musk relaunched late last year that costs individuals US\$ 84 a year or US\$ 8 a month. Charging fees provides a revenue stream for Twitter – and a needed one, as Twitter currently collects virtually all of its revenue from advertisers, who have been fleeing the social media platform since he took over.

Asia diesel...

Most March and April cargos from Asia are heading to storage tanks in Singapore or Malaysia for contractual delivery or to cover trading positions, one northeast Asian refiner said, citing lacklustre end-user demand.

Average monthly imports in the first quarter were at 1.47 million tonnes for both countries, up from 1.35 million tonnes per month in the fourth quarter of 2022. Gasoil stored onboard vessels in Singapore and Malaysia also hit a one-year high in early March at 480,000 tonnes, Vortexa data showed.

Still, some market players are hopeful demand will improve in April to absorb some of the supply, while there is still room in Singapore to hold stocks, with current inventories far below 2020's peak of 16.6 million barrels.

Expectations for lower exports from China in March on domestic stockpiling ahead of the refinery turnaround season will also likely ease the regional

supply glut in coming weeks, traders said. Also, the arbitrage window to Europe could reopen if demand rebounds and if strikes in France are prolonged, which would reduce supplies, a Singapore-based trader added.

Govt. mulls...

"We need to get it setup and it needs to be functioning, and we need a very good person who has the authority basically to reach out to any part of the government and get things done. It should have the authority, with the President behind it," he added.

Dr. Coomaraswamy highlighted that Ireland was able to come out of the financial crisis in 2008 due to the role played by this implementation unit by ensuring the smooth implementation of the IMF programme in a short period, which made Ireland one of the success stories in implementing an IMF programme.

"They were very meticulous on the way they setup the implementation framework. They identified all the actions that had to be taken, and some actions were even split, because more than one authority was responsible for it.

This entity reported directly to the Irish Prime Minister and the Cabinet. The reporting happened once a month and whenever there were bottlenecks or impediments which were constraining the implementation of any aspects of the programme, those were immediately dealt with," he added.

Dr. Coomaraswamy stressed that Sri Lanka also needs a similar set-up with a laser like focus on implementation. "We need to figure out what has to be done and assign

responsibility for each of the actions and monitor very carefully how we are going about it. We need to make sure that we are hitting all the targets and structural benchmarks as we go along," he added.

Further, he pointed out that unlike earlier, Sri Lanka is in a much complex position as the country is in midst of a debt restructuring process while implementing targets and structural benchmarks under an IMF programme.

"This programme is extra tough because we are trying to implement a stabilisation and structural adjustment programme and do the debt restructuring all at once. It's unprecedented for us and that makes it even more complicated to get the implementation right and it makes it even important to get this implementation unit well-structured and running well," he said.

In order to address the current crisis, Dr. Coomaraswamy emphasised that the implementation of structural reforms remains critical, which the country failed to deliver on past IMF programmes.

"If we want to get out of this in a sustained way, we have to do the structural reforms which is to strengthen the growth framework of the economy. In many times in the past, these EFF programmes had both stabilisation and structural reform components. We relatively did well in the stabilisation component, but when there's a political event like an election, it all comes falling down. Even though we had made some progress in the stabilisation front, a very little progress had been made in the structural reforms side in any of the past programme," he elaborated.

Dr. Coomaraswamy cautioned that if Sri Lanka doesn't carry out these structural reforms it could end up like Argentina or Zimbabwe.

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DURAN DURAN TO REUNITE WITH ORIGINAL GUITARIST ANDY TAYLOR

Duran Duran, the British band who led the New Romantic movement in the 1980s, are to reunite with guitarist Andy Taylor for a new project. The band said Taylor, who was diagnosed with stage four metastatic prostate cancer last year, would join them "for a few tracks".

Taylor, whose rock- and funk-inspired riffs drove dance floor hits such as "Girls on Film" and "Rio", left Duran Duran in 1986 to pursue other projects. He had been due to reunite with his former bandmates for their induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in the US last November.



But instead frontman Simon Le Bon read a message in which Taylor revealed his cancer diagnosis. Duran Duran — Le Bon, keyboard player Nick Rhodes, bassist John Taylor and drummer Roger Taylor — said they were "thrilled" at the announcement.

The new project is due for release later this year, they said on Twitter late on Monday. "The new recordings will feature extended Duran Duran family and friends, old and new, including our former bandmate Andy Taylor who will join us on guitar for a few tracks," they said.

Duran Duran, formed in Birmingham, central England, in 1978, enjoyed huge success in Britain and the United States, and have been seen as innovators in the then new medium of music videos.



AFP

BY RIHAAB MOWLANA

Sri Lankan born Himaya Wijayaweera recently won one of the 5 national titles in the Miss Earth Australia National Competition - Miss Earth Australia - Charity. Her love for modelling and pageantry began as a way to express herself and work in collaboration with other designers and brands. In an interview with the Daily Mirror Life, Himaya shares her experiences and challenges she faced during her pageantry journey. She also discusses the controversy surrounding pageants and why she believes they can be a creative way to advocate for social and environmental concerns. She also shares her advice to those participating in pageants and talks about her pageantry journey, including winning Miss Teen Sri Lanka Australia and Miss Earth Australia - Charity.

A CHAT WITH Himaya

MISS EARTH AUSTRALIA - CHARITY

Q AS OF LATE, PAGEANTS ARE Mired IN CONTROVERSY AND PEOPLE ARE QUESTIONING WHY PAGEANTS STILL EXIST. HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND TO THIS?

The pageant I involved myself in focused on a specific goal about something bigger than ourselves. Miss Earth Australia focused on raising awareness by advocating for our environmental issues. There is a lot of controversy due to the idea of judging women through their external features. However, I believe pageants have moved away from these aspects and focus more on the characteristics of people and their capabilities. I believe our generation has become more open-minded, creating a change in the way that pageants can be utilized such as giving a participant a platform to speak upon. Pageants based on beauty are not necessary, they can be detrimental to people's mental health. However, for raising advocates to voice our social and environmental concerns, pageants are a creative way of expression.

Q MISS TEEN SRI LANKA AUSTRALIA WAS YOUR FIRST-EVER PAGEANT AND YOU ALSO WON THE TITLE?

Kicking off my pageant journey back in 2018, I was approached by organizers of the Miss Sri Lanka pageant in Melbourne who recognised me for my height to apply to compete in the pageant they had coming up. I had not thought about competing in pageants until my mum told me how she won many titles back in her day which inspired me to at least have a go. With hard work, I won my first-ever title after competing for the first time as Miss Teen Sri Lanka Australia at the age of 16.



Finally, I am working alongside principals in Melbourne to talk to children about the ways they, too, can be sustainable. This is a valuable project as children are our future generation. Therefore, starting to send the messages assists to foster and educate children to develop into more considerate adults in the future. Furthermore, it allows the continuation of messages to be passed down throughout generations.

Q YOU HOSTED YOUR OWN CHARITY EVENT - A HIGH TEA 'SHADES OF GREEN,' TO RAISE FUNDS FOR CHARITIES UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF MISS EARTH. HOW WILL THE PROCEEDS FROM THE EVENT BE UTILISED?

The entire event was organized from scratch by my mother Sharline Wijayaweera and my father Jayanath Wijayaweera and I to be hosted as a 'High Tea' Charity event. The concept of the event was to illustrate sustainable practices when hosting events. The location was the Berwick Botanic Garden, hosted on a hill overlooking the water to allow the attendees to be in awe in and appreciation of the beauty of our mother earth. We used reusable items and recycled materials for utensils, minimised wastage by making all our food items in bulk and the menu consisted of no meat items or processed foods.

The donations were collected from the entrance tickets purchased by attendees. The 'Shades of Green High Tea' was a huge success and allowed me a moment to really appreciate the company of everyone who truly supported me. The proceeds were donated to the Miss Earth Organisations - Star Production to be put forward to multiple charities under the umbrella of Miss Earth such as wildlife conservation and tree planting projects to name a few.

Q YOU ARE ALSO THE 'PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD' WINNER?

The 'People's Choice Award' included a voting system allowing the public to be involved. The voting was opened to people around the world to cast a vote for the person they thought was most worthy of the crown. Drawing a crowd from Sri Lanka and Australia and other parts of the world, I won the award with a percentage of 40.6% of votes. In terms of comparison, the runners-up had 19% of the votes cast. This was a fulfilling moment for me as it demonstrated how much support I truly had. I would like to thank everyone who voted and showed support constantly as none of it would have been possible without the collaboration of everyone. This award and the national title are to be shared with everyone as it is not a win for only me but every person that showed some love.

Q WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?

I had the opportunity to travel and compete for a title in Egypt, however, I had planned to visit Sri Lanka in December from the start of 2022. I had been looking forward to seeing my home country and family, after the inability to visit due to Covid 19 lockdowns but I had to kindly decline. Therefore, I would love the opportunity to venture into international pageants and compete in many more.

Following the completion of my nursing degree, I would love to visit Sri Lanka and use my knowledge and resources to set up medical camps to give back to my homeland. I would visit Sri Lanka's schools with a small programme to educate our younger generation about our environmental issues and assist in teaching eco-friendly practices"

PICS COURTESY Himaya Wijayaweera

"My project 'Strive for Sustainability' started at the beginning of the state pageant. This project focuses on how we can be sustainable in our daily lives through the simple activities we do."

I remember the adrenaline being centre stage, talking about social issues and the support I received from my family and friends which felt rewarding.

Q MORE RECENTLY, YOU COMPETED IN THE MISS EARTH AUSTRALIA NATIONAL COMPETITION AND BECAME MISS EARTH AUSTRALIA - CHARITY?

I took a break after my pageant in 2018 to focus on getting into university and completing my studies. In July 2022, I was approached by Isha Kulatunge from Isha's Beauty Salon Dandenong to try for this year's pageant. Due to the pageant being focused on the environment, I felt a

great passion to compete due to witnessing the neglect by people towards our environmental emergencies. As a student nurse back in Melbourne, I have been exposed to the massive amounts of waste produced by our healthcare systems on a daily basis. Therefore, I embarked on a journey to help find alternatives such as the transition to electronic documentation and reminders to minimize our wastage. I decided to apply to compete as I wanted a platform to express my opinions.

First, I won the state title as Miss Earth Victoria. This allowed me to be the Victorian representative in the national pageant. The national pageant had 23 contestants varying from across all parts of the nation. It was a six-day pageant boot camp held in New South Wales.

We undertook many activities such as showcasing talent, photoshoots, closed-door interviews and questionnaires. The six days allowed me to get to know other contestants and build knowledge on how to be eco-friendly. On the final day, I ended up winning one of the five national titles and bringing Victoria home a crown. Alongside the national title, I won the People's Choice award and the Green Achievers award.

Q AS MISS EARTH AUSTRALIA - CHARITY, WHAT ARE SOME PROJECTS YOU ARE EMBARKING ON?

I want to promote Sri Lanka and engage an audience to increase our tourism. Due to the state of the nation, I have started a small goal to convince viewers of my social platform to find a desire to visit Sri Lanka.

Many of Australia's hospitals have attempted to implement electronic solutions for documentation. However, firsthand exposure to the build-up of paper wastage in hospitals that do not have the funding to convert illustrated the urgency of the waste production emergency. Thus, I am embarking on researching to find an alternative to electronic documentation, alongside finding a solution to donate funds to hospitals in need.

My project 'Strive for Sustainability' started at the beginning of the state pageant. This project focuses on how we can be sustainable in our daily lives through the simple activities we do. Expressive and constant messages allow everyone to be targeted to do the right thing by the environment rather than focusing the responsibility on a small cohort of people. This project demonstrated how to upcycle clothing for new textiles, partner with sustainable brands and choose eco-friendly strategies.





Gulshan Ashraf and US Ambassador to Sri Lanka Julie Chung opening the Flagship Store



T&F group Chairman, Ashraf Sattar with Gulshan

Anis Sattar MD with US Ambassador

Editor-in-chief
Shyamalee Tudawe

Hi!! COLOMBO IS TALKING ABOUT

LAUNCH PREVIEW

NEW AVIRATE COLLECTIONS

Avirate this week announced its revamp with the launch of its Timeless Woman concept; a series of collections aimed at celebrating the brand's new direction as a womenswear fashion house that celebrates age-inclusive timeless elegance with style and flair that is both luxurious and affordable. The US Ambassador Julie Chung was the Chief Guest at the event.



GM Avirate Meera Jerome

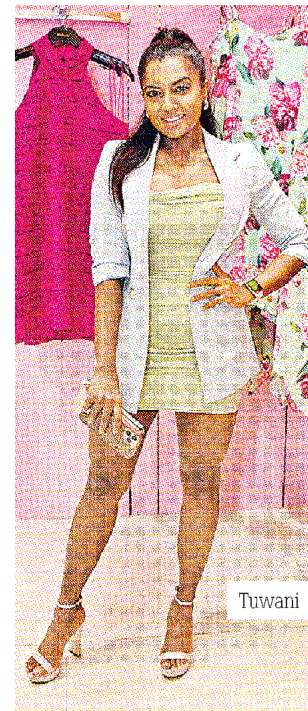


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Hi!!
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GAMES & CARTOONS

4754

Sudoku

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

SOLUTION NO. 4753

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

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

DailyMirror

CROSSWORD

CLUES FOR CROSSWORD NO. 1524

Solution for No. 1523

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

Across

- One who has achieved a state of perfect enlightenment (6)
- American school of the 1950s that imitated the techniques of commercial art (3,3)
- Future (4)
- Distinguish (8)
- Person who refuses to face reality (7)
- Electronic mail (14)
- Hut (5)
- Breakfast (7)
- A state of conflict between persons (8)
- Cried (4)
- Solid missile discharged from a firearm (6)
- The fear of or aversion to something (6)

Down

- Precious (4)
- Person responsible for the editorial aspects of publication (6)
- Granular preparation of cassava starch (7)
- Accelerate (5)
- Phlegm (6)
- Rude decoration inscribed on walls (8)
- Rodent (8)
- Grandfather (7)
- Common edible European bivalve (6)
- Former Chinese custom of touching the ground with the forehead as a sign of respect (6)
- Piousness (5)
- Bucket (4)

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